

**BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL****Minutes of the Bridgnorth Town Council Meeting held in the Annexe, College House on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023 at 7.15pm.**

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

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

**0393/2223 WELCOME**

The Mayor issued a welcome to the meeting and informed she would be calling an Extra Ordinary Council meeting for the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023 due to some urgent business which was not on the agenda for this meeting.

**0394/2223 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

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

C Baines - unwell  
R Leraistre - Work Commitment  
L Rochelle – apologies

**0395/2223 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were declared.

**0396/2223 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

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

**RESOLVED:** to approve and suspend the Town Councils Standing Orders for public questions time.

The Chairman of the Energy Reduction Steering Group as the following questions:

'Following the declaration of a Climate Emergency, has the Town Council developed an internal policy for reducing its own use of energy, and the associated costs, and has it considered how best it might assist residents and businesses achieve the same goal without necessarily occurring significant costs to the Town Council?'



The response from the Mayor was that the Town Council did not have a policy but a member of staff is currently undertaking a climate project and were working on an energy audit across all its buildings and staff had been attending training to ensure the best outcomes to address the climate emergency could be achieved. No particular research into how residents and businesses could be helped.

The Mayor asked for a formal discussion to be placed on a future agenda and to invite the Chairman of the Energy Reduction Steering Group to provide an update on the work they have been progressing with and discuss options with the Town Council for future working.

A member of the public asked the following question:

‘It has been agreed that the Town Council will be using external experts for FOI’s, can you tell us how much money has been spent for this service?’

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Town Council has agreed to use external experts where necessary, and currently was collating information on the costs for this and at present no monies had been spent by the Town Council.

0397/2223 **MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor Wellings, seconded by Councillor Barlow  
Abstained by Councillor Connolly who was not in attendance at the meeting.  
**RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023 as a true record of the business transacted.

Councillor Buckley entered the meeting.

0398/2223 **Policing Charter – Safer Communities**

The Town Clerk informed the Town Council that the Safer Neighbourhood Policing team had been unable to attend the meeting due to attending incidents this evening.

The Town Council had a debate on the current three (3) policing priorities for Bridgnorth including a discussion on the use of St Johns Street in Low Town and the lap used by cars around the town.

The three (3) policing priorities:

1. To reduce illegal drug activity, particularly in residential areas.
2. To reduce speeding cars and antisocial driving in and around the Town Centre
3. To tackle antisocial behaviour with an emphasis on evenings in the around the Town Centre

It was proposed by Councillor Barlow, seconded by Councillor Ireland  
Unanimously agreed by all Councillors  
**RESOLVED:** to approve the recommendation to continue with the agreed policing priorities from the meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

0398/2223 **MAYOR’S AND DEPUTY MAYOR’S DIARY**

Members noted the Mayor’s and Deputy Mayor’s Diary for February 2023.

0399/2223 **MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

There were no members questions.

0400/2223 **SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR**



Members received the following verbal report from Shropshire Councillor Christian Lea.

“Good evening Madam Mayor, Town Councillors and members of the public. I’m here this evening to give a Shropshire Council report.

It’s hard to believe that it’s a year now since wheelie bins for recycling cans, glass and plastic were made available to Shropshire Council residents. Orders commenced last January with deliveries beginning last May and as at the end of last week, over 103,000 bins which have been manufactured by Telford based company Craemer have been delivered. Craemer having won the contract to manufacture the bins pledged to donate £6,000 to local good causes through its social value fund with the Bylet Bowling Club being one of the beneficiaries.

Bridgnorth Library is one of six libraries in Shropshire which is to benefit from £236,950 having been awarded to Shropshire Council by Arts Council England to install new equipment which will make library spaces more accommodating and accessible to the wider community. The Libraries Improvement Fund enables libraries to invest in upgrading buildings and technology so they are better equipped to respond to the changing ways in which people are using them. 1 to1 interview pods with accompanying technology to enable private consultations with the public either face to face or online will be purchased. Mobile shelving will; also be bought to help create flexible space to assist in accommodating health and wellbeing sessions which are offered through social prescribing and creative health models.

Cllr Kirstie Hurst-Knight and myself attended Astley Abbots Parish Council meeting last week and heard from two Astley Abbots residents who are concerned about some motorists driving through their village at inappropriate speeds. This is despite the narrowness of the local lanes and there being no pavements through much of the village. We are thus arranging a meeting with a Shropshire Highways Traffic Engineer to take this matter forward. We also continue to work with Bridgnorth Police on issues of speeding and welcome the Police request for local residents to help them by letting them know when and where they witness anti-social driving. On other Ward matters, it is pleasing to see that the railings at the entrance to St John’s Street have been repaired following them having been hit by a vehicle last year. Over the past few months, we have been working with the Countryside Recreation Team who have recently replaced a stile between two fields with a kissing gate, which is now preventing sheep from escaping. We continue to chase the Street Lighting Team regarding the Mill Street light column, which needs to be reconnected after it was damaged following a vehicle hitting it last Summer. Resurfacing works have been carried out this week on Morfe Road and The Mall. Finally, residents of Cartway, Friars Street and Riverside will be pleased to learn that the Keep Clear marking is going to be reinstated at the junction of Cartway with Bridge Street when the resurfacing works are undertaken next week. This will make turning out of this junction much easier for residents.”

