

**CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL****Public Session**

Presentation from NSC via MS Teams from the Community Response Team. Unfortunately, due to the internet crashing, the MS Teams meeting was unable to proceed. Apologies to be issued to NSC.

**Public Participation**

*Cllr D Shopland arrived at 7.40pm.*

A member of the public raised a question concerning the Council minutes dated 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023, minute no. 1640.2 & 3. As a tax payer and resident, it was concerning to read about the Council finances and asked how far back the problems go to create a charge of £535.00 a day for support and when will the 2022/23 accounts be available for the public to view?

Concerning the Precept Meeting, is the Council able to comment and provide a Precept without the figures from the 2022/23 accounts.

The Chairman of Council confirmed that a total of up to four days at a cost of £535.00 had been agreed by Council to receive support for the Council finances. Only one day of support with Rialtas has been booked to date. The Council has a new Locum RFO who is also looking into the financial matters. The Town Council will be in a position to produce a Precept budget and it is regrettable that the Council is in this position following the previous Locum RFO work completed.

Cllr Young also confirmed that the issues only relate to the 2022/23 accounts, the 2021/22 accounts were prepared properly and have been scrutinised by the Internal Auditor and also an extensive process with the External Auditor.

The member of the public confirmed that an external person has made a complaint and there is still an issue with the AGAR and the accounts.

Cllr Young stated that it was unusual to be debating with a member of the public in public session but that the AGAR is a public document which had been signed off by the External Auditor. It did include areas where the Council did not meet the requirements regarding assessing future risks and arrangements for management of Trust Funds. The Council's response to the External Auditor is on the Town Council website. There is some limited redacted information in that response where it relates to an individual's personal data, but anyone can view this information.

***Proposal – Local Plan 2039 – J20***

A member of the public addressed the Council members concerning the NSC Sites for further development, a 25-hectare site on Court Lane. NSC are under pressure to redevelop, however, the site proposed by the District Council is not acceptable for the following reasons:

The area has been subjected to flooding now and in the past. There is a 17<sup>th</sup> century Craft Centre and has been existence for over 50 years and many livelihoods will be lost if the industrial development is given the go ahead.

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The area is a vibrant place for walkers, horse riders, wildlife and this will all be destroyed with tin warehousing and tar roads and pathways. There would be an increase in pollution in the area from vehicles and light, both by day and night.

There are already empty business units on existing trading estates, businesses are experiencing difficulties in employing staff into these fields too. There will be a strain on the already overburdened roads in the area, Tickenham, Nailsea etc. There are nine homes in the Court Lane area that will be impacted by the proposed development and the risk of flooding will increase if building on a floodplain.

Residents feel they are already 'out of sight' by NSC and this has started to impact resident's mental health at the suggestion of a rural setting being lost. We must protect the character of the area.

Questions raised by the member of the public.

When did the Council know about the proposal?

What is the position now?

Can the Town Council help with regards to the planning proposal?

The Chairman of Council responded by confirming that the Town Council had not picked up the proposal for the development of land at Court Lane. However, there are other areas of land within Clevedon that could be used for business development, i.e. St Modwen site near Kenn, which has been earmarked for business use and has seen no interest for years.

There was a previous application submitted in the 1990's and the Planning Inspector threw the application out for the reasons of being on a floodplain and the destruction of Kenn Moor land.

Councillors and the public continued to debate the matter.

A proposal was suggested for a Special Planning Meeting to be called.

Proposed, Seconded and **AGREED** for a Special Planning Meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at the Town Council offices. Further investigation will take place by the Council to establish as much information about the previous application made in the 1990's and the current proposal mentioned in the Local Plan 2039.

**Action – Council Clerk**

*8.21pm The Chairman moved the meeting into formal session*

*Cllr A Shopland arrived.*

Following the Public Participation session, only three members of the public remained.

