

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting
held on Monday 14 June 2021 at 7.00pm

Present: Cllr Bowden, Cllr Brake, Cllr Corlett-Shaw, Cllr Ellwood, Cllr Irven (Chair), Cllr Murphy, Cllr Richards, Cllr Terrett and Cllr Westcott.

In attendance: Sarah Reed – Town Clerk, 2 members of public

21/284 To receive Apologies for Absence (LGA 1972, section 85 (1))- Cllr Irven proposed that '**apologies from Cllrs Campbell, Johnson and Whetlor are accepted**'. Seconded by Cllr Murphy. Carried. It was agreed to note the apologies from County Cllr Davies and District Cllr Aldridge.

21/285 To receive any **Declaration of Interests** under Watchet Town Council's Code of Conduct (adopted on 9 July 2012) issued in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 Si No: 1464

Name	Minute No:	Description of Interest	Personal / Prejudicial	Action Taken
Cllr Irven & Cllr Murphy	21/292(a)	As a member of Watchet Library Friends (WLF) and Friends of Somerset Libraries (FOSL)	Personal	Cllrs remained in the meeting and took part in the discussion and voting
Cllr Irven & Cllr Murphy	21/292(c)	Director of WCCT	Personal	Cllrs remained in the meeting and took part in the discussion and voting

21/286 **Town Council Minutes** - To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on the 10 May 2021, (LGA 1972, Sch 12 Para 41 (1))
Cllr Irven proposed that '**The minutes from the Annual Council meeting held on 10 May 2021 are approved as a true and correct record.**' Seconded by Cllr Johnson. Carried with 8 votes for and 1 abstention.

21/287 **Chairman's Report:** – verbal

Cllr Irven reported the following:

- Represented WTC as the war memorial when RBL celebrated their 100 centenary.
- Attended SW&T planning meeting to speak on behalf of E&P and full council on the Liddymore planning application. I will not detail my concerns here as they will be reported to E&P, but very unhappy that SW&T would not delay allowing E&P time to consider latest position before submitting application to committee and failed to properly consult with us. I will be recommending to E&P that we write to SW&T with our concerns.
- In terms of updates on last month's report, the Fraud Office have reported that at this stage they do not have evidence to support an action at this time, but investigations are ongoing.
- The Council's noticeboard is being replaced with a lockable version on 44 Swain Street by agreement with Cllr Richards.

21/288 **Reports from the Principal Authority Members:**

- In the absence of County Cllr Davies, a report was circulated prior to the meeting for members information with information on the temporary road closure of Doniford Road, Williton from the 1 June and to last for 95 days to enable contractors to carry out works

JS

to install culverts for the new development. The road is closed to all pedestrians and cyclists due to the depth of excavations on site and the lack of safe available widths to the presence of machinery.

- In the absence of District Cllr Aldridge, a report was circulated prior to the meeting for members information with an update and comments on:
 - a. Unitary Authority two proposals, one for a single authority and one for two authorities being considered by government ministers in Whitehall. Recent poll drew a response from about 110K people across the county, around one third preferred a single authority and two thirds preferred the two authorities' option.
 - b. By-election took place just after the Annual Meeting of the District Council, when a number of seats on each Committee are allocated on a pro-rata basis to each group. Scrutiny Committee was split into two committees due to volume of work.
- In the absence of District Cllr Whetlor, a report was circulated prior to the meeting for members information, with an update on:
 - a. Replacement of Marina /Harbour wall will start on 14 June 2021, and is expected to take around 8 weeks, it will be noisy when the piling work is done, but residents will be advised of this.
 - b. Marina is being dredged on a regular basis by the Marine Group and there is a significant change to be seen.
 - c. Lack of car parking still a matter of discussion, in communication with the owners of the former mill site for temporary parking to be made available on the site for street fair stallholders and visitors to the town attending the Wednesday Market, which is now in hand, whilst also trying to find a permanent solution.

Questions from the floor: none

Cllr Irven asked that members note the reports

21/289

Reports from Representatives of Outside Organisations, Verbal – no Decisions

A report from Cllr Corlett -Shaw as the Council representative on ***the High Street Emergency Fund Working Group*** was circulated prior to the meeting, and is summarised as follows:

Signage Update

Two signs showing the shops in the town, at either side of the car park on Swain Street. We are awaiting materials for these to be able to complete.

Flower Troughs and Displays

Some are now in situ on The Esplanade, more to follow. Displays to be placed in other areas of the town.

Flags

55 x double sided flags now up within the town.

Excellent feedback from various people and stakeholders within the town

These flags are UK produced, with the material coming from the EU There is a good article in the Free Press this week.

Shoppers Seat

Seat has been delivered and is going to be in place in the next week. .

