

AXBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL
DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF AXBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON
MONDAY 16TH OCTOBER 2017 IN THE TOWN HALL, THE SQUARE, AXBRIDGE

Meeting commenced: 7.30 p.m.

Meeting concluded: 9.40p.m.

Present: Councillors Ham (Mayor), Wells (Deputy Mayor), Browne, Bridgeman, Davies, Gall, Gould, Kendall, Myerson, Page and Taylor

Also in attendance: Mrs V Brice, Town Clerk together with County Councillor Taylor and three members of the public (for part of meeting)

96/17 Apologies for Absence

The Mayor advised members that she had received Councillor Laken's resignation from the Council. Members would miss his presence on the Council and his support and expertise, particularly on planning matters. Members wished him well and the Chairman would present him with a gift on behalf of the Council to thank him for his commitment and support over the years. The Clerk would contact Sedgemoor District Council to declare the vacancy.

RESOLVED: that apologies from Councillor Mrs Davies (work commitment) be received and approved.

97/17 Minutes of the Council Meeting – 18th September 2017

Members received the above minutes.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 18th September 2017 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

98/17 Declarations of Interest and Applications for Dispensations

Councillor Browne – declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in relation to planning application 02/16/00030 (relating to the erection of up to 80 dwellings on land to the South of Houlgate Way) living close to the site, and would leave the meeting should the application be considered (minute 103/17(c) refers).

Councillor Myerson – declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in relation to planning application 02/16/00030 (relating to the erection of up to 80 dwellings on land to the South of Houlgate Way) living close to the site, and would leave the meeting should the application be considered (minute 103/17(c) refers).

Councillor Taylor – declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in relation to planning application 02/16/00030 (relating to the erection of up to 80 dwellings on land to the South of Houlgate Way) living adjacent to the site, and would leave the meeting should the application be considered (minute 103/17(c) refers).

There were no applications for dispensations.

99/17 Public Participation

Mr Hamblin addressed the Council on tourism and specifically a proposal for "Destination Axbridge". This matter was considered by the Council (minute 100/17 refers).

100/17 Tourism – Promoting Axbridge

The Chairman, with members' approval, agreed to move consideration of this item to this point in the meeting.

Members noted Mr Hamblin's suggestion to accept an offer from Mr Turner of Visit Somerset to attend a meeting to present options for achieving the proposed "Destination Axbridge". The meeting would be organised by the Chamber of Commerce and attended by interested parties to discuss the proposal. Members considered that it was appropriate for the Chamber of Commerce to take the lead in this matter and would welcome the opportunity to be represented at this meeting. A suggestion from a member regarding the possible re-vamp of the Showcase as a forum for tourism would also be reported back.

101/17 Reports

Police	Members had received the crime statistics report.
County Councillor Taylor	County Councillor Taylor advised members that he had had a meeting by the church regarding the footpath and that Somerset Highway were willing to consider improved signage at Townsend without the need to apply for a small improvements grant. He advised that Somerset Highways did not intend to remove the bund of earth by the slip road onto the bypass as it was part of their safety improvement scheme, intending to slow down vehicles on approach to the junction, by restricting the advance visibility. Many members disagreed with this view, as it did not slow down the larger vehicles and the accident statistics proved that there had been numerous incidents at this location. County Councillor Taylor would continue to pursue this.
District Councillor Mrs Scott	District Councillor Mrs Scott was not in attendance.