### Minutes

**Minutes of a Meeting** (commenced at 7.30pm) of **Clevedon Town Council** held at the **Council Offices 44 Old Street Clevedon** on Wednesday **10<sup>th</sup> January 2024** when the following business was transacted.

**PRESENT** Chairman of the Council – Cllr T Morgan together with Councillors - N Barton, B Culblaithe, A Everitt, C Francis-Pester, A Gardner, A Goodliffe, E Holdsworth, C Lord, K O'Brien, A Shopland (8.21pm), D Shopland (7.40pm), R Westwood & H Young.  
Members of the Public – 30

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The Council must adhere to insurance policy endorsement regulation number – FG02 – Specific Person Exception, policy wide, Section 5, Fidelity Guarantee, Exclusions & Section 8, Officials Indemnity, Exclusions: A & B.

**1649 To receive and approve apologies for absence**

Mr B Chislett, Town Council Tree Officer submit his apologies.

**1650 To receive declarations of interest for items on the agenda**

There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda

**1651 To receive and ratify the minutes of the Council meeting dated 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

Cllr D Shopland stated that the Council Clerk had raised and should be minuted under minute no. 1640.2 & 3, that she had alerted Councillors that there were issues with the accounts under the management of the then Locum RFO.

Cllr Young stated that the content of minute no. 1648 should be recorded under Confidential Session due to the nature of the discussion held. **Action – Council Clerk**

Proposed, Seconded and **APPROVED** and the minutes were signed as a true copy by the Chairman.

**1652 To discuss and agree whether to pursue the Community Response Project following the presentation from NSC Community Response Team**

The Chairman confirmed that due to the internet crashing, the MS Teams meeting was unable to proceed. Contact was made with those due to attend and an apology to be sent under separate cover. **Action – Council Clerk**

**1653 To receive and agree a response to NSC regarding the Tree Planting Consultation for all Wards**

Committee members discussed the Tree Planting Consultation from NSC.

Concern was raised about the trees being planted on Marshall's Field, as the previous rewilding programme suggested by NSC had caused a lot of controversy with residents.

The Chairman confirmed that he has contacted NSC to enquire as to the scope of the proposed tree planting work. NSC have stated that a 9-metre gap between the edge of the riverbank will be left so that contractors can cut the grass on Marshall's Field in the future.

Council members agreed that the following feedback be given to NSC. That a grass cutting or programme of works be established by NSC for all trees planted. This will ensure that regular maintenance is provided now and in the future. Also suggested to have a tree policy drawn up by the District Council Tree Officer to support these measures. **Action – Council Clerk**

The Chairman confirmed that a site meeting with the NSC Officer has been arranged for Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 3.15pm, meet at the Boat Store by the Pill slipway. All welcome.

**Action – Councillors**

**1654 To receive and decide whether to agree to a sponsorship request from Coach Ability**

Members agreed that the request should be submitted via the annual small grants process by the applicant. Applications open in April 2024. **Action – Council Clerk**

Minutes to be ratified at Full Council on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**1655 To receive and decide whether to apply for funding from the NSC UK Shared Prosperity Fund Community Grants Scheme**

Members agreed that details of the scheme should be submitted within the NS Times Council newsletter page and Councillors should make local groups aware of the Community Grants scheme and possible funding available.

**Action – Council Clerk and Councillors**

**1656 To receive an update from the Climate Emergency Working Group**

Cllr Holdsworth reminded members that the aim of the Climate Emergency Working Group, (CEWG) is to achieve Carbon Zero by 2030.

An update following the Climate Action Day was provided, and CEWG is working on topics highlighted by Lexica as being the most urgent matters to address.

A Climate Festival is being arranged with key note speakers attending. The Council's grant awarded will fund the event.

Cllr Holdsworth asked if any other members would like to join the CEWG Committee to boost support.

**1657 Planning**

**1657.1 To discuss and agree recommendations for the Planning applications received from NSC for each Ward**

The Council Clerk advised that the Town Council Tree Officer's report had been submitted prior to the meeting.

