

STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

held on Thursday 17th August 2023 at 7.15pm in The Council Chamber

Present:

Cllr P Batstone
Cllr N Dobson
Cllr A Donaldson
Cllr C Fraser
Cllr H Lacey

Cllr M Jones
Cllr D Mantock
Cllr H Reed – left at 8.10pm
Cllr J Rose

In Attendance: K Squire (Town Clerk) and L Plumridge (Assistant Town Clerk) and Dorset Councillor C Jones

Members of the Public: 3

Minute No. Comments

RESOLUTION
The proposer is
named first followed
by the seconder

23/24/101 **PUBLIC SESSION**
The organiser of the car boot sales would like to return to Ricketts Lane Recreation Ground to hold the car boot sales regularly on a weekly basis between April and October 24 weather permitting. These would continue to raise money for charity. The car boot sales which took place in 2023 were successful and had raised £3,000. He asked the Council to reconsider their decision not to allow the sales on the recreation ground and for help in overcoming the problems of access and the need for volunteer marshalls. The Council suggested this could be raised at the Planning & Environment Committee in September.

Action:
Town Clerk

23/24/102 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Cllr P Marks had sent his apologies.
The apologies were accepted by the members present.

Cllr Donaldson
Cllr Dobson

23/24/103 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**
No interests were declared and no written requests for dispensation had been received.

23/24/104 **MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**
The minutes of the previous Town Council meeting held on 6th July 2023 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.

Cllr Donaldson
Cllr Mantock

23/24/105 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**
Application No: P/HOU/2023/04412
Location: 7 Field Close Sturminster Newton DT10 1QN
Proposal: Demolish conservatory, Erect single storey extension
Observations: No Objections.

Cllr Donaldson
Cllr Reed

Application No: P/HOU/2023/04214
Location: 10 Friars Moor Sturminster Newton DT10 1BH
Proposal: Erect single storey side and rear extension
Observations: No Objections.
Application No: P/FUL/2023/03665
Location: Land at New Road, Broad Oak

Cllr Jones
Cllr Fraser



Proposal: Erect bungalow with double garage
Observations: **Objections, this is outside the settlement boundary and does not comply with the Local Plan and Sturminster Newton Neighbourhood Plan.**

Cllr Rose
Cllr Mantock

Application No: P/HOU/2023/04301

Location: May Cottage Glue Hill Sturminster Newton DT10 2DJ

Proposal: Erection of pool house building

Observations: **No Objections.**

Cllr Donaldson
Cllr Fraser

23/24/106

FINANCIAL REPORTING SOFTWARE

The Town Clerk requested that the Council change their financial package to Scribe Accounting, which is an accounts package with full accounting support, purpose built for Town and Parish Councils designed to produce compliant Council accounts. She and Cllr Dobson had viewed a webinar presentation and both agreed it would be a much easier system to operate. **The Council resolved to change the financial package to Scribe Accounting.**

Cllr Dobson
Cllr Rose

23/24/107

YOUTH HUB UPDATE

The Town Clerk read out a report, which is attached to these minutes. The Town Clerk suggested the Council take some time to consider the next steps and for this to be an Agenda item at the next Town Council on 7th September.

Action:
Town Clerk

Cllr Dobson requested it be minuted that he considered the actions of the Scouts to be unbelievably selfish and small minded, and not taking into account the bigger picture of providing youth facilities in Sturminster Newton.

23/24/108

APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS OVER £2000

There were 2 invoices:

Highwood – mulch mower, brushcutter and clearing saw £2578.43

C J Cox Ltd ref. purchase of vehicle WJ68 RYH £13050.00

The Council resolved to approve the invoices for payment.

Cllr Jones
Cllr Reed

23/24/109

CORRESPONDENCE

A letter had been received from a resident together with a petition of over 50 signatures to ask the Council to reconsider their decision of stopping the car boot sale taking place on Ricketts Lane Recreation Ground.

Car boot sales at The Rec. will be discussed at the next Planning & Environment Committee on 21st September.

Action:
Town Clerk

23/24/110

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk's report had been raised in Agenda item 23/24/107 – no other matters to report.

23/24/111

TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor reported as follows:

Civic Coffee Morning – a coffee morning was held on 7th July with groups associated with young people to network and discuss the needs of young people in the area. It was well attended and another follow up meeting is planned.