102/17 Outside Representative Reports

Axbridge Community Partnership	Nothing to report.
Axbridge Museum Trust	Members received a report from the Museum Trust updating on various matters including management arrangements, funding and events. Muse at the Museum had been very impressive.
Carnival Committee	The Carnival had been held on Saturday 23 rd September 2017 and been a very enjoyable and successful event. The civic guests had thoroughly enjoyed the day and there had been an increased number of floats and participants. The Mayor advised on the clear up after the meeting.
Cluster Group	Members received a report of the Cluster Group updating on the Hinkley C Project, the community safety team and the budget consultation. The presentations were available upon request.
School Governor's Report	The School Governors met recently and a report would be presented to the next Council meeting.
Som. Assoc. of Local Councils	The Annual General Meeting would be held on 28 th October 2017. Councillor Taylor and the Clerk would attend.
Sports and Social Club	Many requests had been received for tree brackets. The trees would be going up on Saturday 25 th November 2017 and any assistance would be appreciated. Father Christmas Night would be held on Saturday 16 th December 2017.
Town Trust	Members received of the report of Town Trust updating on 150 club winners, planters and planned improvement works. The joint meeting would be held on Monday 23 rd October 2017 at 8.30pm. Several agenda items had been raised by the Town Trust.
Other Representative Reports	Sedgemoor District Council Assessment – Councillor Taylor had attended a workshop as a local council representative.

103/17 Planning and Licenses Committee

a) Minutes of the Planning and Licences Committee meetings held on 2nd October 2017

Members received the above-mentioned minutes.

b) Bristol Water Southern Resilience Scheme

The Clerk had been advised by Bristol Water that there had been problems with the test and, if the leak had not been found shortly, they were likely to return at the end of October/early November. The Clerk would establish if Bristol Water would be returning to the site (and when) and if not, seek reinstatement of the area.

c) Outline Planning Application 02/16/00030 - Land to the South of, Houlgate Way, Axbridge

No further update.

d) Outline Planning Application 02/17/00022 Mendip View, Cheddar Road, Axbridge

This application was under consideration by Sedgemoor District Council.

e) Sedgemoor Local Plan

The Clerk updated members on the letter received by the Programme Officer in relation to the Local Plan. The Council would be contacted again, once the public hearing dates had been set. Information was available on www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/examination. The Clerk was asked to contact the Programme Office to confirm whether the Council would be invited to the public hearings and, if so, when such an invitation was likely to be received.

f) Planning Application

Members considered the following application: -

Application No. 02/17/00030/LE
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As Amended)
Applicant: Mrs E Gardiner
Proposal: Erection of a single storey extension to rear (North) elevation
Location: 2 Portmeade Drove, Axbridge, BS26 2BA

RESOLVED: that Sedgemoor District Council be advised that the Town Council has no observations to make on the above application.

g) Amended Plan – Glenmoor, Cheddar Road

The Clerk had recently received an amended plan in relation to the proposed erection of a first floor extension at Glenmoor, Cheddar Road (02/17/00025) which included the removal of one of the proposed windows. The Town Council had had no observations on the initial application. Should members wish to consider the amended plan, a meeting would need to be called, as it had not been possible to include this on the agenda for this meeting. Members did not feel it was necessary to consider this application further.

h) Planning Meeting

The Election of a Chairman would be included on the agenda of the next Planning and Licences Committee meeting. A concern was also raised regarding the procedure followed by Sedgemoor District Council in relation to an extension to a property in Cheddar Road. This would be discussed at the next meeting of the Committee.

104/17 Administration and Finance

a) Report of the Administration and Finance Advisory Group

Members received the report of the meeting held on 9th October 2017. The key items are set out below.

b) 2nd Quarter Report

Members received the report showing receipts and payments from 1st April 2017 until 30th September 2017.

RESOLVED: that the 2nd quarter report be approved.

c) Office Business Rates

The office business rates bill had been received, which appeared reasonable. Sedgemoor District Council would expect to receive £84.82 on 1st November 2017 then £86 in December 2017, January 2018 and February 2018.

RESOLVED: that a direct debit be set up to pay the business rates for the office.

d) Grant

The Group had previously recommended that a grant of £250 be paid to Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance, which provided a valuable service to residents.

RESOLVED: that a grant of £250 be paid to Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance accordingly.

e) Small Improvement Grant

Member had suggested applying to this fund, provided by the County Council, for funds towards the play area project. The Mayor would discuss this with the County Councillor.

RESOLVED: that the Council apply to the Small Improvement Grant fund, for the Play Area project.

f) Hinkley Point Mitigation Fund

Several projects had previously been suggested for application to this fund. Members noted that the project must mitigate for the effects on the local community caused by the construction project. It was understood that Somerset Highways would be able to assist in the provision of a flashing warning sign on the slip road at Townsend. If this was likely to be the case, the Council would wish to apply for new "Axbridge" town signs to replace those on the bypass. The Mayor would seek costs for such signs.

