



# MARTOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Martock Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024 in the Parish Hall, Church Street, Martock at 7:00pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors John Hole (Chair), Joy Bailey (Deputy Chair), Ashley Chapman, Michael Hall, Paul Helyer, Graham Macdonald, Alan Potter, Alison Warne, Ash Warne, Tony Welsh

**ALSO PRESENT:** Natalie Fortt (Chief Executive), Emily Dawson (Operations Manager), Tracy Lamb (RFO), Naomi Gass (Community Support Co-ordinator), Lisa Whittle (Job Club Co-ordinator) and Somerset Councillor John Bailey

## Public participation time

1 member of the public was in attendance.

The Chair announced the sad passing of both Councillor Danny Dwyer and former Councillor Suzanne Luxton. The Chair commended both for their commitment to the local community and asked everyone in attendance to stand in a moment of reflection.

Somerset Councillors John Bailey and Emily Pearlstone had previously submitted a report containing recent news updates from Somerset Council. These included:

### Apply for Pension Credit

As you will have heard, the Government is making cuts to the Winter Fuel Payment so it will now be a means tested benefit. To qualify for the Winter Fuel Payment this winter, you will need to be in receipt of Pension Credits. If you are over the state pension age (or know someone who is) please make sure you check your (or their) eligibility for pension credits to secure the Winter Fuel Payment which can be worth up to £300 per household. Check you eligibility here [Pension Credit Eligibility](#)

### Unpaid parking text scams

Somerset Council is warning that fraudulent text messages about unpaid parking fines have been sent to Somerset residents.

The council are reminding the public that the council does not text residents with parking fines (PCN). If you receive one of these texts, it is not from Somerset Council and may be a scam. Do not click any links or input any personal information.

Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to 7726. This free-of-charge short code enables your provider to investigate the text.

### Prime Foundation Grant Offering

Prime, a property development company specialising in Health and Care buildings, who are currently developing a diagnostic centre in partnership with Somerset NHS Foundation Trust, through its charitable foundation, is inviting applications for grant funding of up to £9,600. Applications are only open to certain postcodes listed on the application page [here](#), it covers Yeovil and South Somerset.

Applications close on 12th November 2024.

<https://www.primeplc.com/foundation/apply/>

### **143/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr James Tresadern.

### **144/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

### **145/24 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Resolved: (By 9 votes for, 0 against and 1 abstention)**

To accept the minutes as a true record.

### **146/24 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair announced that Martock Junior Football Club have received a £10,000 grant from Gigaclear.

This month's Councillor Surgery had been a success, with more parishioners attending including one that led to a referral to the Community Team.

The Chair also announced that the Market House was busier than ever with more parishioners making contact with the Council.

### **147/24 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND TASK GROUPS**

Council received the report regarding feedback from the M3CP meeting.

**Resolved: (By 9 votes for, 0 against and 1 abstention)**

That Council note the report.

### **148/24 COMMUNITY TEAM UPDATE REPORT**

Council received the report and the Chair thanked the Community Team staff members for all their hard work.

**Resolved: (Unanimously)**

To note the report.

#### **149/24 REVIEW OF CHARGES**

The Operations Manager presented the report and explained that the Parish Hall had been excluded from the proposed increase as the current charges remained fair for a hall of its age and condition.

**Resolved: (Unanimously)**

To approve the new pricing structure for 2025/26, as stated within the report.

#### **150/24 POLICY REVIEW**

Council reviewed the proposed updated CCTV policy.

**Resolved: (Unanimously)**

To approve the updated CCTV policy

#### **151/24 INFORMATION CENTRE**

Council discussed the grant of £10,000 that has been awarded to help fund the reopening of the Information Centre on the ground floor of the Market House.

**Resolved: (Unanimously) To:**

1. Accept the grant funding
2. Agree to re-opening of the Information Centre subject to finding suitable volunteers
3. Agree to seek quotations for the works as set out in Section 3 of the report

#### **152/24 CAR PARK BARRIER**

Council discussed the need for barriers to secure the car park at the Recreation Ground. Councillors noted that emergency access would be required, as would access for waste lorries. It was therefore suggested that a combination lock be fitted to the new barriers, as the combination could then be shared when necessary.

**Resolved: (By 9 votes for, 0 against with 1 abstention)**

To approve the purchase and installation of height restriction barriers on both car park entrances to Stoke Road Recreation Ground, using up to an additional £8000 from General Reserves.

#### **153/24 FOOD AND DRINK VENDORS AT THE RECREATION GROUND**

Council considered the report and noted that an administration fee should be used to cover the costs of opening the barriers once installed and for any additional cleaning required.

**Resolved: (By 6 votes for, 3 against with 1 abstention)**

1. To allow Food Vendors to operate from the Recreation Ground, subject to individual approval and the production of the necessary documentation.
2. To allow Food and Drink Vendors to operate outside of Café opening times, subject to individual approval and the production of the necessary documentation.

