

**BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Bridgnorth Town Council held in the Town Hall on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 6.45pm. The meeting was adjourned after Agenda item 6 and resumed in the Annexe, College House on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 at 6.45pm.**

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

**In Attendance:** Mrs C Turner, Town Clerk  
Mrs R Williams, Deputy Clerk

**Absent:** Councillor R Leraistre

0013/2324 **WELCOME**

The Mayor welcome everyone to the meeting.

0014/2324 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

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

C Baines - Another meeting  
A Chetter - Other commitment  
R Ireland - Other commitment  
R Seabright - A family commitment

0015/2324 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following disclosable pecuniary interests or other registerable interests were made:

Councillor N Cooper – Chair of the Twinning Association  
Councillor Buckley – Northgate Swimming Club and Shropshire Councillor  
Councillor Marshall - Northgate Swimming Club  
Councillor Neal – Northgate Swimming Club  
Councillor Sawbridge – Member of the Committee for the Twinning Association and  
Bridgnorth Rugby Club  
Councillor Rochelle – Bridgnorth Rugby Club

0016/2324 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

**0017/2324 MINUTES**

It was proposed by Councillor Wellings, seconded by Councillor Barlow  
Abstained by Councillor Neal who was not present at the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023 as a true record of the business transacted and to include the following changes:

Page 4 - 0431/2223 – 4. Change working from compromising to comprising

Members noted the minutes of the Personnel Committee held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

It was proposed by Councillor Barlow, seconded by Councillor Aked  
Abstained by Councillor D Cooper and Councillor N Cooper who were not present at the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes of the Extraordinary Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023 as a true record of the business transacted.

**0018/2324 MAYOR'S AND DEPUTY MAYOR'S DIARY**

Members noted the previous Mayor's Diary for April 2023.

**0019/2324 MEMBERS QUESTION TIME**

There were no members questions.

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

**RESOLVED:** to approve item number 19 on this agenda – Energy Reduction Steering Group to be brought forward to the next agenda item.

**0020/2324 ENERGY REDUCTION STEERING GROUP**

Members received a verbal update provided by Mr Clive Dyson, Chairman of the Steering Group. This update included:

- The request for support and active participation from the Town Council
- The link with SALC
- Use of Town Council meeting rooms
- Public meeting needs a larger room
- Thank you for the support from the Town Council for the Green Festival
- Public Plan – Town Council omissions
- The Bid for Funding
- Work on the Town Council buildings
- Town Council properties where they were landlords

It was confirmed that the Town Council offer grants to organisations and it was confirmed a grant application would be sent to Mr Dyson for possible use of rooms.

**0021/2324 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

Members noted the schedule of meetings for 2023/24 municipal year, previously agreed at the Full Council meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023 and to be available on the Town Council website.



## ANNUAL REVIEW

### 0022/2324 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES

Proposed by Councillor Wellings, Seconded by Councillor Barlow

Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** to appoint the following Councillors to the Personnel Committee: C Aked, S Barlow, N Cooper, E Marshall, and I Wellings

Proposed by Councillor Barlow, Seconded by Councillor Buckley

Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** to appoint the following Councillors to the Planning Committee: I Wellings, L Neal, J Buckley, D Cooper, R Ireland and K Sawbridge.

The Clerk was asked to note a thank you to Councillor C Aked for his contribution to the Planning Committee during the last 12 months.

Proposed by Councillor N Cooper, Seconded by Councillor Neal

Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** to appoint the following Councillors to the Finance Committee: R Ireland, E Marshall, J Buckley, N Cooper, K Sawbridge, and D Cooper.

Proposed by Councillor Wellings, Seconded by Councillor Barlow

Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** to appoint the following Councillors to the Events Committee: I Wellings, C Aked, S Barlow, R Ireland and R Connolly.

### 0023/2324 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members held a debate on the Terms of Reference.

Proposed by Councillor N Cooper, Seconded by Councillor Wellings

Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** to agree the Terms of Reference for the Planning Committee.

Proposed by Councillor N Cooper, Seconded by Councillor Barlow

Abstained by Councillor Marshall

**RESOLVED:** to agree the Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee.

Proposed by Councillor N Cooper, Seconded by Councillor Wellings

Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** to agree the Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Barlow, Seconded by Councillor Connolly

Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** to agree the Terms of Reference for the Events Committee.

### 0024/2324 EXTERNAL BODIES

Members held a debate on the External Bodies.



