STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1st JULY 2026 AT 7.15 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

PRESENT:
Cllr P Batstone
Cllr L Cooper
Cllr A Donaldson (Vice Chair)
Cllr P Marks
Cllr J Rose (Chair)
Cllr S Trim

IN ATTENDANCE:
K Squire (Town Clerk) J Drew (Office Administrator)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 2

MINUTE NO **COMMENTS**

26/27/069 **To receive comments and questions from members of the public**
A member of the public responses to previous questions he had raised.

26/27/070 **Report from Dorset Councillor Carole Jones**
No report had been received.

26/27/071 **Apologies for absence**
Apologies had been received from Cllr Fraser and Cllr Lacey who were unwell and Cllr Jackson who had family commitments – these apologies were accepted by members present.

26/27/072 **To approve declarations of interest and written applications for dispensation**
No interests were declared and no written requests for dispensation received.

26/27/073 **To approve the minutes of the previous Town Council meeting held on 3 June 2026**
The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 3rd June 2026, having been circulated and published prior to the meeting, were taken as a true and correct record and duly signed by the Chair.

26/27/074 **To approve recommendations from the following committee meetings:**

- **Amenities – 20th June 2026**

26/27/064 To consider a request from Yewstock School regarding replacement fence between the school and Butts Pond Nature Reserve
The Committee resolved to recommend to Council that a lease or management agreement be put in place, allowing the fence to be moved and the trees to be retained.

Chairs Initials.....

26/27/065 To receive a report regarding allotment management arrangements and extension to Filbridge Rise Allotments and agree further actions

The Committee considered the report previously circulated.
The Committee resolved to recommend option 3 from the report: To enter into a management agreement with the Sturminster Newton Allotment Association (SNAA) rather than the lease previously agreed and apply for the developer funding directly but in partnership with the SNAA.

26/27/068 To consider a request from a resident regarding temporary building works

The Committee considered correspondence previously circulated.
The Committee resolved to recommend to Council that the resident can make necessary repairs to their property on the following terms:

- Work to make the wall safe is completed within two months.
- Permanent repairs are completed within one year of commencement.
- Any damage to Council land including the path must be made good to the satisfaction of the Council.

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

26/27/075 To consider a proposal from Cllr Jackson for a biodiversity project

Cllr Cooper reported on behalf of Cllr Jackson. Cllr Jackson has been working with the Grounds Manager and the Dorset Wildlife Trust and will present a formal proposal at a future meeting.

26/27/076 To consider implementing a Town Council Strategic Plan using Breakthrough Communications Council Hive Strategic Plan Toolkit, Training and Template

The Council considered a report circulated with the meeting papers.
The Council resolved to implement a Town Council Strategic Plan.
The Clerk will arrange an informal workshop for the Council.

26/27/077 To consider implementing a communication and engagement strategy using Breakthrough Communications Council Hive Communications & Community Engagement Health Check and support

The Council considered a report circulated with the meeting papers.
The Council resolved to implement a communications and engagement strategy.
The Clerk will arrange an annual communications health check with Breakthrough Communications.
The Community Engagement Working Group will liaise with Breakthrough Communications and office staff to develop a communications strategy and an implementable community engagement plan.

Chairs Initials.....

26/27/078 To approve revised Standing Orders following National Association of Local Councils (NALC) updated model

Updates to the NALC model Standing Orders had been circulated with the meeting papers.

The Council resolved to update the Sturminster Newton Town Council Standing Orders in line with the NALC model.

26/27/079 To consider engaging the internal auditor, Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd, to deliver bespoke training to Councillors and key staff on roles and responsibilities and code of conduct

The Council resolved to engage Mulberry Local Authority Services Ltd to deliver bespoke training to Councillors and key staff on roles and responsibilities and code of conduct

26/27/080 To approve revised Scheme of Delegation in line with recent legislation changes and Town Council review of Terms of Reference

The revised Scheme of Delegation had been circulated with the meeting papers.

The Council resolved to approve the revised Scheme of Delegation

26/27/081 To consider agree timetable for co-option of Councillor for current vacancy

The Council resolved to:

- **advertise the current Councillor vacancy asap.**
- **Hold an open session at 6.30pm on the 12th August 26 prior to the Council meeting.**
- **Deadline for applications 24th August 26.**
- **Co-Option 2nd September 26**

26/27/082 To approve payments over £2000

There were no payments over £2000.

26/27/083 To receive correspondence

No correspondence had been received.

26/27/084 To receive a report from the Town Clerk

The Town Clerk reported:

- There will be training on Managing Conflict in Council Meetings on Thursday 16 July 2026, 6.30pm – 8.45pm in the Council Chamber, all welcome.
- A revised Register of Interests process is now live. Details will be sent to all Councillors for completion.
- She would be attending training on Martyn's Law and its effect on Councils.
- The HR advisor will shortly be sending the updated Staff Handbook. This will be reviewed by the Staffing Committee and then go for approval to the Finance and Policy committee.
- Reminded members of the invitation to visit the Mill on Thursday 30 July 2026.

Chairs Initials.....

- Sharon Clifton will be retiring from The Exchange on 31 July 2026.
- She had attended the bi monthly North Dorset Police meeting and updated the Council on issues in Sturminster Newton. Operations were being led by PC Lewis who would update in due course.

26/27/085 To receive a report from the Town Mayor
The Town Mayor reported:

Thurs 4th Business breakfast at Newstone House (with Cllrs Donaldson and Batstone)

Sat 6th The Volunteers weekend, scheduled for the Railway Gardens but which took place in the Exchange atrium was well supported by Community Groups and Organisations that depend on volunteers. An interesting, if crowded morning! Thanks to Cllrs Jackson and Cooper for organising the TC stand

Mon 15th Youth Hub meeting/update to review planning application progress and options going forward.

Tue 16th Chamber of Trade Meeting to consider restart

Wed 17th Volunteers group meeting

Wed 24th Yewstock (with the Grounds Manager) to review fence line

Tue 30th Chamber of Trade Meeting to consider prelaunch and launch events

I have also attended civic events outside the town:-

Friday 12th Ferndown Mayor making – a ceremony which lasted 20 minutes!

Sat 20th Yeovil Civic evening – held to recognise the organisations and individuals who provide invaluable voluntary work within Yeovil, while raising funds for the Mayors chosen charities

26/27/086 To receive information from members and proposals for future business
Cllr Trim – asked if situations such as the recent power cut should be included in the emergency response plan and would a community WhatsApp group be useful.
Cllr Cooper – reminded members of the Okeford Fitzpaine Emergency Briefing, and the Arts Race in the Railway Gardens.
Cllr Batstone – reported that the Literary Festival was over for another year and that Stur Action have paid for security for the Riverside Fest.
Cllr Donaldson –

- had attended Dorset Councillor Jones surgery at the Vale Family Hub with Cllr Batstone.
- had received complaints about anti social behaviour in Stourcastle
- there are problems with delivery vehicles parking on pavements outside the White Hart and Stur of the Moment.
- he had heard that extra Traffic Wardens are being appointed.

Cllr Rose -also noted that there were parking issues on Honeymead Lane.

The meeting closed at 8.18pm.

Signed by Chair…… Approved on……..

Chairs Initials……