STREET PARISH COUNCIL

Extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 25th February, 2020 at

6.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor P. Goater (Chair)

Councillors: P. Birch, S. Carswell, J. Diment,

D. Drew, D. Ellis, D. Goater, L. Mogg,

T.W.E. Napper, H. Shearer and L. Zaky

IN ATTENDANCE: L.A. Ruff - Parish Clerk

M. Sandiford – Assistant Clerk Projects Officer

County Councillor L. Leyshon

APOLOGIES: Councillors: C.E. Axten, R. Boyce, M. Daniells,

A. Leafe and A. Prior – another engagement -

reasons accepted

206. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th February, 2020 which had

been circulated were approved as a correct record and signed by the

Chair subject to -

* the addition of the following at the end of recommendation D of Minute No. 191 ‘subject to the addition of ‘in liaison with the Clerk, Assistant Clerk or Assistant Clerk and Projects Officer’ at the end of the recommendation for Minute No. 29’
* the addition of ‘Councillor Napper expressed his concerns about the project’ at the end of the first paragraph of Minute No. 194.

207. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

In accordance with the Code of Conduct Councillors Carswell, P.

Goater, Napper and Shearer declared an other interest under Appendix

B in any matters relating to the District Council and stated that they

would keep an open mind when considering issues at either District or

Parish level. Councillor Napper declared an other interest under

Appendix B in any matters relating to Somerset County Council and

stated that he would keep an open mind when considering issues at

County or Parish level.

All members present declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the alteration of the Parish Rooms for Council and library use and that they had been granted dispensation to speak and vote by the Clerk and would keep an open mind when considering the matter. Councillor Drew declared that she was a Friend of the Library.

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208. ALTERATION OF PARISH ROOMS – RESOLUTION TO BORROW

The Clerk submitted a report which had been circulated and members

brought papers sent with the agenda for the meeting on 21st January

which had been circulated. The ACPO gave details of the final results

of the survey and public consultation carried out from 22nd January to

21st February on the project and the proposed council tax precept

Increase. In total 321 completed survey forms had been returned by

the deadline with 258 people (81%) voting in favour of the increase in

precept with 30 voting against (9%) and 33 left blank (10%).

The Clerk reported that if the proposals were given final approval,

when she received consent for the loan she could apply to the PWLB.

The PWLB would then send an email to the Clerk for her to telephone

them to agree final terms including the rate of interest and date of the

advance. This was noted and agreed. The Clerk also reported that

estimated costs associated with the temporary Council office and

library had changed slightly but the overall cost would not increase.

Application had been made for 100% small business rate relief on the

temporary Council office and library.

Councillor Napper was opposed to the proposed borrowing over 14.5

years which future generations would be liable to pay. He felt that the

Theatre might need more funding in the future and would want to keep

that open if there was a choice between it and the library. He felt that

the library should move back to the original building and that this would

be better for the library and the Council which could have full use of the

Parish Rooms. He proposed that the matter be deferred for 3 – 6

months but other members could not see any benefit in this and did not

second the proposition. The existing loan with the PWLB with

repayments of £22,222 a year would be paid off in 2023 and interest

rates were currently low. County Councillor Leyshon reported that she

had contacted the County Council that day and there had been no

communication with the Street Library Trust for some time. Councillor

Carswell reminded members that there had been a number of

meetings with the County Council and Library Trust and that the library

would have remained in the original building if possible. The cost of

repairing the building was considerable and the Councils did not have

much control over it as it was privately owned. Councillor Drew felt that

the use of the Parish Rooms with the library in it was so much greater

than before. The Chair reminded members that around a third of the

project cost was for works to the exterior of the building which had

been neglected previously. A lift was also to be provided so that a

room on the first floor could be used with full accessibility and lots of

items could be stored there. The alterations would result in better use

of the whole building.

RESOLVED

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The following motion was proposed by Councillor Carswell and

seconded by Councillor Shearer -

RESOLVED

1. RESOLUTION TO BORROW

to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for a PWLB loan of £100,000 over the borrowing term of 14.5 years, repayable by half yearly annuity, for the alteration of the Parish Rooms. The annual loan repayments will come to around £8,111. It is also intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments by 1.5% which is the equivalent of an additional £1.60 a year on a Band D property. This was subject to a precept increase consultation where 81% voted in favour of the proposal

2. to agree the application form, cashflow forecast and business plan as circulated for submission to the DHCLG

3. subject to consent being granted to take out the loan set out in 1.

above -

A. to agree to enter into an intermediate JCT contract with Melhuish

and Saunders Ltd. for the specified works and for this to be signed by

Councillors Carswell and P. Goater on behalf of the Council, or in their

absence by any other two members, with the Clerk to witness their

signatures

B. to agree the draft permanent Community Library Partnership

agreement for 6 years as circulated and that Councillors Carswell and

P. Goater, or in their absence any other two members, should sign the

agreement on behalf of the Council with the Clerk to witness the

signatures – minor changes to agreement -

i. Schedule 4 to be amended to reflect the correct volunteer

requirements

ii. Street Library Trust not to be included in the agreement as it was not involved in the arrangements other than currently funding

newspapers and periodicals

iii. Schedule 9 Inventory to be completed

iv. Schedule 17 to be completed by Somerset County Council – setting

out the responsibilities, including payment, of the Council and the County Council for the refurbishment project – delegated authority given to the Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair to

agree this.

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C. to agree to engage Orme Ltd. to carry out Stages 5 and 6 of the works as circulated at a cost of £10,390 + VAT.

In accordance with standing order 3 m Councillor Napper requested

that the way in which members voted be recorded in the minutes.

Councillor Zaky left the meeting at 6.55 p.m. before the vote was taken.

The voting was as follows:

Members Who Voted For Motion Members Who Voted Against

Councillor Birch Councillor Napper

Councillor Carswell

Councillor Diment

Councillor Drew

Councillor Ellis

Councillor D. Goater

Councillor P. Goater

Councillor Mogg

Councillor Shearer

The motion was passed by 9 votes to 1 vote.

209. UNITARY AUTHORITY

A letter from the Leader of Somerset County Council had been

circulated. There were lots of different unitary models and many

factors to be considered. If a new authority was formed it would take

on the debts, assets, reserves etc. of former authorities in the area and

there would be an election for the new members to serve on it.

RESOLVED

that the Leaders of the County Council and Mendip District Council be

invited to speak to the Council at an existing meeting on the future of

local government in Somerset.

210. GRANT TO MENDIP YMCA

RESOLVED

that the grant of £100 agreed on 18th February be used towards the

cost of a new SWAG points scheme for residents of the Street Foyer.

The meeting ended at 7.10 p.m.

Councillor Zaky left at 6.55 p.m.

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