Proposed by Councillor N Cooper, Seconded by Councillor Aked  
Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** to appoint and agree the member representatives on external bodies as detailed below:

- i. Councillor Barlow to continue with St Leonard's Weaver and Bluecoat Trust
- ii. Councillor Connolly and Councillor D Cooper for one year with Bridgnorth & Shifnal Area Committee of Local Councils
- iii. Councillor N Cooper, Councillor E Marshall and Councillor L Rochelle with Sir Roberts Lee's Charity
- iv. Councillor C Baines with Bridgnorth Parish Charity
- v. Councillor K Sawbridge with Bridgnorth Twinning.

Members noted that representatives will be required to provide a report to Council at least once in the year, a matter which had been overlooked during the pandemic.

*(Clerk's Note: Officers to remind the representatives quarterly that a report is required)*

#### 0025/2324 **REVIEW OF INVENTORY OF LAND AND ASSETS**

Members noted that a review of the asset register had been undertaken as part of the end of year accounting process (as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, value £1,758,081.00).

The Town Clerk was asked to note that assets were to be valued every 5 years.

#### 0026/2324 **INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

Members noted that the Town Council has a 3-year contract with WPS Insurance which expires in July 2023 and note the delegation to the Deputy Clerk for this renewal.

#### 0027/2324 **SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Members noted the following subscriptions to be continued by the Town Council:

- Shropshire Association of Local Councils
- National Association of British Market Authorities
- Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management.

#### 0028/2324 **POLICIES**

Members reviewed and noted the Town Council policies.

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

**RESOLVED:** to adopt the following policies:

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Town Council Complaints Procedure
- Freedom of Information Procedure
- Data Protection Policy
- Policy for dealing with the press/media
- Risk Management Strategy
- Financial Reserves Policy
- Staff Handbook



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**FINANCE**

## 1. Accounts Paid – April 2023

**RESOLVED:** that the accounts amounting to £121,694.81 be retrospectively approved for payment.

## 2. Year End for Financial Year 2022/2023

Members noted the year end closedown for 2022/2023 had taken place and completed on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

## 3. Accounts for Payment

Proposed by Councillor Wellings, Seconded by Councillor Connolly  
Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** to authorise the signing of invoices for payment and confirm Councillor N Cooper and Councillor Aled to make the payments on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

4. Members noted that Councillors S Barlow, R Connolly and I Wellings on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023, verified/signed the bank statements for March 2023 and signed the payments approved by Council at the meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023.  
Councillors R Connolly and I Wellings authorised the payroll for April 2023.

## 5. Internal Audit Report

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

**RESOLVED:** to receive and accept the second interim Internal Audit Report for 2022/2023 and note the comments from the RFO.

## 6. Regular Payments and Standing Orders

Proposed by Councillor N Cooper, Seconded by Councillor Connolly  
Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** to approve the list of regular payments, direct debits and standing orders.

## 7. Earmarked Reserves (EMR)

Proposed by Councillor N Cooper, Seconded by Councillor Buckley  
Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** to agree to give retrospectively approval to the transactions to EMRs which were completed as part of the year end process.

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**PAYMENTS BY DIRECT DEBIT**

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

**RESOLVED:** to agree for the water rates to be paid by direct debit with immediate effect.

0031/2324

**PROJECT UPDATE FROM THE FOUNDRY YARD COMMEMORATIVE GARDEN**

Members were provided with a detailed update prior to the meeting.

**0032/2324 ENERGY REDUCTION STEERING GROUP**

This item was resolved to be brought forward within the agenda to after agenda item number 7. Members Question Time.

**0033/2324 LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN (LCWIP)**

Members were provided with an update from Councillor D Copper who informed that a draft had been completed, this would be amended with the question raised by a concerned resident via a Shropshire Councillor.

The Town Clerk was asked to circulate the draft comments to all Councillors for the LCWIP.

It was proposed by Councillor Connolly, seconded by Councillor Wellings  
Abstained by Councillor Marshall

**RESOLVED:** to agree for the draft to be circulated and for all Councillors to make comments or provide feedback and for the Town Council response to be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Working Group to enable the Town Council to response to Shropshire Council within the deadline of the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

**0034/2324 BOUNDARY COMMISSION**

Members were asked to note the update provided by Councillor D Cooper on the draft proposals on the Shropshire Council Boundaries. The consultation was in progress and the Community Governance review would be undertaken but with the delays this would have a tight timescale.

**0035/2324 GRANT APPLICATIONS**

Members were asked to receive and review the report detailing the grant application from Northgate Swimming Club.

Councillor Marshall left the room.

The Town Clerk was asked to revisit the application and gather further information to present a decision at the next Town Council meeting.

It was proposed by Councillor N Cooper, seconded by Councillor Barlow  
Abstained by Councillors Connolly, Neal, Marshall and Buckley

**RESOLVED:** to agree for the Town Clerk to gather more information from the Northgate Swimming Club to understand where the money would be used and obtain a copy of the bank statement.

