



Minutes of the Meeting of Corfe Mullen Town Council
held on Tuesday 23 May 2023 at 19:00 in the main hall of the Village Hall

Present: **Councillors**
D Sowry-House (Chair)
A Craven
D Everett
P Harrison
A Holland
P Holland
B Honeyman
S Jefferies
J Lortie
P Neil
P Purvis
J Stennett

In Attendance: Catherine Horsley (Town Clerk & RFO)
Rachel Virrill (Deputy Town Clerk – minute taker)

Public Participation

There was one member of the public present, who did not wish to speak.

- TC 23/23 To Receive and Accept apologies for absence** (LGA 1972 s85 (1))
Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Mattocks who had a prior engagement.
- TC 23/24 To Record any declarations of interest** Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)
- Cllr Harrison declared a non-pecuniary interest pertaining to agenda item TC 23/37 - to consider request from Corfe Mullen Carnival Committee as a member of the Committee.
- TC 23/25 Paper A – To Approve minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting held on 9 May 2023 – LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41**
- The minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting held on 9 May 2023 were **APPROVED**.
- TC 23/26 Paper B – To Approve Accounts for Payment**
- It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the accounts for payment, totalling £20,289.98.
- TC 23/27 Paper C – To Approve Bank Reconciliation for April 2023**
- It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the bank reconciliation for April 2023.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SJA', is located in the bottom right corner of the page.

TC 23/28 Paper D – Summary of Income & Expenditure and Reserves Balance Reports for the financial year ended 31 March 2023

The Clerk presented the report, noting the general reserves fund as at 31 March 2023 was £164,704.85, equating to circa 4 months operating costs with the recommendation to hold a minimum of 3-6 months.

Cllr Craven raised the following queries:

- Line 93: why was there an overspend in national insurance contributions. The Clerk explained the rate of national insurance contributions had increased during the 2022/23 financial year, albeit the overall salaries expenditure was underspent.
- Line 30: what did the staff training overspend relate to. The Clerk confirmed this was due to CILCA and ILCA training for the Clerk and Deputy Clerk respectively in their new roles, as well as additional training for Grounds team members.
- Line 36: why had there been an overspend on meeting room hire costs. The Clerk explained this was due to meetings being held in the main hall, rather than the small hall as previously.
- Line 13: concerns with the overspend on the public toilets at the Recreation Ground. The Clerk confirmed the increased costs were due to repairs following vandalism. However, the reduced opening times had alleviated some of the issues previously experienced.

The report was **RECEIVED** and **NOTED**.

TC 23/29 Paper E – To Receive and Note the final report of the Internal Auditor for the year ended 31 March 2023

Cllr Jefferies congratulated the Clerk on the positive report received from the Internal Auditor.

The Clerk advised due to the Council's income and expenditure being in excess of £500,000, the annual internal audit costs had increased to £1150, albeit a £350 discount had been applied due to excellent record keeping.

The report was **RECEIVED** and **NOTED**.

TC 23/30 Paper F - To Consider and Approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2023

The Clerk presented the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Form 3 for the 2022/23 financial year, noting the External Auditor had confirmed an intermediate audit was required, due to the Council's income and expenditure being in excess of £500,000.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Annual Governance Statement for year ended 31 March 2023. The Chairman and Clerk duly signed section 1 at the end of the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Accounting Statement 2022/23 which had been prepared and signed by the RFO, with the Chairman duly signing section 2 at the end of the meeting.

The completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year ending 31 March 2023, along with supporting documents would be submitted to the External Auditor by 1 July 2023.

TC 23/31

Paper G – To Confirm and Note the dates for the Notice of Public Rights and Publication of the Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return

The Clerk confirmed the dates for the period of exercise of public rights would commence on Monday 5 June 2023 and end on Friday 14 July 2023.

The Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance and Accountability Return for Accounts ending 31 March 2023 was **NOTED**.

TC 23/32

Paper H - To Declare any Conflicts of Interest with the External Auditor, BDO LLP

It was **RESOLVED** that there were no conflicts of interest with the External Auditor, BDO LLP declared.

TC 23/33

Paper I – To Note the already Approved minutes of Committees:

Finance & Administration Committee – 10 January 2023

Planning Committee – 11 April 2023

Planning Committee – 25 April 2023

The already approved minutes were **NOTED**.

TC 23/34

Paper J – To Consider and Approve Recommendations from the Finance & Administration Committee

The Clerk presented the report, noting the Q4 Budget Monitoring Report presented to the Committee was the predicted position as at 31 March 2023, due to year end processing being in progress at the time of the meeting held on 9 May 2023.

The report was **NOTED**.

TC 23/35

Paper K – To Review and Approve Co-option Policy

The Clerk presented the report, noting following the publication of the Notice of Vacancy to fill the casual vacancy as a result of the resignation of Tim Howard, an update had been received from Dorset Council Returning Officer confirming, no election would take place as less than 10 electors of the Town had made a request for an election. Therefore, the vacancy would be filled by co-option.