**EAST WARD** - The following Planning applications were **APPROVED** by the East Ward Councillors 23/P/2725/FUH and 23/P/2751/AOC

**SOUTH WARD** - The following applications were **APPROVED** by the South Ward Councillors. 23/P/2699/FUL and 23/P/2700/ADV.  
23/P/2606/TPO – Reported by the Town Council Tree Officer as normal tree management.

**WEST WARD** – The following applications were **APPROVED** by the West Ward Councillors. 23/P/2659/FUH and 23/P/2584/FUH – A Councillor asked that it be noted that with any planning application for an extension etc., that the applicant(s) consider energy efficient products including solar panels where possible.

**WALTON WARD** – The following applications were **APPROVED** by the Walton Ward Councillors. 23/P/2560/CGA, 23/P/2576/MMA, 23/P/2612/FUH, 23/P/2646/FUH and 23/P/2829/AOC.  
The following tree applications are as follows.  
23/P/2752/TPO, 23/P/2605/TRCA and 23/P/2607/TRCA

23/P/2723/TRCA – Normal tree management. The Council is Trustees of Herbert Gardens and declared an interest at this point. No vote was taken on the application.

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23/P/2677/TRCA – Council members agreed that although the tree is healthy it has been identified through extensive site meetings and observations with the owner of the property that the tree roots are causing damage to the resident's property. The Council understands the mitigating circumstances for the request to fell the tree and support the decision to fell.

**YEO WARD** – The following application was **APPROVED** by the Yeo Ward Councillors, with the following conditions and queries.

23/P/2846/LDP – Council members agreed that providing there is no impact to neighbours where the premises are attached and that parking and access in/out of the residential site is maintained.

Clarification of the hours of business to be restricted to certain times of the day during the working week, Monday to Friday and will there be business transacted on the weekends? If this is a regular business is the resident registered with all relevant paperwork attained and approved by NSC?

#### **1657.2 To receive a report from Cllr Barton concerning the Town & Parish Planning Workshop held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

Cllr Barton confirmed it was a well-attended workshop. Topics such as CIL, Local Plan and a general update was given, with the next Workshop planned for May 2024. The Council Clerk has submitted the workshop presentation slides to all members.

Cllr Barton enquired about the Cricket Ground application to extend their business hours and why the Council had not been consulted. The Council Clerk had confirmed to Cllr Barton that the Town Council is not a statutory consultee, therefore the District Council do not need to notify us. Cllr Barton has submitted an enquiry to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) about this and will investigate further with other Councillors.

**Action – Cllr Barton**

#### **1658 Town, Events & Amenities**

##### **1658.1 To receive any updates from the Outside Body Representatives for their respective nominated local group(s)**

**Twinning Association** – Cllr Goodliffe confirmed that due to the German airline, Lufthansa, stopping all flights to the United Kingdom, the Twinning visit by Ettlingen has been postponed. Further news awaited.

**Clevedon Pier** – Cllr Francis-Pester confirmed that visitor numbers are holding up, a shame the bad weather over Christmas has hampered things. A Committee meeting is due soon.

**Clevedon Community Association** – Cllr Westwood attended the Executive meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024. There was a lot of enthusiasm during the meeting and lots of activities being done to get projects moving.

**Land Yeo Friends** – Cllr Holdsworth confirmed that a letter has been submitted to the Environment Agency concerning the river being clogged with the evasive weed. A reply has been received and submitted to all members and since the response some further areas of the river have been cleared. What needs to be avoided is the river becoming joined up ponds! The Land Yeo are continuing their efforts by talking to the different bodies concerned, including the Internal Drainage Board.

Minutes to be ratified at Full Council on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Clevedon BID** – Cllr Barton advised that several committee members are standing down and will need to be filled. A Public Meeting to be arranged to discuss future projects and a way forward.

