

BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held in the Annexe, College House on Tuesday 7th September 2021 at 7.15pm

(Draft until signed at a subsequent meeting)

Present:

Councillors:

Sawbridge (in the Chair)

Aked

Baines MBE

Buckley

Chetter

Connolly

D Cooper

N Cooper

Neal

Rochelle

Seabright

Wellings

In Attendance:

L Jakeman, Town Clerk

0138/2122 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED to accept the apologies from:

Councillor Barlow - unwell

Councillor Buffey - unwell

Councillor Colley - unwell

0139/2122 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil

0140/2122 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- i) Mr Lyndon Brazier of Oaklands asked, has the Council [Shropshire] been approached by the Town Council regarding the planned closure of the local highway depot?

Answer: The matter is up for debate later in the meeting where it is intended that the Council will form a view and send that to Shropshire Council.

0141/2122 **MINUTES**

- i) Members noted receipt of the draft minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 17th August 2021.

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on 17th August 2021.

0142/2122 CHANGE THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

Members **RESOLVED to bring forward agenda item 14 as the next agenda item.**

0143/2122 **RESPONSE TO SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL'S PROPOSED CLOSURE TO BRIDGNORTH'S HIGHWAY DEPOT**

Members considered a report and discussed the matter at some length and raised concerns over the loss or deterioration of some direct and crucial services to the Bridgnorth area. Furthermore, the planned decision was seen as another example of Bridgnorth being neglected by Shropshire Council.

RESOLVED that

The Town Mayor write to Shropshire Council on behalf of the Town Council to express its concerns on the planned closure of the Bridgnorth Highways Depot along the lines of the wording below:

That the Town Council has serious concerns regarding the closure of the site and is extremely disappointed that little or no consideration was given to engaging the Town Council in advance of the announcement.

That the Town Council strongly objects to the planned closure of the Bridgnorth Highway depot because it is not clear that the desired cost savings have been measured against the loss of benefit. Furthermore, we are deeply concerned about the delivery of some critical assets particularly in times of high river levels and/or wintery conditions. We request that no decision is made until some formal and direct engagement with Bridgnorth Town Council occurs.

0143/2122 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- i) Covid Testing Centre – Members were reminded of a communication that had recently been sent out identifying the Innage Lane car park as the likely site chosen by Shropshire Council for any PCR mobile testing as and when the need arises. Rather helpfully, Shropshire Council had agreed to restrict the opening hours, to between 10am and 2:30pm, because of traffic congestion given the school run.

- ii) Ambulance Station – Members were reminded that the Mayor had recently sent out correspondence relating to a consultation by the West Midlands Ambulance Service and its intention to rationalise its Ambulance stations which has identified Bridgnorth’s for closure. Members were reminded that there is an on line consultation which closes on 30th September 2021. Members wished to discuss the matter and **RESOLVED to temporarily suspend standing orders.**
 - a. Members expressed concerns about the intended closure and **RESOLVED to delegate to the Town Clerk to respond to the consultation along the lines that the Town Council was dissatisfied with the proposal (relating to Bridgnorth) and that it objects. Of particular concern is the likely effect on service levels and response times and the lack of any effective consultation. The Town Clerk is to include the CCG, Philip Dunne and the WMAS in the circulation list.**

 - b. Members **RESOLVED to reinstate standing orders.**

- iii) Mayor’s Diary – The list of Mayor’s engagements for August would be tabled at the next Council meeting.

- iv) Local Policing Contract – Due to the unfortunate absence of the Mayor a detailed update was not presented. However, the Deputy Mayor advised that she had spoken briefly with the Mayor who had informed her that some dialogue was taking place.

- v) Bridgnorth Walk – The Deputy Mayor reminded members that the Bridgnorth Walk will take place this coming weekend. In light of the current illness of the Mayor and pre-arranged commitment of the Deputy Mayor members were asked if anyone was willing and able to attend the event to represent the Town Council. Councillor Connolly volunteered and will attend.

