

BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Bridgnorth Town Council held in the Annexe, College House on
Tuesday 15th November 2022 at 7.15pm.

Present:
K Sawbridge BEM (Mayor)
C Aked
C Baines MBE
S Barlow
J Buckley
A Chetter
R Connolly
D Cooper
N Cooper
R Ireland
E Marshall
L Neal
I Wellings

In Attendance:
Mrs R Williams, Interim Town Clerk
Mrs R Follette, Interim Responsible Financial Officer

Councillor R Leraistre
Shropshire Councillor C Lea
3 Members of the public

0234/2223 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was proposed by Councillor S Barlow, seconded by Councillor I Wellings and unanimously
RESOLVED: to accept the apologies below:

Councillor L Rochelle	Unwell
Councillor R Seabright	Unwell

0235/2223 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Nil

Councillor J Buckley arrived at this point in the meeting

0236/2223 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Members noted the response given to Mr Daniels public question from the Town Council meeting on the 1st November 2022, provided by Councillor N Cooper.

1. Does the Town Council have an estimate for the cost of the removal of the Arts Trail Statues and the making good of the ground on which they stand, and if so what is the estimate?
2. How much money has been set aside for this purpose and is available to the Council?

A: The train trail has £7,800 in reserves to cover the removal of the statues. We have indicative costs for the removal of the statues from non-highway sites (£1,100 in total) but do

not yet have quotations from the specialist contractors that will be need to remove the statues from the High St, Listley St and Whitburn St in the of Autumn 2023.

Question from Mr Daniels

Whilst it is understood that pressing circumstances may force the Council to go back on its public assurances, there are no such pressing circumstances that justify going back on the public assurances given that all the Arts Trail Statues will be removed at the end of a fixed period, and does not the Council therefore think that this reflects poorly on its probity, or on the confidence that people may have in its present and future deliberations?

A written response will be provided to Mr Daniels in due course.

0237/2223

SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR

Members received a verbal report from Shropshire Councillor Christian Lea, that included the following items;

- Shropshire Council received an award from the Employer recognition scheme making them a gold standard employer.
- They have been awarded nearly £1 million by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles and the support of the Energy Saving Trust to install more on-street electric charging points. Bridgnorth's Innage Lane and Listley Street North car parks will be having some of these additional charging points.
- A new package of measures has recently been announced by Shropshire Council to help support vulnerable and low-income households across the county as part of its cost of living offer. £2.1 million has been given to the Council in Household Support Grant funding from the Government to cover the period to the end of next March.
- Shropshire Council are continuing to deliver new recycling bins to residents who have requested one.
- They are also in the process of giving consideration to the introduction and revision of a number of residents on-street parking schemes in the town. A large amount of feedback from the public was received and the second phase of the consultation is going to be in the form of a public exhibition next month.

Members asked the following questions of Councillor Lea;

- 1) When will the gullies on Severn Side be attended to? Councillor Lea will endeavour to find out and will advise in due course.
- 2) When will the Parish Rooms be brought back into use? It is envisaged that this building will soon be brought back to life as Shropshire council are in discussions with a likely buyer.
- 3) How many electric charging points is it intended for Bridgnorth to have? Whilst Councillor Lea wasn't entirely sure, he stated between 8 and 12 electric charging points.

0238/2223

MINUTES

1. It was proposed by Councillor N Cooper, seconded by Councillor C Aked and unanimously **RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes of the Bridgnorth Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 1st November 2022.
2. Members noted the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on Tuesday 8th November 2022.

0239/2223

MAYOR'S AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S DIARY

Members noted the Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's Diary for October 2022.

0240/2223 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

Nil

0241/2223 **FINANCE**

A question of why the accounts papers are not sent out with the agenda was asked. Members were informed that this was the first time, in a long time, that the accounts papers had been to follow on the agenda and it was because of the general workload.

1. Accounts Paid – October 2022

It was proposed by Councillor N Cooper, seconded by Councillor D Cooper and unanimously

RESOLVED: that the accounts amounting to £304,529.73 be retrospectively approved for payment.

