

BUDLEIGH SALTERTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Town Council held online via Zoom on Monday 29 March 2021 on the rising of the Planning Committee.

Meeting commenced at 7.13pm.

PRESENT

Cllr M C Hilliar (Town Mayor)
Cllr R D Sherriff (Deputy Town Mayor)
Cllr A F Chaplin
Cllr Mrs L D Evans
Cllr A J Harris
Cllr D J Hayward
Cllr A L Jones
Cllr Mrs M P Lewis
Cllr Mrs C A Sismore-Hunt
Cllr G Turner

Town Clerk: Mrs J E Vanstone

Others Present: County Cllr Mrs C Channon, District Cllr A J Dent, District Cllr P M Jarvis and one member of the public

20.303 Public Speaking Time

No Members of the public wished to speak.

20.304 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr H L Riddell (unwell) and District Cllr T D Wright.

20.305 Declarations of Interests in Items on the Agenda

- Cllr A L Jones declared a personal interest in Min 20.31 – he is a Member of Budleigh Salterton Football Club's Social Committee

20.306 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 22 February 2021 had been circulated prior to the Meeting. It was unanimously agreed they be signed as a true record.

20.307 Chairman's Report

The Town Mayor, Cllr M C Hilliar reported that Mrs Ceri Henkus had resigned from the Town Council due to increased work commitments. He had thought she was going to become a good councillor and an asset to the team, and he said she would be greatly missed.

20.308 Clerk's Report

Mrs J E Vanstone reported that the work in the Public Hall was progressing well. However, the caretaker was due to go into hospital for an operation in April and would be on leave for 12 weeks afterwards. Following discussions with the Town Mayor, the Deputy Town Mayor and the Chairman of the Public Hall Committee, it had been agreed that Bagwells should be instructed to undertake the painting of the new foyer doors; this would cost in the region of £500. Cllr A F Chaplin had very kindly offered to assist with some of the final tasks needed to be undertaken before the Hall reopened.

20.309 Reports of Council Representatives on Other Bodies

Budleigh Salterton Covid Support

Cllr Mrs M P Lewis reported that the meetings would now be held fortnightly as infection levels were dropping. All children were back at St Peter's School and the vaccination process was going really well.

Exmouth & District Community Transport Group

Cllr Mrs L D Evans reported that the new bus had arrived and once it was allowable, they would be out and about – she hoped to get as many elderly residents as possible out to see the sea!

Budleigh Salterton Voluntary Car Service

Cllr Mrs Evans reported that the Car Service had ceased operating. The remaining assets had been divided between the Football Club, Hospiscare and the Devon Air Ambulance.

20.310 Reports of County and District Councillors

County Councillor

County Cllr Mrs C Channon reported:

- She was disappointed to have received a notice advising that the resurfacing work at Northview Road, scheduled for 26 March, would not be taking place. She was waiting to hear of the new date to get the work done which would then conclude the surfacing works in the town.
- At the recent meeting of the Budleigh Salterton Traffic Group she had reported a trailer which had been left in Cricket Field Lane. She was pleased to advise that it had been removed.
- She had an underspend of her Locality Budget and because of the County Council elections, this had had to be spent by 8 March. She had been contacted by the new Chairman of the Music Festival and there were many new ideas for this year's event, particularly for young children on The Green. She had agreed to make a grant of £1000.
- The overhanging wall and bushes at Chapel Hill had previously been reported and she was pleased to advise that the trees and hedge had been cut back. There was still an issue with the wall but this was being dealt with by the Neighbourhood Highways Officer.

Cllr D J Hayward asked if there was any progress with the problems at Evans Field.

County Cllr Mrs C Channon said that East Devon District Council (EDDC) StreetScene had cut back the brambles and the area was much clearer but it was unfortunate that a resident had to have a fall before anything had been done. She had also written to Simon Jupp MP to see if he could put pressure on the developers. She said the area needed lights, a footpath and an extension of the 30mph limit.

District Councillors

District Cllr A J Dent advised that Cllr T D Wright had had a knee replacement operation – all had gone well and he was now recovering at home.

He then reported:

- He and District Cllr Wright, with support from other District Councillors, had 'called in' a decision made by the Portfolio Holder to withdraw the beach huts which were rented out by the Tourist Information Centre each summer. He said this decision would have meant a significant drop in the Centre's income and he was pleased this would now be discussed by the Scrutiny Committee, which in turn would mean he and his fellow Ward Members would be able to come to the Centre's defence.

- He had represented Budleigh Salterton when the application to convert the Coach House at Abele Tree House into holiday accommodation had been discussed by the Planning Committee. He said the officer was recommending refusal, insisting that this property was in the flood zone. He advised that the Committee had approved the application by nine votes to four.
- He expected Members would have seen the letter from Luke Hall MP regarding the expectation that all local authorities were to return to face-to-face meetings. He said there was cross party unity at EDDC that this was a stupid idea which did not conform to the Government's own lockdown timetable. EDDC were resisting this as much as they could. Whilst the way forward may be to have small meetings, the Council Chamber at Blackdown House would not accommodate all members for Cabinet and Full Council meetings.

