



Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on 25 March 2025 in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, East Street, Wareham at 7.30pm.

Members Present: Councillors M Cotton (Mayor), Z Gover (Deputy Mayor), D Budd, D Cleaton, K Critchley, A Dallimore, I Davey, B Dean, S Dean, V Green, M Hill, L Kirk, D Robinson, M Tighe and S Wheatley.

Officers present: N Gray, Town Clerk & RFO, S Dickins, Deputy Clerk

TC 194/25 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Holloway.

TC 195/25 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

TC 196/25 Public participation time

There were two members of the public present, neither of whom wished to speak.

TC 197/25 Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting

It was **RESOLVED** the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Town Council held on 03 March 2025 be **APPROVED** and would be signed by the Mayor following the meeting.

TC 198/25 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

There were no matters arising.

TC 199/25 Reports by Dorset Councillors and representatives on outside bodies

Cllr Robinson shared correspondence he had received from the MP for Mid Dorset & North Poole, Vikki Slade, regarding developments at the Wareham ground-level crossing. The Town Clerk noted the Town Council had not received a letter or any direct communication from the MP and expressed disappointment about this. The content of the correspondence was read out for members.

Cllr Robinson noted that while the developments were welcome in principle, the "rolling basis" for the crossing's lease and the statement from Cllr Nick Ireland, Dorset Council leader, that the crossing would remain as long as he remained leader of the Council, left the long-term future of the crossing with uncertainty.

Members agreed with the concerns and expressed their own disappointment in respect of the lack of communication with the Town Council.

It was **RESOLVED** to delegate the drafting of a letter to the MP for Mid Dorset and North Poole to the Town Clerk, which would be shared with members for comment before approval at the next meeting and sending.

The report from Cllr Ezzard was NOTED.

TC 200/25 Payments for outstanding creditors

Members considered the list of payments for approval.

It was **RESOLVED** that payments in the sum of £41,110.96 be approved.

TC 201/25 To receive such communications as the Town Mayor may wish to place before the Council

The Mayor noted that she would not be calling an Annual Town Meeting in light of their low attendance historically, however, 2 Councillors or 6 electorate may choose to call a meeting before 30 June, should they so wish. The Clerk noted that the next elected Mayor in May could opt to call a meeting.

The Mayor noted that her charity skydive in support of the Air Cadets was fast approaching and encouraged members to support the fund raising effort.

TC 202/25 Reports from committees and sub-groups

The minutes from the following meetings were NOTED:

- a) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group 23/01/2025
- b) Planning and Transport Committee 11/02/2025
- c) Policy, Resources and Finance 14/01/2025

TC 203/25 Support for Defibrillator installation in Wareham - Verbal

The Deputy Clerk shared a tabled map which indicated the locations for the installation of defibrillators in proposed locations in Northmoor from the Wareham-based sub-group of the Purbeck Defibrillator Organisation. The group was seeking Council's support in respect to the indicated locations only, as the group had raised funds to finance installation and on-going maintenance themselves.

The suggested locations were:

- The South-Eastern point of Northmoor Way before the footpath leading to Wareham Roundabout.
- The North-Eastern point of Northmoor Way between numbers 88 and 92 Northmoor Way.
- On Northmoor Way opposite the entrance to Burns Road.
- The Western point of Northmoor Way outside of numbers 174 and 172.
- On Northmoor Way outside of numbers 192 and 194.

It was **RESOLVED** to support the organisation's request to install and maintain defibrillators at the five locations listed.

TC 204/25 Town Council Action List

Cllr Tighe noted her progress in arranging a meeting with Purbeck School to further the Youth Council initiative.

Cllr S Dean noted that the action regarding the paving slab at Hauses Field had reached its conclusion and no further action was required.

Members noted the Town Council action list.

TC 205/25 Report of Museum Manager

The Mayor noted the museum manager’s last day in post would be on 27 March 2025.

The Town Clerk noted that the incoming museum co-ordinator had commenced in post and was settling in well.

Members conveyed their thanks to the Museum Manager for his hard work over the previous 11 Months noting the huge progress which had been made in upscaling the Museum’s profile and offerings.

The report of the museum manager was NOTED.

TC 206/25 Town Clerk’s Update

The Town Clerk presented the report which had been shared ahead of the meeting.

Cllr Critchley enquired as to the response received since the publication of the Town Council’s press release regarding the museum development. The Town Clerk reported that she had only received positive feedback from residents via email and in-person at events within Wareham.

Cllr Critchley noted the importance of the positive message being publicised, and the Town Clerk noted that the Chartered Surveyor and Building Consultant, who were local and specialised in cultural and heritage development, would be attending the Annual Town Council meeting in May to present some initial aesthetic plans and answer questions. After that meeting, it was intended to use the plans when attending the local community groups to garner support. The Town Clerk further noted the importance and benefit of Councillors sharing this personally with residents and throughout their community connections.

Cllr Hill noted the poignancy of drawing residents’ attention to the moderate additional cost to the public purse to deliver the museum’s developments at less than one pound per household per week.

The Mayor and Town Clerk noted the positive opportunity Wareham Town Council had recently had in hosting a student for a week-long work placement at the Council, and that another student had made contact for a future placement within the museum.

Cllr Robinson noted a vote of thanks to the Town Clerk and other officers who had supported the student’s work placement at the Town Council in a positive and productive way in such a short time scale.

TC 207/25 Any other items the Mayor deems urgent

There were no items deemed urgent.

TC 208/25 Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Town Council was scheduled to be held at 7:30pm on 29 April 2025.

Mayor..... Date.....