It was proposed by Councillor Connolly, seconded by Councillor Aked  
Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** that the Town Council would reinstate Standing Orders.

0401/2223 **FINANCE**

1. Accounts Paid – February 2023

It was proposed by Councillor Sawbridge, seconded by Councillor Seabright  
Abstained by Councillor Ireland

**RESOLVED:** that the accounts amounting to £61,992.45 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 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023 (£764,016) compromising:

|                           |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| General Fund:             | £383,416 |
| Earmarked Reserves:       | £189,967 |
| Useable Capital Receipts: | £172,633 |

5. Town Bank Reconciliation Statements

Members noted the bank reconciliation statements as of the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023. (Reconciled sum of all bank accounts £79,743.40)

6. Accounts for Payment

Members noted receipt of a list of payments for approval. It was proposed by Councillor Marshall, seconded by Councillor Chetter Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

6.1. **RESOLVED:** that the accounts amounting to £25,889.35 be approved for payment.

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

6.2. **RESOLVED:** to authorise Councillors Sawbridge and Wellings to authorise the bank payments on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

7. Accounting and Audit

Members noted that Councillors K Sawbridge and N Cooper, on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023, verified/signed the bank statements for January 2023 and signed those payments approved by Council at the meeting held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023 and authorised payroll for February 2023.

0402/2223 **GREEN SPACES WORKING GROUP**

Members noted the minutes of the Green Spaces Working group meeting held on January 16<sup>th</sup> 2023.

0403/2223 **GRANT APPLICATIONS**

1. Members reviewed the report regarding the grant application received from Bridgnorth Festival.

It was proposed by Councillor Chetter, seconded by Councillor Barlow 6 Councillors voted for and 6 Councillors voted against

The Mayor had the casting vote as per Standing Order 3.r. and voted for, therefore the motion was carried.



**RESOLVED:** that the Council agree for a £500.00 grant be awarded to the Bridgnorth Festival for their 2023 event and make a suggestion that Castle Hall could also be considered for a venue for the event.

- 2. Members reviewed the report regarding the grant application received from Christians Against Poverty Bridgnorth and debated the request at length as to the value of the grant to be paid.

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

**RESOLVED:** that the Council agree for a £3,600.00 grant be awarded to Christians Against Poverty Bridgnorth to assist in the delivery of assistance to 24 additional clients and to ask that the Town Council logo is displayed to show the Town Council support.

0404/2223 **LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN (LCWIP) CONSULTATION**

Members received an update report from the LCWIP Working Group regarding the ongoing consultation and had a lengthy debate regarding the impact on the Town.

Members were advised to respond to the consultation with their individual comments and requests.

Councillor Seabright left the meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor Ireland, Seconded by Councillor Neale  
Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** that the Council agree for all councillors to have access to a working document to enable Councillors to add comments and to add on the google street maps.

It was proposed by Councillor Connolly, Seconded by Councillor Ireland  
Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** that the Council agree to suspend the Town Councils Standing Order to allow a member of the public to provide an update on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and the work already taken place.

It was proposed by Councillor Sawbridge, Seconded by Councillor Aked  
Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** that the Council agree to suspend the Town Councils Standing Order to allow a member of the public to provide an update on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and the work already taken place.

0405/2223 **DLF WORKS SCHEDULE**

Members noted the report provided by the DLF Supervisor on the work schedule.

0406/2223 **TWINNING ASSOCIATION**

The Town Clerk provided a verbal update on the Twinning Association and the Town Council debated Twinning.

0407/2223 **LOTTERY GRANT**

Members noted that we have successfully been awarded a grant from the National Lottery for £2,200 to use for the Kings Coronation Tea Party. Members wanted to thank the Business Administrator for obtaining this grant.



0407/2223 **ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

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

Councillor Sarah Barlow left the meeting.

- Supporting the Energy Reduction Steering Group
- CCTV
- Energy
- Hanging Baskets
- Encouraging residents to standing for Council
- Publishing of Councillor attendance at meetings
- Come & Chat to BTC Councillors once a month

Councillor Barlow Returned to the meeting.

0408/2223 **PUBLIC BODIES**

It was proposed by Councillor Barlow, seconded by Councillor Wellings  
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.

0409/2223 **SYA CONTRACT**

Councillor Barlow left the meeting

Members discussed the renewal of the SYA contract for youth provision which expires on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 this item was deferred to a future Town Council meeting.

0410/2223 **ELECTRICITY CONTRACT RENEWAL**

Members discussed the electricity contract renewal and deferred to a future Town Council meeting. The item to include if the electricity is renewable energy.

0411/2223 **RETAINING WALL AT CASTLE WALK**

Members received an update from the Town Clerk on the Retaining Wall Project.

0412/2223 **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Members received a staffing update from the Chair of the Personnel Committee.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm