



# BEWDLEY Town Council

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

### **HELD AS A VIRTUAL MEETING ON** **1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 at 7.00PM**

This virtual meeting was held using Zoom software

*(Voting was recorded by a show of hands where Councillors were able to access the meeting using a camera and could be seen by the Town Clerk; Councillors who had no access to a camera were asked to speak out or use the CHAT function on Zoom)*

#### **PRESENT**

Council Members     The Mayor, Cllr A Coleman and Cllrs D Morehead, Deputy Mayor, J Byng, S Billett, , R Coleman, S Collingridge, L Davies, C Edginton White, P Gittins MBE, P Harrison, H Lacy, M Maher, , R Stanczyszyn

In attendance:         S Hudson - Town Clerk  
Six members of the public

#### **9125    OPENING REMARKS**

The Mayor Cllr A Coleman welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a huge thank you to the Town Clerk and the Council Staff who have been working under pressure from home; giving recognition to the challenges they have faced and all their efforts.

#### **9126    TO RECEIVE AND NOTE ANY COUNCIL MEMBER'S APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE**

None

#### **9127    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.

None

#### **9128    COUNCILLORS' DISPENSATIONS**

None requested

#### **9129    PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

##### **Representative members of the principal authorities**

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

The Highways Liaison Engineer, Paul Green has agreed to a short meeting this Thursday to discuss outstanding issues.

The County Council have agreed to a programme of tree-planting (150,000 trees) at several sites across the county over the next 5 years and one of the proposed sites is the field at Netherton Lane which is between the Leisure Centre Fields and the Blackstone Car Park. The site is owned by

Worcestershire County Council and the tress will be supplied free of charge. Once more detailed information is available it will be forwarded on.

Re: Car Park Development in Wribbenhall, whilst County Councillors are aware that Worcestershire County Council are considering ways of easing traffic problems in Bewdley Town and are looking at possibly finding a location for a car park in Wribbenhall, no details have yet been provided.

2) **Mrs R Vale, WCC member for Bewdley division** spoke as follow:

A letter has been written to the Leader of WFDC raising concerns with regard to the removal of the cash option from the WFDC pay and display machines; this means that residents have no option but to pay via phone, preventing vital access to these car parks for residents who have no technical knowledge.

Traffic and congestion. There have been problems with traffic and congestion in Bewdley. At the weekend, Fire Engines had difficulty in accessing Dry Mill Lane in order to fight the Forest fire due to inconsiderate parking. Dowles Road work has been rescheduled to start on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020.

I am continually lobbying WCC to improve road safety in Bewdley and believe that introducing a 20mph limit in Bewdley will nudge people into driving more carefully around the complicated and narrow road system.

Worcestershire County Council's position in respect of many of the Highways related issues raised are as follows:

Speeding Traffic - Enforcement:

*Whilst Worcestershire County Council (WCC) sets the speed limits across the county, it is for the Police and the safer roads partnership (SRP) teams to enforce the speed of the motor vehicles. WCC has undertaken a number of trials of 20mph limits in the County. These trials have proven that 20mph limits are widely ignored unless they are physically enforced, either with highway features or with extensive technological interventions (cameras).*

*In Bewdley, evidence suggests that observed vehicle speeds in the town are already around 20mph (and lower at busier times).*

*The Department for Transport (DfT) guidance stipulates that 'sign only' 20 mph limits are only appropriate where traffic speed across the whole day is already close to that lower limit. In other words, a 20mph limit would likely only be permissible if it were 'enforced' through physical means (vertical or horizontal deflections or "speed bumps"). A side effect of such measures is an increase in traffic emissions and further deteriorated air quality.*

Noise Pollution – Enforcement:

*This is not a function of WCC to enforce or monitor. This falls under Environmental Health which is via Wyre Forest District Council. Who may be able to monitor and enforce where required.*

Bewdley's General Traffic Issues:

*It is the County Council's view that the most pragmatic way to resolve Bewdley's traffic woes is to remove traffic from the Town Centre as much as is practical. This approach will resolve the town's poor air quality, whilst improving the environment for pedestrians and cyclists and bus services operating through the town, as well as ensuring the town is as attractive as possible to visitors.*

