

BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held in the Annexe, College House on Tuesday 1st February 2022 at 7.15pm

Present:

Councillors:

Aked
Baines MBE
Buckley
Buffey
Chetter
Connolly
D Cooper
N Cooper
Ireland
Marshall
Rochelle
Sawbridge BEM (Deputy Town Mayor/Chair)
Wellings

In Attendance:

L Jakeman, Town Clerk
B Ince, Outdoor & Property Manager
T Parfitt, Acting Direct Labour Force Supervisor

0293/2122 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

RESOLVED: to accept the apologies from:

Councillor S Barlow – unwell
Councillor R Seabright – unwell
Councillor L Neal – personal commitment

AND

For the purposes of Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council approves "Illness", "Unwell", "Shielding" and "Self Isolating" as reasons to be absent from Council meetings held between 14th December 2021 and 16th May 2022 inclusive

0294/2122 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Nil

0295/2122 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

i) Summary of comments:

- a. **Agenda Item – Community Safety – Glen Watson of Underhill Street:** Commented on lorries crossing the bridge over the river and they mount the kerb on St Johns St by M&S and Food to Go and whether it should be compulsory for weight restrictions and the need for speed restrictions in the Town.
- b. **Agenda Item – Community Safety –Burrington Berry of Listley Street:** Commented about significant numbers of people driving around at speed and who use the High Street as part of a ‘racetrack’ and asked that further speeding restrictions be introduced.
- c. **Agenda Item – Community Safety - Ben Upton of West Castle Street:** Commented about traffic issues including noise, speed of traffic and that the Town was being used as a racetrack late at night and that the key issue to be addressed is speed. Supportive of traffic calming measures being introduced
- d. **Agenda Item – Community Safety - Angela Upton of West Castle Street:** Commented that: some slowing of traffic required; loud exhaust noise often heard as a result of speeding around the area of the Shakespeare public house; supports the proposal being put forward by Councillor Ireland.
- e. **Agenda Item – Community Safety – Shirley Rutter of St Marys Street:** Commented on speeding injury statistics and was supportive of a 20mph zone in the Town.
- f. **Agenda Item – Council Meetings – Ron Richards of St Leonards Close:** Asked “Is it not illegal to hold a council meeting via zoom?”

The Town Clerk responded: Legislation currently dictates that *(formal) meetings (where binding decisions are made)* of town and parish councils cannot legally be conducted via Zoom *(or other remote meeting facilities)*.

0296/2122 **MINUTES**

- i) **RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on 18th January 2022.**
- ii) Members noted receipt of the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 27th January 2022.

0297/2122 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

Nil

0298/2122 **CHANGE TO ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS**

RESOLVED:

To bring forward agenda item 8 (Community Safety) as the next item of business.

0299/2122 **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

Members considered a proposal from Councillor R Ireland relating to tackling an issue relating to speeding traffic in and around the Town's centre.

Councillor Wellings advised members that he had received representations from numerous residents about roads across the Town that appeared to be being used as racetracks and that he was supportive of some effective speed management action being undertaken. Councillor Wellings did add however, that at least one resident had raised concerns regarding the use of speed bumps as traffic calming measures.

Councillor Buckley commented that there is a wider initiative called 'Twenty is Plenty' calling for wide-spread introduction of 20mph speed limits.

A lengthy debate followed on the topic of speed, road safety and antisocial behaviour between members and in particular the practicability of likely action by Shropshire Council given budgetary constraints.

RESOLVED that

Bridgnorth Town Council formally writes to Shropshire Council requesting that Shropshire Council explore (as a matter of urgency) the feasibility of introducing a 20mph zone in Bridgnorth and some associated traffic calming measures, and that the Town Council would

wish to have an initial discussion with the appropriate highways officers to understand the process and explore realistic possibilities).

0300/2122 **TOWN COUNCIL ESTATE MANAGEMENT**

- i) **Hazeldine Foundry** - Members considered correspondence relating to a community garden in the area of the Hazeldine Foundry which is owned by the Town Council and a report from officers of the Council.
- ii) Suspension of Standing Orders - **RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders to allow comment from a member of the public**

Summary of Comment: Mr Ray Gill of Elizabeth Avenue commented on the topic including his aspiration of the project would be for it to be able to connect with the ground and nature. Furthermore, it was his ambitions to connect with schools and the he would welcome working with the Wildlife Trust.

- iii) **RESOLVED to reinstate Standing Orders** (the meeting continued)
- iv) **Hazeldine Foundry** (continued). Following some debate which included public rights of way, and current usage of the land members **RESOLVED:**
 - to allow the community volunteers to take on limited management of the Hazeldine Foundry site once they are appropriately constituted and insurance arrangements are in place and that:
 - this limited management to include tidying the Southern Boundary, creating a dead hedge barrier and planting an 'edible hedge'
 - that the Green Spaces Working Group and Outdoor & Properties Manager liaise with the community volunteers to create a meadow and bulb planting on the site
 - to note that the Green Spaces Working Group will work with the volunteers to develop further plans for approval by the Council

v) **Outdoor and Properties Manager Report**

Members discussed a number of items on the report and took the opportunity to ask questions (for the purpose of clarity and greater understanding) of the Outdoor and Properties Manager and the Grounds Maintenance Supervisor

vi) **Crown Meadow Junior Football Pitches**

Members considered correspondence requesting a reconfiguration of the football pitches on Crown Meadow.

RESOLVED:

- a. **To support, in principle, the reconfiguration of the football pitches proposed by the secretary of the Bridgnorth Town Juniors Football Club.**

AND

- b. **Delegate to officers to identify a suitable location to re-site the bench and litter bin (that would require moving).**

AND

- c. **Delegate to the Town Clerk to confirm/ sign the Site Owner and Site User Grass Pitch Maintenance Agreement.**

0301/2122 **COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Members considered a proposal from Councillor N Cooper regarding the format of meetings and how the council might be able to facilitate the inclusion of councillors who are unable to attend physical meetings and/ or delegating additional responsibilities to the Town Clerk to reduce the need to hold physical meetings.

Members discussed the matter and also considered how meetings might be viewed online by members of the public. Members noted that current legislation requires a councillor to be physically present at a meeting to cast a vote.

Members asked that Town Clerk to investigate options and recommend a solution that allows some form of hybrid meeting to take place (noting that there would likely be some unbudgeted expense required).

0302/2122 **BRIDGNORTH ARTS TRAIL**

Members noted the minutes of a meeting of the Bridgnorth Arts Trail held on 17th January 2022.

0303/2122 **PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

RESOLVED that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

(Clerk's note: While the discussions are confidential the decisions made are documented for the public record)

0304/2122 **CCTV CONTRACT**

RESOLVED that the CCTV repair budget be increased (from £2,000) to **£3,000**.

0306/2122 **BUILDING SURVEY TENDER**

RESOLVED:

To appoint contractor (A). in response to the tender for the survey of the Town Council's buildings (with funding being made available from Earmarked Reserve 325).

0307/2122 **TELEPHONE SYSTEM CONTRACT**

RESOLVED to defer the item until the early part of the next civic year.

0308/2122 **IT MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

RESOLVED: To extend the current IT maintenance and support contract with Midland Computers for a further 2 years.

0309/2122 **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members noted a confidential report that provided an update on personnel matters.

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