

Amesbury Town Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Council
Tuesday 16th January 2024
At 7.15pm in the Bowman Centre

Present: Cllr Dr M Devendran (Mayor), Cllr T Edwards (D Mayor), Cllr R Yuill, Cllr R Crook, Cllr J Swindlehurst, Cllr M Strange, Cllr S Hedge, Cllr J Lord, Cllr A Lord, Cllr A Hagger, Cr L Knight, Cllr D Kuczera, Cllr I Mitchell, Cllr A Buchanen, Cllr J Jaconiah

In Attendance: Mrs SJ Tucker (Town Clerk) Mrs K Passmore (Admin/Comms Officer)

Visiting Public: 5

Public Questions

No public questions

01/2024. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr E Taylor. Cllr Buchanen sent his apologies in advance for attending late.

02/2024. To approve the minutes of the last meeting dated 5th December 2023.

With an amendment to include Cllr I Mitchell as present, the minutes were approved and signed as a true record.

Proposed: The Mayor

Seconded: Cllr I Mitchell

Resolved

03/2024. To receive Declarations of Interest from Members

No Declarations of Interest received.

04/2024. To receive the Clerk's update (to deal with business from the last meeting)

The clerk confirmed that the Mens' Shed tender is now live on Contract Finder until the end of the month, all documents can be found on our website. The architects have submitted tender invites to 3 companies.

Two new lights have been installed in the first week in January at Harvard Park to help with anti-social behaviour.

An invoice has been submitted to Wiltshire Council for S.106 money which is due, in the region of £735,000. This is for the new playparks to be built and the maintenance of them. Travellers were reported to the Police at Bonnymead Park on 10th January 2024, they left prior to the Council serving an eviction notice. The site has been cleared by the Town Council Maintenance Team. A report is being produced by the Deputy Mayor which shall be used to get quotes for height barriers and a suitable fence line at Harvard Park to prevent unauthorised access/incursions.

The recruitment for the Operations' Manager is ongoing, the deadline for applications is Sunday. Once a list of candidates has been received from the LGRC, the Staffing Panel will arrange interviews.

The Interim Audit is taking place at the office on Thursday this week, this will look at financial systems and processes, allotments, cemetery bookings and facilities' bookings. The Bowman Centre curtains have been sent away for cleaning and fireproofing. Some temporary privacy curtains have been put up.

05/2024. Councillors' Questions and Statements

RY. Cllr Yuill reported that Bloor Homes have been in contact regarding the handover process to Wiltshire Council. They are progressing things in relation to roads and sewers and also the ByWay (dealt with separately). The process works in a way that Bloor Homes get the roads/sewers into a reasonable condition and then pass them to Wiltshire Council to accept/decline. Once accepted they go into a maintenance period for 1 year and if all is ok at the end of that year, it is then adopted by Wiltshire Council. This would be the same process for the Byway.

Cllr Yuill has asked for a report to be produced to be presented to Full Council, this will advise where they are with the adoption process.

Cllr Edwards asked if work would be carried out on the ByWay before this due to the terrible condition. Cllr Yuill confirmed they had a meeting last week involving Wiltshire Council's Adoption Manager and he has suggested improvements (which they have not notified him of). He is hoping to have an update for the next meeting.

Cllr Yuill discussed security concerns as he has been contacted by a resident from Evergreen Court. Someone has been accessing the private area and making a nuisance. He has been in contact with the resident engagement officer and PCSOs to get this issue resolved.

DK. Cllr Kuczera reported on various events in December organised by The Chamber of Trade. Santa's Sleigh was a great success over 5-6 days in Amesbury and surrounding villages. Thanks was given to Cllr Knight for her support. The Chamber of Trade also supported the Amesbury Lantern procession which had a fantastic turnout this year.

AL. Cllr A Lord attended the Amesbury History Centre meeting on 13th January and was very impressed with the energy and the future vision/plans for the centre. He suggested that the History Centre is invited on its first year anniversary to present to the Council how the first year of operations has progressed.

Cllr A Lord raised the issue of travellers at Bonnymead Park, he would like to request a report on a frequency of travellers on our land and the actions that should be taken to review how it fits with Wiltshire Council's Travellers' Strategy.

AH. Cllr Hagger welcomed Cllr Jacqui Lord to the Council.

Cllr Hagger raised the issue of the Town Council holding Events and asked if there will be a discussion about facilitating and enabling events. He was informed that this is an Agenda Item at the meeting.

Cllr Hagger mentioned the end of lease date for the Community shop being December 2024 and asked for discussions to be had about the future of the shop as it is currently not budgeted for beyond December. The Mayor recommended that this should be reviewed at the Amenities' Committee.

LK. Cllr Knight questioned how many residents from Sandell Place are still living in temporary accommodation and whether there are problems with homelessness and unsuitable accommodation within Amesbury.

