



8th December 2021

The **MEETING** of **BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL** will be held in the **ANNEXE, COLLEGE HOUSE, BRIDGNORTH** on **TUESDAY 14TH DECEMBER 2021** at **7.15PM** when Members are summoned to attend.

Yours sincerely



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Town Clerk
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AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations under consideration on this agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 s32 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012

Members are reminded that should you declare a pecuniary interest at a meeting, it is your responsibility to inform the Monitoring Officer.

3. Public Question Time

Members of the public who are electors of the parish of Bridgnorth are advised that they are welcome to ask questions about items on the agenda. Where a question relates more generally to the business of the Council, advance notification is preferred so that a considered response can be provided. It is not always possible to give a verbal response at a meeting and questions may receive a written reply. In accordance with Standing Order 3y (viii), questions should be related to matters of Town Council policy or practice and not related to the individual affairs of either the questioner or any other named person.

(Clerk's Note: The Council will generally permit up to 15 minutes to take questions with each question being limited to 3 minutes).

i) Question(s) received Mr Anthony Daniels of St Leonard's Close

- Is the Town Council responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the grassed area around St Leonards' Church?
- If it is not, could it inform us as to who is responsible?
- Does the Council agree that vehicles should not be parked or driven over this area, which is part of a conservation area, including any employees of the Council? (for the benefit of Councillors, I have sent photographs of the Mayor).

ii) Members are asked to note the responses sent to the unanswered public questions previously muted at the Town Council meeting of 16th November 2021, namely:

Questions received from Mr A Daniels

1) Can the Council give a firm undertaking that the Arts Trail Statues will be removed?

Response: Yes

2) Can the Council give a firm date by which, if not earlier, the statues will be removed?

Response: The statues were originally due to be in-situ until Autumn 2022. However, the Town Council resolved, later in the meeting, to extend the Arts Trail by 12 months. Please see the extract below from the draft minutes under minute number 0241/2122:

'RESOLVED: to extend the trail period from 2022 to 2023 subject to permission being granted by both Shropshire Council and Historic England.'

3) Does the Council have a recent estimate for the cost of removal of the statues and making good the ground on which they stand?

Response: No. We have, however, just been informed by the Arts Trail working group that there is currently £4,000 in the budget with a further contingency of £2,000 which is being held as a hedge against additional removal costs should they occur. Indicative removal costs are also being sought, by the working group, from appropriate contractors.

Question from Mr E Marshall

This is a question about preparation of the Councils budget for next year. It is noted that the Town Council seems to be looking at:

1. Increasing Council Tax by 10.53%
2. Not increasing most or all the fees paid for council services

This means that residents of the town will be paying by their Council Tax all the increases in costs being imposed on the Council. Residents do not have a choice; they have to pay their Council Tax charges.

The current rate of consumer price inflation is around 3.1%.

The Town Council does not provide the important care services such as the collection of rubbish, highways, education and social services.

It is very easy and lazy to impose taxes on residents. But an organisation such as Bridgnorth Town Council should be looking at ways to improve efficiency, productivity, reduce costs, increase income from services other than residents and explore ways of working jointly with other organisations.

Response:

You noted two points:

- Increasing Council Tax by 10.53%
- Not increasing most or all the fees paid for council services

You are aware that the first part was answered at the meeting prior to your question. With regards to point number two, please be advised that fees were discussed at length later on in the meeting under agenda item number 10 i) where Council asked Officers to bring back costings, for inclusion in the 2022/2023 budget, for the increase of fees for Severn Park parking and Cemetery in line with general inflation. All commercial costs are to be reviewed early in the next financial year to include but not restricted to: use of the slipway.

