

# STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 7.15pm in The Council Chamber

### Present:

Cllr P Batstone (Vice Chair)  
Cllr L Cooper  
Cllr N Dobson  
Cllr A Donaldson  
Cllr C Fraser

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

### In attendance:

K Squire (Town Clerk)

Members of the Public: 3

### Minute No: Comment

#### **24/25/319 To receive comments and questions from members of the public.**

The Chairman of the Sturminster Newton Allotment Association spoke in support of agenda item 24/25/329.

#### **24/25/320 Apologies for Absence.**

Apologies had received from Cllr M Jones, these apologies were accepted by the members present.

#### **24/25/321 To consider declarations of interest and approve any written applications for dispensations.**

No interests were declared or written applications for dispensations received.

#### **24/25/322 To approve the minutes: Town Council Meeting 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025 and Extra Ordinary Town Council Meeting 26<sup>th</sup> March 25.**

The minutes of the previous Town Council meetings held on 5<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025, having been circulated and publicised prior to the meeting, were taken as read and approved for signature by the Chair as a true and correct record.

#### **24/25/323 To receive updates and consider recommendations from the following committees:**

- **Planning & Environment 19<sup>th</sup> March 25 – No recommendations made.**
- **Amenities 26<sup>th</sup> March 25 – No recommendations made.**

#### **24/25/324 Planning applications considered:**

- P/FUL/2025/01654 108 Rolls Mill DT10 2HP  
**The Town Council have no objections subject to the recommendations of the bat survey being actioned.**
- P/PAAC/2025/02066 Oaks Farm DT10 2JQ  
**The Town Council have no comment at this stage in the application process.**

- P/PAAC/2025/01978 Poplar Farm DT10 2HS  
**The Town Council object on the same grounds laid out by the Dorset Council Planning Officer.**
- P/LBC/2025/01713 Stour Grange DT10 1DB  
**The Town Council have no objections.**

**24/25/325 To consider independence of Internal Auditor for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.**

The Council resolved to confirm that Tim Light of Lightatouch, was independent of the Council and it's members.

**24/25/326 To approve:**

- **Balance Sheet as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.**  
The Council resolved to approve the previously circulated Balance Sheet as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.
- **Income & Expenditure as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.**  
The Council resolved to approve the previously circulated Income & Expenditure report as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.
- **General Reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.**  
The Council considered a previously circulated report on the general and earmarked reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and resolved to approve these.
- **Payments over £2000.**  
There were no payments over £2000 to approve.

**24/25/327 To consider a request for leave of absence from Cllr M Jones.**

The Council resolved to approve a leave of absence for Cllr M Jones for six months.

**24/25/328 To receive a report from Cllr Lacey regarding the Youth Town Council.**

Cllr Lacey reported a useful and informative meeting of the Youth Town Council with Cllr Marks and the Grounds Manager, Adam Dodson. Discussions included environmental issues, how to increase engagement with pupils and plans for the Youth Club.

**24/25/329 To consider entering into a lease agreement with the Sturminster Newton Allotment Association and setting up a working group to progress the lease agreement and consultation on the possible extension of the Filbridge Rise Allotment site, agree working group terms of reference.**

The Council considered a report from Cllr Marks and the Clerk.

**The Council resolved to progress with the project by setting up a working group. The standard terms of reference for working groups would be adopted, with Cllr Marks nominated as Chair of the group. Members nominated: Cllrs Marks, Mantock and Rose. M Burt, K Knapp of the Allotments Association and A Dodson, Grounds Manager. The Council also resolved to refer the project to the Finance & Policy Committee to consider funding and conditions of finance.**

**24/25/330 To consider installation of new alarm system.**

The Council considered a report previously circulated with the agenda.

**The Council resolved to approve the installation of a new alarm system. Funding for this would be taken from the assets and infrastructure earmarked reserve.**

**24/25/331 To receive correspondence.**

No correspondence had been received.

**24/25/332 To receive a report from the Town Clerk.**

The Clerk gave a brief update on the Youth Club planning application, she had given the planning officer a full brief of the proposed project and hoped to receive a decision after Easter. She also updated on the closure of the Mill, she had been in contact with Philip Hughes the building consultant by email to chase the inspection but had not received a reply and would chase this.

**24/25/333 To receive a report from the Town Mayor.**

The Mayor reported that:

- After failed attempts to make contact with the County Commissioner of the Scouts she had made contact with the Regional Commissioner and asked that the County Commissioner speak to the Clerk as a matter of urgency.
- She had visited year 1 at William Barnes Primary School to talk about welcoming people into the Town. A display of artwork following the visit would be displayed in the office shortly.
- She had attended a 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebration at Newstone House and had asked Mr James Freer if he would do the honor of lighting the VE Day Beacon on behalf of the Town.
- She would be officially opening the new stand at the Sturminster Newton Football Club the next day.

**24/25/334 To receive information from members and proposals for future business.**

Cllr Mantock – Wished to minute condolences for the tragic loss of Paige Hancock who did so much work to help the Vale Pantry and will be sorely missed in the Town.

Cllr Batstone – Reminded members of the programme of events running over Easter and that an exhibition of the winners of the North Dorset Photographic Competition will soon be on display in The Exchange.

Cllr Donaldson – Reported on tree matters at Copse Hill Farm, Stour Grange and Ricketts Lane Recreation Ground. He had also been dealing with a complaint from a resident about refuse collections which he hoped to have resolved. He then warned members of a scam relating to Wessex Water.

**Dorset Councillor Carole Jones report:**

Councillor Jones Reported:

- Drovers and The Gavel will be adopted by Dorset Council.
- A safety audit had been carried out on the bank along the A357 opposite the Town bridge and deemed safe.
- Dorset Council are publicising savings of £45m, this is due to the extension of the amortization period from 20 to 45 years.
- Day Opportunities are focusing on services not buildings, a hub is proposed for Shaftesbury or Blandford.
- A bus service improvement plan is being implemented.

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.00pm

Chair's Signature ..... Approved on .....