Town Clerk: Dan Ledger

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**MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF CULLOMPTON TOWN COUNCIL**

**DATED THURSDAY, 26 JANUARY 2024 AT 7:00PM**

**AT CULLOMPTON TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT:**

**Councillors:** E Buczkowski, J Buczkowski, R Dietrich, P James, P Regardsoe, J Stanford, C Snow, M Thompson (Chair).

**Officers:** Town Clerk, Deputy Clerk, Administrative Assistant.

**MDDC Presentation Team:** Tina Maryan (MDDC), Richard Marsh (MDDC), Ian Beavis (WSP).

**Others:** Mid Devon District Councillors S Keeble and S Robinson, 7 Members of the Public.

**C23/120 Apologies for Absences.** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors J Johns and T Spring.

**C23/121 Declaration of Interest** **and Dispensations**. The following Declarations of Interests were made:

1. Councillor E Buczkowski declared an Other Registerable Interest (ORI) in Agenda item 10.2 (Minute c23/130.2) as she is a member of Mid Devon District Council and Agenda item 7 (Minute C23/126) as she is the Council representative at the Cullompton Community Association.
2. Councillor J Buczkowski declared an ORI in Agenda item 10.2 (Minute C23/130.2) as he is a member of Mid Devon District Council.

**C23/122 Member Questions.**

Councillor P James requested permission to ask his question during the Part II session at the end of the meeting; this permission was granted.

**C23/123 Public Question Time.**

**Speaker 1**

1. There is some confusion over land that will be taken to allow the proposed M5 Junction 28 improvements and the Town Centre Relief Road and asked for clarification. *MDDC stated that there had been no change in terms of the land take for the projects but that the specific area of concern would be taken back with a response provided to both the Speaker and the landowner concerned.*
2. TCRR has become increasingly complicated and much simpler options have been talked about since the 1980s; should not these options be considered again? *MDDC responded that the schemes that is being proposed are fundamentally required to deliver the level of planned growth; there is a direct link between them and their delivery to release the housing development necessary and conducting the scheme in a piecemeal way does not deliver the housing outcome. There are also a significant number of constraints that will be difficult and expensive to overcome.*

**C23/124 Comments and Complaints.** There was nothing to report.

**C23/125 Minutes**. The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Full Council held on 23 November 2023 were adopted as a true and correct record of the meeting subject to the removal of a small typo in the header of the document; the minutes were signed accordingly.

**C23/126 M5 Motorway Junction 28**.

Councillor M Thompson declared a Non Registerable Interest (NRI) as he lives close to the proposed route of the Town Centre Relief Road and the expansion of the M5 Junction 28.

1. MDDC presented the proposals for the expansion of capacity at the M5 Junction 28 and the Town Centre Relief Road. Although the plans are in place, funding is yet to be secured for the project and work continues with central Government to fund the project. £10M has been secured from Homes England for the Town Centre Relief Road but a further £25M is required for the Town Centre Relief Road.
2. In terms of the capacity expansion of Junction 28, the existing junction will remain as it is with an additional bridge over the M5 with additional, south facing, slip roads with connections to Meadow Lane and Honiton Road to the south of Cullompton.
3. Following the presentation, there were several questions from Members of the Public:
   1. The height of the new bridge over the M5 was questioned? *All required standards will be met.*
   2. It was stated that the bridge will be a long span over the motorway, River Culm and main railway line; what plans have been put in place for pillars to support it? *Designers will have considered this and the previous question during the design phase of the project.*
   3. There are a large number of junctions on both the new bridge and between the connections to Meadow Lane and Honiton Road; how is traffic to be controlled? *The design team will have considered these junctions and they will meet required standards.*
   4. It was stated that pedestrian access across the existing junction is less than satisfactory; what plans are in place for pedestrians across the new bridge? *MDDC are keen for there to be adequate provision for pedestrians and other users not in cars but that concerns would be fed into the design team.*
   5. How will the new junction impact on access to the Public Right of Way (Footpath No2) across High Banks from Duke Street and Honiton Road? *These concerns will be fed to the design team.*
   6. It was noted that there is a significant fall from the maximum height of the motorway bridge to the junction with Meadow Lane over a relatively short distance of 500-600m. *MDDC stated that this concern would be fed to the design team. Overall, the design is, at present, conceptual and the detail will come later although the Town centre Relief Road has been fully designed. Although it is technically challenging and the site constrained, the project overall is deliverable.*
   7. What is to be done about noise abatement for those residents who live close to the project? *MDDC stated that this will be considered as part of the final scheme design.*
   8. Had an alternative at Willand been considered; it was stated that there are “hidden” slip roads that could be uncovered and utilised? *MDDC stated that there are significant challenges with the Willand option including that the Environment Agency would be unlikely to support it due to potential flood risks of development here. Increase traffic can be accommodated at Meadow Lane and the railway station at Cullompton is planned to open in 2025 and has strong Government support.*