The Clerk also drew members attention to a survey seeking views as to what is important to the communities affected by the development, which would help inform the development and priorities of the community fund

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the Mayor speak to County Councillor Taylor and if Somerset Highways will be addressing the issue of signage at Townsend, in a satisfactory way to the Town Council, then the Council apply to the fund for new Axbridge signs (if not, the road signs would take priority); and
- 2) that the survey be circulated to all councillors with any comments being sent to the Clerk, to enable her to respond to the survey on behalf of the Council.

g) Local Council Administration Publication

The Group recommended the purchase of this publication at a maximum cost of £73.60

RESOLVED: that the Local Council Administration book be purchased accordingly.

h) Broadband in Axbridge

It has been suggested that the Council find out, via Oyez, whether residents not able to get superfast broadband would like to do so.

RESOLVED: that this be included in Oyez, giving the town council email address as the preferable option for residents to contact the Council should they not be able to get superfast broadband but would wish to do so.

i) Community Stall

Councillor Bridgman had previously agreed to put the stall up on Saturday 4th November 2017 and Councillor Wells would take it down. The information on the stall would be updated.

j) Financial Monthly Report

Members considered the report below. The Clerk updated on a couple of recent invoices.

Payments made since last meeting for ratification by Council			
Ref.	To	For	Value
DC	Post Office	Postage	7.80
DC	Microsoft Store	Microsoft 365 (Annual)	79.99
DC	Amazon	Stationery	37.35

Payments for authorisation by Council		October	
	Mrs V Brice	Reim of Expenses	33.55
	Mrs P Ham	Reim of Civic Expenses	75.20
	Somerset County Council Pension Fund	Pension deficit (Oct)	70.00
	Lloyds TSB Commercial Finance Ltd	Printing of Oyez (Sept) *	55.80
	Mr A Laken	Town Maintenance Contractor - September	255.00
	A1 Gardening and Tree Surgery	Grass cutting -Play area, cem, Town car park and Moorland St Car Park	300.00
	Greenslade Grounds Maintenance	Grass Cutting - Furlong/pitches double cuts (Sept)	326.40
	Somerset County Council	Allotment rent - Hillside (25/3/17-28/09/17)	115.00
	Cheddar Signs Ltd	Banner - Neighbourhood Plan	53.40
	The Party Shop	Carnival Lunch	497.25
	W C Maunders Ltd	Fence repairs – furlong	62.00
	water2business	Water - Allotments 9/3/17-12/09/17	123.01
	water2business	Water and Sewerage - Public Conveniences 11/3/17 - 29/9/17	245.22
	Axbridge Town Trust	Town Hall Grant - 2nd Half	1820.00
	Gompels Healthcare Ltd	Changing rooms consumables	128.46
	Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance	Grant	250.00
	Som. Association of Local Councils	New councillor training*(previously agreed)	25.00
	Direct Debits and Standing Orders to be paid next calendar month (Oct/Nov)		
SO	Axbridge Parochial Church Council	Office rent	600.00
DD	Vodafone	Council telephone	12.35
DD	Plusnet	Broadband etc for office	24.60
DD	Southern Electric	Changing Rooms	31.00
DD	Southern Electric	Electricity - street lights at Town Car Park (Sept)	5.15
DD	Eon	Electricity - street lights at Moorland Street (Oct)	4.42
DD	Sedgemoor District Council	Business rates (public conveniences)	79.00
DD	Sedgemoor District Council	Business rates (Town Car Park)	136.00
DD	Sedgemoor District Council	Business rates (Moorland Street Car Park)	140.00
DD	Sedgemoor District Council	Business rates (Office) (384.82 on 1st Nov, then £86 in Dec, Jan and Feb)	84.82
DD	Public Works Loan Board	Moorland St Loan	2828.72
	TOTAL to be authorised		7818.70
	* on receipt of invoice		

RESOLVED: that the expenditure detailed above be approved

105/17 Leisure and Recreation Advisory Group

a) Leisure and Recreation Advisory Group Report – October 2017

The key items are set out below. The grass on the furlong had been cut back when a little too wet due to poor weather.

b) Play Area and Furlong Safety Check Log and Public Convenience Log

The Play Area and Furlong Safety Check logs and Public Convenience logs for September 2017 had been circulated with the agenda. The Chairman updated on several points. In particular, efforts were being made to repair the hand dryer in the ladies' toilet. A more permanent repair of the furlong vehicular access was being arranged.

