



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 08 NOVEMBER 2022 AT 7.30 PM

AT THE COMMUNITY BUILDING, IRNHAM ROAD, MINEHEAD TA24 5DW

The Meeting was recorded and broadcast live on the MTC Facebook page

Members are reminded that Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety, Human Rights and Biodiversity

Present:	Chair:	Cllr C Palmer
	Councillors:	Cllr A Lawton, Cllr M Palmer, Cllr Marcus Kravis* **, Cllr A Kingston James, Cllr C Gilberto, Cllr B Hodson (* denotes Somerset West and Taunton District "SWaT" Councillor)
Officers in Attendance:		Mr B Howe – Deputy Clerk Mr B Parker – Operations Manager Mrs M Porter – Assistant Clerk
Members of the Press and Public:		0 members of the Press 0 members of the Public
Councillor Absent:		Cllr J Rogers

Cllr C Palmer welcomed all to the meeting, including Cllr Bill Hodson, a new councillor, and Ben Parker, the new Operations Manager for Minehead Town Council.

213 **To receive** Apologies for Absence [LGA 1972 s 85 \(1\)](#)

Apologies had been received from Cllr J Bonar

214 **To receive** Councillors' Declarations of Interest and any Dispensations

In accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members

Member	Minute	Interest	Time Period	Speak/Vote
Cllr M Kravis	All	SWaT Councillor SCC Councillor	2022	Spoke and voted
Cllr C Palmer	All	SWaT Councillor	2022	Spoke and voted

Dispensations

None.

215 **To approve** the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on Tuesday 11 October 2022
- Minutes to be agreed by Councillors who were in attendance

Proposed: Cllr M Palmer
Agreed by all

Seconded: Cllr C Palmer

216 **To adjourn** the Meeting for Public Inclusion *Standing Order No 3e*

No public attended the meeting.

217 **To receive a verbal update on Quay West public toilets and Changing Places toilets.**

Bryan Howe (Deputy Clerk) an architect has been appointed. There might be a change from the original plan to move the entrance from the front of the building to the side - this was for safety reasons and would avoid installing a disabled ramp. A small wall would be erected in front of the new entrance to provide extra safety from parking vehicles.

The work is expected to start in the spring, providing the planning application and tender process had been completed.

218 **To receive** an update on the Christmas Lights:

The Christmas lights will be switched on, on Friday 25 November at 7.00pm. They will along The Parade and for the first time down The Avenue. It will be a much larger display than last year and there will be the usual Christmas tree on Wellington Square.

Minehead Town Council is responsible for switching on the lights only.

BID will be providing the entertainment and therefore responsible for the Event Licence and believe Gateway is involved as well. There will be variety of entertainment going on during the day.

The Farmers Market and some retailers would stay open later (though this was yet to be confirmed).

Cllr B Hodson expressed his concern about the switch on time as it was a bit late for the younger generation.

Bryan Howe explained they changed the time this year because of the problems last year that meant they didn't get turned on until 7.00 so decided a later time would be better

219 To receive a verbal update from the Operations Manager on "Greener Minehead"

Ben Parker, Operations Manager, introduced himself as the new Operations Manager and thanked everyone for welcoming him to the Council and Committees. Ben was the line Manager for the Amenities Team and his goal was to deliver an efficient and more robust service.

Ben Parker had a Greener Ways of Working meeting last week, with Cllr M Palmer, Cllr A Lawton and M Porter, Assistant Clerk. Topics discussed were changes to planting of the bedding plants, weed control, new working practice and composting.

Michele Porter gave an update on the allotments and the new processes going forward.

Ben welcomed other members to the Greener Minehead Meeting and Cllr C Palmer expressed an interest and would attend the next meeting.

Minehead had won the Silver Gilt award in the Somerset West in Bloom. Ben thanked the Amenities Team, the Wombles and other voluntary groups for helping us achieve this prestigious award.

220 To receive a verbal update from the Assistant Clerk on Allotments

Michele contacted everyone on the waiting list for an allotment and is up to date.

We have re-let 7 plots, served several improvement notices on a few and have offered another 3 tenancies this week and we are carrying out weekly inspections to ensure plots are being cultivated and in good condition.

We will be reviewing our stance on the keeping of chickens or livestock on MTC allotments and will be bringing a proposal to Full Council to prohibit keeping chickens on Council run allotments.

Michele contacted the 3 tenants that have chickens on their plots about the Bird Flu regulations from DEFRA that came into effect at midnight on Monday 7 November.

MTC inspected the plots on 8 November to ensure their compliance.

Over 50% of the plot holders have paid their rent and would be sending reminders to those outstanding towards the end of November, Michele's expectation is for all rents must be paid by 30 November 2022.

221 **To discuss improvements at the Cemetery – paths and compound.**

Bryan Howe told the meeting there was a rolling programme for maintaining the paths and vegetation in the cemetery. Bryan and Ben would visit the cemetery to review what needed to be done. Bryan had suggested putting up a screen to provide privacy. The intention was to use hedging rather than fencing panels. MTC intended to instal some additional green bins.

Cllr M Palmer enquired about the possibility of repairing the entrance gates, though conscious of stepping on any toes.

Bryan reiterated that we spend the budget soon.

222 **To discuss the future of Play Area**

The children's play area has fallen into disrepair, though it is on SWT land it is maintained by Minehead Town Council. Council needs to have an open discussion to replace or close the play area. MTC carries out regular safety inspections to ensure it is safe to use and compliant.

Cllr A Lawton said it was a popular play area and was well used especially during the summer, so would like it repaired and not closed.

Cllr C Palmer raised his concern about spending any money on the play area until we know SWT's intentions are after Unitary.

Bryan Howe suggested we apply to lease the land from SWT and apply for a S106 funding to improve the play equipment.

Cllr A Lawton would like to see something for the older children and use natural products rather than metal play as in our MTC play areas.

Cllr M Palmer agreed with Cllr C Palmer and Cllr A Lawton on finding out where we stand with regard the land ownership.

Bryan Howe suggests we have a variety of play equipment to cover all ages.

Cllr C Palmer thanked everyone for attending the meeting and proposed to close the meeting

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer **Seconded:** Cllr A Kingston James.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.