

BUDLEIGH SALTERTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Town Council held in the Public Hall, Station Road, Budleigh Salterton on Monday 24 January 2022 on the rising of the Planning Committee.

Meeting commenced at 7.10pm

PRESENT

Cllr R D Sherriff (Town Mayor)
Cllr M C Hilliar (Deputy Town Mayor)
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

Town Clerk: Mrs J E Vanstone

Others Present: District Cllr A J Dent, District Cllr T D Wright and one member of the public

21.305 Public Speaking Time

No Members of the public wished to speak.

21.306 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr A F Chaplin (isolating), Cllr R J Doorbar (working), Cllr D Tate (bereavement), County Cllr Mrs C Channon and District Cllr P M Jarvis.

21.307 Declarations of Interests in Items on the Agenda

- Cllr Mrs L D Evans declared a personal interest in Min 21.315 – she is the Deputy Chairman of the Group
- The Deputy Town Mayor, Cllr M C Hilliar also declared a personal interest in Min 21.315 – he is this Council's representative on the Group

21.308 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 13 December 2021 had been circulated prior to the Meeting. It was unanimously agreed they be signed as a true record.

21.309 Chairman's Report

The Town Mayor, Cllr R D Sherriff reported:

- The Library BookTrack scheme had just about finished with two or three children still to complete the reading challenge. He had been pleased to present book tokens to a brother and sister the previous weekend and would be presenting another the following weekend. He was not sure if there were any more to do as a new scheme had started recently.
- He was pleased that East Devon District Council (EDDC) had made a start rubbing down and painting the seafront benches. He had spoken to the StreetScene officer carrying out the work and he hoped to get the work finished by the start of the summer season. Cllr Sherriff confirmed this would include all benches from Rosemullion down to the Lime Kiln!
Cllr A L Jones asked about the charges for replacement benches and the Clerk advised she was happy to speak to the family Cllr Jones was referring to.

- He had had an interim meeting with EDDC regarding the rewilding scheme for The Green. Officers had drawn up a new plan which was very much in line with what the Council had asked for. The Clerk would send out this plan and he asked that any comments be forwarded to her as soon as possible. Cllr Mrs L D Evans asked if they would be looking after the shrub beds in the centre of The Green. The Clerk said she would request these beds had some attention!

21.310 Clerk's Report

Mrs J E Vanstone reported:

- The lights at the War Memorial were still on all day. She had reported this and the EDDC Engineer's Department had confirmed they would look at them.
- She had received confirmation from BT that the payphone at the Rolle Mews Car Park was being removed and had been adopted by St Peter's PTA. The payphone on the seafront would remain in service following objections received from EDDC. Cllr A J Harris asked if the seafront box could be re-painted.
- The streetlight on the side of the Public Hall had not been working for some time and after numerous emails to Devon County Council (DCC) she had found out that the light was in fact the responsibility of the Town Council. DCC had offered to repair it but future repairs would have to be carried out by this Council.

21.311 Reports of Council Representatives on Other Bodies

East Devon District Council Arts & Culture Forum

Cllr Mrs M P Lewis reported she had attended a meeting, which had been the first since May 2021. They had received various presentations including information from the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. She said there was a lot going on in other parts of the district which Budleigh Salterton could possibly tap into. She would circulate the information to Members.

21.312 Reports of County and District Councillors

County Councillor

Mrs J E Vanstone read County Cllr Mrs C Channon's report:

- Various Traffic Orders would be discussed at the East Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC) meeting on 14 February. However, the officer in charge had already removed the request for a speed reduction to 30mph on the road between Evans Field and Bedlands Lane on the grounds that this is a rural road. She felt he had clearly lost the plot and she had filed a serious complaint.
- When she had carried out a recent reconnaissance at Evans Field, she had met a Quantity Surveyor for Classic Builders who had told her that Sunningdale Properties had asked his company to take on the construction work. He seemed to consider that was fairly straightforward and likely to happen. She had informed Cllr Hilliar who had been in contact with East Devon District Council about issues at this site. She had also made a point of informing this surveyor of the outstanding work required to construct a new footpath and street lighting. He was unaware of this.
- Council Tax was likely to rise by 3% (2% general + 1% extra for Social Care). However, there was a huge overspend in the Adult Social Care budget (£8.58m) and an even greater overspend in the Children's budget (£23.9m). There had been an increase in referrals for children's social care but the greatest increase was in the Special Education Needs (SEN) budget. Currently DCC was overspent to the tune of £88.098m on SEN; a similar situation was true for other Local Authorities.

