

**Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting**  
**held on Monday 9 May 2023 at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Cllr Olivia Campbell, Cllr Sarah Ellwood, Cllr John Irvén, Cllr Cosmo Johnson, Cllr Peter Murphy, Cllr Sara Summers, Cllr Sean Terrett, Cllr Dave Westcott, and Cllr Loretta Whetlor

**In attendance:** Sarah Reed, Town Clerk, Jo Grellier, Deputy Clerk, Somerset Cllr Davies, 1 member of the public.

**1. Election of Chairman:**

Cllr Campbell as the existing Chair of Council asked for nominations for the post of Chair.

Cllr Whetlor proposed Cllr Campbell. Seconded by Cllr Irvén.

As this nomination was uncontested, Cllr Campbell was elected Chair of Watchet Town Council and Mayor of Watchet for the 2023-24 period. Cllr Campbell thanked members for their confidence in her as Chair and she would try her very best to serve the Council and the community well.

**2. To receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office:**

The Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office was signed and witnessed by the Proper Officer.

**3. To receive Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Murphy proposed that the '*apologies from Cllr Moss are accepted*'. Seconded by Cllr Richards. Carried.

**4. Election of Vice Chairman:**

Cllr Campbell asked for nominations for the post of Vice Chair of Council.

Cllr Richards proposed Cllr Whetlor. Seconded by Cllr Terrett.

As this nomination was uncontested, Cllr Whetlor was elected as the Vice Chair of Watchet Town Council and Deputy Mayor of Watchet for the 2023-24 period.

**5. To appoint Committees**

The following Committees were appointed:

**a. Environment & Planning**

1. Cllr John Irvén
2. Cllr Peter Murphy
3. Cllr Nigel Moss
4. Cllr John Richards
5. Cllr Dave Westcott
6. Cllr Olivia Campbell – *ex-officio*
7. Cllr Loretta Whetlor – *ex-officio*

**b. Finance & Staffing Committee**

1. Cllr Sarah Ellwood
2. Cllr John Irvén
3. Cllr Peter Murphy
4. Cllr Dave Westcott
5. Vacancy
6. Cllr Olivia Campbell – *ex-officio*
7. Cllr Loretta Whetlor – *ex-officio*

**c. Recreation & Tourism Committee**

1. Cllr Cosmo Johnson
2. Cllr John Richards
3. Cllr Sara Summers
4. Cllr Sean Terrett
5. Vacancy
6. Cllr Olivia Campbell – *ex-officio*
7. Cllr Loretta Whetlor – *ex-officio*



**d. Grievance Panel – 3 members**

Cllr Murphy proposed that *'the following members are re-appointed'*.

1. **Cllr Olivia Campbell**
2. **Cllr Peter Murphy**
3. **Cllr Dave Westcott**

Seconded by Cllr Campbell. Carried

**e. Appeals Panel – 3 members**

Cllr Murphy proposed that *'the following members are re-appointed'*.

1. **Cllr Cosmo Johnson**
2. **Cllr John Richards**
3. **Cllr Loretta Whetlor**

Seconded by Cllr Ellwood. Carried

**6. Appointment of Representatives to other bodies**

The following Councillors were appointed as representatives from this Council on Outside Bodies:

- a. **Memorial Ground Management Committee - 1 member**  
Cllr Olivia Campbell
- b. **Museum Committee - 2 members**  
Cllr Cosmo Johnson and Cllr Loretta Whetlor
- c. **Twinning Society – 1 member**  
Cllr Loretta Whetlor
- d. **WACET organisation – 1 member**  
Cllr Peter Murphy
- e. **Friends of the Flatner – 1 member**  
Cllr Sara Summers
- f. **St Decumans Charity – 1 member for a 4-year term (until 2027)**  
Cllr Dave Westcott
- g. **Harbour Advisory Committee/ Harbour Board – 1 member**  
Cllr Loretta Whetlor
- h. **WS Citizens Advice Bureau – 1 member**  
Cllr Cosmo Johnson
- i. **Minehead and Watchet CCTV Group – 1 member**  
Cllr John Richards
- j. **Carnival Committee – 1 member**  
Cllr Sean Terrett
- k. **Somerset Association of Local Councils – 1 member**  
Cllr Loretta Whetlor
- l. **Watchet Conservation Society – 1 member**  
Cllr Olivia Campbell
- m. **Coastal Communities Team – 1 member**  
Cllr Peter Murphy
- n. **Dementia Alliance Committee – 1 member**  
Cllr Sara Summers
- o. **Quantock Foodbank – 1 member for a 4-year term (until 2027)**  
Cllr John Iven
- p. **Watchet Plastic Free Steering Group**  
Cllr Loretta Whetlor
- q. **Bickwatch EV Pilot Project**  
Cllr Sean Terrett

**7. Subscriptions to be paid annually:**

The Clerk informed members that the affiliation fee for 2023-24 from the Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) had not yet been received but was due for payment. Duly noted.

