

WIMBORNE MINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the ANNUAL TOWN MEETING held on TUESDAY 31 MARCH 2015
at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall, West Borough, Wimborne Minster.**

THOSE PRESENT AT THE MEETING

Cllr A Hampton - Town Mayor & Chairman of the Council (in the Chair)
Cllr S K Bartlett
Cllr J Burden
Cllr R D Cook
Cllr L G Harvey
Cllr Mrs D J March
Cllr Mrs A E Roberts
Cllr A W Spencer

8 Local Government Electors

1. ANNUAL TOWN MEETING HELD ON 1 APRIL 2014

The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 1 April 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed.

Questions arising from the items in the Minutes:

Item 5 – The Square. District Councillor Mrs Pat Hymers asked how much money had been raised and what it would be used for. The Town Clerk responded that over £1,000 had been raised and it would be used for improvements to The Square.

Mr D W Lonsdale stated that there should be ‘Matters Arising’ from the Minutes. He specifically wanted an update on Item 4 concerning the land north of Wimborne Minster. The Town Clerk stated that this would be in the Planning & Environment Committee Chairman’s report.

Mr Lonsdale mentioned the detailed design regarding road traffic management and flooding and whether Bloor Homes’ planning application would be accompanied by a detailed infrastructure report.

Cllr R D Cook responded that the planning application was going to the Planning Committee on 21 April 2015. There was to be a briefing the week before to familiarise District Councillors with the application. He further reported that the general public could attend but that they would need to lodge an application to speak at the meeting.

He agreed with Mr Lonsdale that issues regarding traffic management, flooding and affordable homes were of concern. He further stated that although the Core Strategy had not been popular it had been necessary and it was adopted by the District Council because it contained provision for 50% of affordable homes. He stated that the final detail was not known yet

and that he would personally have reservations if the 50% provision was not met.

Cllr A W Spencer stated that the planning application had been in the public domain since January 2014 and included the transport plan. However, the Town Council had always believed this to be inadequate. There had been a meeting with Mr Sayers of Dorset County Council Highways in September 2014 and as a consequence of this an amendment had been made by Bloor Homes. However, the Town Council continued to be unhappy with the transport plan.

He added that a subsequent amendment had then been made in January 2015 although not much information had been received on this. It was now left for views to be put forward at the Planning Committee meeting on 21 April 2015.

Mr Lonsdale commented that the town was in a situation where it was required by Government to develop affordable housing using existing infrastructure but that infrastructure was not adequate. He further stated that job availability lay south of the Town and the roads available to travel to those areas were inadequate.

Mr Lonsdale strongly believed that Wimborne Minster needed to be a thriving Town to survive and houses were required for the young but the proposed new houses were in the wrong place. A big scheme of road development was required and it made no sense that the A31 was not benefitting from the money given by the Government for road development. He questioned how Councillors could vote for something on this scale when the infrastructure was clearly not in place. He had major reservations about the inevitable rollercoaster effect. Cllr Spencer responded by suggesting that he attends and speaks at the meeting on 21 April 2015.

2. **ANNUAL REPORT BY THE TOWN MAYOR AND CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL – Cllr A Hampton**

Good evening ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the 2015 Annual Town Meeting. I am Andy Hampton and as Chairman of the Town Council even though I am not an elector of the Parish as I live just outside the boundary I am required by law to preside at this meeting which is a meeting only for the electors of the parish of Wimborne Minster. Can I welcome any elector who has just been transferred to Wimborne Minster as a result of the boundary changes.

For those that may not be aware I should emphasise that this is not a meeting of the Town Council but of electors. The meeting this evening will follow the format of previous years with each Chairman reporting on issues of particular importance.

We shall then take questions from the floor.

The Town continues to grow and develop and is East Dorset's jewel in the crown with regard to tourism. It is a thriving hub of community activity and The Square continues to be a central showpiece for events held within the Town.

The Folk Festival continues to grow in stature and has a reputation for being a fun, friendly and family environment.

During my two years as Mayor I have been honoured to travel to the majority of towns within Dorset and they face similar challenges to Wimborne Minster but it is testament to this Council that we meet challenges head on and achieve our goals for the good of this historic market town.

