

BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held in the Mayor's Parlour,
College House on Tuesday 3rd October 2017 at 7.15pm**

Present: The Deputy Mayor, Councillor E Marshall in the Chair,
Councillors Mrs C Baines MBE, Ms S Barlow,
Dr J Buckley, D Cooper, G Davies, R Fox, J Gittins,
A Hinton, Mrs H Howell, Mrs K Hurst-Knight, Mrs J Onions
and Mrs C Walden

In Attendance: Clerk, Mr P Griffiths
Councillor J Smithers, Ludlow Town Council
Councillor C Lea, Shropshire Council
5 members of public
1 member of the Press
Minutes Secretary, Mrs P Russell
Minutes Secretary and transcribed by Mrs A Kendrick

0320/1718 FIRE SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT

The meeting commenced with a fire safety announcement by the Deputy Mayor.

0321/1718 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED: to receive the following apologies for absence.

Councillor Mrs S Stevens	May arrive late
Councillor Mrs C Whittle	Personal Commitment
Councillor R Whittle OBE	Family Commitment

0322/1718 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded that it is their responsibility to inform the Monitoring Officer if declaring a pecuniary interest.

There were no declarations of interest read aloud at the meeting; however a hard copy declaring a personal interest was given to the Minute Secretary from Councillor Mrs H Howell.

0323/1718 APPOINTMENT OF A CLERK FOR THE MEETING

RESOLVED: that Mr P Griffiths be appointed as Clerk for the meeting.

0324/1718 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

0325/1718 **MINUTES**

- i) The minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 19th September 2017 at 7.15pm were submitted as circulated.

The Deputy Mayor proposed an amendment to change the resolution regarding the appointment of a “Locum Town Clerk” to “Clerk for the duration of the meeting”.

RESOLVED: that subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 19th September 2017 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

0326/1718 **MATTERS ARISING**

- i) Updates from the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 19th September 2017 that are not included elsewhere on the agenda.

A request for an update on the Maternity Unit Workshop was received as a decision on the immediate future of the Maternity Units was to be made by 29th September. Members were advised that a report has been released stating that the closure period had been extended and would now be in place until 31st December 2017. A final workshop is being held on Thursday from 11am – 2pm in Shrewsbury when people are encouraged to attend to support the reopening of the Maternity Units.

Members raised concerns that they had previously written to SaTH requesting that as a stakeholder, they are kept informed of any updates regarding Bridgnorth Maternity Unit and this has not been done.

RESOLVED: that a third letter be sent to SaTH expressing the Town Council’s disappointment at not being kept informed, despite writing with such a request on two previous occasions, and stating how much of a negative impact the closure will have on our town.

It was suggested that the letter be seen by all Councillors before being sent to SaTH.

Councillor Ms S Barlow requested that a discussion take place on the Chicken Farm following concerns from residents. It was acknowledged that this was not an agenda item and therefore should not be discussed at the meeting; however the Chairman stated that this could be raised at the end of the public session.

0327/1718 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

Question from Councillor J Gittins

With regards to the holding of future public events, what are the requirements of the council to demonstrate managerial control of the health and safety aspects of forthcoming events to meet with our insurance requirements i.e. for Remembrance Sunday and Christmas Lighting Up Night?

The Deputy Mayor replied that the managerial control of the health and safety of the events organised by the Town Council are dealt with by the Outdoors and Properties Manager together with the PA to the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk oversees such works and signs off works as required. In the absence of the Town Clerk and as agreed by Council, this will be carried out by the Town Mayor, and in his absence, the Deputy Mayor.

Councillor D Cooper raised a Point of Order and questioned whether the events will be covered by Town Council insurance. The Deputy Mayor stated that the insurance company had been kept informed of recent developments and would continue to be updated.

Councillor J Gittins questioned whether the staff mentioned had the qualifications to be carry out such work. The Deputy Mayor said that it was inappropriate to challenge the validity of the staff members.

