

**BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL****Minutes of the Bridgnorth Town Council Meeting held in the Annexe, College House on Tuesday 7th February 2023 at 7.15pm.**

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

In Attendance: Mrs C Turner, Town Clerk
Ms A Plimmer, Business Administrator

0358/2223 WELCOME

The Mayor issued a welcome to the meeting and informed all Councillors that the latest version of the Declaration of Interest and Other Interest forms have been provide and it is advisable to update them following the adoption of the code of conduct at the Full Council meeting held on 17th January 2023.

Proposed by Councillor Sawbridge, Seconded by Councillor Barlow
Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

RESOLVED: that the Council agree to move agenda item 10 – Allotments to above item number 6 – Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's Diary.

0359/2223 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Council held a debate on the request to include the reasons for absence in the minutes.

It was proposed by Councillor Sawbridge, seconded by Councillor Barlow
Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

RESOLVED: that the Council agree to include the reason for absence within the minutes but to state 'other' when Councillors are on holiday.

It was proposed by Councillor Barlow, seconded by Councillor Sawbridge
Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

RESOLVED: that the Committee accept the apologies and reasons for absence for the following Councillors:

L Rochelle – Other work commitments

Councillor Leraistre informed that he would only be able to attend the meeting until 8.00pm due to family commitments.

**0360/2223 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were declared.

0361/2223 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public, Mr Seipel raised a question with regard to a Bridgnorth Town Councillor.

"What is the current policy of the Council about seeking to have Tasley Parish Council absorbed into Bridgnorth?"

Previous minutes have shown that Bridgnorth desired this and has asked Shropshire Council on two or three occasions to consider this wish in its deliberations, so far unsuccessfully.

A recent public meeting in Tasley was attended by a Bridgnorth Councillor who stated that there was no such wish by Bridgnorth Council.

Please advise what the current policy is, and if it has changed from the policy I quoted, when was this decision made, by whom, and where was it recorded?

As I gave advance notice of this question, please may I have the answer tonight and could be question be recorded together with the response".

Councillor D Cooper provided a response on behalf of the Mayor and informed that the Town Council had made 2 requests to Shropshire Council for boundary reviews however these had been rejected by Shropshire Council and would be completed if a county wide governance review were to take place.

The Mayor informed that the current sitting Council had not requested a governance review and not discussed this.

Councillor Connelly confirmed she was at the meeting being referred too. Mr Seipel reminded the Council that it was the responsibility of the Mayor to respond unless given permission to speak on her behalf.

A member of the public, Mr Richards wanted to inform on his support to the Council especially with the large amount of negativity around the wall and he understood that there would be a lot of legal debate regarding this.

0362/2223 MINUTES

Councillor Neal informed he was not present at the extraordinary meeting. The Clerk apologised and confirmed this would be amended.

Councillor Marshall informed that he had received not very complimentary comments from members of the public relating the information for minute number 0319/2223 – Retaining Wall Project Update due to the lack of information within.

It was explained that this was within the confidential part of the meeting and was duly noted.

It was proposed by Councillor Barlow, seconded by Councillor N Cooper
Abstained by Councillor Neal and Seabright who were not in attendance at the meeting.
RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the Extraordinary Town Council meeting held on Monday 9th January 2023, to include the amendment that Councillor Neal was not in attendance and that these were a true record of the business transacted.



Councillor Marshall raised a concern that the minutes of the last meeting were not accurate relating to the question he had raised regarding the Mayor reminding Councillors of the right to remove individuals causing a disturbance at a meeting.

The Mayor informed on her recollection of the conversation.

The advice given was not to continue with this debate due to the risk of increasing the misunderstanding and increase the risk further under data protection.

Councillor Marshall informed that these were public documents, and it was unacceptable and that he would be taking it further.

The Council went through the minutes page by page. An amendment was identified to resolution number 0351/2223 – Bridgnorth Bid to change the wording to read a cost plus 21% value and not to include a 21% value for staff management.

It was proposed by Councillor Chetter, seconded by Councillor Buckley

Against by Councillor Marshall

Abstained by Councillors Ireland, Aked, and Seabright

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 17th January 2023, to include the amended identified to resolution number 0351/2223 – Bridgnorth Bid to change the wording to read a cost plus 21% value and not to include a 21% value for staff management and that these were a true record of the business transacted.

0363/2223 **ALLOTMENTS**

Members discussed the correspondence regarding the Bridgnorth allotments.

