

BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held in the Mayor's Parlour,
College House on Tuesday 20th 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, A Hinton, Mrs H Howell,
Mrs K Hurst-Knight, E Marshall, Mrs J Onions,
Mrs S Stevens, Mrs C Walden and Mrs C Whittle

In Attendance: Town Clerk, Mrs A Wilson
Shropshire councillor, E Lynch
One member of the press
Nine members of the public
Mr M Freathy, Chairman of Governors, Bridgnorth
Endowed School
Minutes' Secretary and transcribed by Mrs R Williams

Prior to the meeting, Mark Freathy, Chairman of Governors from Bridgnorth Endowed School addressed the meeting with regard to the current financial position surrounding the work that is being carried out on the leisure centre and swimming pool and the shortfall of £70,000 to complete the work. He explained how the Endowed have a commercial partner, Halo, who have been managing the leisure centre for the past year and currently have contractors on site extending the facilities. They are due to finish the current phase in around 4 to 6 weeks but the wet side changing rooms will not be completed due to the shortfall in funds. Mark has spoken to Shropshire Council who informed him that they are mindful to support a partnership based approach. Shropshire Councillor E Lynch informed the meeting that he had received an email from Chris Edwards, Area Commissioner for Shropshire Council, stating that they would match fund the input from Bridgnorth Town Council and this will be confirmed at the meeting next week with the Endowed school. The Town Clerk stated that she had spoken to Chris Edwards and a figure of £30,000 had been mentioned.

Mrs Nancy Brown addressed the meeting on behalf of the residents and implored Members to consider making a financial contribution. She stated that the leisure centre and swimming pool were a great asset to the town and there was a very strong feeling amongst residents; a statement which was upheld by Members who had received many emails on this subject.

Mark was asked if he had approached any other council if the immediate area asking for financial assistance. Mark confirmed he had not approach any council even Bridgnorth and it was the Bridgnorth council that had invited him along to this meeting to give the presentation.

The Chairman thanked Mark and Nancy for their input and informed them that this issue was being discussed further on in the agenda should they wish to stay and be part of the discussion.

0084/1718 **FIRE SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT**

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

0085/1718 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

RESOLVED: to receive the apology as listed below:

Councillor Ms S Barlow (alternative appointment)

0086/1718 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Personal Interest

Councillor D Cooper	Item 16	Financial Contribution to Bridgnorth Leisure Centre Improvement Works
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0087/1718 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Question from Mr R Richards

When did the Council pass its resolution to release the Report of the Scrutiny Committee into the public domain, and can we see a copy of this resolution?

Councillor R Whittle OBE responded and stated that there was no resolution, it was a separate process pertaining to scrutiny reports.

A point of Order was raised by Councillor R Fox with regard to an item in the confidential section of the agenda. It was felt that the particular item should be in open session. The Town Clerk advised the Member that it was necessary and the Member accepted the Town Clerk's recommendation.

RESOLVED: that agenda item number 16, Financial Contribution to Bridgnorth Leisure Centre Improvement Works, be moved to this point in the agenda to enable discussions to take place whilst Mark Freathy and Nancy Brown were still in attendance.

0088/1718 **FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO BRIDGNORTH LEISURE CENTRE IMPROVEMENT WORKS**

The following proposal had been made to Council by Councillor D Cooper:

'That the Town Council agrees in principle to make a grant to Bridgnorth Endowed School towards the cost of the Leisure Centre improvements as part

of an overall funding package to include contributions from Shropshire Council and community resources, funded from the Town Council's historical accumulated capital receipts of £214,991.'

Councillors were strongly in favour of providing financial support but were also mindful of the financial implications on the council's reserves. After discussion the proposal was amended to making a firm grant of £30,000 being match funded by Shropshire Council. Questions were asked with regard to the shortfall of £10,000. Members were informed by Mark Freathy that the school could bridge the gap until funds from the various fund raising activities came in.

A recorded vote had been requested:

RESOLVED: that Bridgnorth Town Council provide a grant of £30,000 providing that it is match funded by Shropshire Council.

For: Councillors R Whittle, Mrs C Baines, Dr J Buckley, D Cooper, G Davies, R Fox, J Gittins, A Hinton, Mrs H Howell, Mrs K Hurst-Knight, E Marshall, Mrs J Onions, Mrs S Stevens, Mrs C Walden and Mrs C Whittle

Councillor R Whittle informed the meeting that he would be donating half of his Town Mayor's allowance to the fund and this was agreed by those present.

0089/1718 **REPORT FROM SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL**

Councillor W Parr provided the following report from Shropshire Council.

'I would like to take this opportunity to first and foremost congratulate Mr and Mrs Ron Whittle on becoming respectively Mayor and Mayoress of Bridgnorth Town and also to congratulate all members of the town council whom now represent the interests of the residents within the various wards of Bridgnorth.

Unfortunately, I'm unable to come along this evening due to a prior engagement so thank you for listening to my short report.

Shropshire Council committees and member representation are yet to be ratified though the process should be completed this Thursday at full council. Since the elections it has been somewhat hectic and have attended numerous induction programs as have my colleagues bringing us members up to speed on everything from new planning regulations, licensing training, corporate parenting, children's safeguarding, community enablement and council finance to name but a few.

Shropshire residents asked for views on council's highways and transport services - from the condition of roads and footpaths to the quality of cycling facilities - in the 2017 national highways and transport public satisfaction survey. Their answers will be compared with the views of residents in other council areas. The questionnaire will be sent to a minimum random sample of

at least 3,300 Shropshire residents from Monday 19th June 2017 followed by a reminder, with local and national results to be published in mid-October 2017.

This leads me onto the Bridgnorth A458 bypass which members are probably aware that improvement work is now due to start on Tuesday 11th July 2017 – seven days later than original planned to avoid a clash of works on the A49. Access to local businesses and properties will be maintained while work is carried out for the benefit of the town and those who visit.

Over the summer period the town will hopefully make hay whilst the sun shines with the town looking beautiful as usual and to extend my best wishes to the Mayor, Mayoress and all members of the town council and its busy staff.

Thank you for listening to my report.'

0090/1718 **CORRESPONDENCE FROM SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL**

Members noted that there was no correspondence from Shropshire Council.

0091/1718 **TOWN MAYOR'S AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S DIARY**

Members noted that the Town Mayor had attended the following since the last Town Council meeting:

- 12th May – Bewdley Mayor Making
- 17th May – Kidderminster Mayor Making
- 18th May – Opening of the Bridgnorth Bowling Club
- 20th May – Meeting with the High Sheriff and Concert
- 24th May – Ludlow Mayor Making
- 25th May – St. Leonard's Trustees Meeting
- 25th May – Telford & Wrekin Mayor Making
- 29th May – Bridgnorth Walk
- 2nd June – Commissioning Rotary Wishing Well
- 3rd June – Beating the Retreat, Baschurch
- 5th June – Carnival Crowning Ceremony
- 9th June – Bridgnorth's Got Soul
- 10th June – Proms in the Pews
- 11th June – Newport Civic Sunday
- 17th June – Scouts Camp Fire

0092/1718 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

There were no Members Questions.

0093/1718 **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- i) The minutes of the Administration and General Purposes Committee meeting held on Thursday 2nd March 2017 were submitted as circulated.

The Chairman informed Members that these minutes had been approved at the Town Council meeting held on 21st March 2017.

- ii) The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 12th June 2017 were submitted as circulated.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 12th June 2017 be received and adopted.

0094/1718 **MATTERS ARISING FROM COMMITTEE MINUTES**

There were no matter arising.

0095/1718 **FINANCE**

- i) Accounts for Payment

Members were asked to authorise the signing of invoices for payment and those invoices paid in between meetings.

RESOLVED: that the accounts amounting to £78,016.46 be approved for payment.

- ii) Income and Expenditure Report

- i) Income and Expenditure Report

RESOLVED: that Members noted the income and expenditure report.

Account Code Report

- i) Budget Report

RESOLVED: that Members noted the account code budget report.

- ii) Earmarked Reserves Report

The Chairman stated that he felt there was still a large amount held in EMR and he felt that this is not in line with the resolution of Council of 21st March 2017.

The Town Clerk gave Members an explanation of the earmarked reserve amounts that were listed and read out the following from the Administration & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 2nd March 2017:

'RECOMMENDED: that all items be moved from EMR to GR, apart from any monies that have been allocated for a specific purpose or where monies are to be kept to satisfy statutory requirements'

The relevant section of the Internal Audit report for 2016/2017 was also read out:

'We have noted that general reserves have increased to £242,000, which is within the recommended CIPFA guidelines of between 3 and 6 months' revenue expenditure. Specific earmarked reserves of £128,000 are in place with useable capital receipts of £215,000. There has, however, been a significant reduction in ear marked reserves in 2016-17 which could leave insufficient funds allocated for previously approved expenditure.'

The Chairman commented that this was a technical argument and wished to move on.

RESOLVED: that Members noted the account code earmarked reserves report.

- iii) Report from Mrs R Williams

RESOLVED: that Members noted the report from the Mrs R Williams.

- iv) Level of Reserves

RESOLVED: that Members noted the level of the Town Council's reserves of £1,056,935.

- v) Town Council Bank Reconciliation Statement

RESOLVED: that Members noted the Town Council Bank Reconciliation Statement.

0096/1718 **END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS 2016/2017**

- i) Process for Audit of Accounts

Members noted the previously circulated paperwork relating to the process for the audit of accounts.

- ii) End of Year Accounts

RESOLVED: that Members approve the End of Year Accounts 2016/2017.

iii) Annual Return

Members were asked to consider and approve the following:

a) Annual Governance Statement 2016/2017

RESOLVED: that the Annual Governance Statement 2016/2017 be approved.

b) Annual Return Accounting Statements 2015/2016

RESOLVED: that the Annual Return Accounting Statements 2016/2017 be approved.

0097/1718 **LOW TOWN COMMUNITY HALL**

i) Appointment to Low Town Community Hall Trustees Group

Members were asked to appoint the Trustees for Low Town Community Hall consisting of the four East Ward Councillors plus a further two Councillors. Councillor A Hinton, who is an East Ward Councillor, stated that he would be unable to attend any day time meetings due to work commitments.

RESOLVED: that the following Councillors be appointed to the Low Town Community Hall Trustees Group: Councillors Dr J Buckley, Mrs K Hurst-Knight, R Whittle, E Marshall, Mrs J Onions and Mrs S Stevens

ii) Accounts for Payment

RESOLVED: that the accounts amounting to £3,659.62 be approved for payment.

ii) Verbal Update regarding Low Town Community Hall

The Town Clerk stated that there was currently nothing to report.

0098/1718 **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT**

Members were asked to receive and accept the final Internal Audit Report for 2016/2017.

RESOLVED: to receive and accept the final Internal Audit Report for 2016/2017.

0099/1718 **MAYOR'S ALLOWANCE**

- i) Members were asked to consider if the Town Mayor for 2017/2018 may use his Mayoral Allowance to make grants to local organisations, groups or charities which benefit the residents of Bridgnorth (noting that the full £2000 would be available and not subject to deductions).

RESOLVED: that the Mayoral allowance may be used to make grants to local organisations, groups or charities (noting that the full £2000 would be available and not subject to deductions). These would be £1000 for Rupert's Revenge and £1000 to the Leisure Centre funding gap appeal.

0100/1718 **CASTLE HALL – NURSERY**

Members noted that Mrs C Wassell will be closing the nursery in the Castle Hall as of 20th July 2017.

0101/1718 **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS RECEIVED**

Members noted that the following FOI requests had been received:

- i) Expenditure on legal fees that have been spent by Bridgnorth Town Council in relation to complaints by members of the public and/or Councillors against other Councillors or Council Officers in the last ten years.

A reply has been sent and the member of public is satisfied with the information received.

- ii) The employment history of the Town Clerk and a s 517 Refusal of a Request for personal information, both on the 8th February 2017.

An Investigative Officer was appointed on the 22nd May 2017 by the ICO and Shropshire Council is assisting with the reply.

RESOLVED: that the names of the members of the public recorded on the original agenda for this item not be recorded in the minutes. This will apply to this and all subsequent agendas and minutes; that no names of members of the public will be recorded.

0102/1718 **TENDER FOR TOWN COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHY**

Members were asked to give retrospective approval to the quotations below with regard to Town Council photography for the coming year. The tenders were opened on Tuesday 11th April 2017 by Councillors R Whittle and G Davies in the presence of the Town Clerk:

- Angela Brickley Photography £1,620 no VAT
- Ian Wilkins £640 no VAT
- Scott Dale Media £2,700 no VAT

RESOLVED: to accept the quotation from Ian Wilkins in the sum of £640 no VAT

0103/1718 **QUINQUENNIAL INSPECTIONS OF TOWN COUNCIL PROPERTIES**

Members were asked to consider the report from the Outdoors & Properties Manager with regard to the quotations received from Structural Engineers to assess and monitor work as highlighted in the Quinquennial Report.

