

BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held in the Annexe,
College House on Tuesday 7th June at 7.15pm.**

Present:

Aked
Barlow
Baines
Buckley
Buffey
Chetter
Connolly
Ireland
Marshall
Neal
Rochelle
Sawbridge (Chair)
Wellings

In Attendance:

Mr L Jakeman, Town Clerk
Mrs R Williams, Deputy Town Clerk

0037/2223 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr N Cooper – Unwell (Covid)
Cllr D Cooper – Self isolating
Cllr R Seabright - Unwell

0038/2223 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil

0039/2223 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Members noted receipt of a written public question from Mr Ron Richards of St Leonards Close:

“How many Bridgnorth council taxpayers are in arrears with their council tax payment, and if the Town Council does not know, could it find out as a matter of public interest and concern?”

The Mayor, Karen Sawbridger read out a response on behalf of the Council:

“Bridgnorth Town Council does not have access to data regarding individual Council Tax payments.

The information is held by Shropshire Council and you could contact them directly to receive an answer. However, I will ask the Clerk to forward your question to Shropshire Council.

0040/2223 **MINUTES**

- a) Members approved the minutes of the Annual and Adjourned meetings of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 17th and Thursday 19th May 2022.
- b) Members noted the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting of Electors held on Tuesday 10th May 2022.

0041/2223 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- a) Members noted the Mayor’s Diary.

20th May 2022 – Bridgnorth Cliff Railway/ Castle Walk – View works to pillars and copings with Phillip Dunne MP.

28th May 2022 – Opened the ‘Calm Café’, part of the Bridge Bar (Dry).

3rd June 2022 – Opened the Town Carnival

3rd June 2022 – Hosted the Twinning Civic Dinner

4th June 2022 – Hosted the Twinning Afternoon Tea Party

4th June 2022 - Hosted the Twinning Celebration Dinner

7th June 2022 – Visited the Grove Play Park Wild Flower Meadow Garden with Barry Ince, Bug Life and Shropshire Wildlife Trust.

- b) Members noted that they have been offered the opportunity to attend a Code of Conduct training event (via zoom) on Wednesday 15th June from 6pm to 8pm.

- c) Senior Citizens Jubilee Tea Party – Councillor Baines informed members that she had attended the event held on Saturday 4th June 2022 held at the Bridgnorth Community Hall which had been organised by the Town Council. Councillor Baines commented that the event had been a huge success, it had been planned and delivered professionally and she had received many compliments from those who had attended.

0042/2223 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

Nil

0043/2223 **END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS 2021/2022**

- a) Members approved the end of year accounts 2021/2022.
- b) Members received and noted the Annual Internal Audit Report.
- c) Members considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement 2021/2022 and the Accounting Statements 2021/2022 and **RESOLVED:**
 - i. **To agree the Annual Governance Statement** (comprising 9 items).

AND

- ii. **To authorise signing of the Accounting Statements (prepared and certified by the RFO) by the Town Mayor**

0044/2223 **VIDEOING/STREAMING OF TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Members discussed a number of related items including: livestreaming of Town Council meetings; having a video conferencing facility to allow for hybrid meetings and, recording the meeting for historical purposes. There is still some debate to be had regarding a suitable permanent location for Council meetings in the months and years ahead (*there appears to be an ambition to utilise the Town Hall once it is deemed suitable from a technological and access perspective*) and as such the permanent video conferencing solution circulated with the agenda was seen as unsuitable at this time. Members agreed that Councillor Neal and the Town Clerk should explore a simple method to, in the first instance, livestream future Council meetings (a view only facility).

0045/2223 **WATER FOUNTAINS**

Members considered a proposal from Councillor Buffey and **RESOLVED** to:

Explore the possibility of installing water stations within the Town

(Clerk's Note: Cllr Rochelle asked that when exploring possibilities that some understanding of potential usage be considered)

0046/2223 **MARKETING AND BUSINESS PROMOTION WORKING GROUP**

Members received an update from Councillor Ireland (notes of a meeting of the working group held on 24th May had been circulated to members via email after the distribution of the agenda). Members were asked for initial feedback on the topics discussed within the notes of the meeting.

Members offered comment on a number of matters and there was some general agreement that the working group was heading in the right direction and looking at issues that were cause for public comment.

Councillors were asked to provide some more formal feedback (probably by email) to the working group in due course, so that it might refine its initial ideas and if necessary and appropriate bring back some firm proposals to the Council in the future.

The Clerk agreed to contact the Estate Manager of the Apley Estate (Graeme Manton) and put him in touch with the working group lead councillor (Councillor Ireland) as the Estate had some interest in the High Street, most notably 'The Brasserie' adjacent to the Royle which was in a very poor state of repair.

The Mayor noted that the external appearance of the Town Hass was in desperate need of repair and redecoration.

0047/2223 **TOWN HALL IMPROVEMENTS WORKING GROUP**

Members received an update from Councillor Wellings and noted a report circulated with the agenda that provided a summary of some of

the matters that had been discussed or raised at its first meeting held on 24th May 2022.

0048/2223 **CASTLE HALL REFURBISHMENT**

Members considered a proposal from Councillor Connolly and **RESOLVED** to:

Agree in principle to the refurbishing of the Castle Hall. To include external walls, signage and larger coater of arms on exposed brick wall subject to appropriate quotes.

(Clerk's note: the Outdoor and Properties Manager has already obtained some quotes and designs for the replacement of the sign at Castle Hall and the painting of the front walls is already schedule onto the planned maintenance programme for this year).

0049/2223 **SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLORS AT TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Members considered a proposal from Councillor Barlow and **RESOLVED** to:

Formally invite all four Shropshire Councillors to attend Town Council meetings on a rota basis and to produce a short report of latest/relevant news.

0050/2223 **BUILDING MAINTENANCE**

Members considered a proposal from Councillor Barlow that a member of staff puts together a rolling programme for maintaining our buildings and assets and a realistic time frame be set.

The Clerk advised that there already existed a programme of planned works however, that was currently being re-written to take into account the recommendations of the recently commissioned quinquennial building survey,

RESOLVED that:

The Town Clerk shares the existing maintenance programme with members

0049/2223 **PUBLIC BODIES**

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, the public and press be excluded.

0050/2223 STAFFING MATTERS

Members received an update on staffing matters and a summary report tabled at the meeting.

Members discussed the report and were content with the actions documented and being undertaken under delegated powers. Members further noted that the Workforce Committee would be meeting on Tuesday 14th June to take some of the matters forward.

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