

**STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**held on Thursday 16th May 2024 at 7.15pm in The Council Chamber**

Present:

Cllr P Batstone  
Cllr N Dobson  
Cllr A Donaldson  
Cllr C Fraser  
Cllr M Jones

Cllr H Lacey  
Cllr D Mantock  
Cllr P Marks  
Cllr J Matthews  
Cllr J Rose

In Attendance: K Squire (Town Clerk), L Plumridge (Assistant Town Clerk)

Members of the Public: 3

Minute No.	Comments
24/25/001	<p><b>ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND TOWN MAYOR</b> Cllr H Lacey was nominated by Cllr C Fraser and seconded by Cllr P Batstone.</p> <p><b>Cllr H Lacey was duly elected Chairman of the Council and Town Mayor until the Annual Meeting in 2025.</b></p>
24/25/002	<p><b>SIGNING OF THE DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN AND TOWN MAYOR</b> Cllr H Lacey signed the Declaration of the Office of Chairman of the Council and Town Mayor.</p>
24/25/003	<p><b>ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL AND DEPUTY MAYOR</b> Cllr P Batstone was nominated by Cllr H Lacey and seconded by Cllr N Dobson.</p> <p><b>Cllr P Batstone was duly elected Vice Chairman of the Council and Deputy Town Mayor until the Annual Meeting in 2025.</b></p>
24/25/004	<p><b>PUBLIC SESSION</b> A member of the public expressed concern regarding the management of Butts Pond Nature Reserve. The Council will contact the Dorset Council Countryside Rangers who manage the site to discuss the situation and management going forward.</p>
24/25/005	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> All members who had accepted office following the recent elections were present.</p>
24/25/006	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS</b> No interests were declared and no written requests for dispensation had been received.</p>
24/25/007	<p><b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS</b> The Town Council meeting held on 4th April 2024, having been circulated, and published prior to the meeting, were taken as read and approved for signature by the Chairman as a true and correct record.</p>



24/25/008

**APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM  
Amenities Committee 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023  
Finance & Personnel Committee 13<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

There were no recommendations to approve.

24/25/009

**COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN FOR EACH COMMITTEE**

The Council resolved to change Finance & Personnel Committee to Finance & Policy and to create a sub-committee for Personnel to meet at least once a year and as and when staffing matters arise. The sub-committee will be made up of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Finance & Policy Committee and the Mayor.

The Council reviewed the membership for the three standing committees. The Council resolved to approve the following committee appointments including Chair and Vice Chair:

	<b>Planning &amp; Environment all members including Chair &amp; Vice Chair (1 vacancy)</b>	<b>Finance &amp; Policy including Chair &amp; Vice Chair</b>	<b>Amenities including Chair &amp; Vice Chair (1 vacancy)</b>
Cllr P Batstone Deputy Mayor	☑	☑	☑
Cllr N Dobson	☑	☑ Chair	
Cllr A Donaldson	☑ Chair	☑	
Cllr C Fraser	☑		☑
Cllr M Jones	☑	☑	☑ Vice Chair
Cllr H Lacey - Mayor	☑	☑	☑
Cllr D Mantock	☑ Vice Chair	☑	
Cllr P Marks	☑		☑ Chair
Cllr J Matthews	☑		☑
Cllr J Rose	☑	☑ Vice Chair	

24/25/010

**TERMS OF REFERENCE AND DELEGATED POWERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES**

The Council resolved to retain the committee terms of reference and delegations for the Civic Year 2024/2025– see attached.



24/25/011

**APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Council resolved to approve the appointment of representatives, as set out on a separate sheet attached to these minutes and change if necessary, through the year.

24/25/012

**FINANCIAL MATTERS**

Cheque signatories:

The Council resolved to retain the existing cheque signatories:  
Cllrs Rose, Lacey, Donaldson and Fraser

List of Annual subscriptions for 2023/2024

The list of annual subscriptions were reviewed and approved by the Council as follows:

ICCM (Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management)	£95.00
CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England)	£39.00
SLCC (The Society of Local Council Clerks)	£357.00
DAPTC (Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils)	£1001.89

Approval of payments for invoices in excess of £2000

There were no payments in excess of £2000 to be approved.

24/25/013

**STANDING ORDERS**

The Council resolved to approve Standing Orders for 24/25.

24/25/014

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Council resolved to approve the Code of Conduct for 24/25.

24/25/015

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Email correspondence had been received from Mike Neville of the Sturminster Newton Expedition Group to thank the Mayor and Council for his community star award.

24/25/016

**TOWN CLERK'S REPORT**

The Town Clerk gave a verbal report as follows:

Health & Safety Audit:

The annual audit was carried out on Wednesday the 15<sup>th</sup> May 24, this was clear with no action points. An additional audit of the allotment site at Fibridge Rise and the Scout Building on Ricketts Lane were also carried out.

- Allotments  
The auditor recommended a formal legal agreement between the Town Council and the Allotment Association to ensure safe working practices and control risk.
- Scout Building  
The Clerk advised that the audit report for the Scout building showed that the Scouting Committee do not have adequate safety procedures in place to legally open the building to the public, with 23 medium and high priority fundamental and essential action points. One of these being installation of new lighting by an unqualified person who had drilled into the Artex ceiling. An asbestos survey had not previously been carried out. The auditor recommended the building be closed until asbestos presence had been ruled out and the health & safety issues were put in place by the Committee. The Clerk reported that she had checked with the solicitor that the conditions of the lease were clear that health & safety in the building was the responsibility of the Scouts but in the interest of public safety she had insisted the Committee close the building as she could not guarantee the Committee would do this themselves. She was seeking legal advice on the appropriate



course of action following the results of the audit and would report on this as soon as possible.

Play Equipment Project

The Clerk had arranged for the Grounds Manager to present the different play equipment options to students from William Barnes and would come back to the Council with the results for permission to proceed with the order.

24/25/017

**INFORMATION FROM MEMBERS**

*Cllr Batstone* – Reminded everyone of the Stur Lit Festival 8<sup>th</sup> June – 16<sup>th</sup> June.

There will be D Day reminiscences at the D Day Service on 6<sup>th</sup> June.

She is attending a Friends of the Library meeting this week concerning the future of the Library.

*Cllr Donaldson* – noted the old gun shop premises were now a European food shop and wished the venture well. He was concerned to hear that The Swan pub had closed. He praised the Grounds staff for the excellent work on the D Day landings display in the Railway Gardens.

*Cllr Matthews* – enquired whether the Cemetery would be cut before D Day.

*Cllr Jones* – noted that DCM Tyres at Butts Pond Industrial Estate has closed.

*Cllr Lacey* – requested a letter be sent to SN United Football Club to congratulate them on their success in being promoted. She noted that the Town Council office sign is now up outside the office door and looks very good. She had attended a very successful Business Awards event earlier in the day and said it was nice to see the support for everyone involved. Lastly she thanked members of staff for their hard work.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35pm

Approved on .....13 June 2024.....

Chairman's Signature .....