**Civic Society** – Cllr Barton confirmed that it is their AGM this week.

**Farmer's Market** – The Council Clerk advised that the Market are saddened not to have had Outside Body representation for the last 2 years. Cllr Lord volunteered to become the representative for 2023/24.

**Community Resilience** – Cllr Young confirmed a meeting is due soon.

**Citizens Advice, North Somerset** – Cllr Young confirmed that she will contact them and follow up on latest news.

**Clevedon Sailing Club** – Cllr Gardner confirmed there is no update other than the concern with the slipway and maintenance. The Chairman of Council confirmed that he is attending a meeting with NSC Officers and the Sailing Club on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

#### **1658.2 To receive and discuss the dog waste collection contract and proposal for collection of waste to be increased from two to three times a week**

The Council Clerk advised members that the dog bin contractor has raised concern with the increase in the amount of dog waste being deposited in the Town Council bins. Due to the weight of each bag lift from the bins it is becoming more difficult, and the contractor has seen a significant increase in the amount of waste being collected and disposed of. The amount of waste collected previously per round was 320 kilos which has now increased to 420 kilos and the Christmas round alone being 510 kilos.

The Council members discussed if certain measures had been made to increase the number of bins at each location. The Council Clerk confirmed that a survey, site visits and the fact that some residents are leaving dog bags on top of the bins, where full, is evidencing the need to increase the number of collections from twice to three times a week.

Proposed, Seconded and **AGREED** to increase the round to three times a week, from 1 April 2024. The contract expires on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and it was agreed to renew the contract for three years and retain a price of £4.99 per bin empty for the whole period. The annual Council budget to be increased to £25,000.00 per annum to support this change.

### **1659 Finance & General Policy**

#### **1659.1 To receive an update on the budget allocation for all standing Committees for 2024/25**

The Council Clerk confirmed that a report was being compiled in regards to the budget proposal for 2024/25 and will be submitted to all members for the Council meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

#### **1659.2 To receive an update on the Council accounts from the Locum RFO**

The Council Clerk confirmed that progress was being made by the new Locum RFO on the 2022/23 accounts. Cllr Francis-Pester raised a question in that specific questions were raised at the last

Minutes to be ratified at Full Council on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Council meeting, especially as to the remit that the previous Locum RFO was asked to fulfil and that the accounts should have been completed before they left.

The Chairman of Council confirmed that the previous Locum RFO was asked to look at the structure of the Council, which has been completed and now operational. The Chairman also confirmed that once the new Locum RFO has finalised the accounts for both 2022/23 and 2023/24 that the amount of additional money spent by the Town Council to resolve the matters will be finalised and a submission to recover expenses from the previous Locum RFO will be made.

There is no accusation of the misappropriation of monies being made to the previous Locum RFO, just the order and manner in which the account administration was being conducted is all that is in question.

Further work to remove nominal codes and make general improvements will need to be conducted once the accounts are up to date.

### **1659.3 To receive an update and report from the Rialtas consultancy concerning account matters**

The Chairman of Council confirmed that all members had received the Rialtas consultancy report and it contains a suggestive way forward, including training for members, quarterly health check of the accounts and what Officers should be doing going forward.

Questions raised by members included:

- A summary from Rialtas as to when the last level of accuracy on the accounts was achieved.
- Have the Town Council's current Financial Regulations been shared with Rialtas.

It is clear that as soon as issues arose with the accounts being compiled by the previous Locum RFO, that steps were put in place, as soon as possible, to resolve matters. This included the Council Clerk acting upon a recommendation from the Internal Auditor to contact a new Locum RFO who has now been brought in to resolve matters.

### **1659.4 To receive an update concerning The Barn and request to a legal body for advice (Ref minute no. 1601(i) – 1 November 2023**

The Council Clerk confirmed that the legal body has received the questions and supporting documentation concerning The Barn ownership and a response is awaited. The cost for the advice has been confirmed as £350.00.

