



MINEHEAD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 7.30 PM AT
THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, IRNHAM ROAD, MINEHEAD TA24 5DW

The Meeting was digitally recorded

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

Chair: Cllr P Bolton* (Mayor)

Councillors Present: Cllr A Berry, Cllr T Bloomfield, Cllr E Jones, Cllr A Lawton, Cllr R Lillis, Cllr J Malin, Cllr C Palmer*, Cllr M Palmer, Cllr T Venner*
(* denotes Somerset West and Taunton Councillor "SWaT")

Councillors in Attendance: Cllr B Allen*
Cllr M Chilcott **
Cllr C Lawrence**

(*denotes Somerset West and Taunton "SWaT" Councillor
**denotes Somerset County Councillor "SCC")

Councillor Absent: Cllr H Rose

Officers in Attendance: Ms S Rawle (Clerk)
Mr B Howe (Deputy Clerk)
Mrs J Notley (Note-taker)

Members of the Public: 0

Members of the Press: 0

The Mayor welcomed Councillors, officers and those watching on Facebook.

1275 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [LGA 1972 s 85 \(1\)](#)

Apologies had been received from Cllr M Burke, Cllr O Harvey, Cllr N Hercock, Cllr A Kingston-James and Cllr M Kingston-James.

1276 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN RESPECT OF ANY AGENDA ITEMS [\(Localism Act 2011\)](#)

Member	Item	Interest	Time Period	Speak/Vote
Cllr P Bolton	All	SWaT Councillor	2021	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr C Palmer	All	SWaT Councillor	2021	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted
Cllr T Venner	All	SWaT Councillor	2021	Stayed in the room, spoke and voted

DISPENSATIONS (Localism Act 2011)

No-one had requested any dispensations.

1277 TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:

- **Somerset County Council (“SCC”)**

Cllr Mandy Chilcott reported on the carbon reduction measures instigated by SCC with the aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. She told the meeting that half of the street lighting was now carbon friendly using LED lanterns and that 6,244 tons of CO₂ had been saved which would save Somerset taxpayers £950,000 per year.

Cllr Chilcott told the meeting of a motion she had put to SCC for a scheme to enable care leavers to have a guaranteed interview for any jobs they applied for provided they meet the right criteria.

Cllr Chilcott reported that the Local Government reorganisation work had commenced with all Councils across the county. A divisional and ward boundaries review was being undertaken. The views of local Councils were being sought on the proposal to bring 2023 local elections forward to 2022 to link with the elections for the unitary authority.

Her update on the parking review was that WSP Consultancy were supporting officers in the parking review. Communities would be provided with details of what sort of interventions could take place across a range of locations. It will provide an opportunity of all those with an interest to share their views. She had asked for regular meetings to take place while the review moved forward.

Cllr Christine Lawrence said she would leave written information with the Clerk for Councillors. She reported on the 3 phases of the upgrading of the cycle and walkway between Minehead and Carhampton. The plans were available online and were open for public consultation.

Cllr Lawrence told the meeting that there would be refugees coming to Somerset and was leaving details of a website which advised of the ways in which people could help – www.somerset.gov.uk/refugee-resettlement/. She also gave the meeting more information about Spark Somerset, previously known as Engage, and a contact – Jeff Brown, Service Manager, Stronger Communities – helping people in the community to help each other and directing volunteers to where they were most needed. Cllr Lawrence also spoke about the imminent road closure in Carhampton and advised listeners to very carefully plan their journeys.

Cllr Malin posed questions to Cllr Chilcott about Minehead Library.

- **Somerset West and Taunton District Council (“SWaT”)**

Cllr Benet Allen reported that SWaT had sent an advisory letter to town and parish councils about the possibility of bringing forward local elections from 2023 to 2022 to bring them into sync with the proposed elections for the new Unitary Authority.

This would mean elections for all Councils next May. Central Government had asked SWaT to comment on proposals for ward sizes but the new authority would have relatively few councillors for a lot of people; there might possibly be only two wards for Minehead, Alcombe and Periton.

Garden waste collections had restarted after a six-week gap caused by a shortage of lorry drivers. Subscribers had been given eight weeks extra on their subscription periods to mitigate the inconvenience. The SWaT newsletter contained an appeal for anyone with an HGV licence to get in touch

Somerset’s 16 recycling sites would go over to their winter timetables from Friday 1 October, with weekday opening hours of 9am to 5pm while weekends would remain 9am to 4pm.

