

BUDLEIGH SALTERTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Town Council held in the Council Offices, Station Road, Budleigh Salterton on Monday 24 April 2023 on the rising of the Planning Committee.

Meeting commenced at 7.07pm.

PRESENT

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

Town Clerk: Mrs J E Vanstone

Others Present: County Cllr Mrs C Channon, District Cllr A J Dent, District Cllr T D Wright and seven members of the public

22.473 Public Speaking Time

No members of the public wished to speak.

22.474 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from the Deputy Town Mayor, Cllr D J Hayward, Cllr R J Doorbar and District Cllr P M Jarvis.
Cllr D Tate was not present.

22.475 Declarations of Interests in Items on the Agenda

No interests were declared.

22.476 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 27 March 2023 had been circulated prior to the Meeting. It was unanimously agreed they be signed as a true record.

22.477 Reports of Committees

The Minutes of the following meetings were noted:

- Finance Committee held on 27 March 2023
- Budleigh Salterton Traffic Group held on 21 March 2023

22.478 Retiring Chairman's Report

The Town Mayor, Cllr M C Hilliar said it had certainly been an interesting year! There had been ups and downs and good times and not so good times but the Council had come through it well.

He was pleased with the way the Council had operated, with constructive and positive ideas and solutions to problems. He was pleased to have a team behind him and their support.

He thanked the Town Clerk and her Assistant for their support over the year.

He then thanked his wife for her support – as many former mayors would know they are the vital part of the team. He said when he wore the Chain of Office, he really did feel the weight of the town on him and former Chairman, Courtney Richards, breathing down his neck!

Finally he thanked Cllr A L Jones for his time on the Town Council and East Devon District Council – his guidance and knowledge had been invaluable.

22.479 Clerk's Report

Mrs J E Vanstone reported:

- Nomination Forms for the positions of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor were in Members' folders. She asked that completed Nominations be returned to her by 10.00am on Friday 12 May.
- The Council would need to co-opt three additional councillors within 35 days of the date of Election. There would be no need to notify East Devon District Council, being an Election year. She would prepare an advertisement for circulation after 9 May.
- She had applied for a Credit Card with Barclaycard but the application process had been quite convoluted and staff unhelpful. She had therefore applied to Lloyds Bank (the Council's bankers) and whilst going through the application process, the bank advisor had suggested that a Debit Card might be better than a Credit Card. She had discussed this with Cllr Mrs L D Evans (who had been present) and they had decided to go with this suggestion; she was pleased to advise that a Debit Card had been issued and was ready to use for internet purchases and online subscriptions such as Microsoft and Zoom. She would be taking advice regarding updating the Council's Financial Regulations.
- Cllr A J Harris had applied to Devon Communities Together for a grant for Emergency Plan equipment and she was pleased to advise that these funds had now been received. She would liaise with Cllr Harris regarding which items were needed.
- The work to replace the dormer windows and blinds had started but unfortunately had not been completed in the expected time. One of the final window units to be installed had cracked and a new one was on order. She was not sure when this work would be carried out. The replacement blinds would be installed in May.
- New Union Flags had been ordered by East Devon District Council (EDDC) and they would be flown on the seafront from 5 May.
- The Lions would be erecting bunting along the High Street on Thursday 27 April – fingers crossed for a calm dry evening!
- Budleigh Half Marathon, due to be held on 1 October, had been cancelled. The organisers felt there were too many other similar events being held on the same day.
- Over the previous four years, she had been upset to learn on numerous occasions from various Members of the Council that one Member felt that the Council was not being run properly. She said that such comments undermined the Town Mayor and made for a very unhappy working environment. She asked, at the start of a new Council year, that this person desist from continuing with such comments or perhaps have the decency to speak to her in person and advise of the issues they had, so that changes could be made, if required.

22.480 Reports of Council Representatives on Other Bodies

Budleigh Salterton & District Chamber of Commerce

Cllr Mrs C A Sismore-Hunt reported that she had attended a recent meeting, which unfortunately was the final meeting as the decision had been made to wind up the organisation. Only eleven members had attended the meeting, with thirteen sending their apologies.

Whilst the Chamber had had its difficulties over the years, it had been in existence since 1907. Its President Alan Tilbury had done an awful lot of work and she felt sad that it had ended this way.

The Information Centre would help with the Late Night Shopping event but would not take over all the activities.

She said that one attendee had suggested that the traders start up their own group.

One had also been insistent that the Town Council (BSTC) took over the organisation of the Christmas Lights. She had had to explain that BSTC did not have an endless pot of money and did not want to commit to a long term financial obligation which could be in the region of £15000 to £20000, but would consider making a grant each year. It was possible that each shop would decorate its windows and erect lights and hopefully more would take part – it seemed that it was the same traders doing things every year.

She was unsure if Christmas lights would be up in the High Street this year but if someone would form a committee and take this on, then there would be lights. However, the existing lights were wearing out and some of the brackets were failing, meaning new replacement lights could possibly be too heavy for the brackets – not the best combination.