Hinton Archaeological Dig – she had been invited to a private view of the dig which was very interesting.



Community Engagement – community engagement events have taken place at the Boxing Club and The Exchange and another event will be held at the Library on 24th August. Then the group would meet to discuss findings.

23/24/112

DORSET COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Carole Jones reported:

- There is a footpath consultation associated with adding a footpath from the A357 at Newton Hill to meet the junction of Footpath 36.
- Childrens' activities at The Rec, organised by The Pantry and funded by the Council, have been a great success.
- There have been complaints about parking and noise at Northfields, mainly due to the construction company.
- The Pantry will be moving to Butts Pond Industrial Estate to bigger premises which will provide the shop, a cooking area, café area and offices for Homestart and CAB.

23/24/113

INFORMATION FROM MEMBERS

Cllr Donaldson – had attended Wimborne Civic event.

Cllr Mantock - there are some problems with The Mill building – she will report back at the next meeting.

Cllr Batstone – advised Riverfest will take place on Saturday 19th August at Riverside Meadows. Nordcat are holding their AGM at Stour Connect on 22nd August.

Cllr Dobson – The Community Benefit Society are now selling furniture. They are also collecting school uniforms and giving out for free.

Cllr Lacey – expressed the need for all Town Council leases to be reviewed.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.40pm.

Approved on

7 September 2023

Chairman's Signature



Youth Hub Update

The quotes to refurbish the Scout hut as per the approved planning application are approximately £500k. This is double the grant offered by the William Williams Trust.

As mentioned at last months Town Council meeting, the working group have been investigating alternatives.

It has been concluded that it is not possible to accommodate the Scouts, Youth Club, and Homestart/Office Space in the building without going overbudget by over £100k, even with a complete revision of the plans.

The working group have therefore been considering relocating the Youth Hub to the site of the existing workshop. Knowing that we have planning permission for an extension and quotes for the work at approximately £170k. With some revisions of the plans, it is possible to provide the space needed for all the groups within budget. Additionally, the hub would be better located on the recreation ground and the building could be made much more attractive.

The swap would have the added benefit that the Scout hut could easily be converted into a workshop for a small fraction of the £190k loan already agreed for the workshop upgrade project, this would benefit the precept payer.

The working group presented the idea to the District Commissioner for the Scouts who is also a trustee for the Youth Hub CIO. This organisation was set up by the Town Council to take over the lease of the building from the Scouts as had been agreed previously by all stakeholders. After a long discussion where suggested alterations to the internal space were given and emphasis was made by the working group that the Council wanted to ensure the needs of the Scouts were met. The District Commissioner agreed to the proposal in principle and would arrange a meeting of the new executive committee of the Scout group to discuss the proposal.

Last week the executive committee decided to reject the proposal to swap buildings and informed me that they would continue to use the building for Scouting activities rather than be involved in the project. Their stated reasons included an unwillingness to swap buildings due to the lack of space, a loss of identity if they moved buildings and not wanting to give up a building that has historic meaning for the group.

The William Williams Trust have stated that they will not give the grant to any one organisation, including the Scouts.

The working group met last week to discuss the option of building a smaller youth hub within the rec but this needs further thought.

I have been working on a draft lease and surrender documents with Farnfields Solicitors and these are ready for approval.



The William Williams Trust meet in early September and will require an update on the project.

The Scouts lease is currently not being complied with, in the 30 years since the building was constructed there has been a lack of upkeep and the building has not been maintained to a leasable standard as cited in the lease. As the Scouts had agreed to surrender the lease provided there was a new lease which stipulated that they could still use the building, I have not scrutinised the original lease but as the Scouts are now not surrendering the lease, I recommend that advice is taken on the steps needed to ensure that the Scouts comply with the lease in future if that is how the Council would like to proceed.

Obviously this is very disappointing to all who have worked hard on the project over the last 4 years and a significant amount of money has been spent. I would propose that Councillors take some time to consider the future of the project and of the Scout hut and I schedule an agenda item for September's Town Council meeting to agree further actions prior to updating the William Williams Trust.

A small, square box containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is stylized and appears to be a cursive 'S' followed by a flourish.