SWaT was once again offering free trees to town and parish councils, including unparished areas. Local councils wishing to take part in this initiative could order bare root trees free of charge, up to the value of £50 as per the listed guide on the SWaT's Free Trees webpage. This was equivalent to seven or eight trees depending on the combination of species chosen, which include Beech, Hawthorn, Lime and Oak.

- **Police**

The Mayor read out the crime figures from the Police monthly newsletter for the benefit of those watching on Facebook. He said he found some of the figures quite worrying.

- **Councillors attending meetings on behalf of Minehead Town Council**

No Councillors had attended any meetings on behalf of MTC.

- **Advisory and Working Groups**

There had been no Advisory or Working Group meetings.

1278 TO ADJOURN THE MEETING FOR PUBLIC INCLUSION [Standing Order No 3e](#)

No-one had asked to speak. The Mayor told the meeting that Sarah Ellwood, who had been expected to give a presentation on the new cycle path, had been unable to attend but had sent in her report, which Councillors had seen.

1279 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor had no announcements for September.

1280 TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 24 AUGUST 2021 –
MINUTES TO BE AGREED BY COUNCILLORS WHO WERE IN ATTENDANCE

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr Lillis

Agreed with 2 abstentions (Councillors not present at the meeting) and 8 in favour.

1281 TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2021, THE FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2021 AND THE AMENITIES & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2021

The Minutes were noted.

1282 FINANCE MATTERS

1282.1 *To approve Urgent Payments for September 2021*

Payments 1-12, totalling £92,133.49, of which £19,127.24 was for staff salaries.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Malin

Approved with all in favour.

1282.2 *To approve Payments under £1,000 for September 2021*

Payments 13-47, totalling £10,326.57; payments 13-34 had already been approved for payment by Finance & Staffing Committee.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Berry

Approved with all in favour.

1282.3 *To approve Payments over £1,000 for September 2021*

Payment 18 for a sum of £1,060.80.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Venner

Approved with all in favour.

1282.4 *To approve Regular Payments for August 2021*

Payments 1-23, totalling £4,322.48.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Lillis

Approved with all in favour.

1282.5 *To approve Payments by Procurement Card for August/September 2021*

Payments 49-63, totalling £830.97.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield

Approved with all in favour.

1282.6 *To approve Income Report for August 2021*

Income totalling £7,187.77.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Malin

Approved with all in favour.

1283 TO CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE & STAFFING COMMITTEE

1283.1 **To agree a contribution of £16,355.76 towards the new children's play area equipment alongside the S106 grant of £41,124.97**

The Deputy Clerk reported that approval was needed to spend the £16,355.76 from Council's budget. Materials had already been ordered and councillors had seen a report on the play equipment.

Cllr Venner thanked the Clerk and Deputy Clerk for successfully applying for the grant. The Deputy Clerk reported that 11 pieces of equipment would be purchased for 3 sites – Irnham Recreation Ground, King George Playing Field and Cross Farm Park - mostly for the very young but across all age groups.

Proposed: Cllr C Palmer

Seconded: Cllr Venner

Agreed with all in favour that Council contribute £16,355.76 from the budget to top up the S106 Grant of £41,124.97 to provide new play equipment at three of Council's play areas.

1283.2 **To discuss installation of grinding rails at Irnham Road Recreation Ground**

The Deputy Clerk reminded the meeting that the grinding rails were originally going to form part of the grant application discussed in the previous item. The company supplying the play equipment did not provide grinding rails so these would instead be built and funded by MTC. The site identified was at Irnham Road Recreation Ground near the toilets. The Clerk told Councillors that the rails themselves would cost £450-£500 but the ground works including a concrete base would bring the cost up to £3,000-£4,000.

Cllr Venner was concerned about health and safety and public liability issues. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the grinding rails would be added to Council's insurance. Cllr Venner considered the rails would be better situated at Minehead Eye.

The Deputy Clerk asked if Councillors wished to set a budget for the project.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr Malin

Agreed with 7 in favour, 1 against and 2 abstentions that Council spend up to £3,000 on installing grinding rails at Irnham Road Recreation Ground.

