



Minutes of the Meeting of Dulverton Town Council

Held on Monday 8th January 2024 at 7.15pm, in the Town Hall,
Fore Street, Dulverton TA22.

Present: Chairman/Mayor: Mrs Christine Dubery. Councillors: Mr Nick Thwaites; Mr Alan Ottey; Mr Bill Gash; Mrs Louise Parrish; Mr John Preston; Mrs Margaret Rawle; Mrs Ann Van Praag; Mrs Allison Crisp; Mrs Frances Nicholson, Somerset Council (S.C.) who arrived at 7.40pm and left at 8.00pm and one member of the public.

Deferment of Business for Comment by the Public:

Ms Arwen Lewis – Ms Lewis spoke of her concerns regarding the behaviour of some dogs, not on leads and who are not controlled by their owners and incidents which have resulted in her and her children feeling frightened. On several occasions, when having asked that the owners control their dogs, she has received very unhelpful responses.

Ms Lewis requested that members consider initiating a program of awareness and education.

After deliberation members requested the Clerk to publish notices concerning 'good practice', when walking dogs and asking owners to consider keeping their dogs on a lead if such restraint is reasonably necessary to prevent nuisance or behaviour likely to cause annoyance or disturbance to any other person, animal or bird.

Apologies for absence and acceptance of any reasons offered if agreed:

Declarations of Interest:

None not already declared.

Chairman's Comments & Meeting Management:

Cllr Mrs Dubery wished all present a happy new year. She commented that she anticipated that it would be a challenging, difficult year ahead.

Questions for County Councillors:

Cllrs. Mrs Frances Nicholson & Mr Steven Pugsley S.C.

Highways: Further 'Kerb Blips', have been requested as agreed in Union Street.

S.C. Devolution Proposals: It is hoped that further information will be made available at the next Local Community Network (LCN) meeting.

The Exmoor Federation of Schools, Dulverton: Ms Naomi Philp, Executive Head Teacher & Central Federation Administrator, has been invited to attend the next scheduled DRC meeting on 12th February 2024

Minutes of the meetings held on 11th December 2023 as circulated: were approved and signed. Proposed by Mr Preston, seconded by Mrs Parrish and carried.

7019 Update of action points resulting from the last meeting:

Highways Issues: Vicarage Hill - Three residents have objected to the recent Parking Amendment Order No 8 Ref ET30102023. Responses from Kate Brown (S.C.) were noted, as was the fact that the double yellow lines (DYLs) had been painted with no explanation before the signage was erected which resulted in some public confusion.

7020 Accounts:

Financial Statement – December 2023: See Appendix A

RESOLVED: That the Financial Statement as per Appendix A is approved. Proposed by Mrs Van Praag, seconded by Mrs Crisp and carried.

Payments for approval – December 2023: See Appendix B

RESOLVED: That the payments as per Appendix B are approved. Proposed by Mr Preston, seconded by Mrs Parrish and carried.

7021 Committees:

Dulverton Partnership Meeting – 13th December 2023

RESOLVED: To adopt as part of this meeting the minutes of the Dulverton Partnership Group Meeting held on 13th December 2023. Proposed by Mrs Crisp, seconded by Mr Thwaites and carried.

Committee Meetings were scheduled as follows:

Grounds Committee: Tuesday 23rd January commencing at 10.30am

Tuesday 19th March commencing at 10.30am

Town Management Committee: 13th February commencing at 10.30am

9th April commencing at 2.00pm

7022 Setting of the Precept 2024/25:

Despite further requests for information, S.C. has been unable to provide the necessary information to enable members to consider the financial consequence of accepting the responsibility of service provision from S.C.

It was commented that it would appear that S.C. had no reason to request "smaller" town and parishes to delay setting its precept as it is clear the devolution group is only dealing at this time with larger towns within the S.C. area. No resources are available to engage with anyone else.

Members consider the situation to be very disappointing and could only conclude that having indicated a sense of urgency officers were totally unprepared to actually respond to requests for information.

Based on anticipated budgetary requirements concerning the current responsibilities of this Council, as proposed by the Legal & Finance Committee, it was subsequently:

RESOLVED: That the precept for the Financial Year commencing 1st April 2024 is set at £92,200. Proposed by Mrs Dubery, seconded by Mr Preston and carried.

7023 Planning Applications:

RESOLVED: To adopt the comments as per Appendix C as part of this meeting. Proposed by Mrs Rawle, seconded by Mrs Van Praag and carried.

7024 Staffing Issues:

National Salary Pay Award 2023/24:

RESOLVED: To implement the pay award for local government services ('Green Book') employees, as recommended by N.A.L.C. from 1 April 2023 and that salary arrears are paid accordingly. Proposed by Mrs Dubery, seconded by Mr Preston and carried.

Overtime Claim:

RESOLVED: To approve the payment of 9 hours overtime as requested by the Administrative Officer. Proposed by Mrs Crisp, seconded by Mrs Van Praag and carried.

Finance Training Courses:

RESOLVED: To approve meeting the cost of three training courses to be undertaken by the Finance Officer. Proposed by Mr Ottey, seconded by Mrs Parrish and carried.

7025 Late Correspondence:

Correspondence noted by members.

Mr D. Townsend – Street Cleaning: Members agreed with the contents of the email concerning the street cleaning operative and in recognition of how diligently she cleans the streets of Dulverton, maintaining a cheerful and polite disposition regardless of the weather conditions, asked the Clerk to arrange for a small gift to be given to the operative concerned; and for her line manager to be informed of the public comment received.

7026 Questions for Members who have attended additional meetings:

None

7027 Issues to be raised with permission of the Chairman:

Starlight Event – December 2023: The Clerk was requested to write, on behalf of the members of this Council, and compliment the members of the Starlight Committee for their hard work in ensuring the success of the event.

Gully Jetting – The project has nearly been completed. Only Milhams Lane is still to be done if funding allows.

Chairman