It was proposed by Councillor Chetter that Town Council staff complete a piece of work to identify the allotment charges for other Councils before making a decision. There was no seconder for this proposal therefore it did not stand.

It was proposed by Councillor Buckley, seconded by Councillor N Cooper

Abstained by Councillor Chetter

RESOLVED: that the Council agree for a 25% reduction in rent in the year the river floods, for those plots that are affected by the flood and for the Town Council staff to complete a piece of work to identify those plots that flood.

0364/2223 **MAYOR'S AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S DIARY**

Members noted the Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's Diary for January 2023.

0365/2223 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions raised by Members.

0366/2223 **MAYORAL NOMINATIONS**

Mayoral nominations for the municipal year 2023/2024 were discussed.

It was proposed by Councillor Barlow, seconded by Councillor N Cooper

Abstained by Councillor Marshall and Ireland

RESOLVED: that Councillor Connolly is Mayor elect for municipal year 2023/2024.

Councillor Connolly accepted the position and thanked everyone.



Deputy Mayor nominations for the municipal year 2023/2024 were discussed.

Nominations were:

It was proposed by Councillor Baines, seconded by Councillor N Cooper for Councillor D Cooper

It was proposed by Councillor Buckley, seconded by Councillor Chetter for Councillor Wellings

A vote was held for both nominations:

Councillor D Cooper received 4 votes from Councillor Baines, N Cooper, Marshall and D Cooper.

Councillor Wellings received 10 votes from Councillors Barlow, Sawbridge, Connolly, Aked, Buckley, Neal, Chetter, Leraistre, Seabright and Wellings

Abstained by Councillor Ireland.

RESOLVED: that Councillor Wellings is Deputy Mayor elect for the municipal year 2023/2024

0367/2223 **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

Members considered the draft schedule of meetings for the 2023/2024 municipal year.

It was proposed by Councillor N Cooper, seconded by Councillor Wellings

Abstained by Councillor Ireland

RESOLVED: that the Council agree for a review of the Town Council meeting schedule to be completed by the Clerk, to include a forward plan/reporting cycle, to incorporate bank holidays, working groups reports at full council to follow their meeting, one full council meeting a month, August to have recess, start time of meeting to be 6.45pm with a review after 6 months, include the Annual Town Meeting and Shropshire Council Full Council meeting and consultation plan.

0368/2223 **ALLOTMENTS**

This item had already been discussed.

Councillor Leraistre left the meeting.

0369/2223 **GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Further information has been provided to support the Haydn Festival grant. Councillors considered this new information.

It was proposed by Councillor Chetter, seconded by Councillor Ireland

Against by Councillor Baines, Marshall, Barlow, N Cooper, D Cooper and Seabright

RESOLVED: that the Council agree to not award the Haydn Festival with a grant.

0370/2223 **BRIDGNORTH BID**

Members received a verbal update and reviewed a tabled report on the Bridgnorth BID project.

It was proposed by Councillor Chetter, seconded by Councillor N Cooper

Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

RESOLVED: to retrospectively agree for the Town Council to be the Applicant Organisation for a grant application of £42,500 from Shropshire Council for a business need survey to identify the need and desire of the local businesses for a possible Bridgnorth BID – Business



Improvement District. To be the responsible organisation for the grant funding and disbursement in conjunction with the business consortium.

Councillor Seabright left the meeting.

0371/2223 **ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

Members discussed the following items for inclusion on the next agenda:

- Town Council meetings to be recorded and live streamed on Facebook
- Carbon reduction Working Group
- Local Nature Reserve
- Community Garden - Green Space

It was requested that a microphone was available and used in the meetings.

0372/2223 **PUBLIC BODIES**

It was Proposed by Councillor Barlow, seconded by Councillor Neal

Abstained by Councillor Buckley

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.

0373/2223 **RETAINING WALL UPDATE**

Members received a verbal update regarding the Castle Walk Retaining Wall project. It was informed that the legal contractual investigation was still on-going.

The Clerk informed the Council as part of this update, that the Clerk had signed the Town Council into a framework agreement with LM Lawshare, this gave the access to a framework of specialist legal advice that included preferential rates and terms.

It was proposed by Councillor Neal, seconded by Councillor N Cooper

Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

RESOLVED: that the Council retrospectively agree for the Council to be part of the LM Lawshare framework agreement and for the Clerk to sign the documentation for this.

The meeting closed at 8.52pm.