- vi) Bridgnorth Aluminium – The Deputy Mayor advised that The Mayor had been approached by the owners of Bridgnorth Aluminium who had expressed a desire to invest in an ‘area of reflection’, in part, in

recognition of the late Duke of Edinburgh and that some initial discussion was taking place. Councillor Neal requested that the Deputy Mayor contact Bridgnorth Aluminium to offer advice from the 'Green Spaces' Committee, who are very familiar with the most suitable areas of Bridgnorth for such a memorial.

- vii) Shropshire Council Leader – The Deputy Mayor advised that the Leader of Shropshire Council (Councillor Lezley Picton) is visiting Bridgnorth next week to meet with the four Shropshire councillors for Bridgnorth, following which she will meet briefly with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor by way of an introduction. The Deputy Mayor further advised that Councillor Picton is keen at a mutually agreed date and time in the future to meet with the Town Council/ councillors.

0145/2122 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

Nil

0146/2122 **FLOODING IN BRIDGNORTH**

RESOLVED:

- i) **That the Town Council forms a working group (with Cllr Wellings taking the lead) to host and facilitate a residents meeting that can identify the support required in the event of flooding and co-ordinate activity ahead of this winter.**
- ii) **That the working group terms of reference (subject to some minor alterations) issued with the agenda be adopted.**
- iii) **That the working group comprise councillors Aked, Barlow, Buckley, N Cooper, Neal, Rochelle and Sawbridge.**

0147/2122 **WELCOME BACK FUND**

The Clerk advised that he has seen no formal response from Shropshire Council regarding the submission sent on 13th August.

0148/2122 **CASTLE HALL FEES**

Members considered a request from the Senior Citizens group that operate out of Castle Hall and RESOLVED:

To waive the entire fee (for use of the majority of Castle Hall for half a day each Wednesday by the Senior Citizens Group) for the remainder of the

current financial year and review the fees for next year as part of the budgeting process.

0149/2122 **BRIDGNORTH COMMUNITY HALL**

- i) Members noted the minutes of the AGM of the Bridgnorth Community Hall on Monday 23rd August 2021.
- ii) Members noted the minutes of the Business Meeting of the Bridgnorth Community Hall on Monday 23rd August 2021 and consider the requests within it and
 - a. Members discussed the request for a waiver of part of the management fee charged by the Town Council to the charity but were generally of the view that any waiver would need some more detail [from the charity] and further consideration by the Council.
 - b. **RESOLVED** [for clarity] that

The Role of the Management committee be defined as follows:

Bridgnorth Community Hall Management Committee (as appointed by the Town Council) is responsible for management of the Bridgnorth Community Hall Charity (Registered Charity No 1050804) and its affairs on behalf of the Sole Trustee (Bridgnorth Town Council) and will report regularly to the sole trustee to demonstrate that it is carrying out its delegated functions appropriately.

0150/2122 **YOUTH CLUB REPORTS**

Members received reports from the SYA which operates under Contract from the Town Council regarding its summer term time activity and a report from the Bridge Youth Club covering its activities during 2020.

0151/2122 **INTERNAL VISIONING EVENT**

Members noted a report from the Deputy Town Clerk and the recent councillor visioning event that took place on Tuesday 20th August. Those that attended were of the view that the event had been hugely positive and the were thankful to Ros Williams and Rachel Follette for their very effective facilitation of the event.

Members were keen to have a second meeting before the end of September and asked that the Clerk identify a suitable date and venue.

0152/2122 **SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL BRIEFING**

Members noted that all Town Councillors have been invited to a briefing on Bridgnorth related matters by Shropshire Council officers on Monday 20th September 2021 starting at 6:30pm in Castle Hall.

0153/2122 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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 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)

0154/2122 **CCTV**

RESOLVED

To extend the current CCTV contract (with Technical Services) for a period of 12 months on the same terms and conditions that currently exist (cost £2,456).

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