*Best practice consistently shows that the logical way to achieve this is to relocate parking away from the Town Centre to a more peripheral location. At the current time, this is still being investigated.*

Walking and Cycling Within Bewdley

*As part of WCC's Local Transport Plan (LTP4 available online) There is a proposed Active Travel Corridor proposed for Bewdley - this is a non-motorised user route linking places of interest together to form essentially a spiders web of alternative travel as opposed to car travel. The route which is currently being explored is between Bewdley and the Wyre Forest.*

Closing of Roads/Footways for walking cycling and social distancing

*The recent Guidance from Government largely applies to London and city areas so it is not likely to be particularly relevant to a county like ours. It is intended for those areas where car usage is low and public transport usage is high, such as in London and Manchester for example, to reduce the demand on public transport with its current health risks. However, Worcestershire has a much different profile with a higher than average level of car usage and a lower than average usage of public transport services, so much of what the Government has talked about is not applicable to us. That said, we have considered all the principles outlined in the Guidance to determine what actions are appropriate and sensible for Worcestershire and we will, of course, continue to review these."*

Councillors raised questions about the possible location for additional parking in Wribbenhall and that the WCC owned land in the area is to be use for tree planting.

Cllr B Vale responded that potential car parking sites had not been shared with County Councillors also that funding had yet to be sought.

Cllr I Hardiman confirmed that the Netherton Lane site had been allocated for tree planting not car parking.

Cllr Edginton White raised concerns about the lack of social distancing in Bewdley's narrow streets and asked whether one-way roads should be considered at this time. There is a need for more signage and cones.

Cllr B Vale stated that Cllrs A Coleman and R Coleman had already raised their concerns with WCC and that the issues raised were forwarded straight to the County's Gold command team. The County Highways Officer discussed the possibility of erecting barriers in some roadside car parking spaces however, with the removal of free parking and the introduction of the parking app, the removal of the roadside parking spaces would give residents no free parking options.

**Mrs C Edginton White, WFDC member for Bewdley and Rock** spoke as follow:  
With regard to car parking charge - representation has been made to the WFDC Cabinet with regard to the parking charges; the public are being penalised - no free parking, no cash payments and charges up to 9pm. The WFDC member for Regeneration is currently looking into cash payments.

**Mr R Coleman, WFDC member for Bewdley and Rock** spoke as follow:  
An email has been sent to the WFDC Chief Executive Ian Miller asking that he contact WCC Gold command with regards to the pavements in Bewdley being less than 2 metres.

**Mrs A Coleman, WFDC member for Bewdley and Rock** spoke as follow:  
It is good that the District Councillors are against car parking charges that discriminate against elderly people and hope that the Wribbenhall Councillors also agree.

**9130 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the draft minutes of the Town Council meetings held 04/05/2020, the Extraordinary Council meeting held 05/05/2020 and the Annual Council meeting (Mayor Making) held 15/05/2020 (with minor amendments), as true and accurate records of those meetings.

**9131 ACCOUNTS**

The Town Clerk presented the position as follows:

- i. The current schedule of accounts including invoices to be paid and invoices paid as a matter of urgency  
It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the schedule of payments as at 31/05/2020.
- ii. The Year End accounts reconciliation 2019-20.  
It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the Year End accounts reconciliation 2019-20.

**BEWDLEY TOWN COUNCIL**

<u>Year Ended</u> <u>31st March</u> <u>2019</u>		<u>Year Ended</u> <u>31st March</u> <u>2020</u>
<b><u>GENERAL FUND</u></b>		
57,245.05	Balance as at 1st April	45,854.25
181,303.73	Add Total Income	182,799.77
238,548.78		228,654.02
196,923.41	Less Total Expenditure	202,440.63
4,228.88	Transfers to/from Reserves*	-726.64
<b>45,854.25</b>	<b>Balance at 31st March</b>	<b>25,486.75</b>

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH**

<b><u>CURRENT ASSETS</u></b>		
115,016.09	Cash at Bank and Investments	101,677.66
22.87	Petty Cash	36.24
0.00	Together Group Petty Cash	150.00
10,261.06	VAT Recoverable	977.93
8,075.40	Debtors & Prepayments	13,599.32
133,375.42		116,441.15

