

BUDLEIGH SALTERTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Town Council held in the Council Offices, Station Road, Budleigh Salterton on Monday 1 July 2024 on the rising of the Planning Committee.

Meeting commenced at 7.12pm.

PRESENT

Cllr C A Sismore-Hunt (Town Mayor)
Cllr M C Hilliar (Deputy Town Mayor)
Cllr A F Chaplin
Cllr C M Cunningham
Cllr R J Doorbar
Cllr S J Horn
Cllr M P Lewis
Cllr D Walsh
Cllr W K Wood
Cllr G Woodcraft

In Attendance: County Cllr C Channon, District Cllr C Fitzgerald, District Cllr H L Riddell and Mrs J E Vanstone (Town Clerk)

24.067 Public Speaking Time

No Members of the Public wished to speak.

24.068 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from District Cllr M Martin.

24.069 Declarations of Interests in Items on the Agenda

No interests were declared.

24.070 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 20 May 2024 had been circulated prior to the Meeting. It was unanimously agreed they be signed as a true record.

24.071 Chairman's Report

The Town Mayor, Cllr C A Sismore-Hunt reported:

- She had attended the Ladies Choir Concert at the end of May. It had been a lovely evening; the Choir was larger than before resulting in a superb standard of singing. The proceeds from the raffle had been for Hospiscare who are desperate for money. She added that the collection at the Civic Service will also go to Hospiscare.
- As previously reported, at the closing date of 17 May, only one application had been received for the Clerk's job vacancy. After consultation with the Deputy Town Mayor, she had instructed the Clerk to contact three recruitment agencies. The Clerk had forwarded details of their charging etc to the Town Mayor, the Deputy Town Mayor and Cllr G Woodcraft (as Chairman of Finance) and it was agreed to go with Cathedral Appointments; the Terms of Business had now been signed and their fee would be 18% of the annual salary. She added that one company had been quite pushy and not very professional and therefore not chosen.

As at 28 June one further application had been received and she hoped further candidates would be forwarded from Cathedral in the next week or so.

Once these are received, all applications will be forwarded to the Staffing Committee for perusal and then interview.

24.072 Clerk's Report

Mrs J E Vanstone reported:

- The issues with the stage lighting/curtains were not quite so bad as first feared. She and Cllr W K Wood had met with the structural engineer and it was agreed that some of the lighting would be decommissioned after Imperial Productions had visited at the end of July. Arrangements would then be made for the strengthening works to be carried out as soon as practicable.
- Station Road Toilets. The legal work was being undertaken in the background but as anticipated was progressing slowly!
- Only one co-option application had received so that person could be co-opted immediately without interview; she would re-advertise the remaining vacancy.
- The swift nesting boxes, on rear elevation of Hall, would be installed soon – she was waiting to hear from Pebblebed Heaths/OVA with a date.

Cllr M P Lewis asked if the Clerk had written to the person who updates the Tide Times at Steamer Steps. The Clerk confirmed she had done this.

Cllr D Walsh asked what had happened to the other co-option applicant. The Clerk advised that he had withdrawn his application to concentrate on the sewerage issues and she understood he would soon be meeting with South West Water.

24.073 Reports of Council Representatives on Other Bodies

Budleigh Information Centre

Cllr M P Lewis reported that the recent meeting had gone well; the meetings were appreciated and well-received and felt like a collaboration with BIC using the Town Council (BSTC) as a sounding board.

Cllr R J Doorbar added the information provided by BIC was great and whilst they were all volunteers, it was very professional.

The Town Mayor asked if they would be able to fund themselves next year. Cllr Lewis said the expectation was BSTC would not bail them out next year. However, some events were a lot of effort with not a lot of return but they were getting their heads around it.

Cllr G Woodcraft added BIC were not getting carried away about selling merchandise. BIC was now selling tickets for the Music Festival and hoped to sell Literary Festival tickets; Cllr Lewis said it was important that BSTC members did all they could to encourage other organisations to use BIC to sell tickets for their events.

The Town Mayor said this was all good news.

The Clerk confirmed the next meeting with BIC representatives was scheduled for 23 September and she would be sending out a reminder email later in the week.

24.074 Reports of County and District Councillors

County Councillor

County Cllr C Channon started her report by advising that she volunteered at BIC and on the previous Saturday had had 47 visitors in the morning and 32 in the afternoon, adding that a lot of BIC users were locals. She said they had sold quite a lot of tickets for the Music Festival and hoped Literary Festival ticket sales were just as good. She then reported:

- What had started as one campervan parked on Upper Stoneborough Lane had now turned into three. They were impairing the visibility of anyone coming out of Westfield Close and as such she had contacted Highways to see if there is anything they could do.

- She had received a report that some render had come off a property in Chapel Hill. This had been picked up but she was concerned the remaining render might come away and cause problems. She would raise this and the issue of overgrowing vegetation at the next meeting of Budleigh Salterton Traffic Group
- She advised that Bay Court would be holding a garden party in a few weeks and their raffle proceeds would be going to Hospiscare.

District Councillors

District Cllr H L Riddell reported:

- He, District Cllr C Fitzgerald and local resident Peter Williams, were meeting with officers from South West Water to discuss the various issues affecting the town at the moment. They were hopeful that a senior officer would be in attendance. The Town Mayor asked that the problems caused by the tankers be raised as well – the High Street road surface was dreadful. Cllr Riddell confirmed that Mr Williams was focused on the situation with the Pumping Station in Lime Kiln Car Park and would not be fobbed off! District Cllr C Fitzgerald added that she had been asked if the situation was affecting High Street trade. Whilst it was difficult for BSTC to answer this, Members agreed there must be some negative affect and the traders would be better placed to answer this question. All agreed that pressure on South West Water must be maintained.
- He would be stepping back from his involvement with the Local Plan as his employer had put forward some land for potential development.