Questions from Councillor D Cooper

Members had previously been circulated with a number of questions from Councillor D Cooper in which he had requested answers from SALC.

The Deputy Mayor advised that a response had not been received and therefore it was not possible to answer the questions at the meeting. A response would be sent to Councillor Cooper as soon as possible.

0328/1718 **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- i) The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 18th September 2017 were submitted as circulated.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 18th September 2017 be received and adopted.

0329/1718 **MATTERS ARISING FROM COMMITTEE MINUTES**

There were no other matters arising from the committee minutes.

0330/1718 **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

RESOLVED: that the Common Seal be affixed to the following documents:

Section E 576A
Oak Grove Cremation Plot 45

0331/1718 **PARKING STRATEGY CONSULTATION**

Members were reminded that the Parking Consultation survey was available on the Shropshire Council website and could be filled out as an individual.

The Deputy Mayor introduced Councillor J Smithers from Ludlow Town Council to the meeting who had done extensive research into the effects of the proposed changes in Ludlow. He had submitted a Freedom of Information request to Shropshire Council to seek the revenue from the car parks, and how the funds raised are used. He advised Members that in accordance with the Road Traffic Act 1964, Shropshire Council cannot add the revenue from car parks into their general funds. Councillor Smithers advised that at a recent meeting with Councillor P Nutting, he had indicated that he thought the car parks in Ludlow should be given back to Ludlow to manage. Councillor Smithers urged Members to ask Councillor Nutting to consider doing the same in Bridgnorth.

Councillor Smithers then welcomed questions from Members.

Certain Councillors voiced their support for what Councillor Smithers had said and done as Shropshire Council had been coy about how much income these proposals will raise. Members want to know how much more will be raised and the commitments as to what it could be spent on.

Members requested the figures from the Freedom of Information request submitted to Shropshire Council regarding the income from car parking in Bridgnorth. The Deputy Mayor advised that the unofficial response had only been received minutes before the meeting and therefore there was not enough time to look at this. It was stated that a copy would be circulated to all Members after the meeting.

Councillor C Lea, who was in attendance at the meeting, was asked if it would be possible to arrange a consultation in the library for residents. Councillor Lea advised that all the car parks were in his Ward and had attended meetings with various officers at Shropshire Council regarding the proposals and residents' concerns. He advised that he was more than happy to take any comments and raise them with Kevin Aitken at Shropshire Council and would also raise the matter at the LJC meeting taking place on 12th October at 7pm.

Councillor Smithers was thanked for his attendance.

Members acknowledged the summary document provided by Councillor D Cooper regarding the proposals. It was agreed that it would be too time consuming to complete the surveys at the meeting and therefore it was proposed that we get a general feel for each of the main sections, with a small number of Councillors and a staff member meeting to formulate a response. These Councillors would have to be prepared to work for the residents' views, not personal views based on where they live. It was agreed that the response would be circulated to all Members before it was sent.

Members then went through each section giving reasons for supporting or rejecting the proposals.

It was then agreed that the response would be brought back to the Town Council meeting held on 16th October for information, noting that the response had to be submitted by 17th October.

RESOLVED: that Councillors D Cooper, G Davies, R Fox, A Hinton and Mrs K Hurst-Knight be appointed to the Task and Finish Group to prepare a submission to Shropshire Council regarding the Car Parking Consultation.

0332/1718 **SPEEDING ON THE HERMITAGE**

Members had been circulated with a report from the Outdoors and Properties Manager regarding actions resulting from a meeting of the Grove and Lodge Lane Partnership relating to the Hermitage. Members had been asked to consider submitting a case to the Shropshire Council Road Safety Partnership for them to find funding for the erection of a Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) on the Hermitage.

Concern was raised that this matter had been ongoing since 2014 and that it was time this was resolved.

Councillor C Lea, as Chairman of the Grove and Lodge Lane Partnership, advised that he had met with Alice Dilly of Shropshire Council and it had been agreed that a VAS was needed, however funding was not available.