1284 TO CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AMENITIES & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

1284.1 **To discuss the maintenance issue on a parcel of land in the Church Steps area and to agree to write to SWaT**

Cllr Venner had brought this matter to the Amenities & Environment Committee. The Clerk explained it involved a walled shrub bed on St Michael's Road which had been in disrepair for a long time and was very overgrown. More concerning was that the high retaining wall had a large crack in it. The proposal was that Council should write to SWaT and ask it to inspect this area. This parcel of land was on its asset database. The Clerk had had a chance to speak to the Asset team at SWaT and she had sent over some photographs and they were going to inspect the site.

Cllr Venner said that SWaT and SCC would have to liaise because the wall was cracking away from the road and would require a lot of work. Cllr Venner said he had been trying for two years to get something done about this and had had complaints from members of the public. He wanted it on record that MTC as a body had raised its concerns.

Proposed: Cllr Venner

Seconded: Cllr Malin

Agreed with all in favour that Council write to SWaT as a matter of urgency requesting it to clear and maintain this site to a much higher standard and to repair the retaining wall.

1285 TO RECEIVE TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT ON THE ALLOTMENT SITES FROM CLLR M PALMER FOR THE ALLOTMENTS ADVISORY GROUP

Cllr M Palmer told the meeting that all sites had been visited and their condition assessed in July 2021. One site in particular was bad. A number of tenants were receiving letters terminating their tenancies. There were plans to re-mark boundaries and re-size some plots during the following winter. There was some S106 funding available and she and the Clerk would put together a plan for making allotments more user-friendly, particularly those with mobility issues – including new paths, easier access and raised beds. This was an ongoing programme which would take several years to complete. Cllr M Palmer said she would forward her report to any Councillors who had not yet seen it.

The Clerk said there should be another meeting of the Allotments Advisory Group as soon as possible and recommendations brought to Full Council's October meeting.

1286 TO AGREE A DATE FOR THE CAPITAL BUDGET SEMINAR – SUGGESTED 19 OCTOBER 2021

The Deputy Clerk advised Councillors that this Seminar was to discuss any capital projects to be planned for April 2022 onwards. This could be major investments or savings for the future and would feed into the Budget process in November.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr C Palmer

Agreed with all in favour that the Capital Budget Seminar be set for 19 October 2021.

1287 TO DISCUSS THE TYTHINGS COURT SINKHOLE

Cllr Venner confirmed that the sinkhole was not in Tythings Court but in the service road parallel to Park Street on the area of land at the rear of 2 and 18 Park St Minehead at TA24 5NQ. He had had contact with the Environment Agency and also SCC and SWaT about the matter but had been able to make no progress. The police had put tape around the hole and a local firm had put a metal sheet over it as a gesture of goodwill. The cavern beneath it, under 2cm thick tarmac, was 8 feet deep and there was a flow of water. No authority had adopted the service lane. Cllr Venner wished MTC to write to all 3 authorities expressing its grave concerns, arrange a meeting and ascertain who would take the lead in the matter. He was emphatic that MTC should not take the lead but could host a meeting. The matter was now urgent and a health hazard.

Proposed: Cllr Venner

Seconded: Cllr Bolton

Agreed with all in favour that Council write to the Environment Agency, SWaT and SCC expressing MTC's grave concerns about the sinkhole and arranging a meeting to decide who should take the lead in the matter and move it forward.

1288 TO AGREE THE PURCHASE OF A FLOOR CLEANING MACHINE

Councillors had seen a report by the Deputy Clerk about the possible purchase of a floor cleaning machine because cleaning the new Summerland Place toilets with a mop was not satisfactory. The floor supplier recommended a particular company supplying cleaning machines which were suitable for this floor and it had demonstrated two models – one using chemicals and one using steam only. The machine could be used anywhere and came with a trolley. Cllr Bolton approved of the steam machine because it would cut down on the use of chemicals.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr Venner

Agreed with all in favour to suspend Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

Proposed: Cllr Venner

Seconded: Cllr Malin

Agreed with all in favour to purchase the steam cleaning machine at a cost of £2,775.

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr Bloomfield

Agreed with all in favour to restore Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

1289 TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC
(Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960)

Proposed: Cllr Bolton

Seconded: Cllr Jones

Agreed with all in favour.

The Public Meeting closed at 8.49 pm.