22.481 Reports of County and District Councillors

County Councillor

County Cllr Mrs C Channon reported:

- The majority of comments in her inbox were about highways! She had reported the various potholes in the High Street and hoped they would be repaired soon. The winter weather conditions were not ideal for roads – heavy frosts before Christmas followed by heavy rain in February and March. There were now two teams addressing the potholes but there was a big backlog. She had also reported the issues in Greenway Lane and Jocelyn Road which had been marked up so she thought they may be done soon; some issues were defects.
- Knowle Hill and Sherbrook Hill had been due for resurfacing the previous weekend but the work had been cancelled because of inclement weather. She understood that contractors were looking at doing this at the end of May/beginning of June so she had reminded the Neighbourhood Highways Officers that this was during Gala Week!
- A mischievous person had been making comments that Devon County Council was bankrupt. This was certainly not the case; there were deficits due to budget requirements for children with Special Education Needs but the new Chief Executive was working hard to sort out these issues.
- She thanked the three District Councillors, who were all standing down at the end of the current term; their support had been invaluable. She also thanked the members of the Town Council. During her 30 years as a County Councillor she had received tremendous support from both Town and District Councillors, who were her eyes and ears, especially when her Ward had covered Otterton, Colaton Raleigh, Aylesbeare and Woodbury! She currently covered just Budleigh Salterton East Budleigh and Exmouth.
- She then thanked Cllr A L Jones who had been a stalwart on the Town Council for nearly 30 years, latterly as Chairman of the BS Traffic Group. She was sorry that other councillors had decided to stand down for personal reasons and hoped they might give it another go when time permits!
- She thanked the Town Mayor, Cllr M C Hilliar for his support and hoped he enjoyed his new family and thanked the Town Clerk for her invaluable work and feedback.
- She concluded by wishing good luck to the new Council for the forthcoming term.

District Councillor

District Cllr A J Dent reported:

- Interviews had been carried out for a new Director of Governance and Licensing. He was pleased to advise that Melanie Wellman had been offered the position and she had accepted.
- Three candidates were to be interviewed in the coming week for the position of Head of Housing, Health and Environment.

- He had attended a meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee and the following licences had been granted:
 - The Puffing Billy at Exton to allow an outdoor bar to be installed
 - Sidmouth Folk Week
- He said it had been a privilege to serve on both the District and Town Councils and thanked the Town Clerk for her guidance during that time.

District Cllr T D Wright reported:

- After standing on the Town Council for four years, he had been elected to the District Council and straight away appointed to the Cabinet. He said it was hard to believe there had been such resistance to recycling at that time and it had been a struggle to get the operation off the ground. Fast forward to this year, and during March the team had made 540000 collections from properties! There were still missed collections but these amounted to less than 300 complaints per month. 18250 households had signed up for the Green Waste collection and he remembered the concern when having to order several thousand green bins before any customers had signed up for the service!
- He thanked the Members of BSTC for their friendship and support over the years. He also thanked Cllr A L Jones who had persuaded him to stand for election to BSTC – they had not always agreed but remained friends!

22.482 Finance Inspection

- (i) Payments for the month of April 2023, 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 March 2023.

The Clerk advised that all the relevant year end information had been forwarded to Westcotts to allow them to undertake the Internal Audit for 2022/23.

22.483 Request for Grant Aid 2022/23: South West Museum Development

- (i) Consideration was given to making a grant to enable Fairlynch Museum to draw down enhanced services.

Resolved: A grant will be made.

Cllr A L Jones asked that SW Museum Development are made aware that this is a Grant and not a yearly contribution.

- (ii) Consideration was given to the amount of the contribution.

Resolved: A grant of £800 will be made.

22.484 Correspondence Received

- Budleigh Salterton Carnival: Letter of thanks for donation
- Otter Valley Association: Spring 2023
- Devon County Council:
 - Temporary Prohibition of Through Traffic – Chapel Street: 17 to 21 April 2023 (Electricity Supply Works)
 - Temporary Prohibition of Through Traffic – Knowle Hill: 23 April 2023 (Surface Dressing Works)
 - Temporary Prohibition of Through Traffic – Sherbrook Hill: 23 April 2023 (Surface Dressing Works)
 - Temporary Prohibition of Through Traffic – Knowle Hill/Exmouth Road/West Hill: 14 May 2023 (Resurfacing Works)

22.485 Any Other Business at the Chairman’s Discretion

- Cllr A J Harris said he would forward to the Town Clerk a list of equipment needed for the Emergency Plan. He said he was happy to remain as the main point of contact adding that at least two more members were required for the team.
- Cllr A L Jones said it had been an honour to be a Town Councillor. He had always been for Budleigh Salterton and it would be a wrench not to stagger out in the rain on a Monday evening!! He thanked the Town Mayor, Cllr M C Hilliar for his kind words.

22.486 Dates of Next Meetings

Annual Meeting of the Town Council:	22 May 2023 at 7.00pm
Planning Committee:	22 May 2023 on the rising of the Town Council
Town Council:	22 May 2023 on the rising of the Planning Committee

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 7.43pm.

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Chairman

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Date

Approved