The Mayor has had it confirmed by Wiltshire Council that homelessness is not a problem within the Amesbury area, there may be 1 or 2 cases but as soon as Wiltshire Council are aware immediate action is taken.

Cllr Kuczera advised that he is aware of 2 residents that are still in temporary accommodation from Sandell Place. Cllr Knight advised she was also aware of 1 resident. The Mayor confirmed she would look into this and get confirmation.

- MS.** Cllr Strange discussed the community shop and how valuable it is to Amesbury residents and would like to discuss possibilities which she will speak about at a later date. She would like to discuss options with Cllr A Lord.
Cllr Strange highlighted the speed of traffic on Porton Road, she advised that something needed to be done as speeding is a problem.
The Mayor confirmed that she will speak with the Clerk and the LHFIG and would keep Cllr Strange updated.
- TE.** Cllr Edwards reported on residents' concerns who live near the sundial, due to the roads having access onto the grassed area, these areas are being used as access points for transitting in vehicles. The resident is concerned that the Town Council maintenance team are also driving on the area. Cllr Edwards proposed that Amenities' Committee could look into this. The Mayor confirmed that this will be taken to the next Amenities meeting and the Maintenance team shall be informed not to drive across the grassed areas.

Cllr Buchanen joined the meeting.

06/2024. To receive the Mayor's remarks (report)

It is with great pleasure that I extend a warm welcome to Cllr Jacqui Lord, who has recently been elected as the Councillor for Amesbury East. Congratulations to Cllr Lord on her election, and I look forward to working closely with her for the betterment of our community.

I would also like to commend the Stonehenge Chamber of Trade for the outstanding success of Santa's Sleigh. My heartfelt congratulations go out to all the volunteers who dedicated their time and effort to make this event a memorable one for our community. On December 14th, 2023, I had the privilege of visiting Stonehenge School, where I distributed certificates to the Head Boy and Head Girl. These exceptional individuals played a crucial role in reading out the names of the fallen on Remembrance Day last year.

Additionally, during the same day, I visited Amesbury Baptist Church to present a sum of £750 for the Amesbury Food Pantry, a part of the Mayor's Charity Appeal. This generous donation was made possible by the support of local businesses in Amesbury. I extend my sincere gratitude to all the businesses that contributed to this noble cause.

Moving on to December 15th, 2023, my consort and I attended the County of Wiltshire Carol service at the Royal Garrison Church, an event that fostered a sense of community and unity during the festive season.

From January 11th to 12th, 2024, I was invited as a special guest by the Tamil Nadu Government to participate in the World Tamil Diaspora Day program. It was a great opportunity to represent our community on an international platform.

Lastly, in my role as the Health and Wellbeing Lead for the Stonehenge Area Board, I hosted a Christmas concert on December 8th, which was well-attended by our community. My heartfelt thanks go to the Wiltshire Officers and everyone who worked diligently behind the scenes to make this event a success.

There will be a Bingo Fund Raising event as part of my Mayors Charity Appeal for the Amesbury Town Band at Christ the King Church Hall on 25th January at 2 PM. Thanks to the local businesses and residents for the generous donation of raffle prizes.

Thanks to the Town Clerk and staff for all the help rendered in the background.

07/2024. To receive the Police Report

The Police report was received and noted.

08/2024. To receive reports/updates and proposals from Committees and Working Groups

08.1/2024 Planning (Meeting of 16th January)

PL/2023/09619, Householder Planning Permission, Garage Conversion
6 ZEBEDEE CLOSE, AMESBURY, SP4 7GN

Resolved: Support

PL/2023/10835, Householder Planning Permission, Proposed Single Storey side extension, Car port and alterations
10 HIGHFIELD ROAD, AMESBURY, SP4 7HX

Resolved: Support

PL/2023/09583, Removal/variation of conditions, Variation of condition 2 of 18/07937/FUL to allow additional 3 No. meeting rooms to existing office area and extension to existing logistics office area

GREGGS AMESBURY DISTRIBUTION CENTRE, 31 EQUINOX DRIVE, AMESBURY, SP4 7SZ

Resolved: Support

PL/2023/10344, Full Planning Permission, Change of use from Sui generis to Class E (a) (b) and (c)

1 THE ARCADE, EARLS COURT ROAD, AMESBURY, SP4 7LY

Resolved: Support

PL/2024/10628, Full Planning Permission, Proposed new refrigeration plant
THE COOPERATIVE FOOD, BOSCOMBE ROAD, AMESBURY, SP4 7JH

Resolved: Support

PL/2023/11075, Full Planning Permission, Replace previous portacabin (14.8m x 4.2m = 62sqm) with smaller cabin (6m x 5m = 30sqm)

Resolved: Support

PL/2023/11131, Full Planning Permission, Change of use of land to clay pigeon shooting school, stationing of portable office and toilet blocks, use of farmyard as car parking
BEACON HILL FAR, CHOLDERTON, SALISBURY, SP4 0EL

Resolved: No Comment

08.2/2024 Finance (Meeting of 15th December)

– members to consider the recommendation for a grant of £200 to 1st Amesbury Girls' Brigade.

