

BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held in the Annexe,
College House on Tuesday 4th October 2022 at 6.30pm.**

Present: Councillors Aked, D Cooper, Wellings
Absent: Councillor Buckley
In Attendance: Miss A Plimmer, Business Administrator

0166/2223 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Members noted the following apologies:

Councillor L Neal Unwell

(Clerks note: Councillor J Buckley submitted apologies; however they were not received until after the meeting.)

0167/2223 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Nil

0168/2223 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Nil

0169/2223 **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor I Wellings, seconded by C Aked and unanimously

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 5th July 2022.

(Clerks note: The agenda stated incorrectly that the previous meeting was held on the 27th June 2022. The correct date of the meeting and therefore accompanying minutes was the 5th July 2022.)

0170/2223 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS FROM THE 1ST JUNE TO THE 14TH SEPTEMBER 2022**

Members noted applications received, town council responses submitted under delegated authority and Shropshire Council decisions where applicable.

0171/2223 **PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS RESPONSIBILITIES**

Members noted an agenda item from Councillor Wellings regarding the responsibilities of planning committee members.

0172/2223 **LOCAL PLAN**

Members received the following verbal update with regards to the progress of the Shropshire Local Plan from Councillor D Cooper:

Following the first series of hearings in July 2022, the Examiners have not yet agreed that the plan overall meets a sufficient test of soundness to merit proceeding to Stage 2 hearings (about individual sites). The issues they have raised are:

- 1. Whether there has been an adequate process to demonstrate compliance with the Duty to Co-operate with neighbouring Planning Authorities.*
- 2. Whether adequate provision has been made to fulfil Shropshire’s requirements for sand and gravel over the plan period, and in particular a concern that the plan partly relies on windfall development coming forward to meet the area’s requirements.*
- 3. Nutrient neutrality in the particular context of the River Clun catchment.*

In relation to the Duty to Co-operate, the Examiners asked Shropshire Council for further details of meetings with neighbouring authorities. Shropshire Council undertook to collate this information and it was provided to the Examiners on 16th September. The Examiners have now confirmed that they will need to hold an additional Stage 1 hearing session specifically about the Duty to Co-operate and this will take place on 17th January 2023. In relation to sand and gravel, Shropshire Council has indicated that it is confident existing operations will come forward with further plans to expand extraction to meet the “windfall” requirement but is seeking to rely on setting policies about what would be acceptable in planning applications rather than specific site allocations. The examiners response on this point has not yet been published. In relation to nutrient neutrality, the Examiners have suggested that revised Statements of Common Ground between the Council and Natural England and the Environment Agency be prepared.

The timetable set out when Shropshire Council agreed to submit the draft Local Plan last Summer was that it anticipated it would have the examiner’s report in approximately May 2022 and would adopt the Plan (subject to modifications) in July 2022. Clearly, this process is running a very long way behind schedule.