

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

met on

Tuesday 14th July 2020

Via digital Zoom Meeting, starting at 7.00pm

Town Council

- Library Project

DRAFT MINUTES

Annual Meeting of the Council 2020, Deferred until 2021

Due to the current restrictions and uncertainty during the COVID- 19 (Coronavirus) outbreak, Somerton Town Council has taken the decision to defer the Annual Meeting of the Council until May 2021.

Councillors present: Councillors Ruddle (Chair), Fletcher, Flowers, Harrison, Kerley, Pither, Richardson, Simmonds, Smith and Taylor

Officers present: Judy Raybould (Town Clerk) and Claire Lucas (Deputy Clerk)

Members of the Public: 5

Members of the Press: 1

Chairman changed the order of Agenda Items: Item 1485 will be taken prior to Item 1484

QUESTION TIME / COMMENTS

Resident 1 (Comment):

Presentation presented to Members related to good practice in relation to a Council Co-option Procedure with guidance and helpful suggestions to assist in the development of a robust and transparent Councillor Recruitment Policy covering the Co-option Process.

Resident 2 (Comment):

Save Kirkham Street Field Trustee Presentation: Chairperson of Kirkham Street Field Community Trust, Margaret Chambers.

Presentation to Somerton town Council 14th July 2020

Thinking for the long Term

As Chairperson of the Trust I am here to ask The Council for help.

Already the granting of match funding shows that the Council supports this community led initiative. Thank you.

However, since the submission of our application funds amounting to £32,000 have been promised bringing our total to £55,000.

The input of £50,000 from STC would give major benefactors more confidence to donate and would enable the Trust to approach the District Council for funding which we have tentatively investigated. The Trust has found other funding streams available for development and maintenance. -

Your help at this time will help address current difficulties in fund raising caused by Covid 19.

Kirkham Field will meet an identified shortfall of 3 acres of **informal open green space** in Somerton whilst complementing the sports facilities provided at Gassons Lane. Supporting this project generously would be a fair distribution of Council Funds for leisure facilities for the Town's residents of all ages, genders and abilities.

The idea of green spaces for general wellbeing of communities is now rising to the top of the national agenda. When Kirkham Field becomes vacant in 2021 Somerton will have the most incredible opportunity to be forward looking by using this green space to address social issues, heal the community after the Covid emergency, create habitats for wildlife , provide an outdoor space for the residents of central properties, both old and new, with little or no garden including Wessex House, a space for social prescribing by GP's for both mental and physical health and provide opportunities for volunteering and more. It will create an area of peace and quiet near to the bustling high street with its pubs and eating venues enhancing a visit to Somerton. Expression of partnerships have come from Dementia Care, the Men's Shed movement, AceArts, RSPB, Somerset Wildlife Trust. **But first the land itself has to be saved.**

For the Council itself keeping Kirkham Field as a green space will address carbon reduction and storage and provide space to plant trees.

In contrast a development of properties on this field would destroy the benefits which I have just listed **forever** and set Somerton back for generations to come.

The purpose of the Trust is to save the Kirkham Street Field. Please support us as much as you possibly can in a final effort.

I am submitting a proposal to amend the Trigger Clause in the Recommendation to Councilors so that it reads.

"To release the funds on request once a sale agreement has been secured with SCC and presented to STC for verification"

Thank you.

Questions Asked by Members:

Q. What is the impact if the funding is below the requested amount to the Trust?

A. Confidence could be lost when requesting funding from other organisations.

Q. Has there been any progress related to the possibility of archaeology being present on the site?

A. No work has been completed to date. Attention currently has been focused on fundraising. The contact provided relating to Aerial Photography has not been contacted at this point.

COUNTY / DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

District Councillor Kerley: The District Council is concentrating on the Unitary debate.

District Councillor Ruddle: Many Officers have left the Planning Department, including Simon Fox.

County Councillor Ruddle: The weekly reports will end this Friday (19th July 2020) and efforts are being made to work towards a monthly update report as an alternative.

