

HONITON TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Council Offices,
The Beehive, Dowell Street, Honiton on Monday 11th November 2019 at 7.00 pm**

Present

St Michael's Ward

Cllr J Wyatt
Cllr J Taylor
Cllr J Zarczynski (Chairman)
Cllr D Sheridan-Shaw
Cllr J Hannay
Cllr J McNally

St Paul's Ward

Cllr T Darrant
Cllr V Howard
Cllr R Coombs
Cllr P Carrigan
Cllr C Gilson
Cllr C Kolek
Cllr R Hanratty

In attendance

Cllr P Twiss DCC/EDDC
Cllr T McCollum EDDC
Cllr D Barrow EDDC
Mark Tredwin, Honiton Town Clerk
Heloise Marlow, Deputy Town Clerk
5 members of the public

PART A

19/972 The Chairman welcomed Councillors and members of the public. A minute silence was held to commemorate Armistice Day.

19/973 To receive apologies for absence

Cllr N Hannay (personal reasons)
Cllr M Pollington (personal reasons)
Cllr C Hattle-Spence (personal reasons)
Cllr N Macve (personal reasons)

19/974 To receive declarations of interest and receipt of requests for new DPI dispensations on items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest

19/975 To note the grant of dispensations made by the Town Clerk in relation to the business of this meeting.

None were made.

19/976 Public question time on items on the agenda

There were no public questions.

19/977 Mayor's announcements

The Mayor confirmed that he had attended the following events:

Honiton Carnival

Poppy collection
Remembrance Sunday Service
War Memorial service.

19/978 To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 14th October 2019 and the extra-ordinary Council meeting on 28th October 2019

A copy of the minutes of the meetings had been circulated in advance. The minutes of the 14th October 2019 were approved unanimously. The minutes of the meeting on the 28th October were approved by a majority vote of 12 for with 1 abstention.

19/979 Reports from District and County Councillors

Cllr P Twiss presented the following report:

My report this month is deliberately short due to a period of election 'purdah' which is in place until the election is completed and results announced on the 13th of December, but I am always happy to answer individual questions in the interim from councillors or residents as I am thankfully not a candidate in the election!

My contact details are as below.

Councillor Phil Twiss, DCC member Feniton & Honiton Division

T: 01404 891327

M: 07971 871651

E: phil.twiss@devon.gov.uk

Correspondence address during purdah;

Cllr Phil Twiss

Devon County Council

County Hall

Topsham Road

Exeter

EX2 4QD

Broadband

A public consultation that is due to run until the 10th of December following what is termed an Open Market Review (OMR) that took place in the summer, following the cancellation of the contract between Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) and Gigaclear, due to a number of performance and other issues.

CDS, which is responsible for rolling out publicly funded broadband across the two counties, is establishing the remaining area where there are no current or credible future plans to deliver Next Generation Access (NGA) broadband infrastructure capable of download speeds of at least 30Mbps.

Nearly one million homes and businesses in Devon and Somerset now have access to superfast broadband thanks to the Government supported CDS programme and stimulation of the commercial market which is an important element of CDS's role. Of these, over 300,000 homes and businesses have access to superfast broadband as a direct result of investment by CDS.

A link to the CDS news release is attached which provides more information and links to the consultation webpage.

<https://www.devonnewscentre.info/superfast-broadband-public-consultation-launched/>

A new company called Jurassic fibre [www https://jurassic-fibre.com/](https://jurassic-fibre.com/) now have an operations base established on Heathpark and will be working up the A30 towards Dorset and South Somerset after completing their first phase delivery, where I have been told that their Ultrafast Broadband fibre offer (speeds over 100Mbps) will include Honiton, but I can't see this being for at least 18 months, probably longer.

DCC Highways

We are fast approaching budget time and I will be meeting my Neighbourhood Highways Officer in the next couple of weeks to agree work in the Feniton & Honiton Division, where clearly there are a number of remedial works that need to be undertaken in the parish of Honiton!