3. To investigate the possibility of designating specific Street Trading Pitches and developing a Street Trading Policy.

#### **154/24 CEMETERY RULES AND REGULATIONS UPDATE**

The Chief Executive presented the report and explained that Council have received a complaint regarding a memorial request.

**Resolved: (Unanimously)**

To approve amendments to Martock Parish Burial Ground Rules and Regulations as proposed in Section 3 of the report

**Resolved: (Unanimously)**

To refuse the memorial request, as it is contrary to the Rules and Regulations that have been in place since 2016.

#### **155/24 PRECINCT ROOF**

The Operations Manager explained that on 1st September 2014 a full repairing lease was signed between the Parish Council and the Co-Operative group for the covered walkway at the Moorlands Shopping Centre. Full Council queried the length and purpose of the lease and officers agreed to investigate the issue and report back to Council at a later meeting.

**Resolved: (By 9 votes for, 0 against with 1 abstention)**

1. To undertake a 3-year programme of works to repair the walkway roof at Moorlands Shopping Centre.
2. To approve the cost of £5,710 to be paid from the Quinquennial budget for this financial year.

#### **156/24 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORTS**

- a) Receive and note the income and expenditure report for the year to date

Council noted the report.

- b) To review the virements report and approve recommendations made.

**Resolved: (By 8 votes for, 0 against with 2 abstentions)**

To approve the virements as set out in the report.

- c) To receive and note the balance sheet 30.09.24
- d) To receive and review the list of payments, to be signed by the Chair and attached to the minutes of the meeting
- e) To receive and note the External Auditor's Report and Certificate 2023/24
- f) To receive and approve the update to the last internal auditor's report

**Resolved: (By 9 votes for, 0 against with 1 abstention)**

To note and approve reports c to f.

#### **157/24 INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

The RFO presented the new Investment Strategy Policy and the proposed investments for the next 12 months. In response to a question, the RFO explained that Council should have a General Reserve that would cover between three and twelve months of revenue expenditure.

**Resolved: (By 9 votes for, 0 against with 1 abstention)**

To adopt the Investment Strategy Policy and approve the investments for the next 12 months.

#### **158/24 NEW MOBOBILE PHONE CONTRACT**

Council considered the report and requested that the Chief Executive investigate whether it would be possible to sell those old phones that were still in working order.

**Resolved: (Unanimously)**

1. Approve the virement from the budget line 4050 Accountancy to cover any shortfall in funding for the mobile phone units, as this budget is currently underspent.
2. Approve a new two year contract with Vodaphone for eight units at a monthly cost of £17.50 per unit with an upfront cost of £25 per unit.

#### **159/24 CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT**

**Resolved: (Unanimously) To:**

1. Note the report
2. Approve the closure of the offices for the period 24<sup>th</sup> December until 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

#### **160/24 FORWARD PLAN**

**Resolved: (Unanimously)**

To note the Full Council Forward Plan.

#### **161/24 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

- a. Planning Committee – Provisional date set for Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024 7.00pm
- b. Full Council Meeting – Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024 7.00pm

#### **162/24 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Resolved: (Unanimously)**

To exclude press and public on the grounds that the following items involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraph of Section 1 of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

8.55pm Non Council members left the meeting.

### **163/24 EXTENSION OF MEETING**

Council Standing Order 3 x. states that meetings will not last longer than two hours. A motion was put forward to extend this by 10 minutes in order to consider the final three items on the agenda.

**Resolved: (Unanimously)**

To extend the duration of the meeting by 10 minutes.

### **164/24 STRATEGIC PLAN**

**Resolved: (Unanimously)**

1. To appoint Martin Woods to assist in the production of the Strategic Plan.
2. To allocate the cost of the plan from budget line 285-4027 Devolved Services.

### **165/24 SALARY REPORT**

9pm - The Chief Executive and Operations Manager left the room and the RFO presented the report.

**Resolved:**

1. To approve the annual incremental rises but not to review the SCP ranges for each role so that it is clear whether any additional steps are available to each member of the team, or it is made clear that the top of the available scale has been reached.
2. That the Chief Exec reviews the scale points for the Community Team and to set the budget figure based on SCP 26 in the meantime.
3. That a review of the pension provision currently being offered, including independent pension advice, is undertaken and that the budget is calculated based on the LGPS pension provision contribution rates.
4. That a contingency be included when setting the budget for 2025 2026 for the gradual building of a staffing reserve

9.05pm – The Chief Executive returned to the meeting.

### **167/24 TRACK LICENCES**

**Resolved: (Unanimously)**

To seek legal advice on the wording of the licences and the possibility of issuing longer term licences.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

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**Chair**

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**Date**