

BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held in the Annexe, College House on Tuesday 16th August 2022 at 7.15pm.

Present:

Aked
Baines MBE
Barlow
Buckley
Chetter
Connolly
D Cooper
N Cooper
Marshall
Rochelle
Seabright
Sawbridge BEM (Chair)
Wellings

In Attendance:

Mrs R Williams, Interim Town Clerk
Mrs R Follette, Interim Responsible Financial Officer

1 Member of the press

0105/2223 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was proposed by Councillor S Barlow, seconded by Councillor A Chetter and unanimously **RESOLVED:** to accept the apologies below:

Councillor Buffey – Personal Commitment
Councillor Ireland – Personal Commitment
Councillor Neal – Personal Commitment

0106/2223 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Nil

0107/2223 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Nil

0108/2223 MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor N Cooper, seconded by Councillor R Connolly and

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held on Tuesday 19th July 2022 following an amendment to minute number 0092/2223:

Apologies for Absence – Councillor Buckley – Personal choice relating to weather/temperature, given there was a heatwave on the date of the meeting

There were 5 abstentions from Councillors: C Baines, S Barlow, J Buckley, R Seabright and I Wellings (4 of the Councillors had not attended the said meeting).

0109/2223 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Members noted the Mayor's Diary for July 2022.

Councillor I Wellings informed Members that he had been invited by the Nation Flood Forum (NFF) to a meeting setting up the Bridgnorth Flood Response Action Plan. There is to be a meeting arranged with Bridgnorth Town Council; more information will be forthcoming in due course.

0110/2223 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

Nil

0111/2223 **FINANCE**

a. Accounts Paid – July 2022

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

It was proposed by Councillor S Barlow, seconded by Councillor R Connolly and unanimously

RESOLVED: That the accounts amounting to £76,631.99 be retrospectively approved for payment.

b. Members noted receipt of Cashbooks 1, 2 & 3.

c. Balance Sheet

Members noted the balance sheet as of the 31st July 2022 (£1,058,753) compromising:

General Fund	£683,305
Earmarked reserves	£202,815
Useable Capital Receipts	£172,633

d. Town Bank Reconciliation Statements

Members noted the bank reconciliation statements as of the 31st July 2022.
(Reconciled sum of all bank accounts £869,669.32)

e. Accounts for Payment

Members noted receipt of a list of payments for approval. It was proposed by Councillor S Barlow, seconded by Councillor J Buckley and unanimously

- i) **RESOLVED:** That the accounts amounting to £19,839.09 be approved for payment.

And

- ii) **RESOLVED:** To authorise Councillors A Chetter and N Cooper to sign the cheques on Friday 19th August 2022.

f. Accounting and Audit

Members noted that Councillors A Buffey and R Ireland, on Friday 22nd July 2022, verified/signed the bank statements for June 2022 and signed those cheques approved by Council at the meeting held on Tuesday 19th July 2022 and authorised payroll for July 2022.

0112/2223 **BANK MANDATES**

It was proposed by Councillor R Seabright, seconded by Councillor J Buckley and unanimously

RESOLVED:

- a. To confirm the removal of the previous Town Clerk, Mr L Jakeman, from the bank mandates

And

- b. To authorise the addition of Miss A Plimmer, Business Administrator, for the view and submit functions only on Unity Trust Bank

0113/2223 **TASK & FINISH GROUP**

Members considered the draft Terms of Reference (TOR) for a newly formed Task and Finish Group with the aim of reviewing the recently acquired quinquennial report. Members wished for the following amendments to be made to the draft TORs:

- Increase the membership to 6
- Amend item 4. to read: Review problem areas and report back to Town Council and the Town Hall Improvements Working Group in a timely manner
- Amend item 6 to expand on what this means ‘consider the staff implications and resources available’
- Add, at item 9. Review the merits of purchasing equipment versus hiring equipment
- Add, at item 10. Reporting dates to be set at the first meeting of the Working Group

It was proposed by Councillor K Sawbridge, seconded by Councillor S Barlow and unanimously

RESOLVED: To amend the TOR’s as stated above and to appoint the following Councillors as members:

S Barlow, R Connolly, N Cooper, R Ireland, K Sawbridge and I Wellings

0114/2223 **APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR**

Members were informed that a revised quote has been received from JDH Business Services Ltd in the sum of £1,125 plus VAT.