County Cllr C Channon and District Cllr H L Riddell left the meeting in order to attend Otterton Parish Council.

District Cllr C Fitzgerald reported:

- There had been another cliff fall along from the Rosemullion, and whilst smaller than the last, the cliff overhang was quite imposing; she had been amazed to see people sitting underneath it!
- District Cllr Riddell had updated her about the lack of grass cutting on The Green and they were awaiting a response from East Devon District Council (EDDC) StreetScene.
- She had read the BSTC response to the Local Plan and advised that St Peter's School was no longer over-subscribed; this information had been confirmed by the Head Teacher. On 26 July there would be a Working Party meeting between planning officers and Ward Members plus one representative from each town/parish council to discuss the issues with the various sites. This was not a public meeting and no decisions would be made.
- She understood that the planning application for the Longboat Café would be discussed by the District Council Planning Committee on 16 July.

District Cllr C Fitzgerald left the meeting to attend Otterton Parish Council.

Mrs J E Vanstone read District Cllr M Martin's report:

- She had attended the Poverty Working Panel held on Zoom on Monday 24 June; there were two key pieces of information to report:
 - The first was a proposal to plan a Voluntary Sector Anti-Poverty Event, hosted by EDDC and inviting local community groups to get together at a one-day event with keynote speakers. The event would be an opportunity for networking with local community groups, sharing information with partners and raising awareness of the work being done to tackle poverty, plus EDDC's updated Poverty Strategy.
 - The second notable item was an update on the deployment of the Household Support Fund. The Financial Resilience Team were a group who worked with residents to help reduce outgoings and increase incomes, so that families could become resilient and have less need for emergency financial help. It was noted that with the upcoming General Election, the future of the fund after September was uncertain and may not continue. The group has however, done sterling work with the Household Support Fund and DCC's Economic Hardship Fund spending £706,852 from April 2023 to end March 2024.
- Green Wedges. The Local Plan app said, across the District, there had been 508 comments and 146 responses to comments on the Local Plan Consultation. She had received over 130 comments and at least 20 emails of thanks for getting the message out to the residents of Budleigh, whether or not people oppose the erosion of the Green Wedges or not. While General Election fever was around, she had found working with local residents and engaging with local businesses both enjoyable and worthwhile, and it was what she had set out to do when she became a councillor. The Planning Consultation date had now passed and was entering the next phase by meeting with the Local Plan Member Working Party, scheduled for 26 July. She and Cllr Fitzgerald would like to meet with BSTC representatives to prepare for this meeting which would mean going through the housing allocations and possible sites in our area; it would be an important meeting.
- Seachange had hosted an afternoon tea for all Volunteers on Thursday 20 June. The event was well attended, the sun shone, the scones baked by Wesley's were the best she had ever tasted plus the company was lovely!

24.075 Finance Inspection

- (i) Payments for the month of June 2024, in accordance with Appendix A, were approved.
- (ii) It was noted that Cllr G Woodcraft had carried out the internal finance inspection for May 2024.

24.076 Audit 2023/24

The report from the Internal Auditor was received and note his comment regarding the Chairman's Allowance was noted.

The Clerk explained that there were two options for the payment of the Allowance:

- the Councillor could be paid via the Council's payroll and have the tax deducted at source, or;
- the Clerk would reimburse expenses as and when they arose on production of a receipt.

It would be for each Chairman to choose when they took up office.

24.077 Correspondence Received

- Budleigh in Bloom: letter confirming appointment of council representative
- Devon County Council:
 - Temporary Prohibition of Through Traffic – West Hill: 29 August to 2 September 2024 (Temporary to Permanent Reinstatement)
 - Temporary Prohibition of Through Traffic – Granary Lane: 6 to 10 September 2024 (Disconnect Supply)

24.078 Any Other Business at the Chairman’s Discretion

- Cllr M P Lewis asked if other Members were not getting their post as regularly. All members agreed the postal service was very poor.
- Cllr R J Doorbar advised that following a meeting with the EDDC Beach Safety Officer, improved signage relating to dogs on leads etc had been installed along the seafront. He was pleased with this and added that whilst some things took time, they did happen eventually and however small, they do have a positive impact.
- Cllr S J Horn reported he had received a complaint about the speed of traffic along Granary Lane. The Town Mayor said that this had previously been discussed by Budleigh Salterton Traffic Group but she was happy to put it on the agenda for the next meeting. Cllr Horn will respond to the resident.
- The Town Mayor asked if the Otter Valley Association had installed their insect boxes at the Greenway Lane Community Gardens. Cllr A F Chaplin said they had not been installed at yet.

24.079 Dates of Next Meetings

Planning Committee:	15 July 2024 at 7.00pm
Public Hall Committee:	15 July 2024 on the rising of the Planning Committee
Foreshore & Footpaths Committee:	15 July 2024 on the rising of the Public Hall Committee
Planning Committee:	29 July 2024 at 7.00pm
Town Council:	29 July 2024 on the rising of the Planning Committee

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 8.10pm.

.....
Chairman

.....
Date