Mid Devon District Councillor S Robinson believes that Cullompton Town Council are invited to Metro Board meetings and that the land east of Knightswood has very complex ownership. There are lots of issues with flooding at Knightswood and that this was known when the estate was constructed. *Councillor J Buczkowski attends Metro Board on behalf of the Town Council and makes reports to the Planning and Licensing Working Group.*

The Mid Devon District Council team and all Members of the Public departed the meeting at 20:20.

**C23/127 Consultation Update.**

1. The Town Clerk presented the results of the Community Consultation and that further, more narrowly focussed, consultations will take place in future. The presentation was noted by Council.
2. The issues surrounding delivery of the Community Consultation leaflet were noted and no further action is required in this instance.

**C23/128 Committee Minutes.**

The Committee meeting Minutes for the following committees were noted:

1. Community, Economy and Tourism Committee of 7 December 2023.
2. Governance, Finance and Resources Committee of:
   1. 26 October 2023.
   2. 14 December 2023.
   3. 18 January 2024.
3. Planning, Licensing and Strategic Growth Committee of:
   1. 14 September 2023.
   2. 10 October 2023.
   3. 31 October 2023.
   4. 21 November 2023.
   5. 12 December 2023.
4. Services, Property and Outdoor Spaces Committee of:
   1. 12 September 2023.
   2. 9 November 2023.

**C23/129 Finance**.

1. **RESOLVED** to note the Bank Reconciliations up to 31 December 2023.

*Councillors E Buczkowski and J Buczkowski departed the meeting at 20:39.*

*Councillor C Snow departed the meeting at 20.40*

1. **RESOLVED** to authorise payment of £25,000 to MDDC in respect of the Heritage Action Zone project.

*Councillors E Buczkowski and J Buczkowski returned to the meeting at 20:44.*

*Council C Snow returned to the meeting at 20:45*

1. **RESOLVED** to note the payments made under delegation, receipts received and approve the Council payment list.
2. **RESOLVED** to note the budget to date and approve the listed virements held in the agenda pack.
3. **RESOLVED** that delegation is given to the Clerk to enter into a contract with a provider that uses the O2 network (O2, Sky Mobile, Giff Gaff, Virgin Mobile or Tesco Mobile) on a SIM only deal over 10GB. This is to provide mobile telephone services to the outdoor team. The handsets to be purchased outright.

**C23/130 Budget 2024-2025.**  To consider the recommendation from the Governance, Finance and Resources Committee held on 18 January 2024 as follows:

1. **RESOLVED** that the recommended underutilised budget headings be removed as indicated in the report. That a budget line be added for visibility splay cutting with no budget attached at this time.
2. **RESOLVED** that the budget is approved, and the precept is set at £524,815.00. Creating a Band D charge of £145,12, an increase of 13p per week.

*As it was just past 2100, the meeting was closed at 2103, an additional meeting of the Full Council will take place on 1 February 2024 to deal with remaining business.*