**CURRENT LIABILITIES**

31,152.82 Creditors and Accruated Expenses 33,859.41

**102,222.60** NETT ASSETS**82,581.74**

REPRESENTED BY:-

			<b>*Movement in Reserves</b>
45,854.25	General Fund Balance	25,486.75	
3,905.00	Reserves-Economic Reperation	3,905.00	0.00
3,225.02	Reserves-Load Street Toilets	3,225.02	0.00
1,530.00	Reserves- War Memorials	2,000.00	-470.00
7,983.11	Reserves- Election Costs	0.00	7,983.11
1,826.49	Reserves- Christmas Event	4,294.95	-2,468.46
3,732.00	Reserves- Replacement Hats and Robes	3,732.00	0.00
2,911.80	Reserves- Mayors Chain Repairs	2,911.80	0.00
500.00	Reserves- Bus Shelter Maintenance	500.00	0.00
750.00	Reserves- Insurance Valuations	900.00	-150.00
600.00	Reserves- Civic Awards	600.00	0.00
25,825.00	Reserves- Property Costs & Loan Repayments	25,825.00	0.00
3,579.93	Reserves- Together Project	4,029.81	-449.88
	Reserves- Welshgate Planting	421.41	-421.41
0.00	Reserves- VAS Signs	2,500.00	-2,500.00
0.00	Reserves- Signs & Posts	250.00	-250.00
0.00	Reserves- Notice Boards	2,000.00	-2,000.00
<b>102,222.60</b>		<b>82,581.74</b>	<b>-726.64</b>

iii. The bank reconciliation as at 30/04/2020 and the current reserves

It was **RESOLVED** to **Note** the bank reconciliation and reserves as at 30/04/2020

Bewdley Town Council

## RECONCILIATION REPORT

Period Ending 30/04/2020

Reconciled on: 04/05/2020

Reconciled by: Sharon  
Hudson

Any changes made to transactions after this date aren't included in this report.

Summary

GBP

Statement beginning balance	31,674.97
Cheques and payments cleared (16)	-13,588.80
Deposits and other credits cleared (3)	91,875.00

**Statement ending balance****Agreed to bank statement  
30.04.20****109,961.17**

Uncleared transactions as of 30/04/2020	-1,371.59
<b>Register balance as of 30/04/2020</b>	<b>108,589.58</b>
<u>UNITY BANK DEPOSIT ACCOUNT</u>	
BANK BALANCE @ 30TH APRIL 2020	10,642.31
<u>SCOTTISH WIDOWS INVESTMENT</u>	
BANK BALANCE @ 30TH APRIL 2020	30,671.97
<u>CAMBRIDGE BUILDING SOCIETY</u>	
BANK BALANCE @ 30TH APRIL 2020	30,000.00
PETTY CASH @ 31ST MARCH 2020	36.24
TOGETHER GROUP PETTY CASH @ 31ST MARCH 2020	150
<b><u>Total Cash and Investments</u></b>	<b>180,090.10</b>

iv. Comparison of budget to actual income and expenditure as at 30/04/2020. It was **RESOLVED to Note** the income against budget as at 30/04/2020

v. Regular Payments - for **noting**  
It was **RESOLVED to Note** the regular payments

### 9132 COMMITTEE REPORTS

A round up of draft minutes, reports and updates arising since 15/05/2020

i. **Planning Committee.**

The Chairman of the Committee Cllr R Stanczyszyn presented the minutes. It was **RESOLVED to Note** the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 30/04/2020.

ii. **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

The Chairman of the Committee Cllr R Stanczyszyn presented the minutes. It was **RESOLVED to Note** the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes committee meeting held on 27/05/2020. The following recommendations are put for **Approval** (not included elsewhere on the agenda):

a) **Youth Centre Project**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council sends a letter to the Bewdley School in support of their National Lottery grant bid.

### 9133 POLICIES FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL

It was **RESOLVED to Approve** the following policies

	Publication Scheme
BTC004	Document Retention Policy
BCT007	Complaints Procedures

#### **9134 RISK ASSESSMENTS FOR APPROVAL**

Concerns were raised with regards to poor office ventilation and that officers' desks face one another without any screening, also the suitability of the Guildhall for Council meetings due to poor accessibility.

