

**BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council  
held in the Mayor's Parlour, College House on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2018 at 7.15pm**

Present: The Town Mayor, Councillor R Whittle OBE in the Chair,  
Councillors Mrs C Baines MBE, Ms S Barlow, Dr J Buckley  
(in part), Mr D Cooper, Mr G Davies, Dr C Dyson,  
Mr R Fox, Mrs H Howell, Mrs K Hurst-Knight,  
Mr E Marshall, Mrs J Onions, Mrs S Stevens  
and Mrs C Walden

In Attendance: Town Clerk, Mr L Jakeman  
RFO, Mrs R Williams

0406/1819 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members **RESOLVED** to note the apologies as listed below:

**Councillor A Hinton - Alternative Appointment  
Councillor C Whittle - Unwell**

0407/1819 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Nil

0408/1819 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Nil

0409/1819 **MINUTES**

Members noted receipt of the minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

**RESOLVED:**

**The minutes of the Bridgnorth Town Council Meeting held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2018 are signed by the Chairman as a true record.**

Members noted the following written question from Cllr Marshall.

If there are any items on the agenda of a Town Council or Committee Meeting that is considered to be confidential, then before those items are discussed a resolution is passed by Council or Committee to exclude the public and press. Any documents relating to those items are also withheld from the public and press.

For many months, whenever a Council meeting reaches the agenda item 'Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, one or two Members consistently and persistently vote against the motion to exclude the public and press. Of course any Member always has the right to cast their vote as they please, including voting against any motion to exclude the public and press from part of a meeting.

However, if a majority of councillors decided to vote against excluding the public and press at a meeting, what would be the situation in the following circumstances?

1. The meeting at which the vote was taken. Presumably as a democratic vote has taken place, the meeting would continue, but now in open session. Would any informational paperwork previously issued to Members on a confidential basis automatically become available to the public and press?
2. Future meetings. What would be the consequences for future meetings where there may be agenda items which would normally be dealt with in confidential, with the public and press excluded?

Town Clerk's Response:

The democratic process of the Town Council cannot be used to overrule legislation (e.g. data protection and contracts in confidence).

Where matters are put into confidential session then this should be done for a very good reason. If the Council do not agree to discuss (in confidential) an item that has been set aside for a confidential session then it is likely that the matter would not be discussed at all. Where the Council choose to ignore professional advice then that will be documented in the minutes and should the Council continue to discuss the matter that has real potential of financial risk (to the Council), breach of contract, not be in the public interest or similar, then it is likely to be inappropriate for the Clerk to be at the table.

In general the information, as presented, provided to councillors remains confidential.

Members are reminded that while the reports issued as part of a confidential agenda item and some of the discussion it prompts are confidential, the decision of the Council is for public record and will be recorded in the minutes.

(Clerk's Note: Councillor Dr J Buckley arrived at the meeting during this item)

0411/1819 **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- i) **RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018 be received and adopted.**
- ii) Planning Committee Membership

**RESOLVED: that**

**The following Councillors be appointed as additional members of the Planning Committee:**

**Cllr Sarah Barlow  
Cllr Geoff Davies  
Cll Kirstie Hurst-Knight**

(Clerk's Note: The Committee now comprises Cllr Onions (Chair), Cllr Barlow, Cllr Cooper, Cllr Davies, Cllr Dyson, Cllr Hurst-Knight, Cllr Stevens and Cllr C Whittle.)

- iii) Review of Planning Committee Meetings Frequency

**RESOLVED: that**

**Planning Committee Meetings be held on a monthly basis.**

(Clerk's note: The next scheduled meeting of the Planning Committee will take place on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018).

The Clerk was asked to consider the possibility of the Council holding virtual planning meetings with all members of the Council being on the committee.

0412/1819 **STANDING ORDERS**

**RESOLVED: to adopt the revised draft to Standing Orders presented at the Town Council meeting on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> December, other than retaining the 2 Standing Orders relating to Public and Members Questions.**

0413/1819 **REVIEW OF EARMARKED RESERVES AND USEABLE CAPITAL RECEIPTS**

- i) **RESOLVED:** to provisionally approve the amendments to the following earmarked reserves.

Nominal Ledger Code	Name	Current Balance £	Proposed Balance £
4900	Equipment repair/maintenance	2,000	3,000
4902	Cemetery Maintenance	6,500	3,500
4903	Cemetery Land	30,000	25,000
4908	Play Equipment	20,000	20,000
4912	Property Repairs	15,000	15,000
4921	Elections	4,500	4,500
4923	Civic & Ceremonial	2,000	0
4930	Contingency/ Christmas lights	3,000	3,000
4931	Vehicle repairs	2,000	0
4938	Severn Park Maintenance	2,000	2,000
4940	Street Lighting Maintenance	5,000	5,000

- ii) **RESOLVED** to set aside £9.5k from the useable capital receipts to contribute to the proposed FY 19/20 project to provide electricity to the cemetery chapel.

0414/1819 **OUTDOORS AND PROPERTIES MANAGER’S REPORT**

Members noted receipt of a report that provided a general overview of recent and planned activity regarding grounds maintenance.

0415/1819 **SEVERN PARK TOILET PROVISION 2019**

**RESOLVED:** to delegate to the RFO to negotiate a better price for the provision of seasonal toilets in Severn Park in 2019 (35 weeks) with any of the companies that have quoted and to then take out a contract with the lowest quote negotiated.

0416/1819 **LODGE LANE PARK AREA ENHANCEMENT**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the submission of a grant application to enhance a project to improve the recreational area on Lodge Lane.

0417/1819 **BUDGET AND FEES**

Members noted the budget report which included:

A full line by line budget estimates report.

A summary budget (by cost centre), 3 working options.

A proposed set of fees WEF 1 April 2019 which included a significant number of variations including: differentiating between the cost of single and double depth burials: a standard fee to all users of Castle hall (other than the Senior citizens' twice weekly regular booking).

And proposed: a 2.68% in the Bridgnorth Town Council element of Council Tax; no change in the level of the Council's general reserve.

Members further noted that the proposed Council Tax Base figure for Bridgnorth was likely to be 4,552.26 (a negligible increase of 3.21 on the 2018/19 figure)

**RESOLVED:**

**i) To approve the level of fees proposed other than:**

**Increasing Cemetery fees by 10%** (8% above the proposed rate in the case of double depth resident rate of £695) **as opposed to the 2% in the draft level of fees.**

*(To ensure that the level of fees charged reflect the level of costs incurred by the Town Council) and (noting that the rules regarding eligibility for resident concessions rates would need to be tightened with the Clerk to provide a revised draft for Council approval).*

**ii) To approve the draft budget (Summary C) summary sheet other than:**

- a. Increase the anticipated income in FY 2019/20 for the cemetery to £7k.**
- b. Amend the Council Tax Base Figure to read 4,552.26.**
- c. To set the level of the target General Reserve figure at the end of FY 19/20 to achieve a Band D increase of less than 3%.**
- d. To add £1k to nominal ledger grants other (Cost Centre 120, Nominal Ledger 4800).**

(Clerk's Note: A revised budget summary sheet is attached, with the predicted precept required for the FY 2019/20 being £613,170 and a Council tax Band D equivalent rate of £134.70 – an increase of 2.99%. The precept and budget will be put before the Council to be ratified on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019).

0418/1819 **BRIDGNORTH ARTS TRAIL**

**RESOLVED:**

- i) **To note that the funding application to LEADER has successfully passed the outline stage**
- ii) **To delegate to the Arts Trail Working Group to prepare a full bid application for £17,700 (for final stage of project 2019-2021) on behalf of the Town Council.**
- iii) **That the full bid application be brought to Town Council for approval before submission.**
- iv) **To note proposed expenditure from the Arts Trail ring fenced funds for the group to:**
  - i) **Purchase 10,000 x DL tourism flyers £269 for distribution to towns/villages outside of Bridgnorth, across Midlands**
  - ii) **Commission a 3 minute tourism video showing virtual tour of the trail, to promote the town (3 x quotes for file to be shared on YouTube, social media, tourism info centres, etc) first quote £550.**

0419/1819 **CANCELLATION OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

Members considered a report from the Clerk and concurred with the recommendation.

**RESOLVED: To cancel the Town Council meeting scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019.**

0420/1819 **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.

In accordance with standing order 3s a record of votes cast is recorded:

**For the motion:** Cllrs: Baines, Barlow, Cooper, Davies, Dyson, Howell, Hurst-Knight, Marshall, Onions, Stevens, Walden, R Whittle

**Against the motion:** Cllr Buckley

**Abstentions:** Cllr Fox

0421/1819 **PERSONNEL SERVICES (HR/H&S AND PAYROLL CONTRACTS)**

**RESOLVED: To enter in to a 3 year contract beginning 1 April 2019 with Shropshire HR to provide for Human Resource Advice & Development, Health & Safety and Payroll provision at a cost of £5,300 per annum.**

Cllr Cooper asked that his vote against the motion be recorded in the minutes.

(Clerk's Note: Contract awarded in line with Bridgnorth Town Council Financial Regulations para 12 (a) (ii) – *Specialist services*)