Company	College House	Northgate& Museum	Town Hall
Mark Dady Associates	£950.00	£1,360.00	£450.00
Thomas Consulting	£8,600.00	£1,600.00	£1,250.00

RESLOVED: that the quotation from Mark Dady Associates, in the sums stated above, be accepted.

0104/1718 **BUSINESS CARDS FOR COUNCILLORS**

Members were asked to consider purchasing business cards for Councillors

The Town Clerk stated that she has to give permission for the Town Crest to be used. It was decided that Councillors could produce their own business cards subject to approval by the Town Clerk.

0105/1718 **NABMA CONFERENCE 2017**

Members were asked if they would like to attend the 2017 NABMA Conference to be held 17th – 19th September at the Crowne Plaza, Stratford Upon Avon.

No Councillors wished to attend the NABMA Conference.

0106/1718 **KEEP OUR SHROPSHIRE HISTORY ALIVE (KOSHA) FUNDRAISING**

Members were asked to consider correspondence regarding a request for a donation towards the Shropshire Regimental Museum from KOSHA.

A progress update was asked for with regard to granting the Freedom of the Town to the Rifles. The Chairman stated that it would be put on the next Town Council agenda.

It was proposed that a donation of £250 be awarded. This was withdrawn when it was pointed out that there is currently £200 remaining in the Grants budget for the financial year.

It was therefore,

RESOLVED: that a £200 grant be awarded to KOSHA for the Shropshire Regimental Museum.

0107/1718 **UK PARLIAMENT WEEK**

Members were asked if they would like to take part in UK Parliament Week between 13-19th November by holding an event.

Members did not wish to take part and hold an event for UK Parliament Week.

0108/1718 **CONFERENCE/MEETING UPDATES**

From Councillors

- i) Bridgnorth Area Youth Partnership – Councillor Mrs H Howell attended their meeting held on Wednesday 17th May at Cantern Brook.

They have decided that they should hold an AGM on Wednesday 20th September at 7pm in the Annexe.

Members noted the report.

- ii) Sustainable Bridgnorth – Wednesday 7th June 2017

Councillor Mrs H Howell attended an illustrated talk given by Richard Priestley - 'Trump, the Carbon Bubble and possibilities of a better future', and was followed by a Q&A session and discussion. It was well attended (about 40 people) and very lively.

Members noted the report.

From Outside Bodies

- i) Minutes of the Low Town Action Group meeting held on 30th March 2017.

Members noted the minutes.

0109/1718 **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.

0110/1718 **CONFIDENTIAL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

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

- i) The confidential minutes of the Administration and General Purposes meeting held on Thursday 2nd March 2017 were submitted as circulated.

The Chairman informed Members that these minutes had been approved at the Town Council meeting held on 21st March 2017.

0111/1718 **MATTERS ARISING FROM CONFIDENTIAL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising from confidential committee minutes.

0112/1718 **BANDON LANE**

Members considered a land valuation at Bandon Lane and agreed in principle to sell a parcel of land subject to certain conditions.

0113/1718 **CROWN MEADOW**

RESOLVED: that AFC Bridgnorth may not have the use of the large pitch on the Crown Meadow to act as AFC Bridgnorth's "2nd Pitch".

0114/1718 **TOWN COUNCIL DEBTORS**

Members noted the list of debtors and the action that had been taken on certain accounts.

0115/1718 **COUNCIL MATTERS**

Consideration of this matter was deferred until a future meeting.

0116/1718 **PERSONNEL MATTERS**

- i) Members noted the retirement of a member of the Direct Labour Force after 16 years' service.
- ii) Members noted that it has been agreed to pay a sum of £6,000 per annum to cover any emergency call out and additional work during out of normal working hours. This money will be shared out between two staff members who have agreed to take on the role.
- iii) **RESOLVED:** that Members confirm a permanent contact for the Receptionist

0117/1718 **DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR**

The Deputy Town Mayor reported on an internal matter and the Council agreed the way forward.

The meeting closed at 10.10pm