

STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4th FEBRUARY 26 AT 7.15PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER



PRESENT:

Cllr P Batstone	Cllr H Lacey
Cllr L Cooper	Cllr D Mantock
Cllr A Donaldson	Cllr J Rose
Cllr C Fraser	Cllr S Trim
Cllr L Jackson	

IN ATTENDANCE:

K Squire (Town Clerk) J Drew (Office Administrator)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 5

MINUTE NO COMMENTS

25/26/242 To receive comments and questions from members of the public
Dorset Councillor Carole Jones spoke as a trustee of the Vale Family Hub regarding her perception of the relationship between the Hub and the Town Council members.

Report from Dorset Councillor Carole Jones

Dorset Councillor Jones did not give a report.

25/26/243 Apologies for absence

- Apologies were received from Cllr Dobson. These apologies were accepted by members.
- Cllr Marks sent late apologies, but this had not been picked up by the Clerk prior to the meeting.

25/26/244 To approve declarations of interest and written applications for dispensation

- Cllr Lacey declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 25/26/246 as a trustee of the Community Building Trust.
- Cllr Batstone declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 25/26/246 as a member of the Literary Festival Committee.

25/26/245 To approve the minutes of the previous Town Council meeting held on the 7th January 2026.

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 7th January 2026, having been circulated and published prior to the meeting, were taken as a true and correct record and duly signed by the Chair.

25/26/246 To approve recommendations from the following Committees:

- **Finance & Policy Committee 29th January 2026**

The Chair of the Finance & Policy Committee reported the following recommendations:

Financial Reports

- The Committee recommended approval of the income & expenditure report as at 31 Dec 25 to the Town Council.
- The Committee recommended approval of the balance sheet as at 31 Dec 25 to the Town Council.
- The Committee recommended approval of the reserves report as at 31 Dec 25 to the Town Council.

The Committee recommended the following grant awards to the Town Council:

1 st SN Brownies	£596.00
1 st SN Guides	£596.00
SN Allotment Association	£258.00
SN Community Building Trust	£500.00
SN Choral Society	£350.00
SN & Hinton Cricket Club	£600.00
Stepping Stones Preschool	£250.00
Stur Litfest	£750.00
	£3900.00 total

The Council resolved to approve the recommendations of the Finance & Policy Committee as above.

25/26/247 To elect a chair of the Finance & Policy committee to the May 2026 Annual Town Council meeting

The Council resolved to defer this item.

25/26/248 To receive an update on Citizens Advice sessions at The Exchange

The Clerk reported that Citizens Advice sessions would begin at The Exchange from the 13th February. Funding from the Town Council will begin in April 2026 and the interim period will be funded by the Charity of William Williams. Bookings will be made directly to Citizens Advice by email or telephone.

25/26/249 To agree free parking allowance from Dorset Council

To Council resolved to request the following free parking days.

1 st Jan 26	Already taken NY Day Car Run 2026
11 th April 26	The Exchange Open Day
7 th June 26	The Big Lunch
28 th November 26	Christmas Event
5 th December 26	Small Business Saturday
24 th December 26	Weekday in December
Plus 1 st Jan 27	NY Day Car Run 2027

25/26/250 To approve payments over £2000

No payments over £2000 were due.

25/26/251 To receive correspondence
No correspondence had been received.

25/26/252 To receive a report from the Town Clerk
The Clerk reported:

- She had remotely attended a planning forum which would be reported at the next Planning & Environment Committee meeting by Cllr Dondalson as Chair of the Committee.
- She had set up quarterly networking meetings for organisations within the town in association with the Volunteer Centre. The initial tester event had been well received.
- She would be attending the DAPTC Clerks Conference on Friday the 6th February 2026..

25/26/253 To receive a report from the Town Mayor
The Town Mayor reported:

- 9th January - I attended (with Jas) the Hall & Woodhouse Awards to receive £1,500 to help provide equipment for the Youth Hub.
- 21st January - Cllr Donaldson and I attended a meeting with community groups to understand how TC can be of assistance and how groups can help each other to operate more efficiently for the benefit of all.

Joe Rose
Town Mayor

25/26/254 To receive information from members and proposals for future business
Cllr Donaldson – had reported several pot holes in the area and faulty street lights. He was noted that The Swan had reopened.
Cllr Mantock – enquired about the progress of legal enquiries about the wheelie bin on Ricketts Lane. (still in progress), Bin request for Bath Road (request sent to Dorset Council), If the fire station would be affected by the suggested closures (Cllr Jackson updated that this station would not be closing at present but the service would logistically be affected by the other potential closures.), she also asked if Council could consider an open evening regarding the precept (it was suggested that the open forum at the Annual Town Public Meeting would give an opportunity for residents to ask questions).
Cllr Fraser – Thanked the Grounds Manager for the drone photos of the recent flooding at the town bridge.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.07pm

Chairs Signature..... Date Approved