

**Minutes of the Meeting of Bury St Edmunds Town Council,
held at the Guildhall, Bury St Edmunds,
on Wednesday 29 November 2023 at 7pm**

Present: Cllrs Hind (Town Mayor), Augustine, Chung, Higgins, Iannelli-Popham, Mackenzie, McGoochan, Mager, O'Driscoll, Sayer, Stamp, Stennett and Waterman

Also present: Greg Luton (Town Clerk), Jacqueline Howells (Responsible Financial Officer/Assistant Town Clerk), Julie Sturgeon (Allotment and Administrative Officer), PCSO Jo Whiting, representatives from Citizens Advice Bureau, Royal British Legion, Abbeycroft Leisure, River Lark Partnership, a former Town Councillor, the Press and two members of public.

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Armitage and Lindberg.
Cllr Halpin was also absent but no apologies had been received.

2. To receive declarations of interest and additions to registers

All District Councillors declared: *'That I may vote differently at District or County Council level from that recorded at this meeting'*. Cllrs. Augustine, Chung, Higgins, Hind, Mager, O'Driscoll, Sayer, Stamp, Stennett and Waterman declared a local non-pecuniary interest as District Councillors.
Cllr Chung declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the CAB.
Cllr Mager declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of the Woodland Trust.
Cllr Stennett declared a non-pecuniary interest as owner of land adjacent to the River Lark.

3. To consider written applications by a member for dispensation, from the restrictions in section 31(4) of the Localism Act 2011 and specify the period for which any dispensation has effect

None.

4. To confirm, adopt and sign the minutes of the 25 October 2023 meeting of the Council
Resolution Record No. **BSETC/144/23/Nov/23:**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of 25 October 2023 be agreed and signed, as an accurate record.

5. Public Forum

A representative from the Citizens Advice Bureau updated Councillors on the work of the CAB.
A member of the Royal British Legion spoke about Armistice Day event and thanked the Town Council for their involvement.
A representative from Abbeycroft Leisure discussed plans for the Healing Woods project in partnership with the Howard Community Academy.
Representatives from the River Lark Catchment Partnership explained how their proposed project would help to improve the water quality in areas of the River Lark.
A former Town Councillor explained the anti-social behaviour issues currently facing the Newbury Centre.

6. Town Clerk's report

The Town Clerk advised that this was his penultimate meeting before his retirement at the end of December. He mentioned Bury St Edmunds as winning top 'Dog Friendly town' in the Kennel Club awards. He spoke about the installation of a container recycling machine in the town and noted the restoration of the South African War memorial, funded by the Council. He introduced the new Town Clerk, Mrs Jodie Budd, who will take up her new position on 2nd January 2024.

7. Responsible Financial Officer's report

The RFO presented the monthly financial report outlining key information extracted from the monthly budget report. No issues for concern were identified.

8. To note the PCSO's verbal report

PCSO Jo Whiting attended the meeting. She advised that crime figures were down for last month and that Suffolk Police are returning to Community Beat Policing. with officers being more visible in the community.

9. To consider the 2024/2025 budget and precept projections

Councillors discussed at length proposals for the 2024/2025 budget.

The following amendments were proposed:

1. The Theatre Royal be allocated a budget line of £20,000
2. Budget lines 4353 Grant funding, 4361 Environment and allotment improvements, 4362 Community projects be merged into one budget line of £140,000
3. Bury in Bloom be allocated an increased budget of £20,000

The 2024/2025 budget will be recalculated with the above proposals and presented at the December Full Council meeting.

10. To consider grant funding application from the following organisations:**10.1 River Lark Catchment Partnership**

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/145/23/Nov/23:**

RESOLVED that under the Power of the Local Government Act 1972 s.137 the River Lark Partnership be awarded grant funding of £3791.63 towards the Citizen Science Project.

10.2 Citizens Advice Bureau

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/146/23/Nov/23:**

RESOLVED that under the Power of the Local Government Act 1972 s.137 the Citizens Advice Bureau be awarded grant funding of £11,000 towards the purchase of replacement IT equipment.

10.3 Explore Outdoor (Abbeycroft Leisure) Healing Woods project

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/147/23/Nov/23:**

RESOLVED that under the Power of the Local Government Act 1875 s.164 Abbeycroft Leisure be awarded grant funding of £10382.00 towards the 'Healing Woods' project, in partnership with Howard Community Academy.

11. To consider Town Council policies as follows:

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/148/23/Nov/23:**

RESOLVED that the following policies be **ADOPTED** with no changes necessary:

11.1 Co-option procedure

11.2 Financial Procedures:

Accounts payable

Asset control and management

Budgetary control and reporting

Income

IT access

Payroll

Petty cash

VAT

Year-end procedures

11.4 Service Standards

11.5 Scheme of delegation

11.6 Anti-harassment & bullying policy

11.7 Town Mayor's Expensed

11.8 Dealing with Dispensations under s33 Localism Act 2011 – with one grammatical correction

11.9 Grievance Procedure

11.3 Grants policy was presented by the Clerk but it will be re-visited in the New Year.

12. To note the recommended Local Government national pay award for officers in 2023
Councillors acknowledged and **AGREED** the NALC recommended pay award for officers in 2023

13. To receive the report and adopt the recommendations of the following Planning, Licensing and Finance committee meetings:

13.1 25 October 23

13.2 15 November 23

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/149/23/Nov/23:**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning, Licensing and Finance meetings of 25 October and 15 November be ADOPTED and signed.

14. To approve and sign Barclays bank balances as at 29 September 23

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/150/23/Nov/23:**

RESOLVED that Barclays bank balances as at 29 September 2023 be APPROVED.

15. To approve the payments list for September 2023

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/151/23/Nov/23:**

RESOLVED that the payments list for September 2023 be APPROVED.

16. To approve proposal to spend on enhancements to the Mayoral chains

Resolution Record No. **BSETC/152/23/Nov/23:**

RESOLVED that under the Power of the Local Government Act 1972 s.137 up to £3500 be allocated for the enhancement of the Mayoral chains

17. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 13th December 2023

The meeting ended at 9.25pm.

Signed: _____ Dated _____