

SHERBORNE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the SHERBORNE TOWN COUNCIL held at The Manor House, Sherborne, on Monday 19 FEBRUARY 2018 at 6.45 p.m.

Present: Cllr J Hogben (Town Mayor)
Cllrs J Andrews, D Birley, J Carey, D Elliott, S Greene,
A Hall, M Hall, R Legg, J Pentolfe and K Pike

In attendance: Mr T Savage (Town Clerk)
Mrs S Woodford (Civic Administrator)

Youth Advisors: *Annabel Mortimer of Sherborne Girls School*
Emilie Tubbs of Sherborne Girls School

134. PUBLIC SESSION

- 134.1 Police Report – Apologies were received from Sgt Want who was unable to attend the meeting due to operational demand and the Town Clerk presented Sgt Wants written report.
- 134.2 Mrs Marjorie Snowden congratulated Cllr Hogben on being the first lady in the role of Mayor of Sherborne since herself and she also noted the 100th anniversary of the right to vote for woman. Mrs Snowden then asked about the progress being made with the proposed Sherborne Community Arts Centre/Paddock Gallery Project. She had heard various contradictory rumours and wanted to know whether planning permission had been sought for the project and she was concerned about the proposal for new homes adjacent to the Market Car Park, removing the potential for a commercial development or the extension of the car park. She also noted that many of the original trustees were no longer associated with SCACT and wondered who had replaced them and whether the Town Council supported the project overall. The Town Clerk responded stating that he had recently received correspondence from the Trust following 3 months silence and could confirm that pre-planning application discussions are taking place with West Dorset District Council and that General Sir Robert Fry is still Chairman of the Trust. Any changes to the Trust were the business of the Trust and nothing to do with the Town Council. The Town Council had supported the Trust in that it had agreed in principle to providing a lease for Paddock Gardens and had prepared draft Heads of Terms for such a lease. The Town Clerk stated that he expected the Town Council to deal with all the elements of the proposed project as and when they came forward but at this stage he could not guarantee whether it would support every aspect of the Paddock Gallery Project.
- 134.2 Mr Mike Keating spoke about progress being made in finding a replacement service to cover the loss of the 57 Bus in Sherborne. which was axed by the operators as it was not economically sustainable as most passengers only pay concessionary fares. A successful meeting was held attended by approximately 200 residents and chaired by Cllr Peter Shortland. A committee is likely to be formed which will look at the options. Palliative services such as the use of the Sherborne Voluntary Ambulance are under consideration, but with only 16 seats it has limited capacity, but could operate several runs. Beaver Cabs have an 8-seater minibus which they charge out at £8 or it may still be possible to get South West Coaches to divert the X10 or X11, but so far they have not committed. Oliver Letwin, MP, is asking the Secretary of State to carry out a proper review of the Concessionary Fare Scheme and there is a proposal that Dorset may operate a pilot scheme allowing for those who hold a bus pass to be charged a small fair for each journey. Unfortunately, this will not happen quickly as it involves changes to national government legislation.

Cllr Greene asked if the NORDCAT bus had been considered, Mr Keating observed that again it is a small bus and would not have sufficient capacity on its own. Cllr Andrews observed that it had been a good meeting and thanked Mr Keating for taking the time to oversee this exercise.

134.3 Mr Bloomfield raised two issues:-

Firstly he is concerned about how Sherborne residents directly benefit from the grant provided to Tourism Forum derived from the precept that local individuals pay for within their council tax. Secondly he noted the item on the agenda regarding Portfolio Holders and suggested the introduction of a Technology Portfolio Holder or Champion who would look at items such as the electronic notification of bus times at bus stops, electric car charging points and increased use of Twitter, Facebook and developing social networking to benefit the Town. He suggested that it would be easy for Sherborne and/or the Town Council to lag behind in this technological age as drones and electronic cars are soon going to be commonplace.

135. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Cllr Andrews reported on:

- The Puffin Crossing at Bristol Road which has the go-ahead but it is taking time to progress as capital funding has to be agreed, then primary and public consultations will be required.
- The Barton Farm/A30/Horsecastles Lane junction is progressing well and on time. The Sherborne News and Views Facebook page contains an update issued each week.
- The Dorset County Council Budget was set last Thursday with a 2.99% increase on Council Tax along with a 3% increase in the Social Care Precept making a total increase of 5.99%.
- Cllr M Hall queried the progress with resurfacing of certain roads and noted the ineffective way in which potholes have been repaired. Cllr Andrews clarified that from now on all potholes will be squared-off and then filled which increase the adherence of the filler. It was noted that there are many roads in Sherborne that need attention, namely Long Street and Back Lane. Cllr Andrews indicated that the funds to carry out this work are simply not available as the Government has removed the Support Grant. He has written to Oliver Letwin, MP, suggesting that all Members of Parliament for Dorset should lobby the Government asking that Dorset be treated fairly along with other shire counties.
- Discussion continued on Government reorganisation, the future of the 'Dorset For You' website and the education of the public to ensure they use the modern technology.
- Cllr Pentolfe asked if the primary consultation for the Sherborne Parking Review is underway and to ensure that it is well publicised. Cllr Andrews gave assurance that it will happen in due course.
- The meeting on Local Government Reorganisation will take place this Wednesday and a final decision is needed from the Secretary of State by Friday of this week or it will not be possible to postpone the District Council elections.

136. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr A Cook

137. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATION REQUESTS

Councillors were reminded of their obligations to declare their interests in the following items and to indicate the action they will be taking when the item is considered in accordance with the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Model Code of Conduct prepared to comply with the requirements of Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011.

137.1 Cllrs Elliott, M Hall and Legg declared an interest in Agenda Item No 7 as members of the District Council and would not vote.

137.2 Cllr M Hall declared an interest in Agenda Item No 11 as members of the District Council and Sustainability Committee and would not vote.

138. MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 19 FEBRUARY 2018

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Legg and SECONDED by Cllr Andrews and AGREED unanimously that:

The Minutes (Appendix A), having been circulated to Members prior to the meeting were taken as read and approved as a correct record subject to minor amendments.

139. MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Filming for the feature film 'Mari' has now been completed.

140. PLANS COMMITTEE MINUTES

Cllr Pike briefed members on the committee meeting of 5 February 2018.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Pike and SECONDED by Cllr Greene and AGREED (8 in favour and 3 non-votes) that:

The Minutes of the Plans Committee (Appendix B) held on 5 February were received and adopted.

141. FINANCE AND RESOURCES

141.1 Payment Schedule

Cllr Pentolfe introduced the items relating to finance commencing with the Payment Schedule, the paper was noted (see Appendix C) and it was PROPOSED by Cllr Pentolfe and SECONDED by Cllr Andrews and AGREED unanimously:

That for the period 23/1/18 to 19/2/18 payment of Cheque (108284 to 108286) of £220.62 Credit Card Payments of £570.16, BACS Payments of £66,552.29 and Direct Debits amounting to £2,215.57 be approved from the Town Council Current Account and that for the period 23/1/18 to 19/2/18 BACS Payments of £3,167.00 and Direct Debits of £2,359.35 be approved from the Digby Hall and Library Account.

141.2 Bank Balances

The paper was noted (Appendix D) and it was PROPOSED by Cllr Pentolfe and SECONDED by Cllr A Hall and AGREED unanimously that:

The Bank Balances/Reconciliations for Sherborne Town Council and the Digby Hall and Library as of the 31 January 2018 are approved.

Cllr M Hall enquired whether the Town Council held sufficient funds in reserve should there be any kind of emergency. The Clerk gave assurance that in line with recommendations, the Town Council held well in excess of 3 months operational costs within the Reserves and £100,000 is specifically held in the Unallocated General Reserve for an unforeseen event.

141.3 Grant Application – Sherborne Douzelage

Members considered a grant application from Sherborne Douzelage (Appendix E). The Town Clerk informed the meeting that the 2017/18 Grants Budget had been completely allocated but that underspends within the Council overall budget had been identified to compensate if the Council reached the decision that funding should be made available to support this grant application.

PROPOSED by Cllr Elliott and SECONDED by Cllr Legg and AGREED unanimously that:

Sherborne Town Council grants £310 toward Sherborne Douzelage.

142. REVIEW OF PORTFOLIO

Members were in receipt of a report (Appendix F) recommending they review the Council's Portfolios with specific consideration to Health and Safety and to the title of each portfolio. Cllr Andrews stressed the importance of the Health and Safety and the corporate responsibility the Council have for its maintenance and welcomed its inclusion in the Staffing Portfolio.

