



# BEWDLEY Town Council

## **MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

**HELD 2<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2019 at 7.00PM GUILDHALL**

### **PRESENT**

Council Members      Cllr J Byng - Town Mayor and Meeting Chairman  
                                 Cllr L Kearns – Deputy Town Mayor  
                                 Cllrs A Coleman, R Coleman, C Edginton-White, P Gittins MBE, P  
                                 Harrison, D Morehead, R Stanczyszyn

In attendance:         Six Members of the Public  
                                 S Hudson - Town Clerk

### **8975    MAYOR'S OPENING REMARKS**

The Mayor, Cllr J Byng welcomed everyone to the meeting and spoke as follows:

The Monitoring Officer has given advice to remind Councillors that they should abide by the Code of Conduct, behave respectfully to each other at all times and keep their declarations of interests up to date.

Councillors were reminded that purdah now applies, the Council have received confirmation that business should continue as normal however, there should be no mention of political issues. A copy of the Local Government Association's guide has been sent to all Councillors.

### **8976    APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs S Billett, S Collingridge, L Davies and H Lacy

### **8977    DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors were reminded to submit their Register of Interests and to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary and/or Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.

The Mayor, Cllr J Byng declared an Other Disclosable Interest

- 8983 – Together Group – as Chairman of the Group.

### **8978    COUNCILLORS' DISPENSATIONS**

No dispensation requests were submitted for consideration.

### **8979    PERSONAL STATEMENT BY CLLR C EDGINTON WHITE**

Cllr C Edginton White read out her personal statement

I acknowledge that as a councillor my first duty is to the Council and the electorate.

On August 21st 2019 I attended a Private Preliminary Employment Tribunal Hearing with an ex employee who is a friend to take notes on his behalf. By assisting a friend at the private preliminary hearing, I acknowledge that I have put myself in a position where my independence and integrity may be questioned.

I recognise that my first duty is to the Town Council and apologise to Councillors who may have had cause to doubt my commitment and responsibility to prioritise the interests of Bewdley Town Council above external friendships.

I unreservedly apologise if my actions may have brought the reputation of Bewdley Town Council into disrepute.

I confirm that I do not intend to participate at future tribunal proceedings unless I am called to give evidence. I will also continue to declare an interest at the start of any meeting where staffing matters that include updates on ex employees with whom I am friends are on the agenda.

## 8980 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- i. **Members of the public.** Members of the public took the opportunity to speak, as follows:

A member of the public commented that British Telecom had posted a notice of removal on the telephone box located in Northwood Lane. The Council were asked for their support in the adoption of this telephone box.

It was later confirmed that this telephone box in question was not within BTC's parish.

### b. Representative members of the principal authorities

- 1) Mr I Hardman, WCC member for Cookley, Wolverley and Wribbenhall spoke as follows:

Local Issues:

County Highways have now affixed new Chevron Signage to the recently replaced Safety Barrier Railings in Kidderminster Road.

The Highways Engineer has been reminded that the Safari Park Roundabout repairs have still not been carried out to enable transfer of the ground maintenance to the District Council.

Regarding the cyclists collisions occurring at the end of New Road, the Highways Engineer has been chased to urge attention from the Traffic Engineer.

The Highways Engineer has been chased to liaise with the land owner to have trees cut back obscuring the Northwood lane lamp.

Wyre Forest Issues:

The Worcester Street Public Realm work for Kidderminster Town Centre is now virtually completed and is open.

Work on Kidderminster Train Station continues, with changes to the forecourt taking place.

Worcestershire County Highways have now started work on the Churchfields site with the creation of a spur road off the island at the top of Blackwell Street to accommodate traffic out of the town via a one way system.

Strategic Issues County Wide:

The County's Cabinet will soon be announcing their draft budget for 2020/21.

The Council is undertaking an organisational redesign with a view of reducing staffing costs by £6million and restructuring its top 3 tiers to a chief executive, 3 strategic directors, and assistant directors which are currently being appointed. Also, Simon Mallinson, the current Head of Legal and Democratic Services is retiring in February 2020 after 21 years of service.

Councillors raised issues about the placement of the chevron signage at the Kidderminster Road Corner and considered that chevron signage should also be placed before this point.

### **c. Representatives of support services**

- 1) A representative from the Police spoke as follows:
  - A motorbike has been stolen from Dog Lane.
  - An incident of vandalism occurred on Saturday night in the Men's toilets
  - A fake Scottish £20 was reported, shop owners should be aware
  - Millennium Green – The children hanging around the area have moved on to the Park; residents are much happier. PC S Thomas has approached the Bewdley School who have agreed to undertake some work in the Millennium Green

**8981 MINUTES:** of the previous Town Council meeting 07/10/2019.

It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** the draft of the minutes of the Town Council meeting, held on 07/10/2019, is a true and accurate record of that meeting

### **8982 ACCOUNTS**

The Town Clerk presented the position as follows:

- i. The updated schedule of accounts including approval of invoices to be paid and approval of invoices paid as a matter of urgency.

It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** the schedule of accounts as at 30/11/2019.

- Councillors were reminded to initial both the cheque stub and the invoice when signing the cheque thereby evidencing the accuracy of both.

The following documents were presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee 20/11/2019

- ii. It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the cash balances as at 31/10/2019, as general fund.
- iii. It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the bank reconciliation date 31/10/2019.