**8. Inspection of the deeds in the custody of the Council:**

It was agreed that the Chair of Council and the Clerk would schedule an appointment with the solicitor to inspect the Council's deeds in due course.

**9. To agree to a review of the following:**

- **Financial Regulations** – The Clerk informed members that the regulations would be reviewed, and any relevant changes brought to a future Council meeting.
- **Standing Orders** - The Clerk informed members that the regulations would be reviewed, and any relevant changes brought to a future Council meeting.



- **Cheque Signatories:** The Clerk informed members that a review of Cheque signatories would be undertaken, and an update reported at a future council meeting.
- **Health & Safety Policies and Documentation** – Update from the EH&S Designated Officer – Cllr Irven reported the following:

As designated EH&S Officer it is my role to advise WTC on requirements for both employees but also public liability, approve risk assessments but NOT necessarily produce all the risk assessments for the Council, but those not currently defined within the policy.

At the Annual Council meeting last year, the following resolution was passed:

**'Cllr Irven continues in the role of designated EH&S Officer and a working group comprising of Cllrs Campbell, Irven and Terrett is set up to undertake a Health & Safety Review under a standard agenda item at Full Council meetings'.**

And the following actions assigned to the working group as follows:

- Cllr Irven has previously produced RAs for mowing and grounds maintenance etc including mechanised equipment, but Cllr Terrett agreed to review and update operational risk assessments for grounds staff
- Cllr Campbell agreed to review and update office RAs as these date from old office and relate to wellbeing. Also need agreed updated joint RAs with VC for use of shared facilities.
- Need to finalise updated and agree and adopt EH&S policy from the Deputy clerk including delegation of roles.
- As I cannot find hard copies or locate where electronic copies are stored on the original cd disc or office computers – probably due to changes in pc and working at home/office, we need to locate these still.

Cllr Irven concluded his report and stated that he is happy to continue in his role, but would like to see the assigned actions have not been carried out by the working group, and he would like to see more input from the Council on EH&S policy and roles and responsibilities more defined and would request that 'EH&S Policy Update' is a standard Full Council agenda item.

The Chair thanked Cllr Irven for his hard work in fulfilling this role so efficiently for the Council and recognised the work that needed to be undertaken by the working group.

10. **Declarations of Interest:** 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
Cllrs Irven and Murphy	16 (i)	As members of Friends of Somerset Libraries (FOSL) and Watchet Library Friends (WLF)	Personal	Cllrs remained in the room and participated in the discussions and voting
Cllr Whetlor	16 (i)	Member of Watchet Library Friends (WLF)	Personal	

11. **Town Council Minutes - To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 17 April 2023** (LGA 1972, Sch 12 Para 41 (1))  
Cllr Campbell proposed that ***the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 17 April 2023 are adopted as a true and correct record.*** Seconded by Cllr Summers. Carried with 9 votes for and 1 abstention.

Cllr Johnson gave his apologies and left the meeting at 7.44pm.

12. **Update Reports– verbal**

(i) **Chair** - Cllr Campbell reported that both the library re-dedication and Coronation events were held successfully and would be reported on under the relevant agenda items. She had attended a recent War Memorial Ground Management Committee meeting in place of Cllr Irven who couldn't attend, and serious remedial work is needed to the pavilion, initially up to £18,000. It is important that the Town Council looks at ways to assist them seek funding.

(ii) Clerk reported:



2. Re-instatement of Camera 8 – ongoing, no progress to date.
3. SLA between WTC and WWMGMC signed, effective from 1 April, with the first quarterly instalment due on 1 July 2023.
4. The surveyor has completed the condition assessment of the Pavilion, I am in the process of completing the forms to be submitted to the Memorial Trust to secure the grant.
5. Enerveo has been instructed to start the light replacements at Cherry Tree Way and the start date is yet to be confirmed.
6. Update on Casual vacancy, the public notice expired on Friday 5 May 2023, having contacted the Electoral Officer, no electors have come forward to request a bi-election, so the co-option process will be implemented. A timetable will be forwarded on in due course.

**13. Reports from Principal Authority Members:**

A report from County Cllr Davies was circulated a report prior to the meeting for members information.

Cllr Davies thanked the Town Council for inviting him to the library re-dedication event, he was honoured to be part of such a historic occasion.