As I mentioned earlier the Town has a revised boundary following the Community Governance Review and as a result the Town Council will have 14 Members instead of 12 and two wards – the Town Ward with 11 Members and Wimborne East Ward with 3 Members. The proposed developments off Cranborne Road and South of Leigh Road will now be within the Parish of Wimborne Minster.

Elections for the new Council will take place on 7 May 2015.

My Civic Service this year will be held on Sunday 3 May 2015 in The Minster and everyone is very welcome to attend.

3. **ANNUAL REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE RECREATION & LEISURE COMMITTEE** – Cllr L G Harvey

I am Cllr Les Harvey, Chairman of the Recreation & Leisure Committee and my Vice-Chairman is Cllr Mrs Sue Cook.

The Committee is responsible for managing the Town Council Sports & Recreational Activities at Leigh Park and Redcotts Recreation Ground.

These 21 acres provide Wimborne Town residents with facilities for eight different sports plus one teenage and two children's play areas and on a fine weekend day it would not be unusual to find 500 people using them.

Such numbers are undoubtedly due to the high standard of the equipment and facilities, for example the Redcotts Children's Play Area, the Skateboard Bowl and the Bowling Green. Wimborne Minster Tennis Club also goes from strength to strength and has a Junior Club containing members who have achieved County and National Ranking thanks to the excellent coaches who work there.

For the less active there are benches and picnic tables to sit awhile in the sun with a coffee or newspaper.

In conclusion, I believe that our recreation facilities are better now than they have ever been and I would like to thank my fellow Committee members and the Ground Staff for all the hard work which they have put in to achieve this standard.

4. **REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF RESOURCES COMMITTEE 2014**

My name is Cllr Alan Spencer and I am Vice-Chairman of the Resources Committee standing in for the Chairman Cllr Terry Wheeler.

The Resources Committee is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the Council's buildings and office accommodation as well as for lettings and leases. We also manage and monitor the Council's accounts and recommend grants to local organisations.

The accommodation at the Town Hall, which is available for hire and utilised for Civil Ceremonies, together with the privately rented office on the ground floor, raised over £13,500 in the last year. The Committee Room in particular is popular.

Grant awards this year totalled £18,700 for which 18 local organisations will benefit.

We increased the grant to the Colehill and Wimborne Youth & Community Centre this year to £3,000 so that they had sufficient funding to commit to a new building contract which is currently work in progress.

We worked with the BID and Chamber of Trade for a second year to again improve the Christmas Lights in 2014 as well as providing a stage funded between the three organisations to make the switch on more of an occasion.

Because the Tourist Information Centre is so important to the Town and is in fact the only Tourist Information Centre in East Dorset the Town Council has this year contributed £8,500 to enable The Priest's House Museum Trust, which runs the Centre, to employ an assistant to the Manager. Although largely manned by volunteers this was considered vital for the sustainability of the Tourist Information Centre.

The Town Council is also supporting an initiative suggested by Cllr Mrs A E Roberts called 'Flying a Flag for Wimborne Festival'. The idea is that businesses, schools and residents will be invited to make and fly flags using the theme of Dorset buildings and views and flora and fauna of the area. The flags will be flown from business premises in the town centre from May to August 2015 to make Wimborne Minster look attractive to encourage visitors and generate increased footfall.

Finally, with the modest increase in the Council Tax base following the changes to the boundary of the Parish, the Town Council's portion of the Council Tax remains the same in 2015/16 as it was for 2014/15.

5. **REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE 2014 – Cllr R D Cook**

My name is Cllr Robin Cook, Vice-Chairman of the Planning & Environment Committee. As David Packer, the Chairman, is unable to be here, I am presenting this report on his behalf.

There are a number of issues I have been asked to report.

Land North of Wimborne Minster

The Outline Planning Application for residential development, a new local centre, a replacement Wimborne First School, public open space and new allotments and associated infrastructure on land to the east and west of Cranborne Road has still yet to be determined. The Town Council has raised a number of concerns with the planning officers.

First there are serious worries that there is a flood risk to homes situated in Walford Close and Burts Hill as well as the western side of Cranborne Road because insufficient provision has been made by the developers to deal with surface water drainage. We continue to seek assurances in that regard.

Second, there was a real concern about the developer's plans to build three-storey and high density homes flanking the Cranborne Road which will not be an attractive feature.