Loretta/JR is looking further into the fitting

Notices Boards

Maps are finished and membership list completed – ongoing

Bike rack

Issues with the locations – TBC

Painting of the current one will take place shortly

Roof cannot be added due to planning constraints

The accounts were also included in the report showing a balance of £11, 085.12

Cllr Irven as the Council representative on '***Quantock Foodbank***' reported the following:

- Held its AGM. by ZOOM.
- New trustees elected.
- Full report on activities given – won't detail here but will ask Clerk to circulate to members for information.
- Considering running a pilot of the food pantry to assess how it can provide a sustainable longer-term solution for families in need, as foodbank is for shorter term relief.

21/290

To receive and sign the minutes of the following committees and adopt the Resolutions and Recommendations contained therein. (LGA 1972, SCH12 Para 41 (1))

- Tourism & Leisure (13 May 2021)
In the absence of Cllr Whetlor, Chair of the Committee, Cllr Terrett proposed that **'the minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2021 are adopted as a true and correct record.'** Seconded by Cllr Richards. Carried.
- Finance & General Purposes (17 May 2021)
Cllr Murphy as Chair of the Committee proposed that **'the minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2021 are adopted as a true and correct record.'** Seconded by Cllr Westcott. Carried.
- Watchet Community Centre Management Committee (20 May 2021)
In the absence of Cllr Campbell, Chair of the Committee, Cllr Irven proposed that **'the minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2021 are adopted as a true and correct record.'** Seconded by Cllr Westcott. Carried.
- Environment & Planning Committee (20 May 2021)
Cllr Westcott as Chair of the Committee proposed that **'the minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2021 are adopted as a true and correct record.'** Seconded by Cllr Murphy. Carried.

21/291 Verbal reports from sub-committees, working groups, and other outside organisations, where Watchet Town Council does not have representation:
No notifications received by the Clerk

21/292 Reports from Working Groups: any relevant paperwork will be issued prior to the meeting
a. Library – Update and recommendations- Cllr Irven briefly reported that the library was open for browsing in accordance with Government COVID guidelines.

b. CCTV- the Clerk presented the following report:

The Watchet CCTV system was installed with £65,000 funding from the Police Crime and Commissioners budget in 2006. A working group was formed at this time to liaise and oversee the project led by the Community Safety Officer engaged by former West Somerset Council. The working group was disbanded following the successful completion and installation of the Watchet system and were instrumental in agreeing the locations of the cameras and had met their brief and remit. This was when a representative was appointed onto the Minehead and Watchet CCTV partnership to attend quarterly meetings of the partnership together with the Clerk at Minehead Police Station, and report back to Full Council following a partnership meeting under current Council procedure.

Former West Somerset Council employed a CCTV and Safety Officer to manage both systems and to Chair the partnership meetings where updates were given on how Council money was being spent. WTC annually allocated £3,000 towards maintenance of the Watchet system. The systems ran well, with the systems monitored by volunteers in Minehead Police Station. Unfortunately, the Officer passed away and so did his knowledge of the systems, which resulted in the Watchet CCTV system being out of operation for over 2 years. A meeting with the CEO and Leader of the newly formed SW&T Council, brought the need back for a working group whose remit was to ensure the Watchet CCTV system was fully operational. The working group have worked hard to meet their remit, but it has been met in the following way, and they should be thanked for this.

- Watchet System fully operational and housed in the Police Office on the Esplanade.
- Minehead link re-established but accessing recordings in Minehead is still being resolved.
- Clerk has the log-in details for the Watchet system for emergency purposes, and if a request from the Police is received, SW&T has given Town Council personnel permission to access recordings in line with the adopted 'Codes of Practice' which are required by law.
- All the cameras are in good working order.
- A Council representative has been appointed onto Minehead and Watchet Partnership and when meetings are resumed can report back to Council at the appropriate meeting under current Council procedure.
- Clerk has been given delegation to liaise with SW&T Officers, and engineers.
- To date WTC has not paid anything towards maintenance for 3 years, but this will resume this year as the system needs to be serviced, now it is fully operational.

RECOMMENDATION:

The CCTV Working Group having met its remit should be disbanded, effective immediately. The CCTV Council representative and Proper Officer will continue to update members on the system

Cllr Murphy proposed that the **'recommendation is approved.'** Seconded by Cllr Westcott. Carried with 8 votes for and 1 abstention.

58

- C. **Climate Change** –update and recommendations to include draft agreement with WCCT for the employment of the coordinators post as per funding agreement with Somerset County Council- see **Appendix 1** circulated to members prior to the meeting.

Cllr Ellwood presented the draft SLA for members approval. Cllr Murphy proposed that the **'Service Level Agreement is approved as presented'**. Seconded by Cllr Westcott. Carried.

Cllr Ellwood reported as the Council representative on **Plastic Free Watchet**

The project continues to try and recruit more businesses and community groups to take steps to reduce their single-use plastics. We are now exploring the possibility of joining with Minehead, Porlock and Exmoor's Plastic Free initiatives to form a Plastic Free West Somerset. In the meantime, I will step in as Interim Community Lead until another Community Lead is voted in by either the Plastic Free West Somerset group or the Watchet Steering Group.

To celebrate the huge success of achieving Plastic Free status for Watchet, and to keep the project's momentum going, there will be a Plastic-free Picnic and Litter-Pick in Watchet on Sunday 27th June. This event will be run by Somerset Wildlife Trust and welcomes the public to help remove litter and enjoy a plastic-free picnic. Litter-pickers and all other equipment will be provided but please bring your own picnic!

21/293 Legal Matters:

- (i) To approve the draft lease for the Watchet market House Museum – *deferred to the next meeting due to lack of information or communication from the Orchard Wyndham Estate*

21/294 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020-21:

- (i) To approve section 1 'Annual Governance Statements 2020-21- Clerk's report circulated to members via **Appendix 2a**- Cllr Murphy proposed that **'Section 1 Annual Governance Statement is approved and boxes 1 – 8 are agreed and completed'**. Seconded by Cllr Richards. Carried

21/295 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2020-21:

- (i) To approve section 2 'Accounting Statements 2020-21'- Clerk's report circulated to members via **Appendix 2b**- Cllr Murphy proposed that **'Section 2 Accounting Statements 2020-21 are approved as presented and signed off by the Chair of Council and RFO as a true and correct record, the Clerk is thanked for preparing excellent financial documents'**. Seconded by Cllr Corlett-Shaw. Carried.

21/296 Recommendation from the Environment & Planning Committee: -

'The Committee recommend to Full Council that Watchet Town Council commission an independent road and traffic survey, as the residents of Watchet as a whole, would consider this as an acceptable use of taxpayers money. Research to begin with immediate effect by the Clerk/Clerical Officer to obtain reputable company quotations and timescales to carry out the surveys, and SW&T are informed in writing after the Full Council meeting to be held on 14 June 2021'

The Clerk introduced this item by firstly thanking Sam Westmacott who was in attendance for her excellent work in sourcing three companies who could potentially undertake an independent traffic survey and transport planning analysis. Under the Chairs discretion Sam Westmacott was invited to speak to give some background on the brief she had given to potential companies and the outcomes, and also information on the traffic surveys she had undertaken together with up to 25 West Street residents. Members participated in a lengthy discussion where the consensus was that this matter should be progressed through the Environment & Planning Committee at the June meeting and a budget set by Full Council to move forward with this matter.

Cllr Murphy proposed that **'a budget of £9999,99 is agreed in principle with delegation given to the Environment & Planning Committee to form a working group to advise the Clerk in progressing all aspects of this matter, including commissioning a consultant and agreeing scope, costings and contract terms'**. Seconded by Cllr Bowden. Unanimously carried.

Two members of the public left the meeting at 8.13pm

- 21/297 **Jubilee Stone** – to note the update report by the Clerk circulated to members prior to the meeting via **Appendix 3**- the Clerk presented the following report-

£4,000 earmarked from Reserves for installation of the Jubilee Stone into a new location after it was removed from outside the former Council Office and Chamber in Swain Street.
The location to the left of the Book Stop on the pedestrianised area in front of the Boat Museum was agreed by Council. The Clerk has progressed the following:

Planning Permission applied for and granted	£284.00
Architects Plans from Sedgemoor Council	£300.00
Storage costs	£100.00
Licence from SCC to place an artefact on a highway	£165.00
SCC legal fees for licence	£350.00
Installation of the stone by local contractor	<u>£1,525.00</u>
TOTAL	<u>£2,724.00</u>

The licence is yet to be received although it was applied for 4 weeks ago and the fee of £165.00 paid. Local Contractor has communicated with the sculptor, and they have agreed how to remove the stone from storage and lift it into place. The contractor, depending on the licence, is provisionally booked in for mid-July, yet to be confirmed. It is envisaged that the stone will be in situ by mid-July to August depending on how long it takes for the licence to be issued.

Members noted the report

- 21/298 **Matters of Correspondence for Report** - Correspondence is addressed daily and filed, the file is available for all Councillors to inspect at their leisure.
- 21/299 **Accounts for payment** – to approve the May Schedule for payment in June.
The May schedule (Payment in June) was tabled at the meeting. Cllr Irven proposed that **'the Payment Schedule is approved, and the invoices duly paid.'** Seconded by Cllr Ellwood.
Carried.
- 20/300 To note **Matters for the next meeting** – no discussion or decisions made
- Liaise with the Clerk

Meeting closed at 8.17pm

Signed: 

Dated: 