OTHER PUBLIC SERVICE REPORTS (POLICE / FIRE SERVICE)

- No Reports presented

REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVES ON EXTERNAL GROUPS

(Not detailed elsewhere on the agenda)

- Library Trust:

SCC is carrying out a phased opening of its libraries commencing July 6th. SLT is awaiting their recommendations, but we may find that some volunteers are reluctant to assist as many are considered "at risk". We are doing our best to provide a service as soon as it is safe to do so.

- Recreation Ground Trust: No report presented.
- Somerton PPG: No report presented.
Action: The Clerk to circulate the report to Members.
- Speed Watch: Speed Watch can restart following the release of lockdown rules and has only just started.

REPORT FROM CHAIRS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Accessibility and Highways:

Somerton in Bloom 2020:

The floral display has delivered and put up in the town including the installation of 38 hanging baskets. There are some items missing including 2 x 1/2 round baskets from the finger post in the Market place and 2 troughs.

The Clerk confirmed these have been delivered although in the wrong location.

The original watering maintenance programme was set to commence on 10th June but the installation was delayed therefore a request has been made to SSDC map the 14 week plan from installation providing a new finish date of 19th October, confirmation of this is pending.

Overgrown vegetation:

At the junction at the bottom of Horsemill Lane the resident of the bungalow has confirmed receipt of the letter requesting their Budliea be cut back to provide clear viability at the junction and this work has been completed. Thanks, expressed to the homeowner.

Dog Fouling:

Dog fouling during lockdown has increased in Somerton and great efforts have been made in partnership with SSDC to keep areas clear of dog fouling. This has been particularly noticeable at Bradley Hill Lane.

STC1480: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies: Councillor Holland and Councillor Raybould

STC1481: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Members to declare any interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Council's Code of Conduct, and to note the grant of dispensations made by the town clerk in relation to the business of this meeting.

- Councillor Fletcher: Item STC1486 GRANT APPLICATIONS Save Kirkham Street Field Trust

STC1482: EXCLUSIONS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC: To agree any items to be dealt with after the public, including the press have been excluded. (A resolution to be passed by councillors)

- Town Clerk Recruitment (HR Staffing)

Recommendation: To take the item to discuss the Town Clerk Recruitment In Camera.

Resolved: Agreed to take the item to discuss the Town Clerk Recruitment In Camera.

STC1483: MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS: To receive and sign the minutes of the last Town Council meeting held on 10th March 2020.

Resolved: Agreed to accept the minutes of the meeting 10th March 2020 as an accurate record.

STC1485: CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR (Somerton Town Council Co-option Policy Draft previously distributed to Council members)

Extract from the Somerton Town Council TAG Meeting 30th June 2020.

T305: Co-option of new councillors

- *Options for Councillor co-option*

Action Plan:

- *Advertise through Social Media, The STC Website, The Viaduct and noticeboards the Councillor Vacancy during July and August 2020.*
- *The Council via HR to agree an interview panel and to devise a set on standardised questions.*
- *Complete interview sessions with interested parties during September 2020, providing feedback to all the members using a standardised feedback form.*
- *Complete the Co-option process at the October 2020 Full Council meeting.*

Action: To review and agree the Co-option process.

Item debated by Members.

The Chair informed members of an expression of Interest received from Mrs Anouska Harrison on 21st June 2020.

Mrs Harrison was present at the meeting.

Proposed: Councillor Flowers

Seconded: Councillor Richardson

Vote: 6 Votes in Favour

4 Votes against

Motion carried.

- Anouska Harrison Co-opted and welcomed on to Somerton Town Council

Proposal: For Anouska Harrison to complete the Acceptance of Office form within one week of this meeting.

Recommendation: For Anouska Harrison to complete the Acceptance of Office form within one week of this meeting.

Resolved: Agreed for Anouska Harrison to complete the Acceptance of Office form within one week of this meeting.

