

BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held in the Mayor's Parlour,
College House on Tuesday 13th June 2017 at 7.15pm**

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

In Attendance: Town Clerk, Ms A Wilson
Martin Sutton Shropshire Council
5 members of public
Minutes Secretary, Mrs A Kendrick
Minutes Secretary and transcribed by Mrs P M Russell

Absent: Councillor Mrs C Walden

Prior to the meeting the evening commenced with a presentation by the Mayor to Carnival Royalty.

Prior to the meeting, Martin Sutton Shropshire Council advised and answered Questions from Members regarding the trees on Wellmeadow.

Martin had previously met with the Property and Grounds Manager on Friday 9th June 2017 to review the work being done on Wellmeadow. Martin gave a detailed and informative talk on the reasons for standard woodland management which should be done every eight to ten years. Martin also talked about the Health and Safety aspect and said that Shropshire Council do a walk and look inspection and advise on the level of risk; it is usually two years for Schools and Play grounds and five years for Roads.

Martin answered a number of questions regarding the height, density and overhanging branches on the trees at Wellmeadow from members of the public and councillors. The Town Clerk reported that a lot of work had been done and it was ongoing and that the Property and Grounds Manager would meet with Martin Sutton and the Conservation Officer, who would then arrange a meeting with all Residents in the area.

0059/1718 **FIRE SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT**

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

0060/1718 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

RESOLVED: to receive the following apologies for absence.

Councillor Mrs S Stevens	Unwell
Councillor Mrs S Barlow	Alternative Commitment

0061/1718 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

0062/1718 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Questions from Mr R Richards

- i) Who is legally responsible for any defamatory material on the Town Council's agenda or website?

Councillor R Whittle OBE responded and stated that the Town Clerk manages the website and as her employer we manage her.

- ii) Who is legally liable for any defamatory material published by Councillors on social media?

Councillor R Whittle OBE responded and stated that the Town Council is responsible for anything that is published by the Town Council.

- iii) Supplementary Question

From what source does the Town Council receive its legal advice about the agenda from town council meetings before release to the public?

Councillor R Whittle OBE advised that Legal advice, depending on what the topic is, would be from SSLC, NALC, A Solicitor, or Shropshire Council who deal with HR, Employment and legal, health and safety as they are employed as our advisers.

0063/1718 **MINUTES**

- a) i) The minutes of the Annual Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Monday 15th May 2017 at 7.15pm were submitted as circulated.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Annual Meeting Bridgnorth Town Council held on Monday 15th May 2017 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

- ii) The minutes of the Adjourned Annual Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 16th May 2017 at 7.15pm were submitted as circulated.

Councillor R Whittle OBE felt that it was not appropriate to include the advisory note from the Town Clerk regarding changing the Committee structure and the Town Clerk had agreed that this would be removed from the master set of minutes.

Councillor D Cooper felt that page 10 of the minutes implied that he had brought proposals to change the committee structure in March 2015 and again in November 2016 however that was not the case. He had highlighted this for member's attention.

RESOLVED: that subject to the removal of the Town Clerk advisory note, the minutes of the Meeting of the Adjourned Annual Meeting Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 16th May 2017 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

- b) i) Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 21st March 2017.

Councillor Ron Whittle OBE made the following statement and proposal:

"I have become aware that several members of the public are very seriously considering taking legal action against the Council on the basis that they were illegally named in minutes relating to the Scrutiny Panel Report. Their view that it was illegal to name them is supported by the Information Commissioner.

I am very concerned at the prospect of such legal action and I have therefore had conversations with those that I am aware are considering action.

I am given to understand that this threat can be avoided by Council taking steps to amend the minute relating to this matter and therefore wish to make the following proposal:

"To rescind the decision of Council at the meeting on 16th May to accept the minutes of Council dated 21st March 2017, to remove from minute 0929/1617 the actual Scrutiny Report (in italics) bearing in mind that it was not part of the verbal discussion at the meeting. To then re-adopt the minutes in this modified form."

Members were advised that since the proposal had been made discussions had taken place between the Mayor and the Town Clerk regarding the best way to deal with this matter and advice had been sought from the Information Commissioner.

Councillor R Fox arrived at the meeting.

It was proposed that the names of all public be removed from the minutes and the scrutiny report, an apology be sent for their names appearing and also an apology that the panel did not seek approval to include their names in the Scrutiny Report or interview them. This proposal satisfied the Mayor and he felt that it was a matter of trying to find a compromise. It was hoped that this would be acceptable to those named persons. This proposal was seconded.

It was confirmed that the names would be removed from the minutes and the report.

Members were urged to move forwards to a vote.

A recorded vote was requested.

RESOLVED: that the names of all public be removed from the minutes and the scrutiny report, an apology be sent for their names appearing and also an apology that the panel did not seek approval to include their names in the Scrutiny Report or interview them.

For: Councillors Dr J. Buckley, G. Davies, R. Fox, A. Hinton, Mrs H. Howell, Ms K Hurst-Knight, E. Marshall, Mrs J Onions, Mrs C Whittle

Against: Councillor D. Cooper

Abstentions: Councillors Mrs C Baines, J Gittins, R Whittle

FURTHER RESOLVED: that the matter is now closed excluding a report on Shop Watch funds.

0064/1718 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

0065/1718 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

There were no Members Questions.

0066/1718 **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- i) The minutes of the Property and Grounds Committee meeting held on Thursday 7th March 2017 were submitted as circulated.

Members were reminded that as there were no further committee meetings the minutes had been brought to Council to be signed.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Property and Grounds Committee meeting held on Thursday 7th March 2017 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

ii) Members were asked to approve minutes and confirm the recommendations contained therein:

i) The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 31st May 2017 were submitted as circulated.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 31st May 2017 be received and adopted.

0067/1718 **MATTERS ARISING FROM COMMITTEE MINUTES**

There were no other matters arising from the committee minutes.

0068/1718 **NOTES FROM OTHER MEETINGS**

i) The notes of the Events Working Party/Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 23rd May 2017 were noted.

0069/1718 **SEALING OF DOCUMENTS**

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

Oak Grove 182i

0070/1718 **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

i) Planning Committee Meetings

At the Adjourned Annual Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council, Members **RESOLVED:** that in view of the new, longer, consultation period the Planning Committee will meet once each month immediately prior to the second Council meeting.

Members were asked to reconsider this resolution as although the Planning Application Consultation period had been extended, the Tree Consultation period remains at 14 days; therefore not giving Members time to consider these between meetings.

Members were also asked to confirm the date of the next Planning Meeting it was confirmed that the next meeting would be Monday 26th June 2017.

Councillor E. Marshall made the following statement

"I am aware that the second Town Council meeting in October is scheduled for a Monday, 16th October, and not the usual Tuesday. This Tuesday would be the normal third Tuesday in the month that scheduled council meetings have always been held for many, many years. The Mayor has indicated to the Clerk that he is happy for this change to occur. On previous occasions I have raised the matter of dates of scheduled meetings being changed, primarily to suit the interests of Committee chairman who have decided to have a holiday, attend a golf tournament, etc. It initially came to my attention when many years ago a council Member complained rather bitterly that they very carefully had arranged holidays to accommodate council meetings, only to find that Chairman had decided to change dates to suit them. On this occasion, we are not changing dates, because we have not yet agreed them. But I will raise another issue. I believe that any good organisation should operate like a well-oiled, smoothly running machine, and at no time should it be dependent on particular people being present. If the Town Clerk is unable to be present, then we should be prepared to have other members of staff able to run the meeting. It was done in the past, including by people who were not designated as Deputy Town Clerk, and the Council should be prepared to do the same in the future. It is always possible to adjust agendas, defer decisions, etc., as appropriate. I propose that the second October meeting is held on Tuesday, 17th October, and the Planning Meeting is moved back to the Monday, 16th October. I will be accused of wanting to change the dates to suit my convenience, but as a person with principles, I have a previous record of making these comments".

Councillor E Marshall **PROPOSED** that the second Town Council Meeting in October is held on Tuesday, 17th October, and the Planning Meeting is moved back to the Monday, 16th October.

