

BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held in the Annexe, College House on Tuesday 18th January 2022 at 7.15pm

Present:

Councillors:

Aked
Baines MBE
Buckley
Chetter
Connolly
D Cooper
N Cooper
Ireland
Marshall
Neal
Rochelle
Sawbridge BEM (Deputy Chair)
Seabright

In Attendance:

L Jakeman, Town Clerk
R Williams, Deputy Town Clerk

0274/2122 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

RESOLVED: to accept the apologies from:

Councillor S Barlow – unwell/shielding
Councillor A Buffey – unwell
Councillor I Wellings – shielding (Covid)

0275/2122 **TOWN COUNCIL CASUAL VACANCY ELECTIONS**

Members welcomed the recent successful candidates to fill the vacant seat on the Town Council:

Castle Ward – Councillor Ross Ireland
Morfe Ward – Councillor Edward Marshall

The newly elected councillors were asked to consider if they would wish to become members of any of the Standing Committees (Planning, Events & Christmas or Personnel).

RESOLVED that: (Subject to there being vacancies on the committees)

Cllr Ireland be appointed to the Events & Christmas Committee

Cllr Marshall be appointed to the Personnel Committee.

(Clerk's note: At the current time the only vacancy on any of the standing committees is on the Planning Committee).

0276/2122 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Nil

0277/2122 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Mr Whittle of Love Lane – Town Council Precept / Budget

Mr Whittle raised concerns about the proposed level of taxation and asked that the Council consider taking a leaf out of Shrewsbury Town Council's book who have not increased the precept for the past 2 years. He suggested that this might be done by either reducing the Council's net expenditure or lowering the general reserves (or a combination of both).

Deputy Town Mayor's Response

Councillor Sawbridge thanked Mr Whittle for his comments and asked members to consider them when discussing the precept later in the meeting.

0278/2122 **MINUTES**

- i) **RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on 14th December 2021.**
- ii) **RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on 21st December 2021.**

0279/2122 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- i) Members were advised that the Mayor's Diary for December 2021 would be circulated the following day:

- 5th Dec - Sinfonia concert - St Mary's Church
- 19th Dec - Christmas carol service - St Mary's Church
- 29th Dec - Becky Peters performance – Café Zero

- ii) Announcements

Members noted that Councillor Karen Sawbridge has been awarded the British Empire Medal in the Queen's New Year's Honours List and congratulated her on her achievement.

0280/2122 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

Nil

0281/2122 **FINANCE**

- i) Accounts Paid – December 2021

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

RESOLVED: that the accounts amounting to £49,737.14 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 December 2021 (£763,853) comprising:

General Fund	£454,925
Ear Marked Reserves	£136,295
Useable Capital Receipts	£172,633

(* Sub totals combined do not necessarily agree with overall total due to roundings)

v) Town Council Bank Reconciliation Statements

Members noted the bank reconciliation statements as at 31st December 2021. (Reconciled sum of all bank accounts £562,304.76).

vi) Accounts for Payment

Members noted receipt of a list of payments for approval.

i) **RESOLVED: that the accounts amounting to £8,879.92 be approved for payment.**

and

ii) **RESOLVED: to authorise Councillors Chetter and Sawbridge to sign the cheques** (on Friday 21st January 2022)

vii) Accounting and Audit

Members noted that Councillors A Chetter and N K Sawbridge, on Friday 17th December 2021, verified/signed the bank statements for November 2021 and signed those cheques approved by Council at the meeting held on 14th December 2021. Councillors Chetter and Sawbridge authorised payroll for December 2021

viii) Earmarked Reserves

Members noted a report which provided a breakdown of Earmarked Reserves and commentary on their intended/possible uses.

ix) Corporate Card

RESOLVED: to approve an increase in the monthly limit on the Town Council Corporate Card to £1,500.

0282/2122 **CIVIC YEAR**

i) Appointment of Town Mayor

Members were asked to consider giving thought for the appointments of a Mayor and Deputy Mayor Elect for the civic year 2022/2023.

Members were of the view that the appointments should be considered at the Town Council meeting on 15th February 2022.

(Clerk's Note: the vote is non-binding and merely indicative; the formal vote will ,and can only, take place at the Annual Council meeting in May.)

ii) Town Council and Committee Structure

Members were asked to consider giving thought to the structure of Council and Committee Meetings for the civic year 2022/2023.

Members agreed that the matter be included on the next Town Council agenda for an extensive debate.

The Town Clerk asked that members forward him their thoughts on any revisions to the current draft structure ahead of the 15th Feb 22 Council meeting next meeting to form a basis of discussion.

0283/2122 **OUTDOOR & PROPERTY MANAGER REPORT**

Members received a report from the Outdoor & Property Manager and noted the activity being undertaken.

In addition to some questions and comments about the items in the report there were also discussions held with regards to:

- the surface condition of the car park on Severn Park, Bandon Lane and Doctors Lane
(Members were informed that Bandon Lane does not form part of the Town Council responsibilities as it is privately owned)
- missing handrails on Stoneway Stones

0284/2122 **SETTING THE PRECEPT FOR FY 2022/2023**

Members received a report from the RFO and a recommendation for the precept for 2022/2023 to be set at £707,668.

RESOLVED: To approve the issuing of the precept, requiring Shropshire Council to pay Bridgnorth Town Council £684,300 (six hundred and eighty-

four thousand three hundred pounds) to meet its expenditure for the financial year 2022/2023.

0285/2122 **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.

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

0286/2122 **CONTRACTS**

Members received a verbal briefing on an existing contract as a point of information.

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