STC1484: COUNCILLOR RECRUITMENT POLICY (Somerton Town Council Co-option Policy Draft previously distributed to Council members)

Proposal: To defer this item with a request the P&C Committee review the Co-option policy for Somerton Town Council.

Recommendation: To defer this item with a request the P&C Committee review the Co-option policy for Somerton Town Council.

Resolved: Agreed to defer this item with a request the P&C Committee review the Co-option policy for Somerton Town Council.

STC1486: GRANT APPLICATIONS

- **Save Kirkham Street Field Trust** (Full grant request previously distributed to Council members)

Request for £50,000 - £150,000 to support the purchase of the field by the Save Kirkham Street Field Trust

Proposal: To support the grant request to the value of £25,000

To release the funds from Capital Projects Earmarked fund (Currently the Capital Projects earmarked fund holds the Etsome Terrace Sale proceeds).

To release the funds on request once a sale agreement has been secured with SCC and presented to STC for verification.

Recommendation: To support the grant request to the value of £25,000

To release the funds from Capital Projects Earmarked fund (Currently the Capital Projects earmarked fund holds the Etsome Terrace Sale proceeds).

To release the funds on request once a sale agreement has been secured with SCC and presented to STC for verification.

Resolved: To support the grant request to the value of £25,000

To release the funds from Capital Projects Earmarked fund (Currently the Capital Projects earmarked fund holds the Etsome Terrace Sale proceeds).

To release the funds on request once a sale agreement has been secured with SCC and presented to STC for verification.

- **Somerton Recreation Ground Trust** (Full grant request previously distributed to Council members)

To seek funding to repair the temporary changing room floors.

Recommendation: To support the grant request to the value of £4560.00 (60% contribution towards the grant requested amount of £7600).

Funds to be released from the Changing Room earmarked fund to the value of £2000 and the remainder £2560 will be taken from an agreed source to be agreed at the meeting.

Resolved: To support the grant request to the value of £4560.00 (60% contribution towards the grant requested amount of £7600).

Funds to be released from the Changing Room earmarked fund to the value of £2000 and the remainder £2560 will be taken from an agreed source to be agreed at the meeting.

STC1487: ACTIONS AND REPORTS NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA:

- Skate Park Half Pipe installed, and post installation inspection completed
- Edgar Hall Main Hall curtains received.
- Manhole and Sign repair at the Brunel Car Park
- Removal of a bench and sign at the Cox's Yard Car Park. Bench to be relocated.
- COVID-19 Social Distance awareness signs installed in the town following the opening of the High Street.

STC1488: CORRESPONDENCE AND CLERKS REPORT

- Covid-19 Expenditure

Report provided by the Town Clerk.

Spreadsheet table results detailed below:

