

STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

held on Wednesday 2nd July 2025 at 7.15pm in The Council Chamber

Present:

Cllr P Batstone (Chair)

Cllr L Cooper

Cllr N Dobson

Cllr A Donaldson

Cllr M Jones

Cllr D Mantock (Vice Chair)

Cllr J Matthews

Cllr J Rose

In Attendance: K Squire (Town Clerk), J Drew (Office Administrator).

Members of the Public: 1

Minute No.

24/25/057

Comments

To receive comments and questions from members of the public.

One member of the public was enquiring about larger goods vehicles parking in the Ricketts Lane Car Park.

Report from Dorset Councillor Carole Jones.

The proposed booking system for attending Household Recycling Centres has caused concern. However, users will still be able to attend the Blandford Centre without booking. Sherborne and Shaftesbury will have the new booking system.

The TOC (Transfer of Care Hub) at Dorset County Hospital has enabled people to leave hospital earlier but remain under the care of either Blandford or Wimborne hospitals.

Sale of land to Aldi at Rolls Mill Trading Estate is in the final stages.

There will be training at the Vale Hub for Young Carers and the Hub will gain a Kitemark accreditation. More information to follow.

There are proposed changes to the 6th Form at SNHS and Shaftesbury School. Academic subjects will be taught from Shaftesbury with Sturminster pupils accessing online, and non-academic subjects taught from Sturminster and accessed by Shaftesbury online.

24/25/058

Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr C Fraser, Cllr H Lacey and Cllr P Marks. These apologies were accepted by the members present.

24/25/059

To consider declarations of interest and approve any written applications for dispensations.

No declarations of interests had been declared and no written dispensations received.

24/25/060

To approve the Minutes from the following Town Council meetings -

- **4th June 2025**
- **18th June 2025 Extraordinary**

The minutes of the above meetings were taken as read and approved for signature by the Chair as a true and correct record.

24/25/061

To approve recommendations from the following committee meetings

• **Amenities Committee 25th June 2025**

The Deputy Chair of Amenities Cllr Cooper gave an update to Council. The following recommendations were proposed by the committee:

1. To consider releasing a statement to counter misinformation circulating regarding the Scout Hut.

The Committee resolved to recommend the statement be printed in the next issue of What's Happening in Stur and posted on the website and Facebook page.

2. To consider a quote for repairs to the surfacing at Ricketts Lane play area. *

The Committee resolved to recommend that the quote previously circulated was accepted and repairs made.

3. To consider emergency works to trees at Riverside Meadows, Butts Pond Nature Reserve and the Jubilee Footpath.*

The Committee resolved to recommend that the Grounds Manager go ahead with the quote he felt was best.

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

24/25/062

To consider Marsh's Electricals parking issues –

The proprietor of Marsh's Electricals has been experiencing issues with parking their two larger commercial vehicles at night and the weekends. They had paid for a Parking Permit for Station Road Car Park but were fined as the vehicles were too long for the parking space. They have been parking recently in the Ricketts Lane Car Park.

Dorset Cllr Jones suggested she speak to Dorset Council Parking to see if there was a solution. After discussion, the Council resolved to agree to parking at Ricketts Lane on a temporary basis, but on the condition that when possible they use the lower car park. A fee will be charged for this as determined reasonable by the Clerk.

24/25/063

To consider funding services of South West Youth Connect to run the Youth Club in the short and long term.

The Council discussed the need to secure funding for a youth club service for the 25/26 financial year. Grant options were being explored, but the Charity of William Williams would be approached if other funding options were not successful.

Long term the Council discussed building this cost into the yearly budget as a service provided by the Town Council.

The Council resolved to approve that the Clerk add this cost when calculating future budgets.

Dorset Cllr Jones asked if the Town Council and the Family Hub could work collaboratively. Members agreed a collaboration would be sensible. The Clerk would arrange a meeting.

24/25/064

To confirm insurance renewal as part of three-year commitment is fit for purpose.

The Council resolved to approve the current insurance provision for 25/26 as fit for purpose.

24/25/065

To review updated Town Council policy schedule.