Project Funding

We are all asked at some time or another about funding of projects and the Devon County Council Economy Team publishes a regular update of opportunities for a diverse range of interests and it is worthwhile signing up to it at <https://www.devon.gov.uk/fundingnews/>

A couple of current opportunities published recently that might apply locally are the **Condition Improvement Fund** which provides Capital funding for academies, sixth-form colleges and non-diocesan VA schools to improve the condition of school buildings, including health & safety issues and building compliance and the **Rural Development Programme for England: Growth Programme** which provides Funding for small rural businesses for capital investment in food processing, rural tourism infrastructure and business development. Most of East Devon outside of Exmouth and Sidmouth is classified as rural.

In addition, Cllr Twiss recommended the EDDC app which is free to download. As regards project funding from DCC with a £32m deficit, most projects are now crowdfunded and those which bring part funding are more likely to be successful.

Cllr Twiss reported that he has recently been involved in dealing with issues regarding hedges and overhanging or broken branches. Often these involve complex land ownership queries but if anyone has concerns, they should not hesitate to contact him.

Cllr Kolek thanked Cllr Twiss for his recent email regarding climate change which she would share with the other councillors on the Climate Change Working Group. The Town Clerk advised that he would welcome a copy of the graphic shared which he would put onto the website.

Cllr T McCollum presented the following report:

There is a £95k underspend from the Communities Together Fund which is now available through Crowdfund East Devon over the next 4 months. The funds originally came from DCC who can recoup the monies if they are not paid out.

The Scrutiny Committee at EDDC have agreed to the setting up of a car park TAFF which will be reporting back to Cabinet on 5th February 2020.

Cllr Hanratty asked all three EDDC Councillors present what their views were regarding the proposed car park charges increase?

Cllr McCollum advised that as an employee of Honiton Town Council he is unable to comment.

Cllr Barrow and Cllr Twiss both confirmed that they were against the proposed increased charges.

Cllr Barrow presented the following report:

Recycling in East Devon is over 60%

Thelma Hulbert Gallery has obtained a £10k grant from outside EDDC.

LED have confirmed that the changing rooms at the swimming pool in Honiton will be refurbished in the Spring of 2020.

Cllr Kolek raised an issue with some restaurants in Honiton not displaying their food hygiene ratings. A query was raised as to whether this was compulsory, and Cllr Barrow would look into it.

Cllr P Twiss and Cllr D Barrow left the meeting at 7.20pm

19/980 Reports from Councillors with Special Responsibilities

The minutes of the Local Action Group Minutes were noted.

19/981 Update Report

The Clerk presented the update report.

Cllr Coombs queried the response from EDDC that they did not consider that there was any reason why the Fields in Trust should be contacted. According to the Fields in Trust's website they have to be consulted. Could Honiton Town Council contact Fields in Trust directly regarding the matter?

Cllr Zarczynski advised that HTC were not the landowner and nor was the lease a decision to be made by HTC

After some discussion it was agreed that Cllr Coombs would contact EDDC individually for clarification.

Cllr Coombs raised his dismay at the news that the Copper Castle Toll Gate had been disposed of by EDDC and requested that EDDC provide an explanation as to how this occurred.

The Town Clerk confirmed that he would write to EDDC and a report would be brought to the next Town Management meeting.

Battishorne Way Allotments

Members unanimously RESOLVED to authorise the Deputy Clerk to submit the necessary application to EDDC requesting a S106 grant offer to cover the cost of the allotment works. That grant offer will then be brought back to Full Council at the earliest opportunity.

Proposed by Cllr Darrant and seconded by Cllr Hanratty.

Beehive Dispute

The Town Clerk confirmed that he had spoken with the Chair of HCC. They had requested a change to the wording of the agreement which the Town Clerk had agreed to make. As such the Town Clerk would be making the payment agreed between the parties the following day.

PART A MATTERS FOR DECISION

19/982 Planning Committee and Town Management Committee Minutes

Members received the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on the 15th October 2019.

19/983 Bank Signatories Report

The Town Clerk presented the report and explained that he needed 3 additional signatories in addition to Cllr Zarczynski and Sheridan-Shaw.

Cllrs Hanratty, Gilson and Jason Hannay volunteered.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously for Cllrs Hanratty, Gilson and Jason Hannay to be added as authorised signatories to the town council bank accounts.

Proposed by Cllr Zarczynski and seconded by Cllr Sheridan-Shaw.

19/984 Budget Planning Report

The Town Clerk presented the report. He explained that he had prepared a draft Budget but that the figures were not fixed. There is a need to have a balanced budget. If Members have individual projects which they wish to pursue they need to identify from where the funding will come and discuss this with the Town Clerk. Projects ideally need to be required by and for the benefit of the Town's residents.

Members should consider whether there is a need to increase the precept to fund a specific project and should consider their short/medium/long term plans. These will then need to be resolved by Full Council prior to the setting of the budget.

Cllr Wyatt asked if workshop sessions could be arranged to progress the above.

Cllr Kolek asked if the away days could be reinstated when Councillors would meet once every 4 months on an informal basis to discuss future projects.

Cllr Taylor queried why RPI had been used in the figures rather than the CPI and noted that the 3% increase would not apply to some of the budget headings such as the PWLB payments.

Cllr Hanratty warned against increasing the precept especially as the Council has spent £125,000 on legal fees over the last 5 years. Any increase in the precept would be badly received by the public and he asked that all the current legal proceedings be stopped.

Cllr Zarczynski advised that Honiton Town Council had one of the lowest precepts in East Devon but that this could be raised to fund a specific project. He accepted the

figure spent on legal fees over the last 5 years but stated that there were good reasons for this spending which he could not discuss in Part A.

The Town Clerk advised Members to come and speak with him about the budget planning process.

19/985 Terms of Reference for the Allotments Working Group

The Town Clerk presented his report. He had concerns re the proposed TOR were too wide and too open in view of the Council's project based working strategy. The TOR should just be for the proposed Battishorne Way allotments. The Working Group should focus on this project before expanding its remit to other possible developments.

After a full discussion regarding the merits of the TOR being wide enough to allow other matters relating to allotments being part of the remit of the Allotments Working Group, Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the proposed Terms of Reference for the Working Group.

Proposed by Cllr Darrant and seconded by Cllr Coombs.

19/986 High Street Footpath Report

The Town Clerk presented the report and highlighted that the updated proposals no longer included the use of tarmac.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to authorise officers to respond to Jacobs UK with members' feedback on the planned footpath works.

Proposed by Cllr Kolek and seconded by Cllr Carrigan.

19/987 High Street Storage

The Town Clerk presented the report.

Cllr Howard asked if the Town Council cones and trolley were stored in a shed or out in the open as she felt the new equipment recently purchased should be under cover.

The Town Development Manager advised that the equipment was covered by a tarpaulin.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to pay an annual sum of £300 per year for the storage of the cones and other market equipment at the rear of the Masonic Lodge.

Proposed by Cllr McNally and seconded by Cllr Sheridan-Shaw.

19/988 Part B items

It was proposed to take item 15 into Part B of the meeting that deals with exempt business. This was **RESOLVED** by a majority vote of 12 for with 1 against.

Proposed by Cllr Howard and seconded by Cllr Carrigan.

The meeting went into confidential session at 8.15pm

PART B

19/989 Bailey Partnership Dispute

The Town Clerk presented the report.

Following discussion Members **RESOLVED** by a majority vote of 8 for, with 4 against and 1 abstention to authorise the Town Clerk to meet with Foot Anstey in order to discuss strategy for a pre-arbitration meeting between all parties taking into account that this would incur additional expenditure.

Proposed by Cllr Taylor and Seconded by Cllr Zarczynski.

19/990 To close the meeting

The meeting was closed at 9.00pm.