Date	Account	Details	Net
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30/06/2020	AJ Billing	Play Area sanitiser stations	182.00
28/06/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	COVID-19 Community Lifeline Cash withdrawal fee	3.30
27/06/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	COVID-19 Community Lifeline Cash withdrawal fee	7.50
14/06/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	COVID-19 Community Lifeline Cash withdrawal fee	3.00
13/06/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	COVID-19 Community Lifeline Cash withdrawal fee	7.50
11/06/2020	Concept Products	Covid-19 Pelican Pump	5.90
09/06/2020	Concept Products	Covid-19 Sanitiser Dispenser, sanitiser, and signs x2	176.00
08/06/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	COVID-19 Community Lifeline Cash withdrawal fee	3.00
06/06/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	COVID-19 Community Lifeline Cash withdrawal fee	7.50
04/06/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Covid-19 Food Bank Supplies Poundland	42.50
04/06/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	CCovid-19 Food Bank Supplies Bookers	15.08
04/06/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Covid-19 Food Bank Supplies Bookers	57.87
02/06/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	500 x Large Clear Disposable Gloves Somerton Community Life	12.31
31/05/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Covid -19 Petty Cash Credit Card Cash Withdrawal Fee	7.50
25/05/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Covid -19 Petty Cash Credit Card Cash Withdrawal Fee	7.50
22/05/2020	Overt Locke	Covid-19 Cable ties and drawing pins	11.18
20/05/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	100 Face Masks	87.45
12/05/2020	Overt Locke	Covid-19 Cable ties	9.07
08/05/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Covid -19 Petty Cash Credit Card Cash Withdrawal Fee	5.70
04/05/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	COVID-19 Volunteer Petty Cash Fund Cash Withdrawal Fee	7.50
24/04/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Extra Strong Carrier Bags Extra Strong	103.65
23/04/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	COVID-19 Volunteer Petty Cash Fund Cash Withdrawal Fee	7.50
20/04/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	COVID-19 Volunteer Petty Cash Fund Cash Withdrawal Fee	7.50
14/04/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Stationery House Card and Laminating Pouches COVID-19 V' ID	9.17
10/04/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	covid-19 sanitiser	50.00
01/04/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	COVID-19 Food Bank supplies Booker Limited	208.58
31/03/2020	Concept Products	100ML Empty Bottles COVID -19	54.00
28/03/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Disposable Gloves and sanitiser	85.26
28/03/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Disposable Gloves	21.56
28/03/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Plastic 100ml bottles x 30 Volunteer COVID19	39.95
28/03/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Lanyards and A4 Adhesive Labels	18.31
27/03/2020	Concept Products	covid-19 Empty Bottles for sanitiser	36.00
27/03/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Cash Fee Volunteer Petty Cash	7.50
26/03/2020	Overt Locke	Covid-19 Equipment park securing Cable Ties	4.46
26/03/2020	Concept Products	covid-19 Empty Bottles for sanitiser	54.00
26/03/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Cash Fee Volunteer Petty Cash	7.50
25/03/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Cash Fee Volunteer Petty Cash	7.50
24/03/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Cash Fee Volunteer Petty Cash	7.50
24/03/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Volunteer Petty Cash Tin	14.16
23/03/2020	Overt Locke	covid-19 Empty Securing Play are locks & chain & cable ties	61.92
23/03/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Lanyards	21.64
19/03/2020	Judy Raybould Expenses	Lanyards	21.64
18/03/2020	Concept Products	CoVID19 PPE	246.82
			1755.48

- Work carried out during the period the COVID-19 Internal Plan was in place:

Land & Properties Committee:

Installation of a half-pipe in the skate park is now complete and the skate park is open - but will be closed in the event of non-compliance with the published guidelines.

Edgar Hall bar area refurbishment is planned for August 2020. However, the Contractor has been contacted to consider moving this date forward, as social distancing rules have changed regarding certain trades being able to work. All work undertaken would adhere to social distancing rules to make the working environment safe for the Contractor.

Cemetery water pipe emergency repair has taken place due to broken standpipe tap.

Access & Highways Committee:

The committee have been very busy with fly-tipping issues - especially whilst the recycling centres were closed. However, the Somerton site opened from 26th May 2020.

Councillor Pither, Councillor Richardson and the Deputy Clerk and Committee members are thanked for their efforts within the community related to concerns regarding dog fouling and litter.

Within the Brunel Car Park, a repair to a sunken manhole has taken place. Also, within this area a damaged sign has been repaired.

Within the Cox's Yard Car Park, a sign and bench have been removed and returned to Edgar Hall pending relocation within the car park.

The Promotions & Communications Committee:

The committee members are currently working on a social media plan.

Unfortunately, the Annual Parish Meeting (normally held in May along with the annual parish awards) has had to be postponed.

Somerton News was published on time and we are still managing to produce a much-reduced version of Viaduct.

The main notice board at the parish rooms has been removed for painting work on the windows and hopefully will be replaced by a new electronic noticeboard which will be much easier to update direct from the office. The use of the Tourist Information Board located at the front of the Parish Rooms will be used as a temporary Somerton Town Council noticeboard, until the electronic noticeboard is installed.

