



MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

HELD 4th FEBRUARY 2019 at 7.00PM IN THE GUILDHALL BEWDLEY

PRESENT

Council Members Cllr R Coleman - Town Mayor and Meeting Chairman
J Beeson, J Byng, L Candlin, A Coleman, L Davies, C Edginton-White, P Harrison, D Killingworth, R Stanczyszyn

In attendance: Twelve Members of the Public
Miss S Powell, Young Mayor
S Hudson - Town Clerk; D Moore - Treasurer
G Lungley - Temporary Office Manager

8755 CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS and INTRODUCTION OF NEW TOWN CLERK

The Town Mayor, Cllr R Coleman, welcomed everyone to the meeting including the new Town Clerk Sharon Hudson, and reminded everyone of the fire evacuation procedure.

8756 COMMUNITY-LED HOUSING PRESENTATION

Alex Powell, Community-led Housing Co-ordinator at Wyre Forest DC, was invited to present information about Community-led Housing. The national initiative is based on the recognition that communities could be doing more to encourage the local provision of affordable housing; it provides an opportunity for people to get involved in the delivery of the right type of building. In Bewdley issues have been identified relating to starter homes for families and homes for the retired.

WFDC have funds available until May 2021 for a feasibility survey and Ms Powell can be contacted to explore ideas on this and for more information.

8757 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor P Edmundson, Deputy Town Mayor (work commitments)

8758 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded of the requirement to declare all interests.

- Cllr J Byng declared:
 - a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest as spouse of a member of staff;
 - an unspecified Interest as trustee to Riverside North Park Trust (agenda item 8766);
- Cllr D Killingworth declared unspecified Interests as trustee to Riverside North Park Trust (agenda item 8766) and as trustee to Bewdley Youth Café Trust (agenda item 8769);
- Cllr C Edginton-White declared unspecified Interests as trustee to Riverside North Park Trust (agenda item 8766) and as a family connection to the owners of Youth Café premises (agenda item 8769);
- Cllr L Candlin declared an unspecified Interest as past trustee to Bewdley Youth Café Trust (agenda item 8769);
- Cllr J Beeson declared an unspecified Interest as past trustee to Bewdley Youth Café Trust (agenda item 8769)

8759 COUNCILLORS' DISPENSATIONS

Cllr J Byng has an ongoing dispensation to be allowed to stay in meetings, speak and vote on general issues relating to staff, unless any issue relates specifically to his spouse.

No new dispensation requests had been submitted before the meeting.

8760

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- i. **Members of the public.** Members of the public took the opportunity to speak, as follows:
 - a) **Allotments, Bliss Gate Village Field** (not Rock Parish Council). The Chairman and trustee of the Allotments Trust announced the playing field is only half-used and they are investigating its use as allotments. This was included in The Bridge; notices were left for information.
 - b) **Bewdley Conservation Area Residents Association.** The BCARA Chairman thanked the Town Council for the recent grant to set up a website and spoke of the association's wishes to work in partnership with all local authorities and organisations, of concerns about the apparent lack of enforcement, and of concerns about the recent licence application by the Rowing Club.
 - c) **Bewdley Civic Society.** The BCS Chairman supported BCARA's concerns about the Rowing Club's licence application.
 - d) **Dumping on the 'Switchback'.** Has there been any feedback on this issue?
In her capacity as WFDC Councillor, Cllr A Coleman responded that the Environment Agency had accepted full responsibility for clearing the site and work is ongoing.
 - e) **Riverside North Park.** The Friends will be ceasing their fund-raising so who will be taking on the responsibility for the site and where will the funds come from?
 - f) **Bewdley Rowing Club.** The spokesman was present to provide clarification with regard to the recent licence application such that no change is intended with regard to the existing arrangements for the playing of music. The proposed change seeks to allow a drinking extension from 12am to 2am at weekends – it is not intended to occur every weekend but the application will allow for flexibility. Nearby residents and the police have been consulted and there will be a ban on parties for the under-21's. Thus the current application seeks only to extend the bar opening period to 2am.
 - ii. **Representative members of the principal authorities**
 - a) **Mrs R Vale, WCC member for Bewdley division & WFDC member for Wribbenhall and Arley ward** spoke as follows:
 - With regard to WFDC budget-setting members have agreed provision of £13,500 towards shelters for rough-sleepers along with agreements to freeze car parking charges across the district, £30,000 for maintaining highways and verges, strengthening both the environment and planning enforcement teams, support for regeneration, topping up the localism fund and £33,000 for the local leadership fund. Details were published in December and have been supported by members of the public.
 - There has been a jump in visitor numbers to Bewdley Museum and Mrs Vale thanked Alison Bakr and the Museum Friends.
 - As the County Councillor, Mrs Vale expressed concern about the future of Bewdley Youth Café (attention had been drawn via Facebook) and is keen to help in any way possible to keep it going.
- Questions** were put to Mrs Vale regarding rough sleepers, the roundabout at the bottom of Bewdley Hill and Youth Café funding.

