

STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5TH NOVEMBER AT 7.15PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER



PRESENT:

Cllr P Batstone
Cllr L Cooper
Cllr N Dobson
Cllr A Donaldson

Cllr H Lacey
Cllr D Mantock (Vice Chair)
Cllr P Marks
Cllr J Rose (Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE:

K Squire (Town Clerk) J Drew (Office Administrator) Dorset Councillor C Jones

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 10

MINUTE NO COMMENTS

25/26/168

To receive comments and questions from members of the public

A member of the public questioned why the public have not been able to see the Councillor applications for the two Councillor vacancies.

A member of the public questioned when minutes from the Town Council meeting on 8th October 2024 would be made available.

A member of the public questioned whether the Council will be objecting to the Rudge Hill Farm synthetic fuel generating facility installation.

Report from Dorset Councillor Carole Jones

Cllr Jones reported:

- Devolution – the Mayoral option has been chosen for the Super Council – this will be in 2028.
- A demonstration had been held at County Hall on Monday in support of SEND children in the county.
- A £115m plan for road improvements has been approved for the next four years.
- The Dorset Council budget simulation tool is available.
- A planning application for 50 houses off Manston Road has been re submitted.
- There has been a request for a rubbish bin to be installed on Bath Road.
- A new project for school non attenders is being investigated, with a health based approach. The need for Further Education needs in North Dorset remains, as transport to access facilities in other parts of the County continue to be a problem.
- The Youth Club at the Vale Family Hub will now be on a Tuesday evening, with a session for young adults with learning disabilities to start shortly.

- 25/26/169 Apologies for absence**
Apologies were received from Cllr Fraser. These apologies were accepted by members.
- 25/26/170 To approve declarations of interest and written applications for dispensation**
No interests were declared and no written requests for dispensation received.
- 25/26/171 To approve the minutes of the previous Town Council meeting held on 3rd September 2025**
The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 3rd September 2025 having been circulated and published prior to the meeting, were taken as a true and correct record and duly signed by the Chair.
- 25/26/172 To approve recommendations from the following Committees:**
- **Planning & Environment Committee 15th October 2025**
There were no items for recommendation from the Planning & Environment Committee.
 - **Finance & Policy Committee 22nd October 2025**
The Chair of the Finance & Policy Committee reported the following recommendations:
 - To approve the income and expenditure report at 30th September 2025.
 - To approve the balance sheet at 30th September 2025.
 - To approve the reserves at 30th September 2025.
 - To receive notice of audited accounts for 24/15 from External Auditors.

The Council resolved to approve the recommendations of the Finance & Policy Committee as shown above.
 - **Amenities Committee 24th September 2025**
The Chair of the Planning & Environment Committee reported the following recommendations:
 - Wording for a new 5 year lease for the Cemetery Chapel to Grassby & Sons Funeral Directors was approved
 - The Community Emergency Response Plan was approved.
 - An Environmental Policy had been written and approved.

The Council resolved to approve the recommendations of the Amenities Committee as shown above.

- 25/26/173 Planning applications:**
P/FUL/2025/05361 Land at E 377925 N 113341 Newton Hill – from Junction at Orchard Close and Mill Lane Newton
 Erect 8 dwellings, alter access and re-route drive to The Orchard – **no objection.**
Consideration should be given to having the road made up to the adoptable standard. This application does not follow the Local Neighbourhood Plan.
- P/HOU/2025/05631 Atlast, White Lane Close, Sturminster Newton, DT10 1EJ**
 Erect single storey side extension (demolish garage), alterations to fenestration. Convert loft to living accommodation with roof lights – **no objection.**
- P/FUL/2025/06229 Candys Newsagents, Market Place, Sturminster Newton DT10 1AS**
 Change of use & conversion of part of retail floor space and existing residential floor space to 3 flats and 2 dwellings. Retention of existing retail unit – **no objection.**
- P/FUL/2025/06230 Candys Newsagent, Market Place, Sturminster Newton DT10 1AS – as above – no objection, however traffic management arrangements and dedicated car parking for workers should be considered.**
- 25/26/174 Retrospective approval of electrical works for Unit 2 Richmar Trading Estate and purchase of equipment needed to carry out works**
 Having previously seen the quotes by email and confirmed agreement to go ahead with the works. The Council resolved to approve the retrospective quotes.
- 25/26/175 To receive an update from Cllr Lacey regarding Youth engagement**
- Cllr Lacey had visited Yewstock School and met the Student Voice (yrs 10 & 11). She had been taken on a tour of the school, and hopes to visit again with the Mayor.
 - She will be visiting Sturminster Newton High School tomorrow, and hopes to arrange a visit to William Barnes in the future.
- 25/26/176 To update Committee membership**
 The Council resolved that Cllr Batstone be added to the Finance and Policy committee.
- 25/26/177 To consider co-option to fill two vacancies in the office of Town Councillor**
- The Council, through a process of absolute majority voting, resolved to co-opt Susan Trim to the office of Town Councillor.
 - The Council, through a process of absolute majority voting, resolved to co-opt Liam Jackson to the office of Town Councillor.
- 25/26/178 To approve payments over £2000**
 There were no payments to be approved.