Councillor Marshall returned to the meeting.

Members were asked to receive and review the report detailing the grant application from Bridgnorth & District Twinning Association.

Councillors N Copper and K Sawbridge left the meeting.

Members debated the application from the Bridgnorth & District Twinning Association.

It was proposed by Councillor Neal, seconded by Councillor Barlow  
Abstained by Councillor D Cooper, N Cooper and K Sawbridge





**RESOLVED:** to agree the grant application but for the payment of £1,800 to be paid directly to the Spartans Football Club as a contribution towards their travel expenses to Schrobenhausen and not to pay the Bridgnorth & District Twinning Association.

Councillor N Cooper and K Sawbridge returned to the meeting.

0036/2324 **ART TRAIL WORKING GROUP**

Members noted the updated provided from the Art Trail Working Group.

0037/2324 **PUBLIC ATTENDANCE & COUNCIL MEETING LOCATIONS**

Members were provided with a verbal update from Councillor Marshall requesting that occasional Town Council meeting were held elsewhere in the Town. Members debated this item in detail.

It was proposed by Councillor Marshall that occasional Town Council meeting were held at other locations within the Town. There was no seconder for this resolution therefore it was not carried.

Proposed by Councillor Buckley, seconded by Councillor Barlow  
Abstained by Councillor Wellings

**RESOLVED:** to agree to revisit this item in 6 months time and consider the locations for Town Council meetings for 2024 / 2025.

0038/2324 **ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

Members are asked to provide items for inclusion on a future agenda.

- Folly Hole - the Town Clerk confirmed this was on the agenda for June 2023.
- Town Hall - to be open up to the public on a regular basis and at weekends.
- Town Hall Improvements
- Cartway Refuge Issue
- Boys Club

Councillor Barlow left the meeting.

0039/2223 **PUBLIC BODIES**

Proposed by Councillor Neal, Seconded by Councillor Sawbridge  
Abstained by Councillor Buckley

**RECOMMENDED:** 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, **RECOMMENDED:** that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded.

0040/2223 **CCTV MAINTENANCE CONTRACT RENEWAL**

Proposed by Councillor D Cooper, seconded by Councillor L Neal  
Unanimously agreed by all Councillors.

**RESOLVED:** to agree to extend the current CCTV contract for a period of 12 months on the same terms and conditions that currently are in place.

The RFO was asked to provide all Councillor with the information on the number of call outs during the last 12 months and the costs for this.

**0041/2324 PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

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

Members were given the opportunity to ask question and debate the strategic progress and direction provided for the Council.

Proposed by Councillor D Cooper, seconded by Councillor Marshall

Unanimously agreed by all Councillors.

**RESOLVED:** to agree to suspend standing orders to enable the remaining agenda items and business to be transacted.

**0042/2324 RETAINING WALL PROJECT**

Members were asked to receive a tabled report providing the additional information requested from the Extraordinary Town Council meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and debate the verbal update from the Town Clerk regarding the retaining wall project.

Members were given the opportunity ask the Town Clerk and the Project Team questions and debate the options.

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

Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** to agree the recommendation for stage 2b to be completed by Bridgnorth Town Council to include the following:

- The Town Council reserve their position regarding this Stage 2b and the Party Wall.
- For the costs be to be spent from General Reserves with work to be completed with the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Town Clerk and RFO to understand the potential use of funding from the Capital Receipts.
- The Town Council noted the impact on the Town Council's budget and in particular the General Reserve position.
- To review the Stage 3 elements of the project and provide an update at a future Town Council meeting regarding the possibility of a loan via the Public Works Loan Board. This word to be completed in conjunction with the Structural Engineer report and recommendations.

Members debated the impact on the residents of Low Town and visitors.

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

Unanimously agreed by all Councillors

**RESOLVED:** to agree for the Town Clerk to investigate to use of the Community Bus for people in Low Town to use, to complete a weeks trial and to allocate £1,000.00 from General Reserves to cover costs.

Members debated the impact on the Town Councils budget.

It was proposed by Councillor Buckley, seconded by Councillor Sawbridge

A vote was taken:

For by Councillors Neal, Buckley, Rochelle, Marshall, Sawbridge and D Cooper

Against by no Councillors

Abstained by Councillors N Cooper, Aked, Wellings and Connolly.

**RESOLVED:** to agree for a Crown Fund to be launch for an appeal to assist the Town Council with the funding for the remedial works on the retaining wall. For a statement to be





provided as an update and for a statement to be provided detailing the Crowd Funding once the Town Clerk had made the enquiries and confirmed the Town Council were able to do this.

Meeting Closed at 9.45pm.

DRAFT