

**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of the Town Council on
Monday 13th January 2025 at 7.00pm**

Present

St Michael's Ward

Cllr M Baldock
Cllr J Brown
Cllr J Fotheringham
Cllr T McCollum (Chair)
Cllr R Sexton
Cllr M Sheen
Cllr L Wakefield

St Paul's Ward

Cllr S Craddock
Cllr D Hayler
Cllr C Kolek
Cllr A Pearsall
Cllr S Sexton
Cllr H Turner

In attendance

Stephen Hill, Town Clerk
Heloise Marlow, Deputy Town Clerk
Cllr P Twiss DCC
Cllr R Collins EDDC – via Zoom
2 Members of the public

24/246 Apologies for absence

Cllr R Coombs (personal)
Cllr L Smart (personal)
Cllr C Maunder (personal)
Cllr S Thorne (personal)

24/247 Declarations of Interests

Cllr R Sexton - Pecuniary Interest Items 24/256, 24/262, 24/264 and 24/265
Cllr S Sexton - Pecuniary Interest Items 24/256, 24/262, 24/264 and 24/265
Cllr C Kolek - Pecuniary Interest Items 24/256, 24/262, 24/264 and 24/265

24/248 Dispensations

The Town Clerk confirmed he had granted either Cllr R Sexton, Cllr S Sexton or Cllr C Kolek a dispensation in relation to items 24/256, 24/262, 24/264 and 24/265 which allowed one of them to remain in the meeting whilst these agenda items were being discussed, contributing to the debate but would prevent them from voting.

24/249 Public Question Time for items on the agenda

The [attached question](#) was received from Mrs J Brown.

24/250 Reports from District and County Councillors

The [attached report](#) was received from Cllr P Twiss who highlighted the funding allocated to Devon for repairs and the forthcoming Grumblewalk in Honiton on Monday 20th January 2025. Devon County Council is currently going through its budget setting process and considering the proposed

changes to local government reorganisation. Devon County Council has put forward an expression of interest to the Government and if this is accepted the scheduled elections for Devon County Council will be postponed.

Cllr McCollum raised the issue of uneven paving slabs in Honiton and would highlight this during the Grumblewalk on 20th January 2025.

Cllr McCollum responded to the public question regarding the Lace Walk toilets. He agreed that portable loos should have been installed and had raised this with the project leader who disagreed that this was necessary. He was not aware of any list of businesses who allowed members of the public in Honiton to use their facilities. The Lace Walk toilets had been closed earlier than planned due to vandalism and had now been demolished.

Cllr J Brown noted that of all the sites where new toilets were being provided, Honiton was the only site without temporary toilets.

Cllr Fotheringham advised that she could view the Lace Walk toilets from her office and regularly saw the toilets being used. Since they have been closed, she had witnessed members of the public urinating behind the wall or between parked cars and supported the need for temporary toilets.

Cllr S Sexton noted that EDDC had classed the Lace Walk toilets as Category A toilets which meant that they were used frequently and as such EDDC should be asked to provide temporary toilets.

Cllr McCollum advised that he had recently attended a virtual meeting with Devon & Cornwall Police with Cllr Brown. It was noted that other communities had the same issues with vandalism and drugs. The next meeting will be at The Beehive in April and all Cllrs would be invited to attend. Cllr McCollum was hoping to arrange another walk around Honiton with the local PCSO and will invite Cllrs R Sexton and Maunder to attend also as the other Cllrs with special responsibilities for Crime & Anti-social behaviour.

Cllr P Twiss left the meeting at 7.15pm

24/251 Reports from Honiton Town Council Members with Special Responsibilities and/or on Outside Bodies

Cllr McCollum advised that he had spoken with Streetscene (EDDC) about temporary toilets at Lace Walk as the contractors had advised it would be 14 weeks before the new toilets were completed. He had been advised to speak with the project leader and will do so and also raise the issue of additional signage regarding the location of the King Street toilets. Whilst the contractor had a portaloo on site it was within the fenced area and attached to their container.

Members RESOLVED unanimously to write to EDDC requesting temporary toilets, improved signage and a list of businesses that permit the public to use their facilities during the course of the works.

Proposed by Cllr McCollum and seconded by Cllr Brown.

Cllr Craddock provided the following update on Honiton Surgery. Loss adjusters have been appointed. The surgery is operating partly from Honiton Hospital and from Sidmouth Surgery. It may be 5-6 months before the surgery is fully operational again. The surgery did look at bringing in temporary portacabins but without the support of the Integrated Care Board and NHS Devon, this was deemed too expensive.

Cllr Fotheringham advised

- The Charter Day committee had raised £450 from a Christmas bingo. Charter Day would be held on 19th July 2025. The theme was Sports, and the Committee was ready to take bookings.
- Operation Rudolph had been a success – covering Honiton, Seaton and Exmouth with food deliveries to Exmouth, Budleigh Salterton and Cranbrook. Over 300 food boxes had been delivered, 3800 gifts and 300 meals provided.

Cllr McCollum advised that the Christmas lights were due to be removed the following day with the Christmas tree already removed. The lights will now be checked. There had been more failures this year than before and he was hoping for a better light display in 2025/26.

24/252 Correspondence: 5th December 2024 – 8th January 2025

Cllr Kolek queried the cost of a new dog bin. The Town Clerk advised that he estimated this at £500.

Cllr Brown advised that from April 2025 existing dog bins would have QR codes on them which would facilitate better monitoring.

The Deputy Clerk advised that EDDC state on its website that it has no capacity to empty any new dog bins installed.

The Town Clerk highlighted the letter from Gronau and its proposed visit to Honiton in September. Cllr Kolek confirmed that this was being discussed by the Twinning Committee, and she would report back on the arrangements made.

Members **NOTED** the item.

24/253 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 9th December 2024 and Extraordinary Full Council Meeting 17th December 2024.

Cllr R Sexton queried why the appointment of a preferred supplier for the occasional repair and planned maintenance of the King Street Public Convenience which had been deferred at the Extra-Ordinary Meeting on the 17.12.24 was not on the agenda.

The Town Clerk advised that the appointment of a contractor had not yet been decided. Cllrs Craddock and Pearsall were carrying out a pre-condition survey of the building and the King Street Public Convenience Working Group were meeting next week.

Members RESOLVED unanimously to approve the minutes of the Full Council meeting on the 9th December 2024 as published and circulated with the Agenda.

Proposed by Cllr Kolek and seconded by Cllr Fotheringham

Members RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Extraordinary Full Council meeting 17th December 2024 as published and circulated with the Agenda.

Proposed by Cllr Pearsall and seconded by Cllr Sheen.

For 12: Against 0; Abstentions 1

24/254 Minutes of Previous Meetings

Members **NOTED** the item.

24/255 Membership of Committees and Working Groups

Cllr Craddock volunteered to join the King Street Public Convenience Working Group.

Cllr S Sexton volunteered to join the Tourism/Economy Working Group.

Cllr L Wakefield volunteered to be the Council representative for Honiton Hospital & Community League of Friends.

The Town Clerk advised that the Youth Working Group needed to be added to the information sheet with Cllrs S Sexton and Wakefield as members.

The Chamber of Commerce and Honiton Health Matters are to be removed from the list as these entities no longer exist.

Members RESOLVED unanimously to approve the above changes.

Proposed by Cllr Wakefield and seconded by Cllr R Sexton

24/256 Budget 25/26

Cllr Fotheringham queried the amount of reserves held at £146k and highlighted the NALC guidelines recommendation that at least 3 months running costs are kept in reserves. The strategy committee had recommended increasing the precept to bolster reserves but only £1k has been allocated in the budget and the amount of underspend from the 2024/25 budget was unknown.

Cllr R Sexton queried the £400k figure proposed for reserves in paragraph 7 of the Town Clerk's report.

The Town Clerk's advice was to have in excess of 3 months running costs in reserves to ensure that all the Council's risks were covered to include the costs of repairing the Dowell Street corner wall which the Quantity Surveyor instructed had estimated at £168K. A second opinion had been requested. This plus other risks to the Council suggested that £400k in reserves would not be out of kilter with other Councils.

Cllr McCollum advised that Exmouth Town Council had £1.5m in reserves.

Cllr Fotheringham proposed that £50k be added to the budget to bolster reserves and this was seconded by Cllr Pearsall.

The Town Clerk suggested that he calculate the impact this would have on the budget and precept.

The meeting was adjourned at 19:45 and recommenced at 19.54.

The Town Clerk advised that increasing the Reserves budget to £50,000 would increase the budget to £716,545, an increase of £121,320 from 2024/25 or 20% or £175.31 pa (£2.47 pm) per Band D property.

Cllr Craddock spoke against this increase in the budget.

Members voted as follows:

For 4; Against 7; Abstentions 2.

The motion failed.

Members RESOLVED to accept the Budget as proposed excluding items relating to Honiton Community Complex

Proposed by Cllr S Sexton and seconded by Cllr R Sexton

For 10; Against 3; Abstentions 0.

Cllrs R Sexton and Kolek left the meeting at 19.58

Members RESOLVED to accept the Budget items relating to Honiton Community Complex as proposed

Proposed by Cllr Wakefield and seconded by Cllr Craddock

For 7; Against 3; Abstentions 1.

Cllrs R Sexton and Kolek returned to the meeting at 20.00

Members RESOLVED to approve the Precept

Proposed by Cllr Craddock and seconded by Cllr S Sexton.

For 9; Against 4; Abstentions 0

24/257 Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities

Cllr Craddock queried how Cllrs would provide their comments and suggested that it would be better if the comments were agreed by either the HR Committee or the Strategy Committee.

The Town Clerk confirmed that similar to other recent consultations he would co-ordinate/complete the form with comments received from Cllrs.

Cllr S Sexton advised that the document related to conduct by Cllrs and as such the form should be completed by Cllrs either via the HR Committee with all Cllrs invited or by having an Extra-ordinary Full Council meeting. There are free text boxes which need to be discussed.

Cllr Kolek advised that it was not uncommon for the consultation to be delegated to the Town Clerk.

Cllr Fotheringham noted that Cllrs could provide their individual responses to the consultation.

Cllr R Sexton noted that it was a really important issue and that there had been problems in the past with Cllr conduct where there were insufficient sanctions, and it was important that the Council responded together.

Members RESOLVED to hold an Extra-ordinary Full Council meeting to consider and agree the Council's comments on the Strengthening the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities consultation.

Proposed by Cllr S Sexton and seconded by Cllr Pearsall

For 10; Against 2; Abstentions 1

24/258 Strategic Leisure, EDDC Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sports Strategy Parish Consultation

Members RESOLVED unanimously to delegate to the Town Clerk (in consultation with the Councillor Chairman of the Honiton Sports Working Group) to provide the Council's comments on the Strategic Leisure Consultation.

Proposed by Cllr Craddock and seconded by Cllr Brown

24/259 Street Art, Containers at Beehive Car Park

Members RESOLVED unanimously to Delegate the Decision to reconfigure the containers at the Beehive car park and provision of artwork to the Town Management Committee within budget.

Proposed by Cllr Kolek and seconded by Cllr Brown

24/260 Council Surgeries

Cllr McCollum advised that this was an opportunity for Cllrs to meet the public and so it was important that all Cllrs attended either the day surgery or the evening surgery.

Cllr Kolek queried why all the surgeries were on a Thursday and suggested that one of the surgeries should be on a different day. This was supported by Cllr Fotheringham.

Members RESOLVED to refer the arrangements for Council surgeries in April 2025 and August 2025 back to the Strategy Committee.

Proposed by Cllr Kolek and seconded by Cllr Fotheringham

For 8; Against 0; Abstentions 5.

24/261 Meetings Schedule 25/26

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that all the meetings of the Green & Open Spaces Committee would be held in the Hayward Room.

Members unanimously RESOLVED to approve the schedule of meeting dates 25/26

Proposed by Cllr Kolek and seconded by Cllr Pearsall

24/262 [Accounts](#)

Members RESOLVED unanimously to approve all payments except HTC 21019,21025 and 21032.

Proposed by Cllr Craddock and seconded by Cllr Fotheringham

Cllrs R Sexton and Kolek left the meeting at 20.19pm

Members RESOLVED to approve payments HTC 21019, 21025 and 21032

Proposed by Cllr Pearsall and seconded by Cllr Wakefield

For 10, Against 0, Abstentions 1

24/263 Exempt Business

Members RESOLVED unanimously to take the following items into exempt business.

Proposed by Cllr Pearsall and seconded by Cllr S Sexton

24/264 Underwriting of Honiton Community Complex (HCC) Costs

Cllr Pearsall advised that there had been no HCC/HTC Review meeting since the last FC meeting.

Members RESOLVED to agree to underwrite total contribution to HCC of £5000.00 for October 2024.

Proposed by Cllr Craddock and seconded by Cllr Pearsall

For 9, Against 1, Abstentions 1.

24/265 Honiton Community Complex Business Plan Progress Report

Members **NOTED** the item

24/266 To close the meeting

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.