



Castle Cary Town Council

The Market House

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DRAFT MINUTES OF CASTLE CARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

held on Monday 11th December 2023 at 7.00pm

Present: Judi Morison (Chair), Frances Alden, Margaret Bebbington, Robert Brown, David Gill, Pek Peppin, Angela Piggott and Trevor Oats

In attendance: Lisa Davis (Clerk)
Kevin Messenger (Somerset Councillor)
Henry Hobhouse (Somerset Councillor)
Ewan Jones (Bruton Town Council)
Jamie Cullen (Bruton Town Council)
Katie Armstrong (Deputy Clerk)
8 members of the public

Before the meeting started, Judi Morison reminded all Councillors of the Civility and Respect pledge that has been approved by CCTC.

19:00 – Open session

One member of the public spoke about a near collision at South Street and the need for Community Speedwatch in South Street and North Street. They also raised concerns about the extent of the works to the path at Lodge Hill.

One member of the public raised concerns about Councillor conduct at meetings and thanked the Chair for mentioning the Civility and Respect pledge at the start of the meeting. A copy of written questions regarding the youth contract was handed to the Chair and Town Clerk.

One member of the public raised concerns that CCTC did not discuss the Somerset Council financial situation at the last Full Council meeting and were not taking the situation seriously. Concerns were also raised that the minutes of the last Full Council meeting did not mention the new youth contract.

Henry Hobhouse read a statement in response to the query raised at the last Full Council meeting regarding the installation of solar panels on the Toybox Pre School building.

The meeting started at 19:19

TC94 Apologies for absence

Linda Ball, Philippa Biddlecombe and Rob Worth had sent their apologies.

TC95 Declarations of personal or pecuniary interests - no Councillors had interests to declare.

TC96 To approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 20th November to be signed by the Chair at a later time.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed (6 – for, 2 – abstained, 0 – against) that the minutes of the meeting on Monday 20th November are approved.

Robert Brown raised concerns about the amount of detail included in the minutes and suggested that all information should be included as CCTC do not have an active channel to communicate to the community.

TC97 Community Safety and Security update

The Crime report was circulated in advance of the meeting.

TC98 To receive reports, updates and correspondence:

- a) **Somerset Councillors:** Henry Hobhouse gave an update on the financial challenges that Somerset Council are facing and reported that central government had offered a 10% increase in Council Tax which would help to relieve the situation but not remove it. Kevin Messenger reported that a Council budget setting public consultation had been launched today.
- b) **Dimmer Liaison Group** There was no update.
- c) **Caryford Hall** The next meeting would be held on 14th December.
- d) **Castle Cary Museum** There was no update.
- e) **Update on Key Objectives/Projects** There was no update.
- f) **To review action points from previous meetings** Judi Morison reminded Councillors to provide feedback on the letter from SALC by the end of December.

TC99 Chairs' Report

- a) **Local Community Network (LCN)** Judi Morison introduced Ewan Jones – Co-Chair of the South East Somerset LCN and reported that the LCN meeting on 6 December was well attended. The next meeting would be held on 22 February 2024.
- b) **Youth provision**
 - i. **Update** Judi Morison reported that the partner councils met on 23 November to look at the amended contract. Chubb Bullied Solicitors have been contacted to seek legal advice. Unfortunately, Youth Connect have been unable to recruit a Youth Worker to date but will be re-advertising at a higher level with no financial implication to the partnership. Judi Morison stressed that it is important that we get this right as there is a lot of interest in youth provision from other LCN's.
- c) **Correspondence**
 - i. **Emails from resident and Police re: anti-social driving at Millbrook car park** Noted.
 - ii. **Emails re: draft minutes of Full Council meeting on 20th November** Judi Morison reported that a considerable amount of discussion was taking place regarding the potential opportunities and challenges relating to the financial situation at Somerset Council and confirmed that there was very little information available at the last meeting. Unfortunately, APC were unable to attend the joint meeting due to take place on 29 November so this had been re-arranged for 13 December. It was agreed to discuss communication at the MCC Committee meeting in January.
 - iii. **Letter from NHS Somerset re: stroke services in Somerset** Noted

Committee Reports, Recommendations & Progress on Major Projects

TC100 Planning Committee & Neighbourhood Plan

- a) **Planning Committee update report** the Council received a report of the Planning Committee meeting of 4th December
- b) **Letter from Somerset Council regarding 16/03447/FUL & 22/01520/S73, Land adjacent Foxes Run, Bridgwater Buildings, Castle Cary – to note and agree any actions required** The letter was noted and it was agreed that it would be discussed at the next Planning Committee meeting to agree a response. Henry Hobhouse and Care4Cary would be invited to attend the Planning meeting.

Action 231112/1: Deputy Clerk

Robert Brown agreed to send the FOI response regarding the TRO at Foxes Run to Henry Hobhouse.

Action 231112/2: Robert Brown

TC101 Properties and Infrastructure Committee

- a) **Properties and Infrastructure Committee update report** – the Council received a report from the Properties and Infrastructure Committee.
- b) **Update on Market House project** Pek Peppin reported that the bat survey was completed on 8 December and no bats were found in the building. A report would be received before Christmas.
- c) **Pavilion Project update** There was no update.
- d) **Traffic Working Group update** the Council received a report from the Traffic Working Group. Robert Brown reported that discussions were taking place with residents regarding parking.

TC102 Marketing and Communications

- a) **Marketing and Communications Committee update report** the Council received a report from the Marketing and Communications Committee. Angela Piggott thanked Penny Steiner for Chairing the Cary's Christmas Cracker working group and all involved in the event.

TC103 Finance and Management

- a) **Budget year to date summary** – noted
- b) **To consider grant application from The Somerscience Trust for funding towards the Somerscience Festival 2024 printed brochure**
RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve a grant of £150 to The Somerserscience Trust
- c) **Complaints Policy – to review the complaints policy**
RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed to re-adopt the complaints policy
- d) **To note Agreement on NJC pay scales and pay offer for 2023/24 and that the award is backdated to 1 April 2023 and will be paid in the December salary** Noted
- e) **To consider funding for hanging baskets in Castle Cary town centre**
RESOLVED: it was proposed that hanging baskets are funded subject to budget allocation and approval at the Full Council meeting in January.
- f) **To discuss draft budget for 2024/25**

A draft budget had been circulated in advance of the meeting to give Councillors an indication of the direction of travel following discussions with budget holders.

g) Risk Register – to review and approve Risk Register

RESOLVED: it was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the Risk Register

h) Payments - to approve the December 2023 payment schedule for the Town Council and the Donald Pither Trust and to nominate Councillors to verify and authorise payments.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the December 2023 payment schedule for the Town Council be approved.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the December 2023 payment schedule for the Donald Pither Trust be approved.

It was agreed that Margaret Bebbington would check the invoices against the payments and that Philippa Biddlecombe would execute the payments.

TC104 South Western Railway's Customer and Community Improvement Fund (CCIF)

- a) To consider opportunities for submission of application for funding for projects** It was noted that the closing date for the submission of applications was 31 December 2023. Robert Brown reported that he was meeting with SWR later that week and would update Councillors following that meeting on potential opportunities.

Action 231112/3: Robert Brown

TC105 Community Ownership Fund

- a) To consider opportunities for submission of application for Round Three of the Community Ownership fund** It was noted that the closing date for the submission of application was 31 January 2024 and it was agreed to discuss this further with APC at the meeting on 13 December.

The meeting concluded at 21:26 hours.

The next meeting of the Town Council will be held on Monday 15th January 2024 at 7:00pm. Any items for inclusion on the agenda should be forwarded to the Town Clerk by Thursday 4th January 2024.