b) **Mr I Hardiman, WCC member for Cookley, Wolverley and Wribbenhall** had sent apologies for absence. His report was read out by the Town Mayor and covered the following issues:

County-wide:

- There is no intention to close any library;
- It is proposed to give each councillor c.£43,000 to spend on capital highway schemes within their division to be spent in the next two financial years.

Local issues: continuing to chase

- the request for a 40mph speed limit on A456 between Wribbenhall and Bewdley Hill Kidderminster.
- Completion of the replacement cats eyes on A456 bypass, lower section.
- Installation of the footpath light in Jordens Walk
- Installation of tactile-type studs at Catchems End zebra crossing

c) **Mrs A Coleman, WFDC member for Bewdley and Rock** spoke to the number of penalty charge notices issued between April and December 2018.

With regard to planning enforcements, Mrs Coleman indicated the Town Council should be more involved in the issue.

Questions to Mrs Coleman related to waste enquiries, criminal damage to business premises, the state of the Town's CCTV and whether the parking notices were appealed.

In advance of the police report, the Town Mayor advised all present that the local police inspector is moving on.

iii. **Representatives of support services**

Police report: In summary the report related to criminal damage, youths on the church roof, support for the Youth Café, Long Bank, and a new bollard outside the school which is a model of a child.

A question was put asking whether the recent car accident in Habberley Road was due to speeding.

8761

MINUTES

a) To approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held 07/01/2019.

Amendment proposed:

With regard to minute no 8739 (Staffing Committee), Cllr Edginton-White asked for the full list of the amendments she had proposed to be recorded in the minutes. A named vote was requested:

In favour: J Beeson, L Candlin, C Edginton-White

Against: J Byng, A Coleman, R Coleman, P Harrison, R Stanczyszyn.

Abstentions: L Davies, D Killingworth

AGREED

The draft minutes of the Town Council's Meeting held 7th January 2019 were approved as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

8762

ACCOUNTS

The Treasurer presented information to 31/01/2019 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.

APPROVED

- ii. To note the Town Council's cash balances

NOTED as follows (to 31/01/2019) –

- with Unity Bank current account of £57,117.05
- with Unity Bank deposit account of £10,589.29

- with Scottish Widows deposit account of £30,345.52
- with Cambridge Building Society saver account of £30,000.00
- with HMRC (VAT) of £ £9,671.92

iii. To note the most recent bank reconciliation

NOTED

iv. To note actual financial position compared to agreed budget for 2018/19

NOTED

8763 COMMITTEE REPORTS

To receive draft minutes, reports and/or updates since 07/01/2019 from:

i. **Planning Committee**, meeting held 09/01/2019

Draft minutes were noted.

ii. **Staffing Committee**, meeting held 25/01/2019

The draft minutes had yet to be published; Cllr Davies would provide an update confidential session, minute no. 8771.

iii. **Finance and General Purposes Committee**, meeting held 30/01/2019.

The draft minutes had yet to be published however the committee Chairman, Cllr J Byng spoke to the committee's recommendations:

- To add £5,000 to the proposed budget (for approval March 2019)
- To purchase a replacement computer for the office
- To purchase two green (parish) highways grit bins for Blossom Hill
- To purchase accounting software
- To renew the Council's insurance (Cllr Byng, Cllr Killingworth and Town Clerk will meet with the broker to ensure cover is adequate)

It was AGREED

to support the Finance & General Purposes Committee recommendations.

iv. **Together Group**, meeting held 18/01/2019

Draft minutes were noted.

v. **Flood Defence Volunteers group**, meeting held 23/01/2019

The notes to this meeting have yet to be circulated; representatives from the Environment Agency and County Council, who provided an update on the current situation, and the volunteers were thanked for attending.

8764 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PROGRESS

To agree appointment of new Group Leader to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and agree revised terms of reference for the Group including membership and delegated authority.

