

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING 7pm
held at Tetbury Library, Close Gardens, Tetbury, GL8 8DU on the 11th
December 2023**

Present:

Town Councillors: Liz Farnham (Mayor), Zowie Baker (Deputy Mayor), Suzanne Sanderson, Steve Scott, Judith Taylor, Ann Pearce, Colin Pearce, Rodney Smith, Kevin Painter, and Peter Colman.

Officers: T Niblett (CEO (Chief Executive Officer)) V Bolwell (EO (Executive Officer))

Public: 7 members of the public.

The Mayor wished all members and public a Happy Christmas and extended a warm invitation to join her at the Snooty Fox for drinks, and nibbles—all generously paid for by Cllr L Farnham and Kevin Farnham as a token of appreciation to our wonderful community.

TC01. 12/23 To receive and accept any apologies for absence:

Cllr N Ind – received and accepted.

Cllr I Watson - received and accepted.

Cllr P Leech - received and accepted.

Cllr P Burrell - received and accepted.

TC02. 12/23 To receive declarations of interest in connection with agenda items as shown and not already stated on Register of Interests:

None.

TC03. 12/23 Public Consultation:

A member of the public is still awaiting a response from the Cotswold District Monitoring Officer concerning a complaint lodged against the Mayor of Tetbury because, during a previous Full Council meeting the resident was allegedly interrupted in their three minutes.

A resident had claimed that Cllr Kevin Painter had disclosed information to them regarding the payment of £5000 which was made to the business of Kevin Painter. The resident questioned why they have not received similar treatment despite their name being published on an agenda, they have not received compensation or an apology. Feeling aggrieved by this discrepancy, the resident believes that the consequences of the previous council and CEO had compelled them to resign from the Tetbury Town Council in 2018.

They stated that the current CEO had made a false statement in correspondence regarding the payment, and this was in fact paid to Cllr K Painter and not a business. The resident pointed out that Cllr S Scott had authorised the payment in May 2021.

The Chair explained that this issue was to be discussed in the closed session. Cllr C Pearce expressed his concern regarding the closed session. He has previously been the subject of accusations made by a former councillor during a public session. Although the member of the public did not explicitly mention his name, this situation has led to an unjust accusation of him being a bully, and he seeks to address this concern.

TC04. 12/23 To approve minutes of Full Council meeting of the council held on the 27th November 2023:

After amendments, it was proposed by Councillor S Scott seconded by Councillor R Smith to approve the minutes of the meeting on Monday 27th November 2023.

Voting record	For 9	Abstain 1	Against 0	Absent 4
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TC05. 12/23 To approve minutes of the Town meeting held on Tuesday 28th November 2023:

After seeking advice from Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC) the CEO confirmed it was appropriate to approve the minutes of the town meeting. It was proposed by Councillor P Coleman seconded by Councillor J Taylor to approve the Town meeting minutes held on Tuesday 28th November 2023.

Voting record	For 8	Abstain 2	Against 0	Absent 4
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TC06. 12/23 To discuss draft 2024-2025 budget:

Following last month's Full Council meeting, Cllr S Scott, the Chair of Finance and Scrutiny, presented two new budgets for consideration. After a detailed explanation of each budget, Cllr S Scott clarified to the committee that the Visitor Information Centre remains as it stands in the current budget.

OPTION – A: This budget allows for our extended free reserves and allocates all the project budgets (H&W Projects, H&R Projects, Christmas, Dolphins Hall) at 50% of the values they have been at in 23/24. With this budget we would be looking at a 5% increase in the precept. (£7.62). This budget has a deficit of £38,148. This would leave reserves of £28,014

As we are expecting a reduction of around £11,500 in our PWLB payments next year this would leave us a chance of being able to run the same budget again next year with only another moderate increase.

This option is similar to Nailsworth Town Council proposed budget.

OPTION – B: This budget allows for our extended free reserves and allocates all the project budgets (H&W Projects, H&R Projects, Christmas, Dolphins Hall) at 0% of the values they have been at in 23/24. (i.e. no budgets). With this budget we would be looking at a 3.2% increase in the precept. (£4.88). This budget has a deficit of £38,650. This would leave reserves of £28,910.

As we are expecting a reduction of around £11,500 in our PWLB payments next year this would leave us a chance of being able to run the same budget again next year with only another moderate increase.

With an upcoming public consultation in the new year, Cllr L Farnham reiterated the need for the committee to reach a decision that could be presented. However, Cllr A Pearce expressed concern that the agenda item was for discussion and not for agreement. In response, Cllr L Farnham clarified that, as stated at the last meeting, the intention was not to finalise the budget proposal but to agree the proposal to put to the upcoming public meeting; approval of the budget would take place at the January meeting. Cllr Scott advised that he expected changes to be minimal to address issues arising from the consultation. Subsequently, Cllr L Farnham temporarily suspended standing orders to conduct a vote.

It was proposed by Cllr L Farnham seconded by Cllr S Scott to suspend Standing Orders

Voting record	For 7	Against 3	Abstain 0	Absent 4
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Councillor L Farnham highlighted that both budgets included included income from rent of the flat. It was proposed by Councillor L Farnham seconded by Councillor S Scott to present option A at the public consultation meeting in January.

Voting record	For 7	Against 0	Abstain 3	Absent 4
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TC07. 12/23 To approve December payments:

It was proposed by Councillor P Coleman seconded by Councillor S Scott to approve the Police Museum December payment.

Voting record	For 7	Against 0	Abstain 3	Absent 4
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It was proposed by Councillor Z Baker seconded by Councillor R Smith to approve Tetbury Town Council December payment.

Voting record	For 7	Against 0	Abstain 3	Absent 4
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It was proposed by Councillor S Sanderson seconded by Councillor J Taylor to approve the Visitor Information Centre December payments.

Voting record	For 7	Against 0	Abstain 3	Absent 4
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Cllr L Farnham requested that budget holders/Committees look in detail and analyse all the budgets at the end of quarter 3 and to take action to bring budgets back on track. **ACTION**

Cllr A Pearce requested confirmation of the time frame for the new VIC proposal – January Full Council.

TC08. 12/23 To approve Cotswold Wardens offer to rebuild wall in St Saviours:

Cllr K Painter found it peculiar that the responsibility and expenses fall upon Tetbury Town Council.

In response, Cllr L Farnham clarified that despite not owning the grounds where the church is situated, the council bears the responsibility for maintaining the curtilage and the grass trimming of St Saviours Churchyard.

Furthermore, Cllr L Farnham expressed gratitude for the generous offer to repair the wall.

It was proposed by Councillor C Pearce seconded Councillor S Sanderson to approve the Cotswold Wardens offer to rebuild St Saviours Wall. The CEO would write to the Cotswold Wardens to thank them and to confirm the request to do this work.

Voting record	For 10	Against 0	Abstain 0	Absent 4
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Cllr J Taylor highlighted that after inspection of the wall it could have fallen because people were climbing over it. Could signage go up to discourage this?

TC09. 12/23 To note Mayor's report:

Noted.

TC10. 12/23 To consider correspondence received to date:

St Saviours Church Yard – CEO to use delegated powers for a small temporary fence. Concerns relating to a neighbouring plot, which is currently vacant, were to be investigated by the H&R committee.

Town Meeting letter of Support for the Mayor and the Town Council.

Gloucestershire County Council – Bath Road Repairs: Cllr C Pearce has repeatedly brought up the issue of Bath Road repairs with Highways, expressing disappointment at the lack of action towards fixing the wall (Atkins Report June 22). In response, Cllr C Pearce has reached out to a representative from Gloucestershire Highways and intends to share the details with the CEO. Additionally, Cllr L Farnham has proposed sending a formal letter to Gloucestershire Highways on behalf of Tetbury Town Council.

Proposed Restricted Byway – Tetbury Trail, can this be an item for Heritage and Regeneration in January. Cllr K Painter.

TC11. 12/23 To receive Members Reports:

Cllr S Scott – Thanked the CEO for her continued hard work.

Cllr S Sanderson – Due to personal reasons Cllr Sanderson will have to stand down from the VIC Working Group.

Cllr S Sanderson would like to thank all the Staff and Volunteers for their hard work at the Christmas switch on. It was a great event.

Health, Wellbeing and Youth Working group is now back on track with lots of new joiners.

Cllr C Pearce – Requested an update from the Dolphin Recreation Committee regarding the ongoing construction would be appreciated.

Additionally, it is requested that the Good Shed Service Level Agreements for all establishments situated on Tetbury Town Council's land be included on next month's agenda. There appears to be a lack of alignment, requiring clarification.

Cllr K Painter – Cllr Painter will provide the CEO with information concerning the landowner interested in offering a peppercorn rent for a burial extension. The CEO will be kept informed of any discussions.

Tetbury has experienced an exceptionally busy Christmas period and deserves commendation.

Numerous events have been taking place in the town.

Cllr R Smith – Can we investigate the lighting on Brewery Lane? It is a potential risk being so poorly lit could result in an accident.

Cllr R Smith will be Selling Mistletoe Friday 15th of December in Aid of Tetbury Hospital. Please support.

TC12. 12/23 Items for inclusion on the January Agenda:

Approval of budget Financial Year 2024/25

Proposed changes to Standing Orders

Visitor Information Centre Report

Service Level Agreements Good Shed

S106 policy

Risk management

Cllr L Farnham said there were a large number of items on the agenda, and these would need to be prioritised; a key item being the budget. Cllr Scott agreed to prioritise items at the F&S meeting the week before Full Council.

TC13. 12/23 To note the dates and time of the next Full Council meeting Monday 29th January 2024 at 7pm: Noted.

TC14. 12/23 Exclusion of the Public and Press to allow discussion of confidential business: It was proposed by Councillor K Painter seconded by Councillor S Scott that under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the Public and Press be excluded from the Meeting for the following items of business on the grounds they involved the likely disclosure of confidential information (as defined in paragraphs (1) and (2) of Part I of Schedule 12A to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 [Information relating to an individual and Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person]), and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information concerned.

CEO from GAPTC was invited to remain to evaluate the close session process.

GPTC CEO gave the committee a brief overview of their previous career and role as newly appointed CEO, he is passionate to support Tetbury Town Council and the staff. Please do not hesitate to contact him with any issues.

TC15. 12/23 To approve the confidential minutes held on Monday 27th November 2023:

It was proposed by Councillor S Scott seconded by Councillor J Taylor to approve the confidential Minutes held on Monday 27th November 2023.

Voting record	For 9	Against 0	Abstain 1	Absent 4
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TC16. 12/23 To note further details regarding recent FOI requests:

Cllr C Pearce expressed concerns about the confidentiality of this matter and believes that the truth should be made known to the public. Cllr C Pearce conveyed an unwillingness to partake in discussing this item in closed session and stated that he intends to disclose this information publicly.

Cllr C Pearce left the meeting 2010 hrs

Cllr A Pearce, who was Mayor at the time, stated that she believes that this particular matter was not subjected to a thorough investigation and asserts that the council overlooked compensating the other involved Councillor. Due to information leaks to members of the public, Tetbury Town Council now provides pink papers on the evening of sessions. Cllr A Pearce also feels personally targeted while dealing with this issue.

Cllr A Pearce left the meeting 2015hr

Meeting ended 2031

Chair Dated