BEWDLEY TOWN COUNCIL	
<b>BANK BALANCE @ 31ST OCTOBER 2019</b>	
<b>UNITY BANK CURRENT ACCOUNT</b>	
<b>Summary</b>	
Statement beginning balance	126,044.10
Cheques and payments cleared (24)	-9,482.82
Deposits and other credits cleared (5)	6,181.48
Statement ending balance	<b>122,742.76</b>
Uncleared transactions as of 31/10/2019	8,574.03
Register balance as of 31/10/2019	<b>131,316.79</b>
<b>UNITY BANK DEPOSIT ACCOUNT</b>	
BANK BALANCE @ 31ST OCTOBER 2019	£10,610.30
<b>SCOTTISH WIDOWS INVESTMENT</b>	
BANK BALANCE @ 31ST OCTOBER 2019	£30,460.85
<b>CAMBRIDGE BUILDING SOCIETY</b>	
BANK BALANCE @ 31ST OCTOBER 2019	£30,000.00
<b>PETTY CASH</b>	
BANK BALANCE @ 31ST OCTOBER 2019	£110.63
<b>TOTAL CASH &amp; INVESTMENT 31ST OCTOBER 2019</b>	<b>£202,498.57</b>

- iv. It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the current financial position actual against budget as at 31/10/2019.

### 8983 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Round-up of draft minutes, reports and updates arising since 04/10/2019:

**i) Planning Committee,**

It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the draft minutes of the meeting held on 31/10/2019 will be presented to the next meeting.

**ii) Finance and General Purposes Committee, meeting held 16/10/2019.**

It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the Finance and General Purposes Committee's draft minutes 13/11/2019.

The Mayor, Cllr J Byng sought approval for the recommendations as follows:

- a) Together Group – Discussion and decisions were deferred until the January 2020 Council meeting due to purdah

b) Risk Assessments for Review and Approval:

It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** the following risk assessments:

- Christmas Light Switch-on Event risk assessment
- Christmas Tree risk assessment
- Remembrance Sunday risk assessments

c) Bench

It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** that WFDC re-fit a bench on the Cleobury Road at a cost of £60.42 and that the vandalised bench in Millennium Green is repaired.

d) Virements

It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** Virements



**2019/20 Budget Virements**

To adjust budget			
Move From		Move To	
Adjustments as agreed at F&GP committee 13th November 2019 - minute number F&GP/255			
Churchyards	£1,000	Millennium Green	£1,000
<i>To support the clearance and maintenance of Millennium Green</i>			
Load Street Toilet Cleanin	£8,790	Employment Costs Cleaner	£8,790
<i>Move cleaners salary costs (WFDC contribution) from Load Street Toilets to employment costs</i>			

**8984 ROAD SAFETY GROUP**

It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** to formally request that WCC Highways make all traffic survey data available to the Town Council and that a complaint should be raised with WCC regarding the previously unseen July 2018 survey documents only recently being provided.

**8985 MILLENNIUM GREEN**

The Millennium Green Chairman of Trustees Cllr S Billett was unable to attend the meeting, the Town Clerk gave a brief update on actions to be taken and was happy that the Bewdley School were to be involved in the project.

**8986 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PROGRESS**

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group leader, Cllr R Stanczyszyn gave Councillors an update and confirmed that he has been in communication with the two sets of consultants working on the project and was awaiting further information.

**8987 LOCALISM**

The Town Clerk confirmed that, following a meeting with Linda Draycote and Kathryn Underhill, further financial information and the condition reports for the Toilets had been received from WFDC. Additional information is required regarding the condition of the paddling pool.

**8988 TOWN CLERK'S UPDATES**

Councillors were asked to **note** the Town Clerk's updates relating to ongoing concerns, including:

- **Internal Audit -**

Cllr P Gittins MBE had reviewed the financial system in line with the Internal Auditor's recommendations. An observations report will be taken to the next Finance & General Purposes committee.

- **Public Benches -**

A list of all benches identified as belonging to WCC has been sent to the County Highways Manager, no response has yet been received. WFDC are due to fit a replacement bench on the Cleobury Road.

- **Bollards –**

Awaiting an update from WCC Highways

It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the Town Clerk's updates.

**8989 BUDGET 2020/21**

A budget meeting has been arranged for 04/12/2019. From this meeting, final recommendations will be taken to the Finance & General Purposes committee for consideration.

**8990 CHRISTMAS LIGHT SWITCH ON EVENT**

De-brief meeting to be held 05/12/2019. The Town Clerk provided Councillors with a copy of the Social Media policy and asked that care is taken when posting comments and responses on social media sites.

**8991 FLOOD DEFENCES**

Community Flood Defence meeting on 27/11/19 7pm at St George’s Hall was cancelled by the Environment Agency due to on going flooding issues in other parts of the Country. Once weather conditions have stabilised the Environment Agency will provide new meeting dates.

**8992 RURAL MARKET TOWN GROUP**

Following discussions with regard to BTC’s participation in the Rural Market Town Group, Councillors **RESOLVED** to **Agree not** to join the group at this time.

**8993 MAYOR’S DIARY AND FUTURE EVENTS**

- i) To receive an update on the Mayor’s diary for October and November 2019.
- ii) The future community events were noted.  
Youth Music Night – A Mayor’s Charity event to be held at St George’s Hall on 24/01/2020

**8994 ITEMS OF URGENCY OR TO NOTE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

None

**8995 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING – Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020  
7pm**

**The meeting closed at 7.45pm**

**Signed.....  
Mayor/Chairman  
6<sup>th</sup> January 2020**