General - risk assessment

Office (Return to Work-Covid19) – risk assessment

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the above risk assessments with the inclusion of the risks identified above.

#### **9135 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PROGRESS**

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Leader Cllr R Stanczyszyn gave a verbal update and was asked, by the Chairman, to provide a written report to the next meeting.

The SEA Screening Opinion has been completed by AECOM - at no charge to BTC - and sent to WFDC for their agreement; they will then send it out to the three statutory consultees. From the screening opinion provided, it would appear that a SEA is not required. The timetable for the next stage Regulation 14 consultation has not yet been confirmed but it is hoped that it will be towards the end of this year with the hope of the referendum next May. The Planning Inspectorate can take up to 6 months to undertake their review.

#### **9136 VEHICLE SPEEDING AND NOISE DISTURBANCES**

Cllr C Edginton White gave a verbal update on road traffic concerns identified by local residents, including speeding, noise and motorbikes. The Councillor asked that an on line poll be set up for a '20 is Plenty' campaign and that the Councils Road Safety Group meets as soon as possible. The Town Clerk was tasked with progressing both suggestions.

#### **9137 BEWDLEY TOWN MARKETS**

LSD Promotions provided the Council with a number of documents relating to the potential re-opening of the Town Market on 05/07/2020. Councillors raised concerns about social distancing especially with the market being located on Severn Side North in front of residential properties. Following debate, the Town Clerk has been asked to seek more information with regards to the proposed layout and marshalling arrangements.

#### **9138 TOILETS**

The Town Clerk gave an update on the actions being taken by WFDC to re-open the toilets on 15/06/2020. The Town Clerk has undertaken a risk assessment on behalf of the Town Council and WFDC will undertake their own. WFDC have agreed to provide additional cleaning at weekends, signage and floor makings. It is expected that all measure will be put in place prior to the re-opening. Concerns were raised with regard to the lack of a current contract with WFDC for the provision of cleaning.

#### **9139 TOWN CLERK'S UPDATES**

Town Clerk gave the following updates:

- i. **Internal Audit** – the Internal Auditor (DKE Audit Services) the audit is nearly finished and a report should be available before the next Finance & General Purposes meeting. One issue raised was with regard to Millennium Green.
- ii. **Corporate Plan** – the next stage is to identify the Aims and Objectives of the Council going forwards.

- iii. **Localism** – no correspondence has been received from WFDC with regards to the Localism agenda.

**9140 MAYOR’S DIARY AND FUTURE EVENTS**

Due to Covid 19 there are no events in the Mayors diary.

**9141 ITEMS OF URGENCY OR TO NOTE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

**PSPO Consultation**

The response to the PSPO consultation is required by 12/06/2020. During discussions the areas covered by the PSPO were queried. To enable a response to be formulated members were asked to send their individual responses to the Town Clerk who will collate the information and respond to WFDC accordingly.

**Flood Defence Update**

Cllr C Edginton White gave a comprehensive update of her meeting with a representative from the Environment Agency. Remedial work is to be undertaken on the river wall at the end of Lax Lane/Gardeners Meadow; this is expected to start on Monday and last up to 12 weeks. The Environment Agency are producing a news letter which will be distributed to residents later this week and have agreed to hold a zoom meeting with Councillors. The Cllr C Edginton White is to arrange a meeting of the Councils flood defence group. WFDC have been asked to provide an update of information and actions to be taken with regards to the flood defences on Beales Corner. Cllr C Edginton White was asked, by the Chairman, to provide a written report to the next meeting.

**Illegal Parking**

Cllr R Stanczynszyn had been approached by a local resident of Severn Side South with regards to the illegal parking on double yellow lines. The Town Clerk confirmed that actions were being taken to install large planters in the area and signage. The test sign was washed away in the floods, new fixings are being sought. The County Council Highways Officer is in the process of sourcing new bollards.

**Parking Charges**

Cllr L Davies asked that a strongly worded letter be sent to WFDC with regards to the reduced payment methods for car parking in Bewdley since charges were re-instated on 01/06/2020. The cash option has been removed is causing issues for a number of local residents. Free parking has been removed from the Town and chargeable hours extended to 9pm. It was agreed that Cllr L Davies would draft a letter of objection and send it to the Town Clerk.

**9142 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

The meeting closed at 8.55pm

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