4. Minutes

- i) To approve the minutes of the meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 16th November 2021.
(BTC/11/2122 on the Town Council website)
- ii) Events & Christmas Committee
 - a. To note receipt of the minutes of a meeting of the Events & Christmas Committee held on 24th November 2021.
(EVCH/03/2122 on the Town Council website)
 - b. To consider the following recommendations:
 - i) **That the Town Council budget for 2022/23 should include**
 - a. **£2.5k to effect essential repairs to the current lights in FY 2022/23.**
 - b. **At least £1k to support an event related to the Platinum Jubilee**
 - ii) **That the Town Council Fees for the Commercial Hire of Severn Park are inappropriate and should be decided ‘by negotiation’ with that responsibility being delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Events & Christmas Committee and/ or The Mayor.**
 - iii) **To approve in principle the use of Severn Park for large scale commercial activity on 24th April and 3rd August 2022.**
 - iv) **To delegate responsibility to approve the events to Town Council officers who should satisfy themselves that the event can be held safely and with due consideration to the impact on Severn Park and its neighbours.**

- v) (Subject to point ii above being approved by Town Council) **To delegate to the Town Clerk to negotiate an appropriate fee for the event(s)**

5. Announcements

i) Mayor's Diary

22/10 - Opening Board Room cafe, West Castle St.

28/10 - Visiting Reach Out Arts

1/11- Opening Ian Charles jewellers, Central Court.

2/11- Evening of celebration at St Mary's Church for the Bridgnorth Youth and Schools Project.

6/11 - Awarding prizes to the winners of the Halloween Arts Trial competition.

7/11 - Full Monty charity night for Asthma UK.

10/11 - Celebration evening at the Himalaya restaurant. Recipients of the Curry Life Best Customers choice award. With Deputy Mayor.

11/11 - Remembrance service in the Town Hall.

19/11- Christmas light up evening.

26/11 - Senior citizens Christmas lunch.

28/11 - Northgate Swimming club awards evening.

ii) Announcements

To receive any announcements.

6. Members Question Time

Members are asked to receive questions (if any) in accordance with Standing Order 27 and to take no more than 15 minutes in total.

7. Finance

i) Accounts Paid – November 2021

Members are asked to receive notification of items which have been paid in accordance with Financial Regulation 5.5
(*Appendix A on the Town Council website*)

ii) Members are asked to note receipt of Cashbooks 1, 2 & 3 (*Appendix B on the Town Council website*)

iii) Budget Report

Members are asked to note the Budget Summary report, including Earmarked Reserves.
(*Appendix C on the Town Council website*)

iv) Balance Sheet

Members are asked to note the balance sheet as at 30th November 2021.
(*Appendix D on the Town Council website*)

v) Town Council Bank Reconciliation Statements

Members are asked to note the bank reconciliation statements.
(Appendix E on the Town Council website)

vi) Accounts for Payment

Members are asked to:

- i) Authorise the signing of invoices for payment.
- ii) Confirm those Councillors who will be authorised to sign the cheques on Friday 17 December 2021.
(Appendix F on the Town Council website)

vii) Accounting and Audit

Members are asked to note that Councillors R Connolly and N Cooper, on Thursday/Friday 18th and 19th November 2021, verified/signed the bank statements for October 2021 and signed those cheques approved by Council at the meeting held on 16th November 2021. Councillors Connolly and Cooper authorised payroll for November 2021.

8. Budget Setting 2022/2023

Members are asked to consider a report from the RFO and any recommendations contained therein.
(TC/29/2122 on the Town Council website)

9. Bridgnorth Community Hall

For the Town Council to note (as the Sole Trustee of the Charity) the minutes of a Management Committee meeting held on 29th October 2021.
(Appendix G on the Town Council website)

10. Arts Trail Working Group

For the Town Council to receive the notes of a Working Group meeting held on 22nd November 2021 and a copy of its latest budget.
(Appendix H on the Town Council website)

11. Flood Reaction Working Group

To note a report from the Working Group and consider a recommendation that:

That Council consider and approve the deployment of the Direct Labour Force (DLF)

In providing pre flood assistance to previously effected & identified vulnerable properties (namely the distribution of sandbags) on receipt of an official warning from the Environment Agency of the imminent danger of serious Flooding in the Bridgnorth Area.

(Appendix I on the Town Council website)

Membership/Distribution: Councillors Barlow (Town Mayor), Aked, Baines MBE, Buckley, Buffey, Chetter, Connolly, D Cooper, N Cooper, Neal, Rochelle, Sawbridge, Seabright, Wellings