District Cllr P M Jarvis confirmed that Cllr Dent had covered most items! He wished to clarify that five members were need to 'call in' something and he had been in agreement with his colleagues when they had 'called in' the beach hut decision. With regard to the return to face-to-face meetings, he said it would be difficult to decide who attended future meetings and who did not! The Local Government Association was putting pressure on the Government to review its decision and he understood every council in the District had written to the Government about this issue. He warned that councils should be prepared in case the decision was not overturned.

20.311 Finance Inspection

- (i) Payments for the month of March 2021, in accordance with Appendix A, were approved.
- (ii) It was noted that the Chairman of the Finance Committee had not been able to carry out the internal finance inspection for February 2021 due to the current Lockdown.

Cllr Mrs M P Lewis queried Miscellaneous Income of £12002. The Clerk explained this was two payments of £6001 each being the Local Restrictions Support Grant for the Public Hall and Norman Centre.

20.312 Remote Meetings

Consideration was given to the proposal that, in the event that Council meetings will no longer be able to be held online from 7 May 2021, the Chairmen of each committee be granted delegated powers until such time that the Town Council/Committee is able to meet face to face or can resume remote online meetings.

Councillors would still be consulted regarding decisions that need to be made but the final decision would be with the Town Mayor and the Deputy Town Mayor and the Committee Chairman.

After a lengthy discussion it was

Resolved: As the situation regarding remote meetings had not been settled, a final decision will be made at the next Meeting of the Town Council, which will be held on 26 April 2021. The Clerk will obtain costings for the necessary sound/film equipment which may be needed if meetings are to be held in the Public Hall.

Cllr Mrs M P Lewis asked if the Council had written to the Government about this issue. The Clerk confirmed she had written to Simon Jupp MP and copied the letter to Robert Jenrick MP.

20.313 Public Hall/Norman Centre

It was agreed that both the Public Hall and Norman Centre would not re-open until 17 May at the earliest, as per HM Government's Covid-19 Roadmap out of Lockdown (with the exception of Blood Doning and the Police & Crime Commissioner and County Council Elections, both of which are permissible under the current restrictions).

20.314 East Devon District Council: Community Asset Transfer – Draft Procedure

The Consultation Document had been circulated prior to the Meeting. It was

Resolved: No response will be made, Members felt the wording of the document was sufficient.

20.315 Climate Emergency

Consideration was given to creating a Working Group to continue the work started by the Council's committee in 2019.

The Clerk explained that she had been contacted by St Peter's School who had asked how the school and its children could work with the Council on Climate Change matters.

After some further discussion it was

Resolved: A Climate Change Working Group will be formed with the same amount of clerical support as the Budleigh Salterton Traffic Group. The Group will include members of the Town Council and representatives from the Town's Groups as well as St Peter's School.

20.316 Budleigh Salterton Football Club

Consideration was given to supporting the Football Club's plans to adopt part of the play park area in Greenway Lane and it was

Resolved: This Council supports the plan which will see the area better maintained and well-used by the Town's youngsters.

20.317 Request for Grant Aid 2021/22: Lions Club of Budleigh Salterton

(i) Consideration was given to making a donation to the Group for the purchase of Litter Picking equipment.

Resolved: A donation will be made.

(ii) Consideration was then given to the amount of the donation.

Resolved: A donation of £688.18 will be made.

20.318 Lions Club of Budleigh Salterton: High Street Bunting

Consideration was given to supporting an application for the erection of bunting across the High Street from 24 May to 28 September 2021 and it was

Resolved: This Council supports the application

20.319 Any Other Business at the Chairman's Discretion

- Cllr R D Sherriff advised that EDDC would hopefully be opening the Steamer Steps toilets on Good Friday. This would mean that the Lower Station Road Toilets would be closed. He understood if the Town Council were willing to pay, these toilets could be kept open for the summer season. He said they were the second least used in the district as far as water consumption was concerned. He did not know if this was a permanent decision or just whilst the current Covid restrictions were in place.
- Cllr D J Hayward reported that the posts on the end of Cliff Road were in need of repainting. The Clerk said she will report this to the DCC Neighbourhood Highways Officer.
- Cllr A L Jones asked that at the next Meeting, the Council considered a suggestion to tidy up the bollard at the top of Fore Street Hill and the area immediately around it. He asked the Clerk to forward the suggestion so that Members could consider it and come up with any alternative low-maintenance ideas.

20.320 Correspondence Received

- South West Museum Development: letter of thanks for the contribution to Museum Development
- East Devon District Council: Details of 2021/22 District Council Tax
- The Clerk: March 2021
- Clerks & Councils Direct: March 2021

20.321 Dates of Next Meetings

All Meetings will be held via Zoom until further notice:

Planning Committee:	12 April 2021 at 7.00pm
Finance Committee:	12 April 2021 on the rising of the Planning Committee
Annual Town Assembly:	19 April 2021 at 7.00pm
Planning Committee:	26 April 2021 at 7.00pm
Town Council:	26 April 2021 on the rising of the Planning Committee
Annual Meeting of the Town Council:	4 May 2021 at 7.00pm
Planning Committee:	4 May 2021 on the rising of the Town Council

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 8.44pm.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date

Approved