Following a general discussion about the merits of retaining Internal Auditors for a period of up to 6 years (JDH Business Services Ltd had just finished a 3 year term) it was considered appropriate to retain the services of the current Internal Audit firm and so it was proposed by Councillor N Cooper, seconded by Councillor A Chetter and unanimously

RESOLVED: To accept the quotation from JDH Business Services Ltd in the sum of £1,125 plus VAT and appoint them as the Internal Auditor for financial years 2022/2023, 2023/2024 and 2024/2025.

0115/2223 **BRIDGNORTH ROUNDABOUTS**

Members considered a report in which they were being asked to agree a procedure with regards to the ongoing maintenance of the 4 roundabouts in town that are owned by Shropshire Council. Shropshire Council are reclaiming the roundabouts for sponsorship purposes. There was an extreme strength of feeling amongst Councillors with regards to the situation. They had received negative feedback from local residents. Concerns were raised over the potential size of the advertising boards and the content of the adverts. Councillors felt very strongly that local businesses should be given the opportunity to advertise over out of town or national companies. They were concerned over the general ambience of the ‘entrances/gateways’ into town and would it be in keeping with a rural, market town.

Concerns were also raised over the Twinning signs on both the Kidderminster and Ludlow Road islands

Members made several comments about the situation and expressed their disappointment. Following a lengthy discussion it was proposed by Councillor K Sawbridge, seconded by Councillor J Buckley and unanimously

RESOLVED: to delegate to the Interim Town Clerk to contact Shropshire Council and inform them of Council's request to re-visit this matter in 12 months' time following Shropshire Council's agreement for Bridgnorth to be included in the second phase of this initiative for all 4 of the roundabouts.

0116/2223 **BRIDGNORTH COMMUNITY HALL**

a. Members noted the minutes of the Annual General meeting of the Bridgnorth Community Hall held on Friday 22nd July 2022.

And

b. Noted the minutes of the Management Committee meeting of the Bridgnorth Community Hall held on Friday 22nd July 2022.

0117/2223 **BRIDGNORTH ART TRAIL WORKING GROUP**

Members noted the minutes of the Bridgnorth Art Trail Working Group meeting held on Monday 25th July 2022.

0118/2223 **BRIDGNORTH GREEN SPACES WORKING GROUP**

Members noted the minutes of the Bridgnorth Green Spaces Working Group meeting held on Monday 11th July 2022.

0119/2223 **YOUTH CLUB**

Members noted the latest termly monitoring and evaluation reports from SYA.

0120/2223 **STATEMENT FROM NHS CRISIS IN SHROPSHIRE**

Members reviewed the statement provided on behalf of the Shropshire Needs Ambulances campaign.

It was proposed by Councillor D Cooper, seconded by Councillor J Buckley and unanimously

RESOLVED: to delegate to the Interim Town Clerk to write a letter noting the Council's concerns regarding the pressures being faced by local health and core

services and to express our support for the staff who are having to cope with these difficult issues.

0121/2223 **STANDING ORDERS**

It was proposed by Councillor K Sawbridge, seconded by Councillor E Marshall and unanimously

RESOLVED: to form a working group to amend and review the standing orders and appoint the following Councillors as members:
D Cooper, E Marshall and K Sawbridge

0122/2223 **PUBLIC BODIES**

It was proposed by Councillor K Sawbridge, seconded by Councillor C Baines and majority

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.

Councillor J Buckley abstained.

Councillor C Baines left the meeting at this point along with the Interim Town Clerk and Interim RFO

0123/2223 **STAFFING MATTERS**

Members received a brief from the chair of the Workforce Committee Councillor Aked, regarding updates on staffing matters.