25/26/179

To receive correspondence

- Cllr Rose read a letter received from William Williams Trust giving thanks and recognition to the Town Clerk for all her hard work on the Youth Hub project so far.
- The Town Clerk had received a letter from The Vale Hub, requesting that the Council add £25000 each year to the Town Council precept to assist with the Vale Family Hub expenses. This will be considered initially at the Finance & Policy Committee meeting on 26 November 2025 as part of the budget setting process as it had come in after the Town Council agenda was sent out.
- An email had been received from Mr M Roake asking questions about the current situation of the Town Council. He requested a written reply. The Mayor explained that a DAPTC governance health check will shortly be completed and most of the issues raised were due to be addressed, a meeting of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairs of the Committees to provide a response will follow in due course.

25/26/180

To receive a report from the Town Clerk

- A member of the public had previously raised concerns about the former British Legion site and concerns regarding Asylum accommodation. After investigation the Clerk could not find any Town or Parish Council with a policy in place to cover this subject, she suspected because the power is retained by Central Government and the Town Council would not be consulted.
- A reminder that Sunday 9 November, 2025 is Remembrance Sunday – assemble in the Railway Gardens at 9.45am, with the Church Service at 10.00am. There will be a short service at The War Memorial on Tuesday 11 November 2025 at 11am.
- The Allotments Association are looking for a Treasurer.
- Due to the impending Traffic Light works at the Bridge, there will be a Welfare Cabin located at the Mill.
- The Town Council Grants application period is now open, with a closing date of 16 January 2026. These applications will be discussed at the Finance & Policy meeting on 28 January 2026.
- There will be an interim internal audit next week.
- The Planning Application for houses off Manston Road has been resubmitted after the previous appeal. This will be considered at the Planning & Environment Committee meeting on the 19th November 25.
- The Precept Toolkit is not available until sometime during the week of the 1st December so the Clerk asked to swap Full Council meeting on the 3rd December 25 and Planning & Environment Committee meeting on the 17th around to properly discuss the 26/27 budget.

25/26/181 To receive a report from the Town Mayor
September

On the 11th September I attended the launch of the new access system to extend the number of hours the library is accessible to users.

I attended (part) of Blandford's Civic Day on the 13th September, having to return to the Twinning Association stand at the Cheese Festival for the afternoon.

Christchurch held their Civic Day on the 24th September, including a boat trip around the harbour and a tour of the lifeboat station.

October

I assisted with the Riverside quiz in the Exchange on the 3rd October. It was a successful and enjoyable night and it raise funds to help the organisation of future events.

On the 25th October I attended the Dorset Legal Service at Bridport, by invitation of the High Sheriff.

November

On the 1st November I had the honour of welcoming participants of the Dorset COP annual convention. There were discussion groups on various topics around a theme of Turning Environmental Ambition into Action. It was the first time they had met in North Dorset and the 250 or so delegates were duly impressed with the facilities available at the Exchange – and by the catering provided by the Vale Family Hub.

25/26/182 To receive information from members and proposals for future business

- *Cllr Mantock* – would like the resignation letter received from Cllr Matthews to be sent to all Councillors. She also noted that Hosey Bridge will remain closed until 14 November 2025.
- *Cllr Batstone* – there are problems getting the Town Christmas Tree this year. The Grounds Manager has been asked to help source an alternative.
- *Cllr Donaldson* – noted that there will be temporary traffic lights at the Bridge during the works there. Also traffic lights on Bath Road at present. There are 2 Silver Birch trees in Goughs Close, which will be cut down.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.32pm

Chairs Signature..... Date Approved