STC1489: INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT (previously distributed)

To note the contents of the reports Visits 2 & 3 and the agreed actions.

- Items noted by members

STC1490: ANNUAL RETURN 2019-20 GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

To approve the Governance Statement, Chairman to sign the return

Annual Governance Statement 2019 / 20				
	Agreed			
	Yes	No	N/A	
Item 1:	✓			
Item 2:	✓			
Item 3:	✓			
Item 4:		✓		Explanation and Internal Auditors notes read out to Members by the Chair.
Item 5:	✓			
Item 6:	✓			
Item 7:	✓			
Item 8:	✓			
Item 9:			✓	

Resolved: Agreed to accept the Annual Governance Statement 2019 / 2020 (Items voted on block and accepted). (Chairman to visit the Clerk’s office to sign the return as meeting took place via Zoom).

STC1491: ANNUAL RETURN 2019-20 (Full Draft Somerton Town Council Financial Papers for Year 2019 – 20 previously distributed to Council members and AGAR)

To approve the annual return, Chairman to sign the return.

Recommendation: To accept and approve the Annual return 2019 / 2020. (Chairman to visit the Clerk’s office to sign the return (Accounting Statement 2019 / 20) and Somerton Town Council Financial Papers for Year 2019 – 20, as meeting took place via Zoom).

Resolved: Agreed to accept and approve the Annual return 2019 / 2020 (Chairman to visit the Clerk’s office to sign the return (Annual Accounting Statement 2019 / 20 and Financial Papers for Year 2019 – 20, as meeting took place via Zoom).

STC1492: STC ASSET REGISTER (previously distributed)

To note the STC assets. *(Forms part of the Somerton Town Council Financial Papers for Year 2019-20)*

Changes since the previous year:

New items listed:

- 20’ Container
- Gazebo
- Road Signs (Russet Road)
- 2 x Lenovo Laptops (Clerk and Deputy Clerk)
- Somerton Community Library

Items noted as part of the approved Somerton Town Council Financial Papers for Year 2019 – 20.

STC1493: ELECTION OF P& C COMMITTEE CHAIR AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS FOR COUNCILLORS FLETCHER AND HOLLAND:

Chairs of Committees 2020/2021 Membership for P&C Chair:

P&C
Sue Pither

Committee Structures 2020/2021 Membership for Councillors Fletcher and Holland:

L&P	P&C	Planning
Vince Holland	Mo Fletcher	Mo Fletcher

Recommendation: To support the Committee membership options presented:

- Councillor Pither put forward to become Chair of the Somerton Town Council Promotions and Communications Committee.
- Councillor Holland put forward to become a member of the Land and Properties Committee.
- Councillor Fletcher put forward to become a member of the Promotions and Communications Committee and Planning Committee.

Item voted on block.

Resolved: To support the Committee membership options presented.

- Councillor Pither appointed Chair of the Somerton Town Council Promotions and Communications Committee.
- Councillor Holland appointed a member of the Land and Properties Committee.
- Councillor Fletcher appointed a member of the Promotions and Communications Committee and Planning Committee.

STC1494: TO APPROVE THE OBJECTIVES FOR STC 2020/21

Somerton Town Council Objectives 2020/21

Town Council

- Investment Account Review

Administration

- Local Council Award Gold level
- Deputy Clerk CiLCA

Access and Highways

- Road Safety to include Road Safety, Street Lights including Cow Sq*, SIDs Project
- Behind Berry Improvements
- West Street One Way System
- Stationery House Paving
- Somerton in Bloom 2020
- Environmental Initiatives

Land and Properties

- New Cemetery Area Project Phase 1
- Edgar Hall Expansion Project Phase 1
- Play Equipment Review Phase 1

Promotion and Communication

- Develop Electronic notice board including installation
- Neighbourhood Plan – Partnership working with Planning
- Community Engagement:
 - Develop the Council’s use of Social Media
 - Partnership working with Youth Groups

Recommendation: To approve the STC Objectives 2020 / 21

Resolved: Agreed to approve the STC Objectives 2020 / 21

STC1495: T1004382 Behind Berry Traffic Management Improvement Scheme (Report previously distributed)

- To review options report supporting plans of the Behind Berry Small Improvement Scheme for consideration.

Recommendation: To support option 4 of the proposed schemes from Behind Berry Small Improvement Scheme report.

Resolved: Agreed to support option 4 of the proposed schemes from Behind Berry Small Improvement Scheme report.

STC1496: MEETING SCHEDULE

- To review and agree the amendments to the Annual Town Council Meeting Schedule to now include the P&C Committee meeting once every 2 months in line with all other Town Council Committees.

Recommendation: To adopt the amended Annual Town Council Meeting Schedule.

Resolved: Agreed to adopt the amended Annual Town Council Meeting Schedule.

STC1497: FINANCE:

SOMERTON TOWN COUNCIL PAYMENTS SUMMARY			
COUNCIL MEETING	PERIOD	PAYMENT TOTALS	PETTY CASH TOTALS
July 2020	Up to 31 st March 2020	£20468.34	£0.00
July 2020	Up to 9 th April 2020	19225.57	£0.00
July 2020	Up to 5 th May 2020	£23373.71	£0.00

July 2020	Up to 12 th June 2020	£19310.66	£0.00
July 2020	Up to 9 th July 2020	£44314.55	£0.00

- Schedule of accounts / invoices for payment approval by Somerton Town Council for March 20, April 20, May 2020 & June 2020, with two councillors nominated to confirm the payments. (plus signing cheques where online details are not available).
- To receive the bank reconciliation March 20, April 20, May 2020 & June 2020.
- To receive the monthly budget reports for March 20, April 20, May 2020 & June 2020.

Recommendation: To approve the schedule of Accounts / Invoices for payments approval form by Somerton Town Council including the monthly budget Report, with two Councillors nominated to confirm the payments.(Plus signing cheques where online details are not available) and the bank reconciliation for March 20, April 20, May 2020 & June 2020.

Resolved: Agreed to approve the schedule of Accounts / Invoices for payments approval form by Somerton Town Council including the monthly budget Report, with two Councillors nominated to confirm the payments.(Plus signing cheques where online details are not available) and the bank reconciliation for March 20, April 20, May 2020 & June 2020.

Online Payment and Cheque Approvers:

- Cllr Pither
- Cllr Taylor

STC1498: PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Planning Application Number	Planning Description	Location
20/01818/REM	Application for reserved matters following outline approval of 19/02804/OUT (Outline planning application for the erection of 4 No. bungalows with access road) Seeking approval of Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale for Plot 4	Land Os 7200 Bancombe Road Somerton TA11 6SB
Observations to the SSDC Planning Department:		
Recommendation: To support the application.		
Unanimously supported		
Resolved: Application supported.		
Planning Application Number	Planning Description	Location
20/01803/REM	Application of reserved matters following outline approval of 18/03493/OUT (Outline planning application for the erection of 6. No. dwellings and new access road) Seeking approval of access, appearance, landscaping, layout & scale for plot 2	5 Drayton Court Somerton Somerset TA11 6FN

Observations to the SSDC Planning Department:
Recommendation: To support the application. Unanimously supported Resolved: Application supported.

STC1499: CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The COVID-19 Internal Plan has now ceased.
Councillor Bassett and Council Dobson have resigned from Somerton Town Council.
Thanks, expressed to Councillor Bassett and Councillor Dobson for their hard work on the Council and they will be missed.

Get Well wishes for a speedy recovery were expressed to Councillor Dobson.

STC1500: AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING – The next meeting will take place on 8th September 2020

- **FACEBOOK UPDATE AND MEDIA COUNCILLOR APPOINTMENT**

With no further business the meeting closed 8:22pm

In Camera

STC1501: CLERK RECRUITMENT

With no further business the meeting closed 8:33pm