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

3. Members noted the budget Summary report including earmarked reserves.

4. Balance Sheet

Members noted the balance sheet as of the 31st October 2022 (£922,041) comprising:

General Fund:	£549,469
Earmarked Reserves:	£199,939
Useable Capital Receipts:	£172,633

5. Town Bank Reconciliation Statements

Members noted the bank reconciliation statements as of the 31st October 2022. (Reconciled sum of all bank accounts £523,685.99)

6. Accounts for Payment

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

6.1. **RESOLVED:** that the accounts amounting to £9,521.66 be approved for payment.

6.2. **RESOLVED:** to authorise Councillors R Ireland and K Sawbridge to sign the cheques on Friday 18th November 2022.

7. Accounting and Audit

Members noted that Councillors N Cooper and R Connolly, on Friday 21st October 2022, verified/signed the bank statements for September 2022 and signed those cheques approved by Council at the meeting held on Tuesday 18th October 2022 and authorised payroll for October 2022.

8. Budget 2023/2024

8.1. Members noted the report showing the current financial position.

The Chair of the Finance Committee gave a visual presentation to Members showing how the budget for 2023/2024 may look with a precept of £747,437.

8.2. Members noted the report showing potential service changes.

Members discussed a number of items with regards to potential savings for the 2023/2024 budget. An informal workshop is to be held on Monday 5th December 2022 at 6pm where details of the budget can be gone through in greater detail.

Members asked Officers to carry out investigations with regards to the possibility of moving the CCTV suite, looking to manage the rental of the Cemetery Lodge in house and resurrecting the Bridgnorth Youth Partnership.

0242/2223

CARNIVAL

Members wished for a vote of thanks to be recorded to the Carnival Committee for a job well done.

It was proposed by Councillor K Sawbridge seconded by Councillor C Baines and unanimously

RESOLVED: to suspend standing orders to allow a member of the public to speak.

It was proposed by Councillor K Sawbridge seconded by Councillor C Baines and unanimously

RESOLVED: to reinstate standing orders.

Following a discussion, it was proposed by Councillor D Cooper, seconded by Councillor C Baines and majority

RESOLVED: to agree to the level of reserves needed (£7,266) and further agree to the Carnival grant of £2,500 remaining in the 2022/2023 budget.

0243/2223

BRIDGNORTH COMMEMORATIVE GARDEN

Members considered correspondence from Bridgnorth Aluminium regarding a commemorative garden at the Hazeldine Foundry site. They had asked for Councils approval and support to pursue the project further.

Councillor L Neal declared an interest at this point as he works for Shropshire Wildlife Trust.

It was proposed by Councillor N Cooper, seconded by Councillor K Sawbridge and majority

RESOLVED: to agree, in principle, for the commemorative garden at the Hazeldine Foundry Site.

0244/2223

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Members considered Councillor E Marshall's agenda submission for him to be appointed to the Community Governance Working Group.

This item is to be brought back to a subsequent meeting.

Councillor S Barlow left the meeting at this point

0245/2223

OUTDOORS AND PROPERTY MANAGERS REPORT

Members noted a report from the Outdoors and Property Manager. It was proposed by Councillor N Cooper, seconded by Councillor K Sawbridge and unanimously

RESOLVED: to close Listley Street toilets at 3.30pm in December except when a town event is taking place and to not reinstate the hanging baskets on the Clock Tower and the Town Hall.

0246/2223 **WORKING GROUP**

Members agreed to form a working group to build responses to Shropshire Councils Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and Local Transport Plan. And to appoint Councillors D Cooper, R Ireland, R Leraistre and L Neal to that group.

0247/2223 **PUBLIC BODIES**

It was proposed by Councillor N Cooper, seconded by Councillor C Aked 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.

R Williams, R Follette and Councillor C Baines left the meeting at this point

0248/2223 **STAFFING MATTERS**

Members considered a proposal from the Chair of the Workforce Committee Councillor C Aked regarding staffing matters.

It was **RESOLVED:** by the majority to accept the proposal, with there being two abstentions, Councillor Chetter and Councillor Marshall