

BLANDFORD FORUM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town & General Purposes Committee
Held on Monday 8th June 2015 at 7:00 pm

DRAFT
Subject to confirmation

PRESENT

Cllr H Mieville – Chairman
Cllr S Hitchings (Chairman of Council)
Cllr C Stevens
Cllr Jackie Stayt

Cllr R Carter – Vice Chairman
Cllr L Lindsay (Vice Chairman of Council)
Cllr E Butler
Cllr L Hitchings

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk
Mrs Traci Handford – Chamber of Commerce

Assistant Town Clerk
Nicci Brown (Press)

SITTING IN

Cllr H White

Cllr John Stayt

1. PUBLIC SESSION

- 1.1 Cllr Butler reminded Councillors of the Gallipoli commemorations in the Corn Exchange on Friday 12th and Saturday 13th June. Cllr Carter is project lead and has carried out a tremendous amount of work.
- 1.2 Nicci Brown reported that Pubwatch and Shopwatch are now up and running again. The Town Clerk reported that the Assistant Town Clerk had secured funding for this to happen.
- 1.3 The Chairman explained that the Well and Connected event was a great success and praised those involved in making it a success. The Assistant Town Clerk and Julie Wigg from the DT11 Forum Community Partnership had worked together to create a lively community event.

2. APOLOGIES

None

3. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

None had been submitted.

4. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Butler, SECONDED by Cllr Mieville and, following a secret ballot, it was AGREED (6 in favour, 1 abstention) that

Cllr Carter is Vice Chairman of the Town & General Purposes Committee for 2015/16.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2ND MARCH 2015

Cllr Lee Hitchings arrived at 7:10pm.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Butler, SECONDED by Cllr Hitchings and AGREED (4 in favour, 4 abstentions) that the Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED, subject to the addition of Cllr Butler also stating the impact on the historic setting on the Market Place on minute no. 55 and Cllr Harrocks leaving the meeting and returning to the meeting on page 4.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

6. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

- 6.1 Well and Connected – The Town Clerk reported that the event was very successful on both days with groups appreciating the networking opportunity. Feedback forms were mostly positive with useful suggestions and comments to take forward to next year's event. 295 people attended on the Friday and 329 people attended on the Saturday. Complaints were received on the day from the three market traders on the Saturday who were concerned that the event was stealing the show by using the outside space in front of the Corn Exchange with a portable PA. It was explained to the parking warden who reported the complaints to the Assistant Town Clerk that this space was not subject to market regulations and the PA system was used to promote both the event and the market.
- 6.2 Hall & Woodhouse – The Town Clerk had met with Hall & Woodhouse and asked about the Three Choughs pub's status. Hall & Woodhouse confirmed that a lease with Starbucks is in place and they are already paying rent. The delay is due to Starbucks timetable at other venues in the country.
- 6.3 The Wheatsheaf – Ward Councillors have been informed that the interim moratorium period has now started, as the owner has placed the pub on the market. This allows community groups to make an offer on the property. The Chairman advised that the group who submitted the site to be listed as a community asset are meeting in the near future to discuss a way forward.
- 6.4 Out and About booklet – This has now been finalised and has been sent to the printers.
- 6.5 Arches event – The event went well and was useful as it may lead to positive development. Mr Cash took a number of members to Station Court and the Scout Hall from the Railway Arches. The Chairman of the Dorset and Somerset Railway Trust, Godfrey Baker, was supportive of the location of the proposed interpretation boards and discussed potential funding.

Cllr Hitchings enquired whether correspondence had been received from the Mortain Twinning Association regarding celebrations for the 30th anniversary next year. The Town Clerk confirmed that this had not been received. Cllr Hitchings informed the Committee that the 17th – 19th June 2016 had been suggested by the group to Mortain as visiting dates and requested that the Town Council discussed this matter on the next agenda and makes a recommendation to Town Council for expenditure.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

7. GENERAL UPDATE FROM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

- 7.1 Mrs Handford apologised for not providing an update at the previous meeting and reported that English Heritage objections to the proposed awnings in the Market Place were due to the fact that they were not removable. A quote to install removable awnings is being sought and this will then be discussed with English Heritage again.