It was felt that this was a Shropshire Council Highways issue and should be a matter for the Grove and Lodge Lane Partnership.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council submits a request to the Shropshire Council Road Safety Partnership to find the funding for this project and state in very strong terms that this matter has been outstanding for three years.

0333/1718 **GRANTS - TWINNING**

RESOLVED: that the annual grant of £500.00 be given to the Bridgnorth Twinning Association.

Councillor D Cooper requested that his abstention be noted in the minutes.

0334/1718 **PURCHASE ORDERS**

RESOLVED: that the Outdoors and Properties Manager be authorised to sign purchase orders up to £250.00.

0335/1718 **PROPERTY AND GROUNDS ADMINISTRATOR**

Members noted that the Town Council has appointed a part time Property and Grounds Administrator on a temporary contract for 6 months. They will be working in the office two days per week.

0336/1718 **TOWN HALL TRAIL**

Members were asked to consider a proposal to open the Town Hall during half term (23rd – 28th October). The Curator is arranging a “Town Hall Trail” which will be advertised to schools in the next couple of weeks. Members are reminded that currently, the Town Hall is open during the winter on a Friday and Saturday only.

Members were also asked to approve expenditure for an additional member of staff to assist during half term.

The majority of Members felt that this was a good idea and an investment in the Town Hall. It gets visitors into the building who may never have visited previously and will help in the marketing of the Town Hall as a venue.

Members were advised that the cost to the Town Council would be approximately £340.00 to cover staffing costs for the additional opening hours. There would be no charge to enter the ‘trail’.

RESOLVED: that the Town Hall is open during half term week (23rd- 28th October) and that expenditure of £340.00 for staffing be approved.

It was requested that it be noted that Councillors recognise that not everything has to pay for itself if the expenditure brings additional value to the town. It was stated that each case should be taken on its merit.

0337/1718 **CHRISTMAS LIGHTING FEATURES ON LAMP POSTS 2017**

Members were reminded that at the last Town Council meeting, Members accepted a quotation for a one year lease of lamp post features from Millennium Quest. Further information was provided to Members about the lease options and costs; however Millennium Quest had since come back to the Town Council and advised that a one year lease was not possible.

Members were informed that the Christmas Committee had met prior to the Town Council meeting and had discussed this matter at length. They had made a proposal to move away from the lamp post features and instead, light up Lavington Gardens using the money which would have been spent on the lamp post features. This amounted to £1,400.

Concern was raised that further information was needed about the proposals from the Christmas Committee. Members were advised that the committee minutes would be going to the next Town Council meeting for ratification.

Members were advised that the Christmas Committee had raised £1650 from local businesses wanting to sponsor a lighting scheme in town. It was clarified that this was only in pledges at the current time until Council approval is given.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council abandon the proposals to purchase lamp post features and instead, light up Lavington Gardens for a maximum of £1,400.00

0338/1718 **OUTDOORS AND PROPERTIES MANAGER'S REPORT**

- **THEFT AND DAMAGE TO THE ROTARY CLUB WISHING WELL**
Anti-social behaviour within the Castle Grounds is on the increase. Clive reports to me that there is a definite increase in and evidence of individuals gaining entry to the park after locking up. This ranges from deliberate littering to the more recent grinding off of the lock and metal grid to steal money from the wishing well and the latest wilful damage to the hanging baskets around the bandstand.
- **CASTLE GROUNDS**
Lightwire Electrical looking in to options for a security light suitable for erecting on the Bandstand to cover the bottom gate and the area around the Wishing Well.
- **RIVERSIDE CLEARING**
The riverside clearance continues with coppicing the Willows.
- **HEART OF ENGLAND IN BLOOM**
The HEIB presentations were split this year with the main awards being presented at Warwick Castle where the Town Council was again awarded Gold in the Town category. We also won a special Horticultural Excellence Award for the castle grounds. The second ceremony specifically for cemeteries, parks public houses and hotels was held at Coventry on the 21st of September where the town was awarded a Gold for the Castle grounds in the Pocket Park category, a Gold for the Cemetery, a Gold for the Old Castle Pub and a Silver for the Parlors Hall Hotel.