There was no seconder and the motion was lost.

Councillor D Cooper raised his concerns regarding the Planning Committee meetings taking place during the same week as Town Council as this was imposing too much on the members of the Planning Committee.

Councillor R Whittle OBE felt that this would create problems as this would result in there being meetings each week and this would restrict members making personal commitments.

It was **PROPOSED** that Planning Committee meetings be held on alternate weeks to Town Council Meetings.

There was no seconder and the motion was lost.

ii) Schedule of Meetings

RESOLVED: that the Schedule of Meetings is accepted as circulated.

BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2017-2018

Committee	Date	Time	Location
MAY 2017			
Planning Committee	Monday 22 May 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
JUNE 2017			
Planning Committee	Monday 12 June 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 13 June 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 20 June 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Planning Committee	Monday 26 June 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
JULY 2017			
Planning Committee	Monday 10 July 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 11 July 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 18 July 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Planning Committee	Monday 24 July 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
AUGUST RECESS – except for the Planning Committee			
Planning Committee	Monday 7 August 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Planning Committee	Monday 21 August 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
SEPTEMBER 2017			
Planning Committee	Monday 4 September 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 5 September 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Planning Committee	Monday 18 September 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 19 September 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
OCTOBER 2017			
Planning Committee	Monday 2 October 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 3 October 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Monday 16 October 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Planning Committee	Tuesday 17 October 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
NOVEMBER 2017			
Planning Committee	Monday 6 November 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 7 November 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Planning Committee	Monday 20 November 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 21 November 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
DECEMBER 2017			
Planning Committee	Monday 4 December 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Monday 11 December 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Planning Committee	Monday 18 December 2017	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour

JANUARY 2018			
Planning Committee	Monday 8 January 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 9 January 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 16 January 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Planning Committee	Monday 22 January 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
FEBRUARY 2018			
Planning Committee	Monday 5 February 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 6 February 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Planning Committee	Monday 19 February 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 20 February 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
MARCH 2018			
Planning Committee	Monday 5 March 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 6 March 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Planning Committee	Monday 19 March 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 20 March 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
APRIL 2018			
Town Council	Tuesday 3 April 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Planning Committee	Wednesday 4 April 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Planning Committee	Monday 16 April 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Town Council	Tuesday 17 April 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
Annual Town Meeting	Wednesday 25 April 2018	7.00pm	Low Town Community Hall
Planning Committee	Monday 30 April 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour
MAY 2018			
Annual Meeting	Thursday 10 May 2018	7.00pm	Town Hall
Adjourned Annual Meeting	Tuesday 15 May 2018	7.15pm	Mayor's Parlour

iii) Timing of Meetings

Councillor J Gittins had requested that Members consider a motion that all meetings finish at 9.45pm, with no suspension of Standing Orders, no matter what stage Members are at in the meeting.

This was to safeguard staff and fellow Councillors who have families and work commitments and are worried that meetings could go late into the night to fit everything in.

Councillor R Whittle OBE advised that he had no intention of holding extraordinarily long meetings and reminded Members that they had frequently suspended Standing Orders to allow a meeting to continue under the old system. He intended to finish the meetings as expeditiously as possible. Concern was also raised that if a meeting does not finish this motion would result in meetings being adjourned.

The motion was put to a vote.

A recorded vote had been requested.

For: Councillors Mrs C Baines MBE, Dr J Buckley, D Cooper, R Fox, J Gittins and Mrs H Howell.

Against: Councillors A Hinton, Mrs K Hurst-Knight, E Marshall, Mrs J Onions, Mrs C Whittle and R Whittle OBE

Abstain: Councillor G Davies.

The Mayor had the casting vote and voted against, and therefore the motion was lost.

0071/1718 **COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

Following the Town Council meeting held in March 2017, Members considered the following proposal:

That Bridgnorth Town Council submits a request to Shropshire Council to conduct a Community Governance Review to examine merging the parishes of Bridgnorth and Tasley and to give consideration to other changes to the boundaries of Bridgnorth that would enhance local government in the immediate area.

Councillor D Cooper gave some background information relating to the last time a Community Governance Review had been requested. He felt that as the Local Plan was being reviewed it would be more sensible to consider parish boundaries in light of its findings. It was suggested that this item be deferred until next year or the proposal is modified to state that the request for the Community Governance Review to take into account the result of the Local Plan Review.

A recorded vote had been requested.

For: Councillors Mrs C Baines, Dr J Buckley, G Davies, A Hinton, Mrs K Hurst –Knight, E Marshall, Mrs J Onions, Mrs C Whittle, R Whittle

Against: Councillor D Cooper

Abstain: Councillors R Fox, J Gittins, Mrs H Howell

0072/1718 **APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES**

i) Members appointed Members to the following Working Parties/Task & Finish Groups as agreed at the Adjourned Annual Meeting.

- Severn Park Management Working Party

Councillors R Fox, J Gittins, A Hinton, Mrs K Hurst-Knight, E Marshall

- Castle Hall & Town Hall Task & Finish Group
Councillors Ms S Barlow, Mrs C Baines MBE, R Fox, Mrs H Howell and Mrs C Whittle
- Community Governance Review (Boundaries Working Party)
Councillors A Hinton, Mrs K Hurst-Knight, E Marshall, Mrs J Onions, R Whittle OBE.
- Local Plan Review Working Party
Councillors D Cooper and Mrs C Whittle and volunteers R Gill and C Dyson

iii) Members nominated the following additional member to the Planning Committee.

Councillor R Fox

Members agreed that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr B Jones for his help as a Co-opted member of the Planning Committee over the last few years.

0073/1718 **PLANNING APPEAL 17/02543/CALLIN**

Members were informed that planning application 16/02739/FUL relating to the Erection of 5 No retail units, car parking, reconfigured access, landscaping and associated works at Land Adjacent to Sainsbury's Supermarket, Old Smithfield, Bridgnorth, Shropshire had been referred back to the Town Council following the submission of an appeal to the Inspector and Secretary of State against the decision of Shropshire Council to resolve to approve planning permission for the above proposal. The appeal will be determined on the basis of a Called-In Inquiry.

Members were advised that if they wish to make comments, or modify/withdraw their previous representation, they may do so. We are advised that all representations must be received by the Planning Inspectorate by 19 June 2017.

Members were advised that Shropshire Council may seek to recover costs from another appeal and objections have been considered twice and it has gone to the Planning Inspector.

Members were concerned as they believe the people of Bridgnorth felt upset and powerless and that we need to make a stand to gain respect from the people of Bridgnorth.

Councillor D Cooper replied that Shropshire Council South Planning Committee agreed with Bridgnorth Town Council and did not feel they had legal basis for refusal. Councillor Dr J Buckley asked what contact we have with Shropshire Council Planning and if we get to know about the decisions before they are agreed as we should be kept informed before the final decision is made. It was also asked whether Bridgnorth Town Council's Chair of the Planning Committee could have a meeting with Shropshire Council's Chair of the Planning Committee.

After a lengthy discussion it was **RESOLVED**: that we reaffirm our original objection while at the same time keeping the appeal under close review.

0074/1718 **WESTGATE ENGAGEMENT**

Members were advised that the Westgate Engagement, proposed from will from Thursday 22nd June with an open public event from 4 pm until 7 pm had been postponed for a further month. Officers from Shropshire Council, Housing Plus Group, Purcell Developments and West Mercia Police would be present to answer questions and take comments.

Members felt that this did not do the site justice and that we should write to Shropshire Council to express our thoughts on the above. It was also suggested that a web site should be set up as was done for the Smithfield development.

0075/1718 **OUTDOORS AND PROPERTIES MANAGER'S REPORT**

Legionella disease risk assessments

All Town Council Properties have undergone a thorough risk assessment against the threat of Legionella contamination. Areas of high and medium risk highlighted in the report are being addressed and the need for additional staff training has already been actioned on the 8th May when me and 3 members of the DLF attended training given by Shropshire Council's Health and Safety Team. Additional on-site practical monitoring training will be conducted by IWS Water Hygiene Midlands at a cost of £280.

Property fire risk assessments

Annual Fire Risk Assessments were conducted on all the Town Council owned properties on the 8th June 2017. We are still awaiting reports back.

Town hall signage

The new Market Traders signage has now been erected and the new Information signs and notice board will be erected in the next few weeks.

Castle grounds

The Bridgnorth Rotary Club Wishing Well has been built almost entirely from sponsorship and a little help from the Town Council was unveiled last Friday evening. It is hoped that it will raise thousands of pounds over the coming years.

The Bridgnorth Cub Pack volunteered to do some gardening on the 26th June between 6.30 pm and 8pm. Sabrina repairs are well underway, the replacement resin mouldings have all been made and undergoing an ageing process.

Riverside clearing

Following the theft of all of our hand-held maintenance equipment some areas have fallen behind on the maintenance schedule and the riverside is just one them. Every effort is being made to catch up.

Councilor E Marshall commented that a local resident had shown him some photos of the riverside as he was concerned with the derelict property by the Rugby Club and also the vegetation growing in this area. The Property and Grounds Manager responded saying that this is Shropshire Council's responsibility.

He also said that due to all the tools being stolen it would take a few weeks to get back onto the schedule of work.

Councilor Helen Howell asked what had been the delay with the Insurance claim. The Town Clerk explained that the insurance company had lost the information and required copies of what had been sent. Also hiring of equipment was not covered in the insurance.

Heart of England in bloom

The next Heart of England judging will be on the 18th July 2017 starting at 1pm.

Councilor R Fox asked for a vote of thanks for Barry and his team.

The Property and Grounds Manager informed the Members that the areas being worked on were Wenlock Rise by the Cattle Market, By Pass, Wolverhampton Road, Stanmore estate up to the Kidderminster roundabout. The Town Clerk said that all this work will be reallocated when Shropshire Council start their new contractors in April 2018.

Councillor David Cooper had been told by a resident how lovely the Bandon Island looked and thanked the staff.

0076/1718 **TRAFFIC CALMING**

- i) Listley Street, Bridgnorth
- ii) 20's plenty for us

Members were asked to consider speed reduction measures in Listley Street after communication had been received from A Dilly at Shropshire Council.

Members had been given information on a scheme that is being looked into by Ludlow called 20's Plenty for Us. This involves having a maximum speed limit of 20 miles per hour in certain areas.

After a lengthy discussion Members agreed to set up a Task and Finish group to look into 20's Plenty and discuss with the Highways department of Shropshire Council.

Councillors Mrs C Baines MBE, R Fox, J Gittins, Mrs H Howell and R Whittle OBE all volunteered to take part in the Task and Finish Group.

0077/1718 **SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL ENVIRONMENTAL MAINTENANCE GRANT 2017**

Members were informed that we had applied to Shropshire Council for an environmental maintenance grant for 2017. Funding had been applied for in the following areas: Stanmore Straight between the Wolverhampton Road and Stourbridge Road and areas adjacent and surrounding four of the five Town roundabouts.

Shropshire Council had confirmed that Bridgnorth Town Council has been awarded £1,672.22 which is subject to acceptance and will be paid in July 2017.

Members noted the above.

0078/1718 **CPRE SHROPSHIRE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Members noted that the CPRE AGM is taking place on Tuesday 27th June 2017.

0079/1718 **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.

0080/1718 **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

- i) The Confidential minutes of the Adjourned Annual Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 16th May 2017 at 7.15pm were submitted as circulated.

RESOLVED: that the Confidential minutes of the Adjourned Annual Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 16th May 2017 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

0081/1718 **MATTERS ARISING**

- i) Updates from the Adjourned Annual Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 16th May 2017 that are not included elsewhere on the agenda.

There were no matters arising

0082/1718 **CONFIDENTIAL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

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

- i) The minutes of the Property and Grounds Committee meeting held on Tuesday 7th March 2017.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Property and Grounds Committee meeting held on Tuesday 7th March 2017 be received and adopted.

0083/1718 **MATTERS ARISING FROM CONFIDENTIAL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm