

**Minutes of the Meeting of Warminster Town Council
on
Monday 25th March 2024 at 7pm
held at the Civic Centre,
Sambourne Road, Warminster, BA12 8LB.**

Membership:

Cllr Allensby (West) Vice Chairman of the Council and Deputy Mayor	*	Cllr Keeble (West) Chairman of the Council and Mayor	*
Cllr Brett (East)	*	Cllr Kirkwood (Broadway)	*
Cllr Cooper (Broadway)	*	Cllr Jones (East)	*
Cllr Davis (East)	*	Cllr Macfarlane (West)	*
Cllr Fraser (West)	*	Cllr Parks (North)	*
Cllr Hawker (Broadway)	A	Cllr Robbins (East)	*
Cllr Jeffries (North)	*		

Key: * Present A Apologies AB Absent

In attendance:

Officers: Tom Dommett, (Town Clerk and RFO), Judith Halls (Deputy Town Clerk), Patsy Clover (Committee Clerk).

Police: T/Sergeant Vicky Howick

Press: One

Members of the public: 14

FC/23/120 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr Hawker.

FC/23/121 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest under Warminster Town Council’s Code of Conduct issued in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

FC/23/122 Minutes

FC/23/122.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15th January 2024, were approved as a true record, and signed by the Chairman.

FC/23/122.2 There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15th January 2024.

FC/23/123 **Chairman's Announcements**

FC/23/123.1 Cllr Keeble, Mayor of Warminster, welcomed Cllr James Kirkwood to the council.

Cllr Keeble commented on the huge success of the spring market and gave his thanks to the council's officers and Warminster Business Network.

FC/23/123.2 The Mayor's engagements were noted.

FC/23/124 **Correspondence Circulated**

The correspondence list was noted.

FC/23/125 **Questions**

There were no questions submitted in advance by members of the council.

Standing Orders were suspended for public participation at 19:02.

FC/23/126 **Public Participation**

Maggie Richens spoke as a member of Sustainable Warminster and the Toad Patrol explaining that she believed that the local toad population would be in danger of extinction if a road closure is not implemented and reminded the council and Wiltshire Council of their legal duty to consider biodiversity in their decision making.

Iain Perkins, a local ecologist, advised members that 3,500 people had signed the Save Warminster's Biodiversity petition. He reminded members of the duty placed by the government on unitary and parish councils to support biodiversity through the Environment Act 2021. Ecology and Hydrology reports demonstrate that the toads need the council's support.

Harriet James advised members that the Toad Patrol had recorded 500 amphibians this year compared with thousands in previous years; the decline is not sustainable. She stated that, in her view, at least three different sections of the Traffic Act could be used to support a road closure.

Standing Orders were reinstated at 19:10.

FC/23/127 **Reports from Unitary Authority Members and the Police**

FC/23/127.1 **Police**

T/Sergeant Vicky Howick presented a verbal police report which members noted. She raised the following points:

- Joint patrols, both overt and covert, are being carried out in conjunction with Trowbridge police to address the significant increase in shoplifting.
- The Police are working with Selwood Housing and various youth agencies to address the increasing problem of youth ASB. Arrests and referral orders are being made when a crime is identified.
- Recent cases of dangerous driving and criminal damage/ assault in Westleigh were cited to demonstrate the need for CCTV and police support for the installation of CCTV cameras on the estate.

T/Sergeant Howick will provide data for incidents of domestic violence in Warminster. She stated that there was a positive arrest rate in Warminster and a police commitment to pursuing cases.

FC/23/127.2 Unitary Councillors

Cllr Jackson referred members to the announcement by Wiltshire Council about their plans to close the squash courts at Warminster Leisure Centre stating his concerns about a lack of evidence to demonstrate the need for a greater floor area for the gym and the lack of consultation. The proposed closure of the squash courts will be included as an agenda item for the Extra Ordinary meeting of Full Council on 15 April; data from the recent Area Board meeting regarding numbers using the sports facilities and numbers using the squash courts will also be included.

FC/23/128 Proceedings of Committee

Cllr Macfarlane raised his concerns about perceived discrepancies in the minutes from the Town Development committee meeting on 26th February and the Parks and Estate committee meeting on 11th March when ticketing for the centenary event was discussed. The Town Clerk advised that the minutes referred to were not on the agenda for adoption.

Minutes from the following meetings were adopted:

FC/23/128.1 Finance and Audit Committee meeting held on 8th January 2024.

FC/23/128.2 HR Committee meeting held on 2nd October 2023.

FC/23/128.3 Parks and Estate Committee meetings held on 23rd October 2023 and 22nd January 2024.

FC/23/128.4 Planning Advisory Committee meetings held on 11th December 2023, 29th January 2024, and 19th February 2024.

FC/23/128.5 Town Development Committee meeting held on 4th December 2023.

FC/23/129 Resignations from and Appointments to Committees

There were no resignations from committees and, as there are currently no vacancies on any committees, no appointments were made.

FC/23/130 Mayor and Deputy Mayor Elect 2024 - 2025

Cllr Keeble proposed Cllr Allensby as Mayor Elect of Warminster 2024 - 25. Seconded Cllr Cooper.

Members resolved to select Cllr Allensby as Mayor Elect for 2024 -25.

Cllr Allensby proposed Cllr Cooper for Deputy Mayor Elect of Warminster 2024 - 25. Seconded Cllr Keeble.

Members resolved to select Cllr Cooper as Deputy Mayor Elect for 2024 - 25.

FC/23/131 Meetings calendar for municipal year 2024 – 2025

Members adopted the calendar of meetings for the May 2024 - May 2025 municipal year.

FC/23/132 Sealing of Documents – Warminster Community Hub

Members resolved to approve the agreement for a peppercorn rent which was executed by affixing the Common Seal of Warminster Town Council.

FC/23/133 **Road Closure Smallbrook Road**
After discussion of the three proposed options, **members resolved to apply** to Wiltshire Council for a road closure to be implemented from 14th February 2025 to 13th March 2025 with funding to come from General Reserves.

FC/23/134 **Grant Application**
Support for the scheme from the police, Princecroft School and residents was noted.

In answer to a query from Cllr Davis, the Town Clerk advised members that the council had provided assistance to Selwood Housing regarding procedures and compliance for their CCTV system but that the CCTV Partnership would not be involved in monitoring; this would be carried out by Selwood Housing.

Members resolved to approve a grant of £5,000 to Selwood Housing towards the installation of CCTV cameras on the Westleigh Estate with funding to come from General Reserves.

FC/23/135 **Sale of Dewey House**
Members resolved to proceed with the sale of Dewey House and to delegate the process to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor.

FC/23/136 **Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS)**
Members resolved that all the documentation and information is in place to apply for a Quality Gold Award under the LCAS.

FC/23/137 **Community Governance Review**
Members noted that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England has consented to the making of an Order under the Local Government and Public Involvement and Health Act 2007 for the reorganisation of community governance in a number of parishes as recommended by Wiltshire Council meaning that from May 2025, the number of councillors for the parish of Warminster will be increased from 13 to 14; the additional councillor will be in Warminster Broadway ward.

FC/23/138 **Council Youth Champion**
Members resolved to appoint Cllrs Allensby and Jones as the council's Youth Champions. The Youth Champions will be contacts for youth engagement and liaison with organisations and be someone youths can come and talk to about ideas.

FC/23/139 **Neighbourhood Plan Update**
The importance of including site allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan in order to increase the land supply protection from four years to five years in the light of the recent government paper was raised by Cllr Keeble, as chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

It was anticipated that this would extend the review of the Neighbourhood Plan by approximately nine months.

Members ratified the decision of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to include site allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan.

FC/23/140 Communications

Members agreed press releases to be issued with the following spokespeople:

- Road closure Smallbrook Road – Cllr Keeble
- Grant Application Selwood Housing – Cllr Parks
- Council Youth Champion – Cllr Allensby
- Neighbourhood Plan site allocation – Cllr Keeble.

Meeting closed 8:13pm.

Minutes from this meeting will be available to all members of the public either from our website www.warminster.uk.com or by contacting us at Warminster Civic Centre.

Next Full Council meeting to be held on 20th May 2024. This will be the annual meeting.