

STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Thursday 7th January 2021 on Zoom.Us at 7.15 pm

Present :

Councillor N Dobson

Councillor A Donaldson

Councillor C Fraser (Mayor)

Councillor J Janes

Councillor M Jones

Councillor H Lacey (Deputy Mayor)

Councillor H Reed

Councillor M Roake

Councillor G Rose

Councillor R Taylor

Absent: Cllr S Bevis

Attendance on Zoom: No members of the public were present

Mal Derricott (Acting Town Clerk), Louise Plumridge (Assistant Town Clerk), Kate Squire (Finance Officer) and Adam Dodson (Grounds Manager)

RESOLUTION
for each item the
proposer is named first
followed by the
seconder

- Councillors introduced themselves to the Acting Town Clerk Mal Derricott.
- TC/150/21 PUBLIC SESSION
No members of the public were present.
- TC/151/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies were received from Cllr Bevis.
The apologies were accepted by the members present.
- TC/152/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS
No interests were declared and consequently no written requests for dispensation had been received.
- TC/153/21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
The minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 03.12.2020 having been circulated and publicised prior to the meeting, were taken as read and approved for signature by the Chairman as a true and correct record.
- TC/154/21 FINANCIAL MATTERS
i. BUDGET COMPARISON– as at 30.11.20
The Town Council resolved to approve the recommendations of the Committee.
ii. PAYMENTS FOR INVOICES IN EXCESS OF £2000.
The Finance Officer had previously circulated information about payments over £2000 this month which have been approved by Councillors Fraser and Rose on examination of quotes, invoices and payment schedule details. These were for the toilet door replacements needed at Station Road. One invoice will be reimbursed as part of an insurance claim due to damage. The other invoice is for replacement of the two other doors at the location which needed replacing as routine maintenance and is part of budgeted works.
The Town Council resolved to approve the payments as detailed.
- TC/155/21 APPROVAL OF THE TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET AND PRECEPT

Cllr Taylor
Cllr Rose

Cllr Dobson
Cllr Rose

Cllr Rose
Cllr Reed

Chair's initials

FOR 2021-2022

Having previously been circulated the budget detail

The Council resolved to approve the Town Council budget and precept of £342,112 for 2021-2022.

Cllr Roake acknowledged it was not the time to discuss but wanted to raise that he was not in agreement with spending capital on the Market Cross project.

Cllr Rose
Cllr Dobson

TC/156/21 DORSET COUNCIL CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL STRATEGY

Cllr Donaldson had prepared and circulated a response to the Dorset Council climate and Ecological Strategy which was acknowledged by the Cllrs as a superb response. Discussion ensued with much interest and;

The Town Council resolved to approve a focus group of Cllrs Donaldson, Fraser, Taylor and Roake meet to prepare the comments to be submitted to Dorset Council by the 20th January.

Acting Town Clerk Mal Derricott pointed out that very few comments had been submitted and that it was really important to express the Council's views. Dorset Councillor C Jones advised that as well as a Council response, everyone could reply individually as well.

Cllr Taylor
Cllr Jones

TC/157/21 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Acting Town Clerk advised that she would be undertaking staff appraisals for all the staff, if possible in the next 3 to 4 weeks. No staff appraisals have been carried out for around 2 years and the staff are anxious to have an opportunity to have some time to talk matters over. There is also a need to record their progress and possibly their training requirements.

The Town Council resolved to agree the proposed appraisal schedule.

Cllr Fraser
Cllr Rose

TC/158/21 TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT

Emma Lindsay, Town Clerk, has now left the employ of the Town Council in advance of her termination date of 31st. January. Mrs Lindsay left on 18th. December 2020.

As a temporary measure former Town Clerk, Mal Derricott, has been engaged as Acting Town Clerk.

Cllr Fraser also mentioned that a successful Christmas Card competition had been arranged with William Barnes School with a fantastic response from the children. Prizes and sweets were delivered to the School. Cllr Fraser requested L Plumridge to circulate to the Councillors the School's Barnestorm newsletter.

TC/159/20 DORSET COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Jones expressed how refreshing it was to hear how the staffs' interests were being looked into and she hoped that the Town Council can become more involved in the community.

She gave a verbal report as follows;

- The Pantry – People are really struggling - The Pantry social supermarket is providing food for 500 families per week.
- There are now a huge number of Covid cases locally.
- Vaccinations will start this Saturday and there will be a Covid testing site in the Station Road car park.
- The volunteer Covid Action Group has restarted providing

Chair's initials

food, food deliveries and prescriptions to the local community. It was agreed that the Grounds staff could help with this if needed.

- Urgent repairs to the A357 at Shillingstone will start on 11th January due to a collapsed sewer.
- There is a consultation on household waste provision.
- The Council Tax has been set at 1.9%
- Dorset Council is to purchase what was St Mary's private school in Shaftesbury – the cost of keeping children out of Dorset is huge.

TC/160/20 MEMBER INFORMATION

Cllr Dobson – mentioned how good the Christmas Lights were this year, having been paid for by Sturbiz and SNEDS. With the new lockdown The Emporium and Community Chest have had to close. Negotiations are continuing with John Romans with regard to the lease at Lloyds Bank. There will be more reliance on volunteers in the future and he hoped the Town Council could support these organisations' needs.

Cllr Reed – A youth project with the Scouts is now going ahead with William Williams funding.

Cllr Lacey – Advised that the Covid testing station is part time and will be open 2 days a week. Covid Action Group – she hoped that the Cllrs would agree that the Grounds staff can help with delivering food boxes. Christmas Lights – Cllr Lacey thought it be a good idea to write a letter of thanks from the Town Council for SNEDS' efforts in town over Christmas. She finished by noting that many volunteers have been out of action now for some 18th months through the lockdowns.

Cllr Reed offered Nordcat to help with food deliveries.

Cllr Donaldson – As Tree Officer Cllr Donaldson mentioned several current tree matters. He also expressed that, as there were no longer Planning & Environment meetings, his only option was to bring up in Another Other Business at Town Council meetings. He suggested that he could start to circulate tree matters similarly to how the planning applications are being dealt with.

Cllr Donaldson noted that Sturminster Newton had appeared on TV South Today which included interviews with several local people. The Literary Festival 19th June – have requested to apply for one of the free car parking day allocated to the town,

Cllr Jones expressed thanks to Cllr Dobson for his efforts with SNEDS with the Christmas Lights.

He also mentioned that at Colber Bridge some fencing had been ripped off and is being used as a small bridge. The Grounds Manager advised this has already been put back safely and the Gas Board, whose responsibility it is, advised.

Cllr Fraser – advised he had discussed at length the Scout project with Robert Cowley of William Williams.

The meeting was declared closed at 8.14 pm.

Approved on Chair's signature.....

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