RESOLVED: that the Play Area and Furlong Safety Check Log and the Public Convenience Log for the period commencing 2nd September 2017 until the week commencing 30th September 2017 be approved and be signed by the Mayor.

c) Town Maintenance Contractor

Members received the report of the Town Maintenance Contract for September 2017. He had worked 17 hours during September which had included 7 hours litter picking on car park and

furlong including hedge trimming and gully clearing, 4.5 hours carrying out works on the furlong including hedge work, clearing fence panels and their removal, collecting materials and repairing fencing, 3.5 hours repairing the wall in Moorland Street Car Park and 2 hours removing litter from the cemetery and at Townsend.

The Chairman advised that he would also cut back and carry out limited maintenance on Back Lane. Members thanked the Town Maintenance Contractor for all his hard work.

106/17 Highways Advisory Group

a) Report of the Highways Advisory Group – October 2017

Members received the report of the Group updating on various matters. It was noted that the reference to the bull in field was that essentially it was permitted to be there by law.

b) Highways Matters

Road Closure, Upper New Road – members noted the disruption caused by this closure. The Mayor/Clerk would establish when the works were due to be completed and the road re-opened. Forthcoming road closures – Roadworks were also taking place on the A38 in the vicinity of Tarnock. The A371 between Winscombe and Banwell would be closed for 2 weeks from 21st October 2017.

107/17 Cemeteries, Allotments and Open Spaces Group

a) Cemeteries, Allotments and Open Spaces Group

A meeting would be held on 1st November 2017 at 8pm.

b) Allotment allocation update

One plot had been allocated to a new tenant, subject to the receipt of paperwork. A second vacant plot had been offered to a prospective new tenant.

c) Open Spaces Matters

Overgrown foliage, Cheddar Road – The Town Maintenance Contractor would be asked to tidy up the overgrown buddleia and foliage by a bungalow in Cheddar Road.

108/17 Personnel and Protocol Committee

a) Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2017

Members received the draft minutes of the meeting held on 2nd October 2017. Particular reference was made to the Assistant to the Town Clerk and the work of the Modern Town Archivist. In the first instance, the Council would seek a volunteer to undertake the role of Modern Town Archivist (Oyez). The Mayor and Deputy Mayor intended to look through the collection to establish what should be held at Somerset County Archives (perhaps in liaison with the person appointed). Members discussed possible items of interest/what should be collected in future.

It was also noted that the Mayor's Chain needed updating. This would be included on the agenda of the next Personnel Committee meeting.

b) Lone Working Policy

Member considered the proposed revision to the Lone Working Policy, following the change of office. There was some discussion as to the division of the responsibility between the Council and the Clerk and the draft would be further considered by the Committee and re-submitted to the Council.

109/17 Draft Budget and Precept 2018/19

Members received the draft budget for and considered each section of the accounts in detail, discussing areas where the budget could be reduced. The current draft budget was too high and members would wish to see an increase in precept of around 7%.

The Group would re-draft the budget in light of comments received for submission to the next meeting of Council.

110/17 and Diary Dates

Members noted the correspondence page and diary dates. Reference was made to Somerset Village Agent roadshows (Oyez), Somerset Youth Project information (Leisure and Recreation); Family Support Services consultation (Oyez); Planning for the right homes in the right places consultation (Planning and Licences Committee) and Maternity Experience Workshop (Oyez, Doctors and Chemist)

The Clerk advised that Natwest Bank (which had recently closed its branch in Cheddar) would be providing a mobile unit in the car park at Cheddar Village Hall, Church Street, on Wednesday mornings between 11.30am and 12.15pm

Chairman

Date