The Council resolved to approve the policy schedule with the addition of an IT policy as recommended by the External Auditor.

- 25/26/066 **To review the following Town Council policies –**
 • **Publication Scheme**
 The Council resolved to approve the publication scheme.
 • **Scheme of Delegation**
 The Council resolved to approve the Scheme of Delegation subject to an amendment that the internal audit report go to the Finance & Policy Committee for consideration and recommendation to Full Council.
- 25/26/067 **To consider the Internal Audit report for 24/25 and any recommended actions.**
 The Council considered the contents of the Internal Audit report. The recommendation to include an IT policy for 25/26 was noted and would be actioned.
- 24/25/068 **Reminder for Councillors to review their Register of Interests.**
 Councillors were reminded they need to regularly update their Register of Interests online. The Office Administrator can assist with this. (The date of taking up of office is the date a Cllr signs the acceptance of office form, these are kept in the Council Office).
- 25/26/069 **Updates from SNTC projects.**
 The Council discussed the proposal that this was a regular agenda item.
 The Council resolved that due to the additional time this would take, a shared file should be set up that could be edited and reviewed by all Cllrs and staff. The Clerk will action this.
- 25/26/070 **To approve any payments of over £2,000.**
 The Council resolved to approve payment of £16,245.30 for the Insurance renewal to James Hallam Ltd.
- 25/26/071 **To receive correspondence.**
 No correspondence had been received.
- 25/26/072 **To receive a report from the Town Clerk.**
 The Town Clerk advised the Council that the Annual Governance and Accountability Review had been submitted to the External Auditor by the deadline of 30th June 2025.
- 25/26/073 **To receive a report from the Town Mayor.**
 The Town Mayors report is attached to these minutes.
- 25/26/074 **To receive information from members and proposals for future business.**
 Cllr Mantock – Had recently attended the Rotary event at Hinton St Mary. She is still concerned about the condition of Colber Bridge – The Clerk advised that the gate has been ordered.
 Cllr Donaldson – advised that the Council will need to consider the future funding of the Neighbourhood Plan work. The funding from Government is to be removed.
 Cllr Jones – Handed a resignation letter to the Clerk.. The Council thanked him for all his work and wished him well.
 Cllr Matthews – asked who was responsible for checking the various defibrillators around the town. The light for the one at The Exchange is faulty. The Clerk will ask the Masons who donated it.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.44 pm

Approved on Chairman's Signature

During June I have represented the Council at several events. As Mayor I helped hand out the certificates at the LitFest Poetry and Writing Competition (as well as enjoying a number of the events. On Sunday 15th June I had the pleasure of hearing three combined choirs of 80 singers backing the Chilean group Quintano and ArtsReach bring them back again I thoroughly recommend anyone who can going to see them. On the morning of the 21st June I assisted the Lord Lieutenant presenting the certificates in the North Dorset Photo Competition. The photos continue to be on show at The Exchange until Saturday 5th July and are also on line. All the photos were good, all very different (apart from the expected duplicates of the Mill, Gold Hill and the tree avenue in Hinton St. Mary), and are available to be used to publicise our North Dorset Market Towns, which was the purpose of the exercise. On Tuesday 24th I attended the launch of St. Mary's Church appeal to raise the £40K needed to repair, and indeed make safe, the east window. Until that is done, no-one, not even Rev. Mary, should approach the far end of the chancel, so communion is given safely in the choir. Finally, on 26th June I had the pleasure of presenting two Brownies with their Gold Awards – they are now moving up to Guides. There is a waiting list for the Brownies and more leaders are needed to cater for those.

REPORT FOR ITEM 25/26/074

Going forward, although I no longer have any official role with SturAction, I continue to work with the Events Coordinator, to bring people into the town by running events. We are currently planning the History Week in September, an evening of recycled fashion for men, women and children on 1st October as part of the Sustainable Stur initiative, plans are afoot for spooky Halloween events at the autumn half term, and of course we are working with Cllr Peter Marks and the Grounds Team planning Christmas 2025. And finally – the SturLitFest Team, having had a good week this year, are already planning the SturLitFest for 2026.

Pauline Batstone