7. **GENERAL UPDATE FROM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (CONT)**

Mostyn's shop is now being marketed by Symonds and Sampson, and it is hoped that they will continue to work with the Chamber. A display from Pimperne School is currently being displayed in the empty shop. Chloe Mutton from Pramacare has also approached Symonds and Sampson to work with them to use empty shops for displays. The Chamber is also looking to start up a Breakfast or Lunch Club for Chamber members. The Chamber is also currently looking at reviving the project for signage at industrial estates.

- 7.2 The Chairman enquired when it is expected that the Chamber will be up and running again. Mrs Handford confirmed that she will be meeting with the Secretary on the 22nd June to arrange regular meetings with members. Cllr Butler highlighted that she had attended the re-launch in November and that nothing had happened since then. Mrs Handford explained that her personal and work life had taken priority since then. Cllr Butler also enquired whether the Steering Group that was set up three years ago had met and made any suggestions. Mrs Handford informed the Committee that the Chamber had been discussing a number of ideas up until the re-launch in November. Members of the Chamber are kept up to date by email. Cllr Butler highlighted that shopkeepers are suggesting that they had not received updates. Mrs Handford confirmed that only members of the Chamber would receive updates. Cllr Jackie Stayt enquired whether the Vice Chairman would not be able to step in if the Chairman is too busy. Mrs Handford confirmed that she had not delegated these matters.

The Chairman summarised the discussion and it was agreed that a communication channel would be re-opened between the Town Council and the Chamber of Commerce by way of regular updates to the Town Council.

8. **GENERAL UPDATE BY BLANDFORD POLICE**

No update received.

Post Meeting Note: An update has been circulated to Councillors. The current main objective is the disruption of Class A drugs in town, which is working. During May, ASB has gone down 36%, no change in the amount of reported crimes in that period but detections of crime has increased by 2.8%.

9. **REVIEW OF TOWN & GENERAL PURPOSES BUDGETS TO 26TH MAY 2015**

9.1 Analytical Review of Revenue Budget

The paper was noted (see Appendix A).

9.2 Review of Earmarked Reserves

The paper was noted (see Appendix B).

9.3 Reserve Accounts

The paper was noted (see Appendix C).

10. **TO CONSIDER APPROVAL FOR A RECREATIONAL EQUIPMENT PIECE AT THE MARSH & HAM**

The matter was deferred to the Recreation and Amenities Committee.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

11. **TO CONSIDER FORMING A WORKING GROUP TO DISCUSS FEEDBACK RECEIVED IN RELATION TO THE CHRISTMAS WINDOW COMPETITION AND PREPARE FOR THE CHRISTMAS WINDOW COMPETITION 2015 (AS REFERRED BY THE COMMITTEE AT THE MEETING HELD ON THE 2ND MARCH 2015)**

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Mieville, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED unanimously that

A Working Group consisting of Cllrs Butler, Stevens, Jackie Stayt, Mieville and Carter was formed to discuss feedback received and prepare for the Christmas Window Competition 2015 and report back to the next meeting.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

12. **TO CONSIDER THE TOWN TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SIGNAGE THROUGHOUT THE TOWN CENTRE**

The paper was noted (see Appendix D).

Cllr Butler declared a personal interest as a member of the Town Team and informed the Committee that she had suggested that the information is presented to the Committee before the project went any further, but that it is likely that the group would have formally consulted the Town Council at a later date.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Jackie Stayt, SECONDED by Cllr Hitchings and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Clerk, Committee Chairman and Committee Vice Chairman seek a meeting to discuss these proposals and to point out that there may be a benefit in discussing project ideas with the Town Council at an earlier date to gather background information on work that may have already been carried out.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

13. **TO CONSIDER THE CHARGING SCHEDULE FOR PUBLIC CONVENIENCES (REQUESTED BY THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN)**

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Butler, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED (7 in favour, 1 against) that a RECOMMENDATION to Full Council is made that

The public conveniences are made free for a trial period of 6 months for the Tabernacle and the Marsh and Ham to investigate the impact this has on cleaning costs and vandalism prior to budget setting for 2016/17.

ACTION: TOWN COUNCIL

The meeting closed at 8:30pm.

SIGNED: DATED: