

## BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held in the Mayor's Parlour,  
College House on Tuesday 20th March 2018 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, Mrs H Howell, Mrs K Hurst-Knight,  
E Marshall, Mrs J Onions, Mrs S Stevens, Mrs C Walden  
and Mrs C Whittle

In Attendance: Acting Town Clerk, Mr B Ince  
One member of the press  
Six members of the public  
Minutes' Secretary and transcribed by Mrs R Williams

0772/1718 **FIRE SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT**

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

0773/1718 **RECORDING OF MEETINGS**

The Chairman informed the meeting that recording, including filming, audio recording, taking photographs, blogging, tweeting and using other social media websites is permitted at Council meetings which are open to the public - however, anyone wishing to do is requested to speak to the Town Council staff prior to the meeting as there are rules which must be followed.

0774/1718 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

i) **RESOLVED:** to receive the apologies as listed below:

Councillor Ms S Barlow	Work Commitment
Councillor A Hinton	Personal Commitment

(ii) No formal approval of the reasons for absence for the purposes of S85 Local Government Act 1972 was required.

0775/1718 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**Personal Interest

Councillor Mrs C Baines	Item 25	Permission to Use Council Properties
Councillor D Cooper	Item 25	Permission to Use Council Properties
Councillor R Fox	Item 25	Permission to Use Council Properties

0776/1718 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

0777/1718 **REPORT FROM SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL**

The following report from Shropshire Councillor William Parr was read out at the meeting:

‘Mr. Mayor and Members of Council.  
Please accept this report as follows.

As I I’m sure Mr Mayor and members of this council, there is cause for concern at the state of highways in the county as most of us get complaints about potholes after the recent bad weather. Being advised by our Leader of Shropshire Council and officers, I’ve been assured that there should be no impact on the day to day maintenance of the highway network given budget and that the council is working hard to catch up with pothole repairs. Importantly , I hope the forthcoming change of contractor will see an improvement in the quality of highway maintenance but without spending huge amounts of money that we don’t have this will always be an area of concern.

I have been furnished with documentation with a covering letter from our MP Philip Dunne with reference to safety and other concerns about obstructive parking on the Cartway and Friars Street which are not easy to resolve but with a constructive dialogue between councils and residents hopefully we can work on an initiative to address these problem.

I had the good fortune to be present at the community hall in Low Town where our Chief Executive Clive Wright listened to and answered questions along with Officer Chris Edwards myself William Parr and Christian Lea. It was an excellent turnout from the local public which filled the hall including Our mayor Ron Whittle and various other councillors who would probably would all agree we learnt a great deal.

Thank you for listening to my report.’

0778/1718 **MINUTES**

- i) The minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at 7.15pm were submitted as circulated.

A query was raised with regard to the Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee under minute number 0747/1718 as clarification was wanted. It was confirmed that the resolution was to accept the original proposal by Councillor R Whittle, contained in the agenda for 20 February 2018, with the amendments stated under the above minute number.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018 be signed by the Chairman as a true record.

0779/1718 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

0780/1718 **TOWN MAYOR'S AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S DIARY**

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

- 22 February - Chetton Village Hall for launch of Chetton Active Friends
- 26 February - Low Town Residents meeting
- 28 February - Meeting at Severnside concerning volunteer clean-up.
- 2 March - Women's World Prayers (cancelled due to snow)!
- 3 March - Civic Ball at Punch Bowl
- 4 March - Girl Guides Thinking Day at Castle Hall
- 10 March - Opening of Bishop Percy's House
- 10 March - Shrewsbury Civic Ball
- 18 March - High Sheriff's Official Service at Ellesmere.

0781/1718 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

There were no Members questions.

0782/1718 **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- i) The minutes of the Christmas Committee meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018 were submitted as circulated.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Christmas Committee meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018 be received and adopted.

- ii) The minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018 were submitted as circulated.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018 be received and adopted.

Councillor Mrs J Buckley gave an update on the situation regarding the Arts Trail statues. Members were informed that Shropshire Council had been consulted with regard to the locations. The statues are being bolted onto concrete plinths that are being set on level ground. The statues are to be located outside the following premises on the High Street: Lloyds Bank, the Card Store and Blooms the Florist. With Council permission, the Arts Trail Working Party wish to send letters on Council letter headed paper to all residents that may be

affected by the location of the trains. Members watched a You Tube video showing the locations of the trains on a scale model of Bridgnorth.

0783/1718 **MATTERS ARISING FROM COMMITTEE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising.

0784/1718 **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 £77,220.11 be approved for payment.

ii) Income and Expenditure Reports

i) Income and Expenditure Report

Discussions took place with regard to the level of potential deficit at the end of the financial year.

**RESOLVED:** that the income and expenditure report be noted.

Account Code Report

i) Budget Report

**RESOLVED:** that the account code budget report be noted.

ii) Earmarked Reserves Report

**RESOLVED:** that the account code earmarked reserves report be noted.

iii) Report from Mrs R Williams

**RESOLVED:** that the report from Mrs R Williams be noted.

iv) Level of Reserves

**RESOLVED:** that the level of the Town Council's reserves of £576,023 be noted.

- v) Town Council Bank Reconciliation Statement

**RESOLVED:** that the Town Council Bank Reconciliation Statement be noted.

0785/1718 **LOW TOWN COMMUNITY HALL**

- i) Accounts for Payment

**RESOLVED:** that the accounts amounting to £1,593.25 be approved for payment.

0786/1718 **PROPOSAL CONCERNING COUNCIL FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Members were asked to consider a report with regard to future presentation of financial information from 1 April 2018.

Concerns were raised over the presentation of the figures in the proposed reports as they show year to date actual expenditure but only a full year budget figure and not what would be expected for the year to date (in contrast to the current Account Code Report). It was felt that monthly income and expenditure should be shown to Members, as is the current system of reporting on the Detailed Income & Expenditure Report.

Following a lengthy discussion it was

**RESOLVED:** that the proposal concerning Council financial information be accepted and that:

Council be presented with two budget reports each month:

- i) Budget detail by Cost Centre showing last year and current year budgets and actual YTD and next year's budget.
- ii) Budget Summary, of the above, by cost centre just showing totals.

Commencing with the preparation of the 2019/2020 budget, all cost centres relating to grounds are brought together except that the Cemetery will remain a stand alone centre. The allocation of all costs; including salaries, wages, pension and National Insurance, will be allocated to the Cemetery cost centre in the 2019/2020 budget and from 1 April 2019.

Councillors were also asked to consider receiving agendas electronically with the exception of the financial reports which will be sent to all.

0787/1718 **NOTES OF OTHER MEETINGS**

- i) Notes of the Castle Hall & Town Hall Working Party meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

**RESOLVED:** that the notes of the Castle Hall & Town Hall Working Party meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2018 be noted.

- ii) Notes of the Events Working Party meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018

**RESOLVED:** that the notes of the Events Working Party meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018 be noted.

0788/1718 **LITIGATION**

The Mayor informed Members that this item would be deferred to the confidential session. It was asked if it could be identified what the item concerned. Members were informed that the item was placed in open session as the Scrutiny Report, which this item relates to, was originally in open session.

0789/1718 **ELECTION OF A TOWN COUNCILLOR FOR BRIDGNORTH MORFE WARD**

Members were informed that the vacancy in Morfe Ward had been advertised as it had been confirmed that ten electors had called for an election which will be organised on behalf of the Town Council by Shropshire Council. Members were asked to consider whether they would like poll cards for the election for the Morfe Ward.

As an indication of cost, the election for Morfe Ward in 2016 cost:

Printing = £111.71  
Postage = £818.35

Members felt that by having polling cards it would heighten residents awareness.

**RESOLVED:** to have polling cards for the election for the Morfe Ward.

0790/1718 **REQUEST FOR A VERBAL REPORT**

Following a request from Councillors G Davies and Mrs J Onions, in their capacity as both Councillors and Members of the Chamber of Commerce, Members were asked to consider the following:

“The Deputy Mayor and, if appropriate, the Mayor, are requested to give a verbal report on the circumstances and actions taken in respect of the telephone call made to an organiser of events in Bridgnorth, as mentioned by the Mayor in response to a public question on 20<sup>th</sup> February.”

A proposal was made and seconded to move this item into confidential session and combine it with Agenda Item 33. There was a vote of 5 in favour and 8 against. The motion was lost.

The Deputy Mayor provided the following report:

“I will try to answer the request for a verbal report as per the agenda item, and also to cover a number of questions raised by a Member in a series of emails sent to me last week.

This item refers to a phone call made on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017 to someone who arranges a couple of events in the High Street each year. As this meeting is open to the public I don't want to specifically name this person, so from now on I will refer to this person as the Market Provider.

On Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017, I received an email informing me that the Market Provider had contacted the Council. He had been shocked and upset to receive a phone call from a representative of the Chamber of Commerce stating that the Town Clerk had been sacked and that some events for next year had been cancelled. This created a difficult and awkward situation. It was explained that the Town Clerk had not been sacked, that no events had been cancelled, and that he should not be receiving any phone calls from any other organisation confirming or cancelling events that involve the Town Council. Major areas of concern were what appeared to be unacceptable behaviour by the Chamber of Commerce, and that rumours like this could be damaging to the Council and to events.

Based on the information so far available, it was looking bad for the Bridgnorth Chamber of Commerce. The Market Provider, an independent person who had no connection with Bridgnorth or Shropshire apart from very occasionally organising a market, had unexpectedly made in effect a complaint to Bridgnorth Town Council. There was no reason whatsoever to believe that he was not telling the truth.

At some time in the near future this information about the phone call would have had to be reported to the full Town Council. This could and probably would have led to difficult and testy discussions at a Council meeting, and a subsequent torrid and fractious relationship with the Bridgnorth Chamber of Commerce.

But the identity of the person who had deliberately made the telephone call was not known; was it one of the leaders of the Chamber of Commerce, or a misguided friend of the Chamber on the fringes of that organisation? I was aware that some telephones maintain a record of telephone numbers for both incoming and outgoing telephone calls. So more in hope than expectation, I asked that the Market Provider be contacted to see if he had the telephone number of the caller.

The reply was much better than expected. Not only could the Market Provider identify the telephone number, but he had a recording of the telephone conversation. The telephone number was provided, and very surprisingly, the number belonged to a Bridgnorth Town Councillor. With regards to providing a copy of the recording of the phone call, the Market Provider indicated a willingness to do so, but needed to think about whether he should.

I now knew which telephone had been used to make the call, but still had no proof of the actual identity of the person who made the call. It could have been the councillor, and even if this was correct, this councillor could have denied it. Alternatively, someone else may have borrowed the phone and made the call. A further alternative though somewhat farfetched, is that some tech savvy person had managed to use this councillor's phone number.

Because of possible legal and reputational issues that could arise, and the need to protect Bridgnorth Town Council, I decided that at this stage we had done as much as we could, and to hand this matter over to the Police, for them to decide whether or not a crime had been committed, and if possible to ascertain who had actually made the call.

The Police were informed on the 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2017. The Mayor was subsequently informed about the phone call.

About 2 weeks after the matter had been reported to the Police, the Council received a copy of the recording of the phone call. It was then that it became known that the person who had made that call appeared to be Councillor James Gittins. Furthermore he had given a false name, Tony Bennett, and had made frequent references to speaking on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce. Cllr. Gittins was not a member of the Chamber of Commerce, and had no authority to speak on their behalf.

As this was now a police matter, it would have been inappropriate for this matter to be reported to Council. Only the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, one member of staff and later on the Locum Town Clerk, knew about the phone call and that the police were involved. At no time did the Council make any representations to the Police on this matter, and neither did the Police seek any views from the Council.

It is understood that the Police did not inform Cllr. Gittins that they were investigating this matter until either very late December 2017 or very early in January, 2018, when he was asked to attend a Police station to be interviewed. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2018, Cllr Gittins emailed the Locum Town Clerk, copied to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, to say that due to health and personal issues he would not be attending any Council Meetings, etc. for the next few months. For some considerable time, the Mayor and I had wanted to inform the Council about this matter, and for the Council to decide what action, if any, should be taken. There was also the ethical problem of how to deal with the Bridgnorth Chamber of Commerce, who had no idea whatsoever that the name of their organisation had been used without their knowledge, and could have caused

them immense damage. The transcript of the recording of the phone call revealed not one but several mentions of the Chamber of Commerce, including offering to “take up the slack” organising events. In my opinion, the Council had a duty to inform the Chamber of Commerce. Not to do so would have made the Council culpable, and would definitely have made matters worse if it subsequently became known at some later date.

In the middle of January 2018, the Mayor contacted the Police Inspector responsible for overseeing this investigation, to see if the Police had made any decisions on this matter, and if the matter could now be discussed by Council. The Mayor was told that the Police had decided that the Market Trader was the injured party in this matter, that it was up to the Market Trader to decide whether or not to take the matter to court, and that the Market Trader had decided not to do this. But as the Police had not yet made their final decision, the Council still could not yet discuss this matter.

A few days later the Police did decide to take no further action and closed this case.

It is then that for me this matter now becomes very interesting. I wanted it to be an agenda item on the next Council meeting. But I was advised that this should not happen. I was told that before it goes on any agenda, it should be reported to the Monitoring Officer. I checked with someone else, and received the same advice. Personally, I disagreed with this advice. Bridgnorth Town Council is an independent legal body, and as long as it follows and implements the law, its own Standing Orders, Policies and Procedures, etc., this Council can do what it wants. We are dealing with a nasty phone call, we have all the details of that phone call on a recording, we have a transcript, and we feel certain we know who made the call. As the police have declined to do anything, the only organisation that can do anything about the councillor who made that call is Bridgnorth Town Council, not Shropshire Council.

Reluctantly, I reported this matter to the Monitoring Officer, giving full information of what had happened, including a copy of the recording and transcript. Within a few days, Cllr. Gittins resigned. A few days later I received an email from the Monitoring Officer, copied to Mr Gittins, informing me that:

The Monitoring Officer has now considered the complaint. She had regard to the subsequent resignation of Mr Gittins from the Town Council and did not consider that there would be any benefit in considering the matter further. Additionally, she considered it unlikely that an investigation would be likely to conclude that the Code of Conduct had applied to Mr Gittins when the call had been made as he had not called as a councillor and had not given the impression that he was doing so.

Personally, I was surprised and somewhat shocked with the last comment of the Monitoring Officer. The call could be considered as a nuisance call that initially upset the Market Trader who received it, and also it could be considered as a deliberate attempt to damage the Bridgnorth Chamber of Commerce. It could have led to possible legal action being taken against the Town Council. But the person, who was known to be a Councillor, was not acting as a Councillor when he made the call. If that person had not legally breached the Code of Conduct, he most certainly had defied the spirit of the Code of Conduct based on the seven Nolan principles of leadership, integrity, honesty, etc.

I think it is very important to note that, as far as I am aware, at no time had Cllr. Gittins contacted the Town Council or the Bridgnorth Chamber of Commerce to inform either organisation that he had made that telephone call, and that he wanted to apologise.

All Councillors have now had the opportunity to listen to the recording of the telephone call and read a copy of the transcript. I believe all councillors who have heard the recording do not dispute that Cllr. Gittins made the telephone call. Myself and the Mayor certainly believe it to undoubtedly be him. There is one Member who is concerned about whether or not the correct procedures were followed in dealing with this phone call, but this member has stated several times in writing that the phone call was made by Cllr. Gittins, and furthermore has also confirmed in writing that they do not condone Cllr. Gittins making the call.

Note that this report is solely about a matter involving a person who was a Councillor on Bridgnorth Town Council at the time, and is named as such, and it is not about a member of the public.

In my opinion, this matter was dealt with promptly, diligently and discreetly to establish the true facts, deal effectively with any problems, avoid arguments, take care of other people and organisations, and to protect the Town Council. Also please note that after the initial email informing the Deputy Mayor about the telephone call, staff involved only carried out requests from me and the Mayor. Any delay was due to following Police instructions.

I would like to put forward a couple of hypothetical questions to Members for serious consideration. If the telephone number and the name of the person who made that telephone call remained unknown, but the telephone call had been reported to Council, what would have happened?

1. Would Cllr. Gittins have owned up and said he had made that call?
2. How would Members have reacted on being informed that the person making the call had said that he was speaking as a representative of Bridgnorth Chamber of Commerce?

In reply to a public question at the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2018 Council Meeting, the Mayor stated that he had apologised to the event organiser and he would be making contact with the Chamber of Commerce to offer a similar apology. I think it would be appropriate for all Members of this Council to make public their support for the Mayor in taking these actions. Furthermore, to protect the name and reputation of this Council, it should be made clear that we do not condone what Cllr Gittins did in making that phone call, and under no circumstances would this Council ever approve similar disreputable activities by any other councillor. Perhaps a Member might wish to propose a suitable motion?’

0791/1718 **STREET TRADING**

Following the last Town Council meeting, Members were asked to note that Shropshire Council had confirmed that the High Street (from the top of Whitburn Street) and St. Mary’s Street are not classified roads and therefore are not affected by Shropshire Council’s Street Trading Policy. Whitburn Street forms part of the B4364 and merges with the B4373 through Northgate.

Members were asked if they would like to consider taking over street licencing for the area turning left at the top of Whitburn Street to Northgate.

No commercial activity takes place in this area by the Town Council. Members did not wish to take over the street licencing for the area.

Members were informed that the roads could be de-classified by resolution of the Strategic Licensing Committee of Shropshire Council.

**RESOLVED:** to write to the Strategic Licensing Committee of Shropshire Council and ask to de-classify Whitburn Street, from the mini roundabout to its junction with the High Street and the High Street from the junction with Whitburn Street to Northgate.

0792/1718 **RECORDING OF TELEPHONE CALLS**

Members were asked to consider a motion from Councillor Mrs C Whittle with regard to recording all calls made to Bridgnorth Town Council in order to protect staff from allegations and abuse.

It was proposed and seconded that this item be moved to confidential session.

**RESOLVED:** to move this item to the confidential session.

0793/1718 **WORKING OUTSIDE THE PARISH BOUNDARY**

Members were asked to consider two motions from Councillor E Marshall:

- i) Bridgnorth Town Council staff should not undertake any work outside the town boundaries, nor allocate any other resources for use outside the town, without prior permission of the Council.
- ii) Bridgnorth Town Council should continue to maintain the traffic island at the top of the Hermitage, as long as the Council can use the island for advertising and retain any income that is generated.

Members were informed that Shropshire Council have recently renewed the Highways Contract. They were asked, prior to renewal, if Town and Parish Council could bid to carry out works on certain areas. The councils were told no. It is therefore presumed that all areas that Bridgnorth Town Council currently maintain, that are not within our remit, will be covered by the new contract.

**RESOLVED:** to accept the above motions:

Members agreed to write to all parishes concerned and inform them that Bridgnorth Town Council would no longer be carrying out work that is the responsibility of Shropshire Council.

0794/1718 **TOWN HALL**

- i) Hire of Town Hall

Members were asked to consider a request for the hire of the Town Hall for a wedding fair by D & W Wedding Fairs.

**RESOLVED:** to allow the Town Hall to be hired for the wedding fair.

- ii) Easter Holiday Activities

Members were asked to consider a proposal from the Curator of the Town Hall to run children's activities during the Easter Holidays.

Members commented that initiatives that promote the town should be encouraged.

**RESOLVED:** to accept option 2 of the proposal from the Curator for Easter activities: The Town Hall could close on Sunday and open on Tuesday instead during the two weeks April 1<sup>st</sup> – April 13<sup>th</sup>.

iii) Fairtrade Produce

Members were asked to consider a request from the Curator of the Town Hall to allow the sale of locally sourced products in addition to the Fairtrade products. Alternatively, the Town Council could approach a local organisation to make fresh cakes/muffins/scones etc using Fairtrade products. This request is being made as there are no fresh cakes available in Bridgnorth which fulfil the Fairtrade requirement and the Traidcraft catalogue offers only a limited selection of long-life cakes

**RESOLVED:** to allow the sale of locally sourced products in addition to the Fairtrade products.

0795/1718 **REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE – BANNER REQUEST**

Members were asked to consider a request from On Trac Marketing to assist with their campaign to recruit more foster carers and adopters by allowing posters/ringside banners/flyers etc to be placed in community areas in Bridgnorth at no cost.

**RESOLVED:** to allow reasonable sized posters in Town Council notice boards and Town Council website and offer use of the side of Listley Street public conveniences building.