The Clerk confirmed in line with the draft co-option policy, an advertisement for a new member to be co-opted onto Council would take place for 4 weeks from Friday 25 May 2023 until Friday 23 June 2023. Following the closure date, any application forms submitted would be collated to be considered at the next Full Council meeting scheduled on 27 June 2023.

It was **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the co-option process to fill the casual vacancy and **APPROVE** the Co-option policy.

TC 23/36

Paper L – To Consider Quotations and Approve Contractor to carry out Grounds Maintenance Work

The Deputy Clerk presented the report and quotations from three contractors to carry out grounds maintenance in the short-term following the resignation of the Head

Groundsman and one Grounds Team member on long term sick leaving a reduced Grounds Team.

Members discussed the options, noting further clarification was required relating to the optional additional pitch renovation services to enable them to consider these services going forward, particularly the impact on drainage to pitch one, which was renowned for being out of play during the winter months.

It was also noted, in terms of the old cemetery grass cutting, clarification was required regarding rare orchid species located to the rear of the chapel.

Cllr Craven proposed Contractor 1, Option 1 to complete grounds maintenance, which was seconded by Cllr Lortie. All members voted in favour.

A Service Level Agreement (SLA) would be put in place, with the contractor providing copies of relevant insurances and risk assessments.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** Contractor 1, BCP Council to carry out Option 1 Grounds Maintenance for a period of six months initially, from 1 June 2023 at a total annual cost of £19,040+VAT, pro-rata.

It was **RESOLVED** for the Clerk to seek further clarification on the optional additional pitch renovation services to enable Council to consider these services going forward.

TC 23/37 Paper M – To Consider Request from Corfe Mullen Carnival Committee

Cllr Harrison had declared an interest in the agenda item and therefore did not take part in the discussion.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** requests from the Corfe Mullen Carnival Committee due to be held on Saturday 10 June 2023 from 1pm-5pm at the Recreation Ground as follows:

- Town Council on behalf of the Carnival Committee to apply to Dorset Council Environmental Services to suspend the Dorset Council's Dog Related Public Spaces Protection Order 2020 for the duration of the event to enable dog show to take place.
- South Coast Helicopter Club registered members to fly model helicopters as part of a display.
- To loan tables and chairs from the sports pavilion lounge for the tea tent, albeit amount required had yet to be confirmed.

TC 23/38 Paper N – To Note Update on Sports Provision and Sports Pavilion at the Platinum Jubilee Fields

Cllr Honeyman noted the streetlighting in the car park at the Recreation Ground remained on throughout the night. The Clerk advised this would be investigated.

The update was **NOTED**.

It was **RESOLVED** for Council to receive updates relating to sports provision and sports pavilion on significant items and/or items requiring approval of spend at future meetings.

TC 23/39 Paper O - To Receive and Note Tree Survey Report and Approve Tree Surgeon to complete high priority recommendations

The Deputy Clerk presented the report, noting the recommendations for high priority tree work at Springdale Road Open Space and land on Broadmoor Road, adjacent to the allotment site.

Cllr Craven proposed Quotation 1 to carryout high priority tree works and to use same contractor as a trusted supplier for further tree work highlighted within the tree survey report. Ad-hoc quotations should be obtained periodically to ensure value for money to the Council. Cllr Harrison was uncomfortable with this proposal, albeit he was content with Quotation 1. It was agreed with members voting in favour to appoint contactor/quotation 1 with three quotations obtained for any further tree works.

Members recognised the impact on the village and the environment by felling trees and felt the rationale for any tree work should be communicated sensitively to residents ahead of any tree works taking place on the Town Council website.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** Quotation 1, Tree Stuff Arboricultural Services to carry out high priority tree works at Springdale Road Open Space and land on Broadmoor Road adjacent to the allotment site at a total cost of £3350.00+VAT.

It was **RESOLVED** for the Clerk to draft a communication to be published on the Town Council website to provide the rationale for the tree works and to make allotment holders aware.

TC 23/40 Paper P - To Note Update on Grounds Team Trailer and Agree How to Proceed

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk presented the report. Members felt purchasing of accessories should be deferred whilst grounds maintenance work was being sub-contracted.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** Option 1, Dorset Trailer Training to provide trailer refresher training for all grounds team members at a total cost of £1080.00+VAT.

TC 23/41 Verbal – To Note any updates from Representatives to Outside Bodies

Cllr Jefferies noted there was no further update relating to the Beacon Hill landfill site.