- Fortunately, DCC had managed to build up substantial reserves in recent years by prudent housekeeping but would be using £127.633m of those reserves this year to balance the books. This meant that that money would not be available next year! Like other local authorities, DCC had applied to the Department of Education for a large grant to cover some of the debt incurred by SEN.
- The COVID pandemic had meant that the Council had been able to make savings with officers working from home and virtual meetings but this had been at the cost of efficiency.
- At the beginning of January, notices had appeared on Salting Hill advertising a road closure. She had had no notice of this and the notices were removed mid-week. However, she had now been informed that the road would be closed from 9 May to permit Western Power to identify an electric cable which would allow them to erect another street light. She was concerned because this road had only just been resurfaced and the traffic to Lime Kiln Car park was likely to be heavy at the beginning of May. Granary Lane simply could not cope with excess traffic. She had mentioned this to Cllr A L Jones and it would be raised at the Budleigh Salterton Traffic Group meeting on 25 January.

District Councillors

District Cllr T D Wright reported

- Cabinet would be meeting on 2 February to approve the budget for 2022/23. The recommendation to go to full Council on 23 February would be a 4% increase – this equated to approximately £5 per Band D household.
 - A deficit of £370000 would maintain the status quo and therefore any further demand on resources would be a problem. There had been an increase in Planning applications and the department would not be able to continue without more resources.
 - One suggestion was an increase in car park fees with strategic car parks (those on sea fronts etc) being increased to £2 per hour and others increased to £1.50 per hour. The cost of permits would not be increasing so this would encourage residents to purchase a permit. He expected it to be a heated discussion!
- Waste & Recycling Board. The Council-negotiated contract had resulted in reductions in costs per household but because the number of properties to be serviced had increased and the amount of materials being picked up kerbside had also increased, Suez had asked that the contract be re-negotiated. The Board would be meeting on 26 January, so he would have a better idea about likely increases. He explained that it was an “open book policy” which meant Suez was not able to pull the wool over EDDC regarding their costs. He added that EDDC made quite a bit out of the green bin collections.
- He had previously halted the repainting of the footbridge over the amenity walk at Upper Stoneborough Lane. He had thought it needed to be looked at with a view to redesigning the bridge so that it would be more usable by those in wheelchairs and with pushchairs etc. He was pleased to advise that the scheme was to be included in the 2022/23 capital budget.

Cllr A J Harris asked, if EDDC had a signed contract with the contractor, why the contract needed to be redrawn. Cllr Wright confirmed this was because of the number of dwellings in Cranbrook, which had not been included in the first contract.

District Cllr A J Dent reported:

- District Cllr Wright had recently chaired two meetings of the Scrutiny committee with each lasting from 9.30am to 2pm. The meetings were to discuss 2022/23 budgets. He reiterated Cllr Wright's comments on Waste & Recycling and Car Parking.
- The pandemic had reduced income considerably for Leisure East Devon (LED); health and fitness services were much needed and valued across the district. A subsidy of approximately £1million had already been agreed for this year's budget but similar support would be needed annually. MPs had been lobbied to see if there was any funding available.
- Public employees had had minimal pay increases over the last four or five years and now an Independent Pay Review was underway. This was likely to add over £500000 to the council's budget.
- The cliff path from Rosemullion to Sandy Bay was beginning to look dangerous in parts. Residents were concerned that a path had been cut along the existing path. He understood that Clinton Devon Estates were undertaking a survey. Work would be continuing over the next couple of years.
- Cranbrook currently had 4000 houses with plans for the same amount again to be constructed. All homes had hot water systems from a central heating system. This source of green energy meant that there was an unforeseen benefit as when the time came to change from fossil fuels boilers, Cranbrook residents would not have that problem!

21.313 Finance Inspection

- (i) Payments for the month of January 2022, in accordance with Appendix A, were approved.
- (ii) It was noted that the Chairman of the Finance Committee had carried out the internal finance inspection for December 2021.

21.314 Audit 2021/22

It was noted that the Council's Internal Auditor, Thomas Westcott, had undertaken the interim audit and no issues were raised.

21.315 Request for Grant Aid 2022/23: Exmouth & District Community Transport Group

- (i) Consideration was given making a donation to the Group.
Resolved: A donation will be made.
- (ii) Consideration was given to the amount of the donation.
Resolved: A grant of £1500 will be made.

21.316 Request for Grant Aid 2022/23: Lions Club of Budleigh Salterton – Gala Week Children's Cycle Competition

Consideration was given to sponsorship of the Children's Cycle Competition. It was
Resolved: Sponsorship of £200 was agreed.

21.317 Lions Club of Budleigh Salterton: Gala Week – 28 May to 5 June 2022

- (i) Consideration was given to a request for a concessionary hire charge to be applied for the hire of the Public Hall (or a Grant towards the cost).
Resolved: A concessionary hire charge was approved. The Clerk advised that in previous years this had been £100.
- (ii) Consideration was given to a request to use The Green.
Resolved: Approved.
- (iii) Consideration was given to a request that the bunting be erected above the High Street and will remain in situ until after the Literary Festival in September (w/c 16 May to w/c 19 September 2022 approximately).
Resolved: Approved.

21.318 The Green

Consideration was given to supporting a request from the Lions Club of Budleigh Salterton to plant a tree on The Green to celebrate HM The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. The Town Mayor, Cllr R D Sherriff advised that three trees were going to be planted on behalf of the Town Council and this was a separate application. The Clerk had contacted the Lions Club and put them in touch with the relevant officer at EDDC. The Clerk advised that a Holm Oak had been suggested; these trees are drought-tolerant and able to deal with a seaside climate.

Resolved: This Council supports the request for a commemorative tree on The Green.

21.319 East Devon District Council: Licence Application – Marine Parade

An application from The Longboat Café for an alcohol licence was received and considered. It was

Resolved: This Council supports the application but would ask that only plastic glasses are used outside.

The Clerk was asked to highlight the typing error which stated “no accompanied children shall be allowed on the premises” and ask if it should be amended to read “no unaccompanied children....”

21.320 Correspondence Received

- Veterans Community Support: Letter of thanks for donation
- Devon County Council:
 - Temporary Prohibition of Through Traffic & Parking – Northview Road: 27 January 2022
 - Temporary Prohibition of Through Traffic – Sherbrook Hill: 7-25 February 2022
 - Temporary Prohibition of Through Traffic – Salting Hill: 9-20 May 2022
- Otter Valley Association: January 2022
- The Clerk: January 2022
- Clerks & Councils Direct: January 2022

21.321 Any Other Business at the Chairman’s Discretion

- Cllr Mrs C A Sismore-Hunt advised that the wall at the end of The Green had been knocked down or had fallen down.
- The Deputy Town Mayor, Cllr M C Hilliar asked if it was possible to have standing agreement in place to approve the Lions Club’s Gala Week requests (erection of bunting across the High Street, use of The Green and concessionary Public Hall hire charge).
- District Cllr A J Dent advised that the District Council meeting scheduled for 23 February had been changed to 21 February and therefore clashed with the next Town Council meeting. Therefore, he and Cllr Wright offered their apologies.

21.322 Dates of Next Meetings

All meetings to be held in the Public Hall until further notice.

Planning Committee: 21 February 2022 at 7.00pm

Town Council: 21 February 2022 on the rising of the Planning Committee

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 7.53pm.

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Chairman

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Date