Third, the Town Council wants the maximum number of affordable and social housing on the site and for the developer to meet its obligation in the Local Plan to provide 50% of such dwellings. There is a worry that the developer is trying to circumvent these requirements by exaggerating infrastructure and SANG maintenance costs.

Fourthly, the Town council wants to see a traffic control and traffic calming scheme for the approach roads to the site including additional waiting restrictions as well as a traffic plan for construction traffic.

This is not the complete list of comments but the main ones which residents will be interested in.

Town Centre Maintenance

The Town Council is pleased with the outcome of the scheme jointly funded with Wimborne BID to supplement what the Dorset Waste Partnership does to keep the town centre tidy. We have refurbished public benches, repainted bollards and railings and washed down signs as well as additional litter clearance.

The Square

The District Council has now issued licences for two sitting out areas on the east and west of The Square.

Although only one of the cafes occupied their allotted area last year it seemed to prove very popular.

Waitrose Bridge

The District Council is in the final stages of the agreements necessary to install the bridge. Tree pruning work has been carried out at the location of the bridge to avoid problems at a later date caused by nesting birds. The bridge will be fabricated off-site which will take several months and it will not be installed until after the Folk Festival weekend. The site works will take approximately seven weeks once the bridge is delivered to the site.

East Borough (North)

Despite the introduction of a 20 mph speed restriction and the no entry except for access order the number of vehicles using East Borough as a shortcut has continued to rise. The Town Council has asked Dorset County Council to consider implementing the original scheme we suggested in 2003 when this problem was first considered. That scheme involved introducing a No Entry just south of Tice's garage for all motor vehicles except buses and removing the No Right Turn restriction in Priors Walk. The County Council's decision is awaited.

Town Tourism Plaques

The Town Council has agreed to meet half the £750 cost of refurbishing the plaques on buildings of significant importance and which form part of the Town Trail (modesty forbids mentioning that I am providing the other half!)

Possible Changes to Household Recycling Centres

Of particular concern this year was when the Town Council heard about the possible closure of the Brook Road HRC because it did not meet current standards.

The Town Council has been involved with discussions on a suitable replacement site and a site south of Wimborne Minster near Candys Lane, Corfe Mullen is the preferred option. However, we have made it clear that Brook Road should not close until a new site is provided.

On behalf of the Chairman can I thank all Members of the Committee for their input during the past 12 months.

6. **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC RELATING TO TOWN MATTERS**

Cllr Mrs A E Roberts asked why the second café was not adhering to its licence and why it was trading on the footpath. The Town Clerk responded that this was being dealt with by the Licensing Manager. Cllr D Morgan reported that a planning application was to be considered at the next Planning Committee meeting on Tuesday, 7 April 2015. Cllr R D Cook reported that if the application was granted on 7 April 2015 then the owner of the café would have to ensure that all tables and chairs were placed in the designated area.

Martin Tidd, 24 West Street – asked for an update on Mill Lane and the right of way. Cllr R D Cook reported that the confusion over this matter had first materialised when a resident in 2006 had applied for an area to be made a right of way. This didn't go ahead and the resident could no longer be traced, however, another resident of Millbank House decided to take it forward. Dorset County Council's Regulatory Committee met on 12 March 2014 and decided the area in question should be put forward for further investigation as to whether it should be a public right of way. Mr Cook stated that this whole matter had been mis-reported in the press.

Mr Tidd then went on to talk more generally about the town and specifically about the number of A-board signs and the amount of litter in the area. He was concerned that no one seemed to deal with the litter in car parks and referred to the Westfield car park. He added that Dorset Waste Partnership did not seem to clear the gutters of the car parks. He felt that the general state of litter in the car parks did a disservice to the town and gave a bad first impression.

Cllr A J Hampton responded to say that the footpath north of Walford Bridge, which was an area of concern raised at last year's meeting, had been tidied up within 10 days of the meeting last year.

Mr A E Oliver, 34 Park Lane – reported that the next worst area for litter in the Town was the area outside the Kebab shop in Eastbrook Row. He strongly believed that the Kebab Shop should take responsibility for its litter and should collect the cartons discarded outside its premises. He felt someone should take control over this and it should be passed on to the District Council.

Mr Lonsdale suggested that those responsible should be sent the bill for clearing up the rubbish and that an option would be to fine the owners of the Kebab shop.

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.

Signed Date
Town Mayor & Chairman of the Council