TC 23/42 Paper Q – To Note the update from the Climate Change Working Party

Cllr Neil presented the report, noting it was essential for Council to consider a programme to replace felled trees as a result of the actions from the recommendations in the tree survey report.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 23/43 Paper R – To Note the update from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Cllr Neil presented the report. The opportunity for a stand at Corfe Mullen Carnival to promote the neighbourhood plan and work of the steering group was discussed. Cllr Neil agreed to follow up with the Chair of the steering group.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 23/44 Verbal – To Note Clerk's Update

The Clerk provided an update as follows:

- Lamp post outside the Council Office had been damaged, requiring a replacement. A quotation for the work was in progress.
- Following the recent vandalism of the bin outside the Council Office, Dorset Police had reviewed the CCTV footage. An invoice to cover repair costs had been produced, should the culprits be identified with a witness statement to be given.
- A response was sent relating to the consultation on Dorset Councils Dog Related Public Open Spaces Order.
- No response was received from members relating to the Dorset Council Consultation on the new infrastructure levy, which was disappointing.
- Recreation Ground play area requires carpentry repairs to various pieces of play equipment and would be closed for one day whilst repairs and essential maintenance took place. Date to be confirmed.
- The mobile café had signed their agreement and paid refundable damage deposit. Trading commenced on 23 May 2023 for 6 months.
- Resident had been in contact regarding grit bins in Highmoor Road as he was unhappy with the Town Councils previous response.
- Attended the Clerks virtual meeting with the Chief Executive Officer of Dorset Council who provided updates on the cabinet reshuffle, Ofsted inspection of young people and adult social care, working with the Home Office and sharing intelligence with other agencies relating to barge due to be in place off Portland to house migrants and it was not anticipated the next general election would be until Autumn 2024.
- Corfe Mullen local PCSO's had visited the Council Office to introduce themselves and were made aware of the recent anti-social behaviours being experienced in the village.

It was requested for the PCSO's to be invited to a Full Council meeting to meet with members to understand the challenges from Dorset Police's perspective. The Clerk agreed to invite them to the next Full Council meeting.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 23/45 Verbal – To Note Mayor's Report

The Mayor provided an update on recent events he had attended as follows:

- Blandford Civic Service on 25 April 2023.
- Supported the Mayor of Portland at his 24-hour walkathon on 29 April 2023 around Portland.
- Dorset Civic Service at Sherborne Abbey on 5 May 2023, followed by a service at Wimborne Minster, both to mark the Coronation of King Charles III.
- Big Lunch Coronation day street party was held in Beacon Way on 7 May 2023 with a total of £378 raised from the event and the recent Celebration of Service for the Mayors Charity, the Lewis Manning Trust.
- Weymouth Civic Day on 10 May 2023.
- Broadstone Neighbourhood Watch Meeting on 22 May 2023.

The update was **NOTED**.

TC 23/46 Verbal – To Note Dorset Councillor Report

Cllr Harrison provided an update as follows:

- Attended the Civic Service at Sherborne Abbey on 5 May 2023.
- Beryl bikes were coming to Corfe Mullen, late summer 2023.

- Dorset Cllr Ray Bryan had visited the village to discuss highways issues including extending double yellow lines on Corfe View Road, moving bus shelter opposite The Parade Co-op on Wareham Road, concerns over the uneven pavement in front of The Parade Co-op which was owned by a private landlord and extending double yellow lines on Albert Road junction with Blacksmith Close.

Members asked if the Town Council, particularly the Clerk could be informed when any Dorset Council Portfolio Holders visited the village to discuss issues and challenges experienced by the Town Council and its residents as the primary authority, and first link with electorates, to enable more collaborative working.

Cllr Neil noted that he had tried unsuccessfully to contact Cllr Ray Bryan and requested Cllr Harrison pass on questions from the Climate Change Working Party to be taken to the next Dorset Full Council meeting.

The Clerk asked if Cllr Harrison had received a response regarding the request for replacement dragons teeth at Cogdean Elms. Cllr Harrison read the response he had received from the Dorset Council Officer and agreed to forward it to the Clerk. Members were disappointed with the response and felt it was disrespectful to Corfe Mullen residents. Dorset Council's actions should be preventative not reactive.

Cllr Sowry-House noted his disappointment to not receiving a response from the local MP Michael Tomlinson, regarding his invitation to the recent Celebration of Service. Cllr Harrison acknowledged and advised this was an administration error.

The update was **NOTED**.

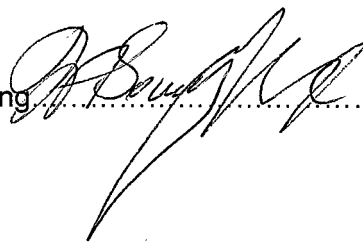
TC 23/47 Verbal – Matters for Forthcoming Agendas No decisions can be taken¹

- Update on 'the Pound' in Corfe Mullen

TC 23/48 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting –Tuesday 27 June 2023 at 19:00 in the Main Hall of the Village Hall, Towers Way, Corfe Mullen.

TC 23/49 Close of meeting at 21:00.

Signed as a correct record of the meeting



Date

11-7-23

¹ Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business which are not specified in the summons/agenda (LGA1972 sch 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119)