He then informed the Chair of Council that he had some confidential information he wished to make members aware of, which could not be in the public domain.

Cllr Campbell proposed that ***'due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, Standing Order (1d) is invoked, and the public and press are instructed to withdraw'***.

Seconded by Cllr Ellwood. Carried.

Member of the public withdrew from the meeting at 7.50pm.

See Excluded notes **23/12EX**

Cllr Davies referred to a budget allocated by Somerset Council as mitigation for the B3191 road closure.

Cllr Richards proposed ***the re-admittance of the public to the meeting'***. Seconded by Cllr Whetlor. Carried.

Member of the public returned to the meeting at 7.53pm.

Cllr Davies continued his report and referred to how historic buildings in Somerset are administered conserved, leased, and the governance relating to this.

*Questions from the floor:*

**Cllr Murphy asked:** which specific building in Somerset is he referring to?

**Cllr Davies responded:** The Old Court House in Chard, English Heritage have this on the risk register as they are keen to conserve it.

The Chair thanked Cllr Davies for his report.

**14. Reports from Representatives of outside organisations- verbal, no decisions – none received.**

**15. Verbal reports from sub-committees, working groups, and other outside organisations where Watchet Town Council does not have representation:**  
(Notification to the Clerk prior to the meeting) – none received.

**16. Reports from Working Groups:**

(i) **Watchet Library:** Cllr Irven reported on behalf of the working Group, that the library re-dedication ceremony was a successful event and thanked everyone involved in making it a historic occasion.

(ii) **Climate Change** – the working group held its first meeting to discuss the format and options of a decarbonisation plan. It was agreed that group members did not have the internal skills to undertake a carbon audit, and Cllr Moss was tasked with seeking quotations from a consultant. The framework agreed was to start with a carbon reduction pilot study on several of the Council owned buildings and to look at the potential for grant funding.

(iii) **Wheeled Park** – deferred, waiting on more information.

(iv) **Kings Coronation-** Cllr Whetlor reported the following:

The event was very successful and a fantastic celebration for Watchet. Thanks, must be given to the office staff, particularly the Deputy Clerk for her hard work in organising the gazebos and entertainment, and the Clerk for putting up with the constant interruptions to her workload. Majority

of thanks go to the wonderful ladies at the Salvation Army who provided the cakes and for the other ladies and gentlemen who helped with the serving of the cream teas. Thanks to our Mayor and Cllr Summers for their sterling work. The final costings will be reported at the next meeting once they are finalised. Finally, thanks to the Town Council for sponsoring the day and the gifts for the school children.

(v) **Watchet Task Force** – Cllr Murphy referred to the notes of the meeting held on 4 May 2023 which had been circulated prior to the meeting, he proceeded to put forward the following recommendations for members consideration:

1. Cllr Murphy proposed that **'the Town Council explore joining the 'Next Door' media platform'**. Seconded by Cllr Whetlor. Carried.
2. Cllr Murphy proposed that **'the Town Council co-sponsors the Steam Fayre event with WCCT, supported by WACET and proceeds to work with the Visitor Centre to produce an A5 map displaying the location of the shops in Watchet open during this event, with a quantity to be confirmed, and a budget of up to £500 allocated. The maps will be given out on the trains.** Seconded by Cllr Whetlor. Carried.
3. Cllr Murphy proposed that **'Environment & Planning Committee explore options for increasing the number of car parking spaces in the town.** Seconded by Cllr Whetlor. Carried.
4. Cllr Murphy proposed that **'Recreation & Tourism Committee explore the extra provision of litter bins on the Esplanade'.** Seconded by Cllr Richards. Carried.

**17. Somerset Council Chair's Awards for Service to the Community 2023:**

(i) To consider and approve a nominee – *criteria and application form circulated as Appendix 2* - After a brief discussion, Cllr Summers proposed that **'Kate Kennedy and Lucy Shaw are nominated from the Council for this award for the work they have done to set up the 'Ukrainian Hub.** Seconded by Whetlor. Carried with 9 votes for and 1 abstention.

**18. Matters of correspondence for Report**

The Councillors were informed that correspondence is addressed daily and filed.

**19. Accounts for payment – Acceptance of April Accounts for payment in May, see accompanying schedule**

Cllr Campbell proposed that the April accounts for payment (due for payment in May) are approved and duly paid. Seconded by Cllr Summers. Carried.

**20. Matters for the next meeting**

- Approve Annual Financial Statement

The meeting ended at 8.32pm

Signed: .....

Dated: ..... 12/6/23 .....

*[Handwritten signature]*