

STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
held on Thursday 7th March 2024 at 7.15pm in The Council Chamber

Present:

Cllr P Batstone – arrived 7.37pm	Cllr H Lacey - Chair
Cllr L Cooper	Cllr D Mantock
Cllr N Dobson	Cllr P Marks
Cllr A Donaldson – Vice Chair	Cllr J Rose
Cllr C Fraser	

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

Members of the public: 1

Minute No.	Comments
23/24/270	PUBLIC SESSION A member of the public voiced concern that Dorset Council had considered the request to extend the 40mph speed limit along the A357 approaching Bagber unnecessary - there have been 2 bad accidents recently. The Council acknowledged the comments and will consider it at the next Planning & Environment Committee meeting on 21 st March 2024. They also advised that he contact Dorset Councillor Jones to discuss.
23/24/271	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies had been received from Cllrs Jones and Reed. Cllr Batstone had also advised she would be late due to Dorset Council commitments
23/24/272	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS No interests were declared and no written requests for dispensation had been received
23/24/273	MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING The minutes of the previous Town Council meeting held on 1st February 2024 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.
23/24/274	RECOMMENDATION FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS Planning & Environment Committee – 15th February 2024 There were no recommendations from this committee to consider.
23/24/275	PLANNING APPLICATION Application No: P/VOC/2024/00263 Location: Banbury Cross Boarding Kennels And Cattery Angers Lane Fiddleford Sturminster Newton DT10 2BY Proposal: Erect 2 No dwellings, create new vehicular access with brick piers, sliding metal gate and 1.8 m high boundary wall. Create 4 No parking spaces (with variation of Condition No. 2 of Planning Permission No. P/VOC/2023/01573 to amend the approved plans of unit A). Observations: No objections. Application No: P/HOU/2023/03245



Location: Gray Ladies White Lane Close Sturminster Newton DT10 1EJ
Proposal: Erect extension, loft conversion, install dormers and roof lights.
Observations: **No objections providing the recommendations from the bat survey are implemented.**

Application No: P/VOC/2024/00896

Location: Ralph Down Farm Rolls Mill DT10 2HP

Proposal: Adapt a part-built building for use as offices adjacent to existing commercial uses (with variation of conditions 2, 8 & 11 of planning permission P/FUL/2023/05400 - to amend approved plans).

Observations:

The Council supports the comments from Dorset Council Highways that the details of the variation are too vague, and they requested clarification in order to make an informed decision.

23/24/276

GRANT APPLICATION FROM STURMINSTER NEWTON AMATEUR BOXING CLUB

The Boxing Club had submitted a grant application £750 for equipment for the gym.
The Council resolved to award a grant of £750.

23/24/277

REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS

The Working Party had met and looked at the most recent National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Standing Orders. Some minor amendments had been suggested and circulated prior to the meeting. The Council discussed these.

The Council resolved to adopt the Standing Orders circulated.

The Council resolved to agree a protocol or guidance note for the mayoral process.

23/24/278

SECTION 38 AGREEMENT FOR NORTH HONEYMEAD FIELDS

This item was deferred as legal papers had not been received.

23/24/279

ELECTION PROCESS

The Clerk explained the nomination process and timeline for the forthcoming election.

23/24/280

CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk had received a complaint concerning safety risks at the bridge. She referred this to Dorset Council and an officer responded to the resident directly. She shared the response with the members for information.

23/24/281

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk reported as follows:

Police – the new Police Officers presence in Sturminster Newton has been very positive and encouraging.

Training – all staff have undergone fire safety training at Vale Fire Safety.

The Finance Officer has completed Financial Introduction to Local Council Administration (FiLCA) training.

Grounds staff are attending chainsaw and tree identification courses.

SLCC AGM – the Clerk and Grounds Manager had attended the Society of Local Council Clerks AGM and networking event.

Water testing – the Clerk had discovered that Wessex Water and Environment Agency do very little water testing on the Stour.

Sewage Capacity – the Clerk had been asked to enquire regarding sewage capacity for new developments. Dorset Council ensure adequate provision is made at the planning stage.



23/24/282

TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor reported she had attended the following:

- A very well attended funeral for the late Alan Harrison.
- William Barnes School – introducing year 1 children to the role of Mayor.
- Twinning Association AGM – it is their 30th anniversary next year and it is their intention to invite the Mayor to celebrations.

23/24/283

DORSET COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Carole Jones reported as follows:

- The recommendation to add an official footpath at the bridge has been accepted.
- Station Road will be closed again due to the Gigaclear works.
- National Empty Homes Week 2024 started on Monday 4 March. The campaign gives local authorities the opportunity to publicise the information and assistance available for owners of empty properties to help bring them back to use, as well as offering residents advice on how to report any empty homes in their neighbourhoods which are causing concern.
- The Mill pier area is crumbling and dangerous for use as a fishing platform. The Clerk had contacted the Hinton St Mary Estate Managers and Dorset Council Rangers already regarding the situation.
- The 2024/2025 Dorset Council budget had been agreed.

23/24/284

INFORMATION FROM MEMBERS

Cllr Donaldson –

- Has received complaints about the post office opening times and the ongoing staff shortages.
- Reported the Careers Day at The Exchange had been very successful with over 700 attendees.
- Reported that sadly the Womens Institute formally closed after 105 years.

Cllr Batstone –

- Is liaising with Countryside Rangers as the Trailway beyond Sturminster Newton needs attention.
- Advised there are still police issues at Shillingstone.
- Reported that the Newton Residents Association will be holding their AGM.
- Reported that there are new tenants at The Bull Inn
- Sturbiz are organising a tourism event.

Cllr Lacey –

- Requested Councillors to not visit the office without calling the office first as the Clerk had a large workload to manage at present.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.06pm

Approved on

4/4/2024

Chairman's Signature



