

BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held in the Mayor's Parlour,
College House on Tuesday 3rd March 2020 at 7.15pm**

(Draft until signed at a subsequent meeting)

Present:

Councillors:

C Baines
S Barlow
J Buckley (in part)
D Cooper
G Davies
C Dyson
H Howell
K Hurst-Knight
C Whittle
R Whittle (in the Chair)

In Attendance:

L Jakeman, Town Clerk

Absent: Councillor E Lynch

0436/1920 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members noted the apologies as listed below:

Councillor R Fox	- Personal Commitment
Councillor E Marshall	- Unwell
Councillor K Sawbridge	- Personal Commitment
Councillor S Stevens	- Personal Commitment
Councillor C Walden	- Unwell

0437/1920 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Nil

0438/1920 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Question from Mrs A Wilson

“There is a strength of feeling in town that the Town Council should be working with partners e.g. Shropshire Council, Environment Agency, Emergency Services etc to see what flood measures could be put in place for Bridgnorth. Following Clive Wright’s comment on Channel 4 News that Bridgnorth does not often flood and after questioning him about the comment it is understood that Shropshire Council have been asking for more flood prevention for the county. Given the horrendous situation the town found themselves in recently with regard to wide spread flooding it is suggested that a multi-agency approach be given to looking at preventive options for the future. Could the Town Council assure residents that they will work with partners to secure some of these flood prevention measures for Bridgnorth but ensure full consultation with the local residents as part of the process?”

Town Council response

Members of the Town Council along with County Councillors had only very recently and prior to the flooding met representatives of the Environmental Agency and Shropshire Council staff to discuss the effects of flooding and as such can demonstrate that it is engaged with appropriate organisations. The Town Council will of course press those that have some responsibility for flood prevention to address the issues at Bridgnorth. As to specific solutions we would be guided by specialists and those that have or have access to the necessary resources to take steps to prevent future flooding. I expect that the Council would of course encourage those that have solutions to engage with local residents. Any positive actions would need to be multiagency and include part of wider suite of actions further upstream.

0439/1920 **MINUTES**

- i) Members noted receipt of the draft minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 18th February 2020.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 18th February 2020 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

0440/1920 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

Nil

0441/1920 **OUTDOORS AND PROPERTIES MANAGER'S REPORT**

Members noted receipt of a report that provided a general overview of recent and planned activity regarding grounds and property maintenance, extract below:

- **Cemetery Lodge** Now that the Cemetery Lodge is empty it is intended to re-advertise through a local letting agency. Before that can happen the property requires a thorough deep-clean and decorating from top to bottom. The decorating will be carried out by our own maintenance team but the deep clean needs to be done professionally. We have contacted a company called Best Choice Cleaning Services who have given a quote for two cleaners to carry out a thorough 5-6 hour deep-clean by a contractor (circa £180). Other companies were contacted with a slightly lower fee but they would require us to provide the cleaning equipment and materials. There are sufficient funds (£353) to cover the cost within the Cemetery Lodge repair budget.

0442/1920 **TREE PLANTING SCHEME WORKING GROUP**

RESOLVED: That the Terms of Reference for a Tree Planting Scheme Working Group be approved.

0443/1920 **YOUTH SERVICE PROVISION – BRIDGNORTH YOUTH CLUB (INNAGE LANE)**

Members noted correspondence between Bridgnorth Town Council and Shropshire Council that seeks to keep Bridgnorth Youth Club running in a format similar to its current model until 31st March 2021.

RESOLVED: to note the correspondence and that some further meaningful dialogue between Bridgnorth Town Council and Shropshire Council is likely in the next financial year, but that Shropshire Council has confirmed that they will continue current funding of sessions at Innage Lane Youth Club until March 2021.

0444/1920 **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

Members noted that the Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 26th March at Castle Hall and Councillors were invited to suggest items that might be considered for the agenda.

Members noted that the Annual Town Meeting is not a meeting of the Council; it is a meeting of the townsfolk.

0445/1920 **COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

Members noted receipt of correspondence from Shropshire Council regarding the Town Council's application for a Community Governance Review (in that it seeks to recommend no changes to the boundary of Bridgnorth) and were invited to comment.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council notes that yet again Shropshire Council have failed to recognise the valid and very strong case for the alteration of the town's boundaries, and furthermore have serious concerns about the strong bias shown in the draft and final reports of the Review Working Group that gave generous exposure to the views of those against changing boundaries but failed to mention the Town Council's arguments. It appears that the review conducted by Shropshire Council had taken little or no note of the 'Guidance on Community Governance Reviews' published jointly by the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in March 2010.

0446/1920 **ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS/FLOODING**

The Mayor advised the meeting that The Town Council had worked with the Major Incident Team to offer assistance where it was able and appropriate. This included opening the Castle Hall and having that attended to by a number of councillors during the day and early evening of the first day; providing office space for the advanced party of the Major Incident Team. The first time that Castle Hall was available it was made available as a rest centre within an hour for anyone who had been evacuated from their home, with camp beds and blankets being available as well as volunteers from the Red Cross on hand to provide medical assistance. On the second occasion that the Castle Hall was required for use it housed a crisis drop in centre with staff from Shropshire Council offering support to residents that might have been directly affected by the high river level.

Members were reminded from the response to the public question that at a previous meeting led by a representative from the EA that the EA had indicated that they would wish to have a meeting which would include affected residents (real or potential). The Town Clerk was asked to approach the Environmental Agency to see if they had a date in mind for a meeting with Councillors and residents.

(Clerk's Note; Councillor Buckley arrived at the meeting part way through the item being discussed)

0447/1920 **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

RESOLVED in terms of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and it is, therefore, **RESOLVED** that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

0448/1920 **STAFFING MATTERS**

- i) CCTV – Nothing to report.
- ii) Members received an update from the Town Clerk regarding Job Descriptions. Members asked that the Job Description working group meet before the next Council meeting and make some final recommendations (that can take into account comments made by staff) that can be then be considered by the Full Town Council.

DRAFT