It was proposed that £200 be granted to the 1st Amesbury Girls' Brigade.

Proposed: Cllr I Mitchell

Seconded: The Mayor

Resolved

08.3/2024 Amenities (Meeting of 19th December)

– members to consider the quotes for a new flagpole, noting the Amenities Committee recommendation for the HFC quote.

Cllr Swindlehurst confirmed that the committee recommended HSC for the quote. This was deferred whilst the Clerk looks at alternative Flags or an extension to the current pole following comments from councillors.

– members to consider the proposed 24hr closure of Lord’s Walk to be the last Tuesday of November annually.

The above has been deferred to enable the Clerk to conduct more research.

Arising from the Minutes of the Amenities’ Committee, Cllr Yuill suggested that members of the public are made aware that they are able to use the grit available. The Mayor confirmed that this shall be published on the Council’s social media.

08.4/2024 Events (Meeting of 7th December)

– members to consider the future of organising large scale events

Cllr Jaconiah discussed the meeting held on 7th December, highlighting the Minutes provided.

Cllr Edwards discussed previous events and how the Council needs to work with local companies and not let prejudice of councillors get in the way of achieving the aim.

Cllr Swindlehurst recommended the Town Council works with the Chamber of Trade on delivering events. Cllr Knight agreed and advised that contact is made with the Chamber to see how the Town Council can support it with events.

Cllr Mitchell confirmed he had received correspondence from WALC about a seminar to be held on 30th January in Chippenham aimed at Parish & Town Councils Public Events, the details would be circulated.

08.5/2024 Projects (Meeting of 15th January)

– members to consider the quotes for the consultancy process as part of the Wiltshire Town’s Fund Programme.

Cllr Hagger produced a weighting matrix that he used against the 3 quotes, for which the LGRC quote was the clear winner.

It was proposed that the LGRC be awarded the consultancy process.

Proposed: Cllr A Hagger

Seconded: The Mayor

Resolved

08.6/2024 Neighbourhood Planning (Meeting of 19th December), to include a proposal for the Call for Sites Consultation to be published.

Cllr Mitchell reported on meetings held with Troy Planning.

It was proposed that as part of the Neighbourhood Plan a Call for Sites is required to be published. This is a 6 week consultation period from Mid-January to the end of February. This is to be promoted on the website and social media, and an invite to Wiltshire Council to publicise it.

Proposed: Cllr I Mitchell

Seconded: Cllr L Knight

Resolved

08.7/2024 Biodiversity and Climate Change (Meeting of 4th December)

Cllr Edwards had provided a brief update at the last meeting. There was nothing further to report.

09/2024. To receive reports/updates from external meetings attended

The Stonehenge Area Board Report had been received and noted.

10/2024. To approve Payment of Accounts and Bank Reconciliation

It was proposed to approve the December Payments and Bank Reconciliation

Income: £759,127

Expenditure: £475,118

Cllr A Lord questioned if payments are as expected. The Mayor confirmed that there is an underspend on the expenditure.

Proposed: The Mayor

Seconded: Cllr A Lord

Resolved

11/2024. Approval of Budget and Precept Charge for 2024/25

It was proposed to ratify the proposed budget and set the Precept charge at £710,596, the equivalent of £154.04 for a Band D property. This equates to 42p per day. This is an increase of £14.34 for a Band D property or 9.31% on last year's Precept, as recommended by the Finance Committee Meeting held on 15th December 2023.

Proposed: Cllr I Mitchell

Seconded: Cllr R Crook

Resolved

12/2024. To receive quotes and designs for the new website

3 quotes were reviewed but a decision was deferred whilst the Clerk works with Cllr Kuczera to compare the quotes to provide Cllrs with a simple format to see what each quote offers and how they differ. The Clerk was asked to determine if Wade Digital are able to provide integration with some of our systems as is the case with Vision ICT.

13/2024. To consider action to take in light of parking and human faeces complaints at Solstice Park

Cllr Lord confirmed that a meeting is booked for 9am 17th Jan with the Clerk and the Solstice Park Development Manager. Following this, discussions can be raised through the LHFIG.

14/2024. To consider the quotes for a new 3-year lease for the caretakers' tipper truck

It was proposed to accept the Quote provided by Global Vans to include the service plan
Proposed: Cllr Kuczera
Seconded: The Mayor
Resolved

15/2024. Confidential Session

The public and press were asked to leave during this session where matters relating to contracts involving local companies were discussed.

It was proposed that Quote 2 be accepted for the cleaning contract for the Amesbury Car Park Toilets.

Proposed: Cllr Swindlehurst
Seconded: The Mayor
Resolved

16/2024. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6th February 2024 at 7.15pm