Members asked that their thanks be passed to the staff and volunteers who helped to achieve the Gold Awards for the town.

RESOLVED: that letters of thanks be sent to the establishments who won awards.

Members noted the report.

0339/1718 **HEART OF ENGLAND IN BLOOM**

Members noted the report.

0340/1718 **HEIB BRIDGNORTH DISCRETIONAL AWARD**

Members noted the report.

0341/1718 **POPPIES IN THE CASTLE GROUNDS**

Certain Members raised their concerns regarding the amount of multi-coloured poppies and it was felt that the purpose of the Poppies should be remembered.

RESOLVED: that approval be given for poppies to be hung on the railings in the Castle Grounds as in previous years, with feedback from Members being given regarding the colours used.

0342/1718 **EXTENSION OF HEALTHMATIC ROLLING CONTRACT BY A FURTHER 9 MONTHS TO JULY 2018**

Members were reminded that the current contract with Healthmatic for the maintenance of the public toilets had recently been extended for a further three months whilst alternative quotes were sourced for the long term contract.

Concern had been raised by certain Members regarding the current contract provider and it was suggested that the Town Council goes back out to tender and that it is advertised to local people. Members were advised that this had already been carried out and only one other company had shown an interest. Investigations into costs of maintaining the toilets ourselves had also been carried out and had come back extremely high.

A proposal to extend the contract for a further three months was made, taking the contract to January 2019, to seek further quotes and to advertise to local people.

A further proposal was made to extend the contract to the end of March 2018 as there was currently a lot of work taking place at the Town Council.

The initial proposal was withdrawn and it was

RESOLVED: that the contract with Healthmatic be extended to 31st March 2018 and that in the meantime, further quotations be sought. This would also be advertised to local people.

0343/1718 **ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM**

Tasley Chicken Farm

This item had been raised at the meeting following contact from a member of the public seeking support from the Town Council as there was to be a Judicial Review in two weeks.

Councillor D Cooper advised Members that he was a member of the Action Group and that the group were crowdfunding for legal fees.

It was stated that financial support was not an option as a previous request for financial support for a similar matter had been turned down.

Members were reminded that a resolution had previously been passed on this subject at the Extraordinary Town Council on 23rd August and therefore, if the matter is to be re-discussed, a petition containing the signatures of eight Councillors is required.

Members queried this and it was agreed that if there is a resolution about this matter, eight Members will need to sign the petition and this item would be brought back to the next Town Council meeting. If there was no resolution, the matter could be discussed as a formal agenda item.

0344/1718 **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS 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.

0345/1718 **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

- i) The confidential minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 19th September 2017 at 7.15pm were submitted as circulated.

The following amendment was proposed by the Chairman, Councillor Marshall, seconded by Councillor Ms S Barlow and agreed by councillors:

- i) Under minute number 0294/1718 replace the title 'Locum Town Clerk' with 'Clerk'

RESOLVED: that subject to inclusion of the above amendment the confidential minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 19th September 2017 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

0346/1718 **MATTERS ARISING FROM CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

- i) Updates from the Confidential Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 19th September 2017 that are not included elsewhere on the agenda.

This item was in confidential session as it related to potential land transactions and negotiations with third parties.

RESOLVED: that Standing Order 1r be suspended to allow the meeting to continue until the conclusion of business.

0347/1718 **CONFIDENTIAL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Members were asked to approve confidential minutes and confirm the recommendations contained therein.

- i) The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 18th September 2017.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Property and Grounds Committee meeting held on Monday 18th September 2017 be received and adopted.

0348/1718 **MATTERS ARISING FROM CONFIDENTIAL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising from confidential committee minutes.

0349/1718 **UPDATE ON APPOINTMENT OF A LOCUM TOWN CLERK**

Members discussed items relating to, terms of employment, resignations and pay of employees.

This item was in confidential session as it related to individual Town Council employees and their terms of employment/service.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm.