

HONITON TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Council Offices,
The Beehive, Dowell Street, Honiton on Monday 9th September 2019 at 7.00 pm**

Present

St Michael's Ward

Cllr M Pollington
Cllr J Taylor
Cllr J Zarczynski (Chairman)
Cllr D Sheridan-Shaw
Cllr N Hannay
Cllr N Macve
Cllr J McNally

St Paul's Ward

Cllr T Darrant
Cllr V Howard
Cllr R Coombs
Cllr P Carrigan
Cllr C Hattle-Spence
Cllr C Kolek
Cllr R Hanratty

In attendance

Cllr P Twiss DCC/EDDC
Cllr D Barrow EDDC
Mark Tredwin, Honiton Town Clerk
Heloise Marlow, Deputy Town Clerk
15 members of the public
1 member of the press

PART A

19/923 The Chairman welcomed Councillors and members of the public.

19/924 To receive apologies for absence

Cllr L Jeffery (personal reasons)
Cllr T McCollum (personal reasons)

19/925 To receive declarations of interest and receipt of requests for new DPI dispensations on items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest

19/926 To note the grant of dispensations made by the Town Clerk in relation to the business of this meeting.

None were made.

19/927 Public question time on items on the agenda

There were no public questions

19/928 Mayor's announcements

The Mayor confirmed that he has not attended any events over the last month and would provide a list of events attended at the next meeting.

19/929 To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 12th August 2019

A copy of the minutes of the meeting had been circulated in advance. The minutes were approved by 12 votes in favour with 2 abstentions.

19/930 Reports from District and County Councillors

Cllr Dean Barrow presented the following report:

- As regards the wall in Sidmouth Road which has fallen down, EDDC are working with the County Council to repair it as soon as possible

Sue Errington, a member of the public asked if EDDC were still a Fair-Trade Council following their move to Honiton. Cllr Barrow confirmed that they were – it is the Council which is Fair Trade not the building.

Cllr Phil Twiss presented the following report:

Village survival guide

Clearly Honiton is not a village but many useful items with no need to re-invent the wheel I found in the recently published village survival guide published by The Princes Countryside fund at <https://www.princescountrysidefund.org.uk/research/read-vsg> and read where much of what it details our local communities are already doing in terms of community resilience and long term sustainability; a really good reference tool where one of more things might resonate in terms of improving quality of life, but clearly one size won't fit all.

R, D & E NHS Hospital Trust

The provision of healthcare is a highly complex and challenging environment this year there has been little difference for the R, D & E between winter pressures demand and any other time of year where e.g. June was a highly challenging month with what is called Operational Pressure escalation Level (OPEL) being declared on all 30 days of the month due to capacity issues.

There was high demand for emergency cardiology procedures and an increase in the number of patients in acute hospital beds waiting for transfer to psychiatric units adding to pressures on bed capacity. Due to a highly challenging environment in the domiciliary and home markets, 'Delayed Transfers of Care (DTOC) for patients who were 'green to go' contributed to the pressure on hospital beds.

Parking remains a major issue at the R, D & E with new dedicated Park and Ride being made available to staff at Digby, and a further one for patients and visitors at Sowton. In my view all the more reason for more treatment taking place locally in

mothballed 'fit for purpose' hospital buildings. A review of the R, D & E requirements of what space is needed going forward is currently taking place and due for completion towards the end of the year.

What is certain is that demand for services is only going to go up and the new 'MyCare' and EPIC IT platform due to go live in July 2020 (currently on time) can only improve working efficiencies for everyone's benefit

Schools funding

Whilst the devil will clearly be in the detail the recent news from Government of £7bn pounds over the next three years towards the funding of schools is clearly welcome

Climate Emergency update

Devon County Council takes its responsibilities to addressing the climate Emergency very seriously and attached is a briefing for members issue on the 2nd of September 2019 and attached for your information, where DCC is part of a much larger task force with multiple partners and stakeholders which include local authorities, Parish Councils and individuals. You may also find this link useful

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/energyandclimatechange/devon-climate-emergency> and where I also met with Doug Eltham the climate change Officer at DCC on the 5th of September to discuss the impact DCC has in terms of carbon reduction and climate change. In round figures DCC is responsible for 1% of carbon that goes in to the atmosphere using government guidelines to measure the impact of its activity. 40% of DCC's output is from School Transport and 40% from Highways activity where clearly changes to vehicles currently used with the investment required won't happen overnight and similarly there must be a balance between work on roads and carbon output where change must happen over time.

Arguably the biggest conundrum is with agricultural activity which accounts for around 40% of the total carbon output in Devon where clearly we need our Farmers to keep producing food, but perhaps need to look at different systems and types of agricultural activity, where again this is unlikely to change in the very short term

I have been asked by people as to what they can do at an individual level to make a direct and immediate impact and a really good example of where to begin is to measure your own carbon footprint by taking the WWF carbon measure at <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/#/> as the beginning of what you can do today to reduce it. Clearly this is intended at an individual level, rather than industrial but it really does make you think!

I am also now using a web browser called Ecosia, see <https://www.ecosia.org/> where 80% of profits are used to plant trees and as I write 67,000,000 have been planted since 2009 and this number is rising rapidly

The safety barriers at Millers Way have been damaged and will be repaired once the insurance claim has been processed.

Cllr Macve asked whether it was still the case that 17 out of 20 car journeys are made by one person travelling?

Cllr Twiss was unable to answer that question.

Cllr Hanratty suggested that the tree planting generated by Cllr Twiss using the Ecosia web browser would never be sufficient to offset the carbon which has been generated by the recent problems with the traffic lights at Dowell Street. He has spoken with both EDDC and Devon Highways who advised him that the lighting panel had been hit by a lorry and that they were waiting for a part. Cllr Hanratty suggested that this was a disingenuous response and now another hole has appeared in the highway. Western Power have now apologised by tweet confirming that a main cable has been severed and that disruption is likely until 20th September. However, there has been no action and no information from Devon Highways.

Cllr Twiss advised that he could not speak on behalf of Devon Highways but can ask why the work is taking so long. He shares the concerns but suggested that there was a technical explanation such as a part not being in stock. He will investigate and report back to the Council.

A member of the public confirmed that he had also contacted Devon Highways on Monday 2nd September and their response was that they were unaware of the problem. When he contacted Devon Highways on Friday 6th September, he was advised that a new part had been ordered but that no timescale could be given in respect of when the work would be done.

Mr Adam Powell queried Cllr Twiss' carbon output figures and whether these included embedded carbon output.

Cllr Twiss confirmed that his figures related to the carbon output created by Devon County Council which is calculated using a measure provided by the Government and that the agricultural carbon output figure relating to Devon County Council farms.

Cllr Zarczynski confirmed that usually questions from the public to District and County Councillors are not allowed, he was happy to allow it on this occasion.

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

19/931 Reports from Councillors with Special Responsibilities

Cllr Zarczynski presented the LAG minutes which were now being made available to Councillors and these were noted.

19/932 Update Report

The Clerk presented the Update report, and this was noted.

PART A MATTERS FOR DECISION

19/933 Human Resources Committee

The Clerk confirmed that the item related to a letter received by the Council which had since been withdrawn and replaced by an email. However, Councillors could not discuss the contents.

Cllr Kolek queried whether the Council's insurers would be asked for advice on the status of the letter or just to note receipt of the letter. Cllr Zarczynski confirmed that the insurers would be asked for advice and there would be no charge for this.

Cllr Coombs stated that the Council were being asked to make a decision on an item which could not be discussed and without Councillors questions being answered. Should this item be moved to Part B?

The Town Clerk advised that all Councillors had received a copy of the exempt minutes of the HR meeting 3 days before the meeting which should have answered any queries Councillors had. No queries had been raised with him prior to tonight's meeting and Councillors could have done so. For the matter to go into Part B, the meeting would need to be adjourned and the item discussed later.

Cllr Taylor advised that the matter involved sending a copy of a letter received by Council to the Council's insurers for free advice. The facts were not relevant as this was a protective measure.

Cllr Zarczynski advised that the second item to be resolved by Council related to a matter discussed under Part B. Councillors needed to be confident that what is discussed under Part B stays in Part B and that the rules relating to confidentiality would be enforced. There would appear to have been a breach of Part B from the last meeting and this needed to be looked into.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Clerk should contact the Council's insurers with a copy of a letter received to obtain advice as to whether this letter is a pre-action protocol letter.

Proposed by Cllr Howard and seconded by Cllr Darrant.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously that an investigation should be carried out into the alleged breach of the confidential part of the Full Council meeting on the 12th August 2019.

Proposed by Cllr Coombs and seconded by Cllr Taylor.

19/934 Co-option of new Councillors onto Honiton Town Council

The Town Clerk advised that Mr Mark McGrath had withdrawn his application for health reasons over weekend. If Councillors wished to discuss this with him, he requested that they do so after the meeting.

The Clerk confirmed that the prospective candidates who were in attendance would be asked to wait in the Council's meeting room. They will then be called in alphabetical order to give their presentations and answer four questions which have been set by Members, but which will be read out by the Town Clerk.

The prospective candidates gave their presentations and answered the questions raised in the following order:

Carol Gilson
Jason Hannay
James Wyatt

All Members were then given ballot papers which were then collected, and the votes were counted by the Town Clerk and the Deputy Town Clerk

The Mayor then announced that all three candidates had received the requisite number of votes to be co-opted to the Council.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to invite all three candidates to join the Councillors in attending the meeting although they would not be able to vote.

Proposed by Cllr Kolek and seconded by Cllr Hannay.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to allow all three co-opted Councillors to attend Part B of the meeting.

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

19/935 Fairtrade presentation by Sue Errington

Cllr Kolek introduced Sue Errington who had been invited to attend the meeting and provide the Council with a presentation about Fair Trade.

It was confirmed that a PowerPoint presentation would be provided by Sue after the meeting and circulated to Councillors.

The following points were made:

- Devon has been a fair-trade county for over 10 years.
- Fairtrade Devon is co-ordinated by Devon Development Education for who Sue Errington works.
- The aim is for growers to have a fair price for their work.
- Most are small scale farmers
- Fair Trade foundation guarantees a minimum price for the product/work.
- Co-operatives receive a fair-trade premium which is distributed according to the wishes of the community.
- Fair trade improves local standards.

- There are 5 steps to becoming a fair-trade town.
- There are no downsides to becoming a fair-trade town as it helps to raise a town's profile.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to set up a small working party lead by Cllr Kolek in conjunction with Honiton Chamber of Commerce to explore the possibility of Honiton becoming a Fair-Trade Town. The working party will report back to Full Council in December.

Proposed by Cllr Hattle-Spence and seconded by Cllr Pollington.

19/936 Street names report

Cllr Darrant provided a verbal summary of the report which he had submitted to the Town Clerk earlier that day.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to provide the Town Clerk with names to be put forward for street names on the new Taylor Wimpey site and that they be listed in order of preference and sent to EDDC.

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

19/937 Car park report

The Town Clerk presented the report.

Cllr Macve suggested that the income from the car park could be used to install electric charging points.

The Town Clerk confirmed that this had been discussed with EDDC, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor. An electric charging point will cost approximately £6,000 to install. It was agreed that this would be looked at further.

Cllr Kolek suggested that the proposed 15-minute grace period was too short.

Members **RESOLVED** by 9 votes in favour, 4 votes against and 1 abstention to reaffirm their desire to introduce parking charges at Dowell Street car park.

19/939 Car park incident report

The Town Clerk presented the report which was noted.

19/940 Wildflowers in Honiton project

Cllr Kolek presented the report and a photograph of the proposed wagon offered by Combe Garden Centre and confirmed that pledges of £200 has already been received towards the costs involved. Some concern was raised as to the size of the wagon and whether it would be possible to site this on the roundabout near to Tesco.

Cllr Taylor raised concerns regarding insurance cover for volunteers working on the roundabout and at other sites.

Members **RESOLVED** unanimously to establish a working group and authorise the chair of the working group and officers to approach Devon County Council to adopt the roundabout on Battishorne Way, opposite the Honiton Tesco entrance with a view to instigating a wildflowers project using S106 funding and support from the local community.

19/941 Part B items

It was proposed to take items 17 and 18 into Part B of the meeting that deals with exempt business. This was **RESOLVED** unanimously.

Proposed by Cllr Coombs and seconded by Cllr Howard.

The meeting went into confidential session at 8.55pm

PART B

19/942 Dispute with Honiton Community Complex Report

Cllr Zarczynski provided a summary of the dispute for the benefit of the three new co-opted Councillors.

It was then proposed by Cllr Taylor and seconded by Cllr Howard to extend the meeting by 30 minutes and this was agreed unanimously.

Following discussion, the report was noted.

19/943 Bailey Partnership update report

Cllr Zarczynski provided a summary for the dispute for the benefit of the three new co-opted Councillors.

Following discussion Members **RESOLVED** by 11 votes in favour, 1 against and with 1 abstention to instruct Foot Anstey Solicitors to issue arbitration proceedings against Bailey Partnership.

Proposed by Cllr Taylor and seconded by Cllr Carrigan.

19/944 To close the meeting

The meeting was closed at 9.30pm.

DRAFT