It was proposed to nominate Cllr R Stanczyszyn to take leadership of the Steering Group.

AGREED

Cllr R Stanczyszyn would take leadership of the Steering Group.

Cllr R Stanczyszyn anticipated the setting up of a community group to be based on the solid foundations of the previous Steering Group; terms of reference had yet to be agreed.

8765 LIBRARIES CONSULTATION

Members are to meet with Worcestershire County Council representatives on 28/02/2019 at 1pm.

8766 RIVERSIDE NORTH PARK

Update on the Town Council's decision relating to the paddling pool – as yet no movement regarding the lease. It is believed funds will be available from the Friends of the Park.

8767 BEWDLEY ROWING CLUB

The Club had submitted an application to alter its licensed hours; a request had been submitted to the Town Council to comment.

Following robust discussion no member indicated being in favour of posting a response to the public consultation.

8768 CIVIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MAYOR

The Town Mayor deferred this item.

8769 BEWDLEY YOUTH CAFÉ

An update on the future of the Youth Café was given by Cllr Killingworth. The future is uncertain due to lack of funding for the annual running costs of £70,000 and various options are being investigated. Cllr Killingworth was thanked for the work he does to support the venture.

8770 TOWN MAYOR'S DIARY AND FUTURE EVENTS

- i) The Town Mayor spoke to his list of civic duties undertaken during January including a visit to the Community Pantomime (which had received funding support via the Town Council's application for lottery funding), attendance at the Holocaust Memorial Day service and a joint event with the Mayor of Kidderminster Town Council to hold a model railway exhibition that raised £1,200 gross which was shared between KTC, BTC Mayors' Charities and the Kidderminster model railway club.
- ii) No future community events were noted.

8771 CLOSURE OF MEETING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1(2) it was RESOLVED to exclude the public and press from the meeting to allow for discussion of confidential matters relating to staff members.

The meeting was closed to members of the public at 8.50pm.

A The Town Mayor invited comment on agenda item 8768: To consider the discussion paper produced by Cllr Edginton-White, unamended from August 2018, with regard to the extent of involvement in Town Council business activities undertaken by the councillor appointed as Town Mayor.

Detailed discussion ensued culminating in the following being put to the vote (a named vote was requested):

- i) "That we change standing orders to limit the Mayor's Council activities to the Chairmanship of the full Council meetings. Return to advising/recommending that the Civic role of the Mayor takes priority over committee attendance other than Full Council where the Mayor is the Chairman."

In favour: J Beeson, L Candlin, C Edginton-White

Abstention: one member abstained (name not recorded)

Against: All other members voted against the motion

Motion refused.

ii) "If the Mayor's mayoress or consort is also a Councillor that they are also advised to reduce committee membership to a level where they can appropriately support the Mayor in their important Civic role."

In favour: J Beeson, L Candlin, C Edginton-White

Abstention: one member abstained (name not recorded)

Against: All other members voted against the motion

Motion refused.

(iii) "When asking the Mayor to represent the Council on working parties and at official meetings the Mayor's work load is taken into account and the Deputy shares some of these responsibilities on a planned basis."

It was agreed to amend this by adding at the end "on agreement between the Mayor and the Deputy".

The amendment was voted on:

In favour: J Beeson, J Byng, L Candlin, C Edginton-White, D Killingworth, R Stanczyszyn

Against: P Harrison

Abstention: names not recorded

Motion, as amended, carried.

B REPORT FROM STAFFING COMMITTEE

Cllr L Davies:

- The Town Clerk is in post part-time until mid-March 2019, full-time thereafter;
- Compliance with pensions auto-enrolment had necessitated the request to increase the budget for 2019/20.
- The solicitor's update regarding the ongoing position with the Community Engagement and Events Officer was noted.

8772 ITEMS OF URGENCY OR TO NOTE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Noted for future meetings:

- New play equipment for Wyre Hill Play Area
- Will Harris Lamb (planning development agents) attend next meeting?
- The national inquiry into Members' Ethical Standards has identified a need for training.
- To consider setting up a working party to consider Wyre Hill Play Area
- Various questions submitted by Cllr Edginton-White to be circulated to all members.
- Date of the Annual Town Council meeting (Mayor Making).
- St George's Day Parade.

8773 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING – Monday 4th March 2019, 7pm.

There being no further business this meeting was closed at 9.55pm.

Signed.....

Mayor/Chairman

Meeting of the Town Council – 4th March 2019