

BUDLEIGH SALTERTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Town Council held in the Council Chamber on Monday 24 February 2020 on the rising of the Planning Committee.

Meeting commenced at 7.07pm.

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs C A Sismore-Hunt (Town Mayor)
Cllr M C Hilliar (Deputy Town Mayor)
Cllr A F Chaplin
Cllr Mrs L D Evans
Cllr D J Hayward
Cllr A L Jones
Cllr Mrs M L Kenneally-Stone
Cllr H L Riddell
Cllr R D Sherriff
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, District Cllr T D Wright and three members of the public

19.450 Public Speaking Time

- A resident spoke about Shandford. She said she had spoken at the Town Council meeting in September. She felt she should try and help to keep the home open. She explained that she and her sister had a long association with the home, as their father had been involved when it first opened. She said it was in the interests of the residents and local people that the home be redeveloped for care for the elderly. The visit by local MP, Simon Jupp, had inspired her to organise a public meeting. She concluded by saying that she felt Abbeyfield had not lived up to its standards.

19.451 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs M P Lewis (holiday).

19.452 Declarations of Interests in Items on the Agenda

No interests were declared.

Two members of the public left the meeting.

19.453 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 27 January 2020 had been circulated prior to the Meeting. It was unanimously agreed they be signed as a true record.

19.454 Reports of Committees

The Minutes of the following Meetings were noted:

- (i) the Community Gardens Committee held on 10 February 2020
- (ii) the Community Infrastructure Levy Committee held on 10 February 2020
- (iii) the Budleigh Salterton Traffic Group held on 19 November 2019

19.455 Chairman's Report

The Town Mayor, Cllr Mrs C A Sismore-Hunt advised she had recently attended a 100th birthday celebration for Mrs Betty Briggs. Mrs Briggs had had an active involvement in the town including Fairlynch Museum.

19.456 Clerk's Report

Mrs J E Vanstone reported:

- Emails had been received by one or two councillors supposedly from the Town Mayor, Cllr Mrs C A Sismore-Hunt. These had been a scam and she had reported them to the Police and Action Fraud.
- She and Cllr G Turner had attended a meeting at East Devon District Council (EDDC) at which John Hart, Leader of Devon County Council (DCC) had been speaking about the County's budget. The following points were covered by Cllr Hart:
 - The Meeting was usually held in November, but the date had been put back because of the General Election. Therefore the Precept for 2020/21 had already been set. The budget had gone to Cabinet on 14 February and to Full Council on 20 February. She expected County Cllr Mrs C Channon would be able to expand on this in her report.
 - Cllr Hart had explained that 10% of the budget was on Adult Services, 8% on Children's Services. The total budget was £540m.
 - In addition to this, £500m came directly from government for schools. The school population had only gone up slightly
 - Cllr Hart had then asked for questions from the floor and covered a variety of topics including potholes, Brexit and transport.
- On 12 February she had attended a meeting at Cranbrook Town Council regarding CCTV. She gave members a bit of background on the project:
 - In 2017, following a couple of incidents in the High Street, the Chamber of Commerce had approached the Town Council regarding a CCTV system. Cllr A J Dent, Cllr T D Wright and Cllr C Richards had met with the Clerk to discuss how much of the High Street should be covered and they had agreed the area should run from Mackerel Square along Fore Street and High Street to the junction with Station Road. After this initial meeting, representatives from three local companies had been invited to come up with schemes and quotations.
 - Subsequently a meeting had been held with an officer from Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and the Chamber of Commerce. The OPCC officer had advised that funding was available from the OPCC and any footage from the High Street cameras could be monitored at a hub in Exeter. The officer had informed the meeting that the Police would handle all footage so effectively would be data controllers, meaning nothing for the Clerk or Town Council to do or see, the Council would just be an equipment host.
 - She said that Chamber of Commerce input and help was vital. The Chairman had contacted building owners for approval to house the equipment – this had taken some time! She was pleased to advise that all had agreed to have equipment on their buildings but were not happy to pay for the electricity!
 - She then reported on the meeting at Cranbrook. Town Councils in Exmouth, Okehampton, Dartmouth and Cranbrook were all interested in providing CCTV systems and were at varying stages in the process.
 - A representative from the OPCC had advised that there was no monitoring hub in Exeter and it was quite likely that there never would be one! The nearest hub was at Tolvaddon in Cornwall, which was the fire service control centre for Cornwall and another hub in Plymouth was under construction.
 - The OPCC officer had also advised that, if the cameras were not monitored by a company such as the Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service Business (CF&RSB), the Police would not take on the role of data controllers.
 - She explained that CF&RSB had capacity to take on the data control and monitoring of cameras but this would cost £1000 per annum per camera.

