

BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held remotely via Zoom
Video-Conferencing on Tuesday 22nd September 2020 at 7.15pm**

Present:

Councillors:

K Hurst-Knight (in the Chair)
C Baines
S Barlow
J Buckley
D Cooper
G Davies
C Dyson
R Fox
E Marshall
K Sawbridge
C Whittle
R Whittle

In Attendance:

R Williams, Deputy Town Clerk/RFO
A Kendrick, PA to the Town Clerk

Absent: C Walden

(Clerk's note: Councillor C Walden was not able to join the meeting on-line)

0092/2021 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

H Howell – personal commitment
S Stevens – personal commitment

0093/2021 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Nil

0094/2021 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Nil

0095/2021 **MINUTES**

- i) Members noted receipt of the draft minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 18th August 2020.

RESOLVED: to accept the draft minutes but to include the full wording for Options B and C in minute 0080/2021.

0096/2021 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

The following questions had been received from Councillor E Marshall:

My questions are about the small stretch of riverside on the eastern side of the River Severn between the Low Town Bridge and the access bridge to the Bylet Bowling Club. More specifically, they are about the even smaller stretch where vegetation grows. This site is in a prominent position in the centre of Bridgnorth.

For many years there has been no maintenance undertaken on this piece of land, with the result that today there is an unsightly mass of dense impregnable vegetation, brambles, shrubs and trees. Channels in the bank to allow surface water into the river are blocked, railings and kerb stones have become hidden, and some trees are growing bigger and higher.

The questions are:

1. Would BTC agree that this part of the riverside is a disgrace and in urgent need of action for improvement?

Answer: An answer cannot be given to this question at this meeting as Councillors will need to be consulted.

2. Does BTC own and/or have any responsibility for the maintenance of this stretch of riverside?

Answer: No.

3. If the answer to the previous question is no, who does BTC think is responsible for this part of the riverside?

Answer: Shropshire Council.

4. Around 2014, there were discussions about handing over responsibility for riverside maintenance from Shropshire Council to BTC. Did the resulting agreement include or specifically exclude the above stretch of riverside?

Answer: The agreement did not include this particular stretch of the river. Bridgnorth Town Council look after the riverbank from the Low Town Bridge, upstream, to Severn Park and Friars Field and downstream from Low Town Bridge we look after Quayside and Wellmeadow only.

5. What has BTC done over recent years to ascertain ownership, or contact those considered to have responsibility for this land, to request, encourage and insist that the riverside is maintained to a proper and suitable standard?

Answer: Contact has been made on numerous occasions with Shropshire Council over the years. The Mayor, Councillor K Hurst-Knight met recently with both residents and Shropshire Councillor C Lea to discuss this area. Councillor Lea mapped the area and took photographs that have now been forwarded to the relevant Officers at Shropshire Council.

6. Would BTC agree that using its resources funded by a council tax charge on residents, and the powers, status and image accorded to a first tier local authority, it has a duty and responsibility to act on behalf of the local community to sort out this problem?

Answer: This cannot be answered at this meeting as Councillors need to be consulted. A proposal can be submitted to a future meeting should Councillor Marshall so wish.

0097/2021 **FINANCE**

- i) Accounts Paid – August 2020

Members received notification of items which had been paid in accordance with Financial Regulation 5.5.

RESOLVED: that the accounts amounting to £69,119.74 be retrospectively approved for payment.

- ii) Cashbooks 1, 2 & 3

Members noted receipt of Cashbooks 1, 2 & 3.

- iii) Budget Report

Members noted the Budget Summary report, including Earmarked Reserves.

- iv) Balance Sheet

Members noted the balance sheet as at 31st August 2020 (£931,077).

- v) Town Council Bank Reconciliation Statements

Members noted the bank reconciliation statements as at 31st August 2020.

vi) Receipts and Payments Summary

Members noted the in-year receipts and payments summary as at 31st August 2020.

vii) Accounts for Payment

Members noted receipt of a list of payments for approval.

RESOLVED: that the accounts amounting to £7,832.88 be approved for payment.

(Clerk's Note: Cllrs Davies and Dyson to sign cheques on behalf of Town Council)

viii) Accounting and Audit

Members noted that Councillors D Cooper and Davies, on Friday 21 August 2020, verified/signed the bank statements for July 2020, authorised payroll for August 2020 and signed those cheques approved by Council at the meeting held on 18 August 2020.

0098/2021 **BUDGET PREPARATION 2021/22**

Members noted a report from the RFO and received an indicative budget for Financial Year 2021/22 and a budget-setting timetable. The Chairman informed Members that a working session/workshop would be held early in October for Councillors' input into the budget for 2021/2022.

RESOLVED: to confirm the budget-setting timetable.

0099/2021 **BANKING ARRANGEMENTS – TRANSFERRING MONEY BETWEEN ACCOUNTS**

RESOLVED: that the Town Council authorises amendments to its bank mandates to allow a single user (an Officer of the Council) to move money between the two Unity Trust accounts, provided that those changes do not also permit payments to third parties. (This amendment will be used in future when the interest rates rise).

0100/2021 **TRANSFERRING MONIES WITHIN CCTV BUDGET**

RESOLVED that a virement is completed to transfer £3,000 from the CCTV Salaries nominal code (4000/301) to the CCTV Repairs nominal code (4170/301).

0101/2021 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES' PAY AGREEMENT 2020-2021**

Members noted the agreement between the National Employers and the NJC Trade Union Side on rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2020 (increase of 2.75%).

0102/2021 **RESIGNATION OF A COUNCILLOR**

Members noted that Councillor E Lynch has resigned.

0103/2021 **SHROPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE CONSULTATION ON INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021-2025**

RESOLVED: to agree the corporate response as drafted by the Town Mayor.

0104/2021 **LOCAL PLAN REVIEW**

Members were informed that minor typographical amendments have been made to the submission documents that had been circulated with the agenda; the amendments do not alter the meaning of any of the documents.

RESOLVED: to approve the submission of the 21 Consultation forms and the covering letter, following the typographical amendments, as the Town Council's response to Shropshire Council's Regulation 18 pre-submission draft Local Plan. (In addition and for completeness, the submission made in June 2020 to Shropshire Council should be resubmitted in order that it is formally registered as part of the Regulation 18 Consultation.)

0105/2021 **OUTDOORS AND PROPERTIES MANAGER'S REPORT**

Members noted the report from the Outdoors and Property Manager, which provided a general overview of estate management matters.

0106/2021 **CASTLE GROUNDS PERGOLA**

Members considered a motion from Councillor Baines that should the pergola in the Castle Grounds be irreparable, consideration should be given to replacing as it is a feature of the Park.

RESOLVED: to replace the pergola in Castle Grounds.

0107/2021 **FAIRTRADE STATUS**

RESOLVED: that Bridgnorth Town Council confirms its commitment to serve Fairtrade products where practicable.

0108/2021 **LAND OFF BANDON LANE**

Members noted the intention of Bridgnorth Rugby Club to submit a planning application for a community use building on land owned by the Town Council off Bandon Lane.

0109/2021 **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.

0110/2021 **TOWN COUNCIL DEBTORS**

Members considered a report from the Responsible Financial Officer.

RESOLVED: to note a debtors report and approve the actions being undertaken to address unpaid invoices due to the Town Council.