Although not on the agenda for decision at this meeting, discussion focused on Mr Bloomfield's suggestion of introducing a Technology Portfolio. The need for the Council to engage more in the use of social media and websites was discussed. There was concern that there is a great deal of out of date information relating to Sherborne on various websites that are out of the control of the council and the need for a central hub providing local information. The need to encourage the District Council into the provision of electric car charging points as it is believed there is funding available for carbon neutral projects.

The Town Clerk pointed out that an IT Working Group was formed in 2016 and it recommended that the Town Council move to become digital by way of electronic agenda and minutes, the issue of I-pads and the provision of a new website with the capability to be easily expanded to encompass local Sherborne groups and organisations. However, following the recommendation of that Working Group, the Town Council agreed at that time that it did not wish to venture into the world of social media as it was difficult to manage effectively and would involve a lot of administrative time that was not currently available.

Discussion returned to the agenda item and the provision of a portfolio encompassing Health and Safety and Members were in support.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr M Hall and SECONDED by Cllr A Hall and AGREED unanimously that:

Sherborne Town Council:

- i) **Notes the content of this report.**
- ii) **Extends the remit of the Staffing Portfolio Holder to include Health & Safety incorporating the points identified in paragraph 3.8 of this report.**
- iii) **Renames the Staffing portfolio to Staffing, Health & Safety Portfolio.**
- iv) **Renames the Finance and Resources Portfolio to the Finance Portfolio.**
- v) **Renames the Playing Fields & Recreation Areas Portfolio to the Open Spaces Portfolio.**

143. TOURISM FORUM

Members were in receipt of a progress report (Appendix G) from the Sherborne Tourism Forum explaining how it has utilised the funding allocated to it by Sherborne Town Council to help promote Sherborne as a visitor destination. Members focused on the point raised by Mr Bloomfield during the Public session at the start of the meeting regarding what direct benefit did the residents of Sherborne obtain from the funding invested in the Tourism Forum and the Town Clerk agreed that he could raise that point with the Forum for consideration. He pointed out that the recent Cruise Ship Educational Meeting attended by members of the Forum had resulted in 2 Cruise Liners booking trips to visit Sherborne, showing what can be achieved by proactive marketing initiated by the Forum. Cllr Birley pointed out that the more visitors that are encouraged to come to Sherborne, the greater the use of the local shops, cafes and restaurants and therefore a boost to the local economy which will help to sustain the town.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carey and SECONDED by Cllr Legg and AGREED unanimously that:

That Sherborne Town Council:

- i) Acknowledges the positive and productive work carried out by the Tourism Forum and notes the use of the financial support allocated to the Forum by STC during 2017/18.**
- ii) Request that the Tourism Forum considers how the residents of Sherborne benefit from the Forum’s work and its use of the grant funding allocated to it by Sherborne Town Council.**

144. COUNCILLOR MOTION

Members were requested to consider a Motion (Appendix H) submitted to the Town Clerk by Cllr Greene in line with Standing Order Number 9.

After further consideration it was PROPOSED by Cllr Greene and SECONDED by Cllr Andrews and AGREED (7 in favour and 3 abstentions and 1 non-vote) to support the motion below:-

‘That Sherborne Town Council earnestly requests the District Council to urge our MP and the Minister for Housing, Community and Local Government to reinstate a National Zero Carbon Homes standard. Supporting this, I have read that until 2015 when the Government scrapped a national Zero Carbon Homes standard, local authorities could use planning permission to insist on higher efficiency standards in building proposals. Since almost half the energy we consume is used in buildings – heating homes, work places, shops and public buildings, providing hot water and powering all appliances – it is vital that the Zero Carbon standard is revived or a better new one devised. For example, in S. Ireland, Dublin City Council requires all new buildings to meet Passivhaus standards or above. In 2016, there were more than 1,000 buildings under construction in the UK to a Passivhaus standard. Upgrading this is highlighted by Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit

145. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Cllr Pike reported on a recent meeting of Sherborne Society CPRE.

146. EXEMPT BUSINESS

There was no exempt business.

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm

..... Town Mayor