0796/1718 **PERMISSION TO USE COUNCIL PROPERTY**

Members were asked to consider the following requests for free use of Council meeting facilities/properties:

- i) Bridgnorth Tourist Association – 4 meetings per year held in the Mayor’s Parlour – 1.5-2 hours each
- ii) Crucial Crew – 4 meetings per year held in the Mayor’s Parlour – 1.5hours each
- iii) League of Friends of Bridgnorth Hospital – use of Castle Hall – 27<sup>th</sup> October 2018 – 1960s Ukulele themed night

**RESOLVED:** that the above requests be denied and the charity rate for each facility be applied.

It was asked if any cancellation of bookings, due to the above resolution, could be reported to Council.

- iv) Bridgnorth Music and Arts Festival – use of Castle Grounds, under the Town Hall and Quayside – various dates

It was pointed out that the Music and Arts Festival was a free event and that the organisers undertake fundraising activities to cover the costs incurred.

**RESOLVED:** that the above request be upheld.

0797/1718 **EVENTS WORKING PARTY/COMMITTEE**

i) Update

Members were asked to note that at their meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018, the Events Working Party voted to become a committee of Council, with co-opted members, a Town Councillor in the chair and to be combined with the Christmas Committee. Members were also asked to consider the following:

- a) The Committee's request to allow members of the public to be appointed to the Events Committee with full voting rights, in accordance with NALC LTN 7 and s144 of the Local Government Act 1972, to continue the community support of this group. Members were asked to note that since the amalgamation, non-Councillor Members will not be given voting rights for Christmas matters unless they fall within s144 of the Local Government Act.

**RESOLVED:** to allow members of the public to be appointed to the Events Committee with full voting rights, in accordance with NALC LTN 7 and s144 of the Local Government Act 1972

b) Appointing Members to the Events/Christmas Committee

**RESOLVED:** to appoint the following Members to the Events/Christmas Committee: Councillors Ms S Barlow, Dr J Buckley, Mrs J Onions, Mrs S Stevens, Mrs C Walden and R Whittle

0798/1718 **PHOTOGRAPHY TENDERS**

Members were asked to consider a synopsis of quotations received for the photography tender for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019:

**RESOLVED:** not to have an official photographer.

0799/1718 **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS RECEIVED**

Members were asked to note the following FOI requests that have been received:

- i) How much has Bridgnorth Town Council spent on external audit fees for the period 2015-2017
- ii) How much has Bridgnorth Town Council spent on HR consultancy and support for the years 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18

0800/1718 **CONFERENCE/MEETING UPDATES**

No reports had been received.

0801/1718 **ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM – EMERGENCY EXPENDITURE**

Members were advised that emergency repairs, at a cost of £853.03 plus VAT, were required to the Land Rover to enable it to pass the MOT. Members' permission for the expenditure was sought and given.

0802/1718 **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.

0803/1718 **TOWN COUNCIL DEBTORS**

**RESOLVED:** to accept the list of debtors as listed at Appendix L.

0804/1718 **LITIGATION**

At this point in the meeting the Mayor gave a verbal report on the Litigation noted above at 0788/1718.

0805/1718 **RECORDING OF TELEPHONE CALLS**

0792/1718 was also addressed at this point and it was **RESOLVED:** that telephone calls should be recorded and that the Acting Town Clerk was to look into additional costs.

0806/1718 **PERSONNEL MATTERS**

i) Interview Panel

**RESOLVED:** that an interview panel of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillor R Fox is set up and that a consultant is appointed to advise on the selection process to appoint a new Town Clerk at a daily charge of £450 plus VAT per day (part days on a pro rata basis), plus expenses at cost. These will include travel costs (standard rail fares), mileage at £0.45 per mile, overnight accommodation and subsistence.

At this point in the meeting, it was **RESOLVED:** that Standing Orders be suspended to allow the meeting to continue over the 2.5 hour limit.

ii) Compliance Matters

**RESOLVED:** that the Acting Town Clerk was to seek professional advice from NALC regarding this matter.

0807/1718 **COUNCIL MATTERS**

Councillor D Cooper advised that he did not feel that the issues raised in the report circulated would receive adequate consideration at this juncture in the meeting and that he would withdraw this item from consideration at this meeting and requested that it be brought back to the next meeting.

At this point in the meeting, the Deputy Mayor requested that the Acting Town Clerk withdraw from the meeting at this juncture. The Acting Town Clerk withdrew from the meeting. The Deputy Mayor made a statement.

The meeting closed at 10.00pm