### **1659.5 To discuss and agree the large grant application scheme for 2024/25**

The Chairman of Council agreed that the large grant application scheme for 2024/25 be deferred and discussed at the Precept Council Meeting to be held on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

## **1660 Property**

### **1660.1 To recommend the Survey Report be accepted and acted on by way of authorising the Working Group to incur expenditure in commissioning all necessary tests, to seek quotes for works to be undertaken and to agree a maintenance schedule – no. 42 Old Street**

Cllr Everitt confirmed that the Survey Report has shown a number of areas that require attention within the property.

Minutes to be ratified at Full Council on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024

The energy performance certificate expired in 2018 and has now been rated as an 'E'. Landlords need to achieve a 'C' rating by 2025. Changes need to be made to the single glazed windows, insulating the loft and stone walls.

Currently conversations are being held with Sustainable Energy company in Bristol and the possibility of becoming a model project as to how the property could be made more energy efficient.

A Council member stated that a competent tradesman could have produced the report and noted that the roof and floor structure has not been examined in the report. They also suggested turning the premises into an office.

Proposed, Seconded and **APPROVED** that the Working Group incur expenditure in commissioning all necessary tests and to seek quotes for works to be undertaken and supporting maintenance schedule.

#### **1661 Clerks Report**

The Clerk had no items to report.

#### **1662 To receive information from Clevedon North Somerset Councillors relating directly to Clevedon Cllr Young updated members on the following:**

**NSC 2024/25 Budget** – School transport and placement is a top priority for NSC who are already experiencing a difficult budget challenge for 2024/25.

**AECOM Report – The Beach** – The Executive are expecting a report in March 2024. Further conversations need to take place with businesses on the seafront concerning loading bays and the rowing club.

Stage 1 of the road safety audit has been done. Results expected w/c 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024.

An invitation to be submitted to all members inviting them to discuss the outcome and to have our input.

Meeting with Active Travel concerning the design of the scheme to take place.

Stage 3 – Safety audit of existing scheme on Hill Road and recommendations are to go ahead, but the cold weather is hampering things at the moment.

**Seafront Concessions – Tender process** – A meeting has been held with NSC Officers as to what will be within the tender process. The mini golf course may be extended into the area proposed for the Skate Park pump track.

The Clevedon Skatepark Project committee have been made aware of this proposal and they have expressed their concerns following the amount of work and the designs produced for this piece of land. A topical survey, drainage report and who would maintain the pump track, if established needs to be completed. A meeting of the Skatepark Working Group needs to be arranged to discuss further.

**Action – Skatepark Working Group**

**Clevedon Slipway** – A further update to be given following the meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

Minutes to be ratified at Full Council on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024



**B&M complex** – The proposed changes are not included within the amendment to the plans. B&M have a further six-year lease on the property. The older people accommodation was on the basis that improvements are made to the Queens Square and it was felt that the Town Council should be pushing back on this and not just the development in the B&M car park area.

**Castlewood development** – NSC have approached a not-for-profit organisation, Aquos, to provide plans for 40% affordable housing development, including economic use too on the land currently occupied by NSC. The plans are being developed over the next nine months.

**Church Hill Avenue development** – This proposal has been deprioritised at present.

**Hangstone Quarry** – NSC have agreed to develop this land with community led housing.

Cllr Barton enquired whether there was any update with Clevedon School using part of the Castlewood building due to the high alumna concrete issues at the secondary school location on Valley Road. **Action – Cllr Young**

**1663 To receive the Chairman’s report**

There were no Chairman’s items to report.

The Chairman of Council closed the formal session of the meeting and explained to members of the public that the meeting was moving into confidential session due to staffing matters.

*9.55pm – All members of the public left the meeting.*

Formal Session of the meeting closed at 9.56pm

CHAIRMAN ..... DATE .....

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