- She advised that some discussion had taken place on the possibility of joint procurement of equipment.
- She advised that following the meeting with Cllr Hart at EDDC, a note containing very useful information had been received regarding Drainage Responsibility.
- After over six months of requests, the Mandate Variation to enable her to make internet payments with Lloyds Bank had finally been activated. She was disappointed that she had had to make a formal complaint to get the changes organised!
- She reminded members of the Foreshore & Footpaths Committee, that the Spring Walk would be held on Wednesday morning. She was aware that most of the committee were unable to attend so asked that if there were any matters they wished to bring to the attention of the EDDC officer, to let her know by close of business on Tuesday.
- Following the Community Infrastructure Levy Committee Meeting she had contacted the EDDC Planning Obligation Officer who had agreed to come along to the offices on 9 March 2020 at 5.30pm to discuss all things CIL and S106. She suggested all members attend the meeting, not just the CIL Committee.

19.457 Reports of Council Representatives on Other Bodies

Budleigh Salterton Voluntary Car Service

Cllr Mrs L D Evans reported that the Group's finances were healthy, but the lack of passengers was causing concern. She was unsure how this situation was going to be overcome.

Exmouth & District Community Transport Group

Cllr Mrs L D Evans reported that following a very generous donation of £21000, the Group was now in a position to order its new bus. They had been trialling a Ford, but passengers were not very happy with its comfort, so she suspected they would be purchasing another Mercedes! She hoped it would be on the road by the end of the summer.

Budleigh in Bloom

She would be purchasing plants for the planters in March and the round beds opposite the Public Hall were soon to be planted with sustainable planting.

19.458 Reports of County and District Councillors

County Councillor

County Cllr Mrs C Channon reported:

- As reported by the Clerk, the budget for 2020/21 had been set. DCC was hoping for a four-year settlement from central government but unfortunately only a one-year settlement had been made. It was hoped that after the Chancellor's budget on 11 March a four-year settlement would be agreed.
 - There would be an increased spend of £43m this year. The highways budget had increased by £2m to alleviate drainage and highways issues caused by the bad weather.
 - Vital services such as Children's and Adult Services would have increased budgets, with an additional £11.5m and £23.7m respectively.
 - An extra 2% would be just for Adult Social Care, meaning a 3.99% increase overall. This was just under the 4% so there would be no need for a referendum.
 - She felt this was the best budget for some years, things needed to change as constant cuts in budgets had a serious affect on services such as highways and adult services.
- She was pleased to advise that funding was available to carry out patching works on West Hill. Unfortunately, due to the problems caused by the recent bad weather, this work had been delayed but she was hopeful it would be carried out soon.

- She had funding from her Locality Budget for two extra bollards in the High Street - she had often seen cars driving on the pavements and hoped this would alleviate the situation. The pavement was particularly bad by the Co-operative and Lloyds Pharmacy.
- Patching work had been carried out in Moor Lane and Bedlands Lane.
- She then spoke about Shandford:
 - She had suggested that the resident, who had spoken at the start of the meeting, should declare a pecuniary interest and should be careful what she said on the issue.
 - She was pleased that Simon Jupp MP had agreed to meet residents and relatives recently. There had been quite a queue outside the home when she had arrived! Unable to meet inside the home, the group had reconvened to the offices of Home Instead where Mr Jupp had taken quite a few questions to Abbeyfield – she understood he had already received a response.
 - A group of local residents had set up a steering group to see what could be done to keep the home open. They were not convinced that Abbeyfield had done enough to keep the home open.
 - Another group of residents had met with Abbeyfield representatives and had carried out a thorough review of what was needed to run the home. She respected their expertise and tenacity and whilst saddened to learn it was not feasible for them to run the home, she accepted their findings.
 - The building had been altered for its use as a care home and did not comply with current regulations.
 - Apart from the last twelve months, Abbeyfield had said that the home had not ‘washed its face’. The current manager had turned things around and it would appear poor senior management was at fault.
 - The home would have to be reaccredited by the Care Quality Commission and because of room sizes it may not comply. With less than 40 residents the home would not be viable.
 - She said it was really hard to take on this information as all town residents would have a soft spot for the home.
 - Many thought that the building had been sold to Abbeyfield in 2012, but this was not the case, it had actually been transferred.
 - Only three of the residents actually lived in Budleigh Salterton, East Budleigh, Colaton Raleigh or Otterton and thirteen were Devon County Council-sponsored residents. Places had already been found for half the residents.
 - Community ownership was questionable and this interest had been lost when the building was transferred to Abbeyfield. If for any reason the home was not viable, any profit from a sale had to be reinvested to support the town and surrounding villages for vulnerable and elderly residents. This would be run by a Trust acceptable to the community.
 - Interest had been received from another company which runs similar homes. The offer had been turned down as residents had already been given notice to leave. The decision had been reported in the paper in September with no indication from them but they might reappear once the building was on the market.
 - The cost of repairs to make the building viable as a home were near on £500000. The payments from locals would not go very far!

Cllr R D Sherriff said he had read the letter from Abbeyfield sent to the resident and the information contained within it reinforced the information which County Cllr Mrs C Channon had given the Town Council – the resident seemed to be choosing to ignore this information!

County Cllr Mrs C Channon said that Abbeyfield could have better handled this issue and explained that the home was losing money. Quite a lot of repairs had been carried out already but more were required and whilst there was a Legacy it was not sufficient to fund all the repairs that were needed.

District Councillors

District Cllr P M Jarvis reported that he had attended an interesting meeting of the Police & Crime Panel.

- The Commissioner had, with representatives from district and county councils and some MPs, requested additional funds from central government to aid policing during the summer influx of tourists. The criteria had changed and, with many other requests already received, the Devon & Cornwall request had been refused.
- The trialling of tri-service officers (a combination of police, fire and medics working together) had been successful and it was hoped to roll this out across the region. However as officers had to be within five minutes of a fire station, it would be unable to cover the entire region.
- PCSO numbers were being reduced from 200 to 150 which was disappointing.
- There had been an increase in violent crimes – Devon & Cornwall was 5%, whereas it was only 1% nationally. It was thought this might be down to increased reporting.
- In 2019/21 the OPCC had increased its precept by 12%. There was approval to increase by £10 per Band D property for 2020/21 but the Commissioner had decided on a £9 increase (4%). Panel members had preferred the £10 increase which in turn would have put an additional £360000 in the kitty. He said this might not seem a lot, but members had tried to veto her lower increase but this had failed as the majority of Panel Members did not agree with the veto.

District Cllr A J Dent and District Cllr T D Wright had nothing to report.

19.459 Finance Inspection

- (i) Payment of cheques for the month of February 2020, in accordance with Appendix A, was approved.
- (ii) It was noted that the Chairman of the Finance Committee had carried out the internal finance inspection for January and February 2020.

19.460 Request for Grant Aid 2019/20: Veterans Community Support (East Devon)

District Cllr A J Dent asked to speak in favour of this request. He said he was the EDDC Armed Forces Covenant representative as well as being an army veteran. He explained that he regularly attended the Group's meetings which were held locally. The Group consisted of about twenty veterans and widows. They received no external support, either medically or financially and all, bar one, were on benefits and unable to work. He said some had deep-seated mental and emotional issues and one was still battling historic charges from duty in Northern Ireland. Cllr Dent said he had met Jonny Mercer MP at an event at Lympstone recently and had encouraged the MP to take on this issue.

Cllr Dent then explained that the group benefited immensely from trips out and a donation to help fund the planned trip would be much appreciated.

The Town Mayor, Cllr Mrs C A Sismore-Hunt thanked Cllr Dent for raising awareness of this Group.

- (i) Consideration was given to making a donation to the Group.
Resolved: A donation will be made.
- (ii) Consideration was then given to the amount of the donation.
Resolved: A donation of £485 will be made. Cllr Mrs M L Kenneally-Stone advised that the Group should apply to the Town Council for additional funding if additional trips etc were organised in the future.

19.461 Lions Club of Budleigh Salterton: Gala Week – 25 May to 2 June 2020

(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 for VE Day and will remain in situ until after the Literary Festival in September (w/c 27 April to w/c 21 September 2020 approximately).

Resolved: Approved.

(iv) It was noted that an application had been submitted to Devon County Council for a road closure for the High Street and part of Station Road on 23 May 2020 to enable the Gala Week parade to take place.

19.462 Correspondence Received

- Simon Jupp MP: Response to the Town Council's letter regarding the closure of the Fire Station
- Budleigh Salterton Croquet Club: Further letter regarding the recent request for Grant Aid
- Devon Association of Local Councils: Minutes from Larger Councils Sub Committee meeting held on 14 November 2019 and agenda for the meeting on 13 February (subsequently cancelled)
- Devon County Council: Temporary Prohibition of Traffic Order:
 - 11 to 14 May 2020 – Little Knowle: work to erect steel pole by existing pole
- Devon County Council: Information on Drainage Maintenance Responsibilities
- Allotment & Leisure Gardener: Issue 1 2020

19.463 Any Other Business at the Chairman's Discretion

- Cllr D J Hayward asked what action the Town Council would take if the coronavirus escalated into a pandemic.

Cllr Mrs M L Kenneally-Stone said that it would be best to take advice from Public Health England and the NHS.

County Cllr Mrs C Channon advised that DCC had a policy in place which would be rolled out if necessary.

- The Town Mayor, Cllr Mrs C A Sismore-Hunt advised that the date of the Annual Town Meeting had changed. The meeting would now be held on Monday 20 April.

19.464 Dates of Next Meetings

Planning Committee:	9 March 2020 at 7.00pm
Foreshore & Footpaths Committee:	9 March 2020 on the rising of the Planning Committee
Budleigh Salterton Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Committee:	9 March 2020 on the rising of the Foreshore & Footpaths Committee
Planning Committee:	23 March 2020 at 7.00pm
Town Council:	23 March 2020 on the rising of the Planning Committee

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 8.01pm.

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Chairman

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Date

Approved