



MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON 8th JANUARY 2018 AT 7.00PM IN THE GUILDHALL BEWDLEY

PRESENT

Councillor Mrs A Coleman (Mayor)
Councillor Mr J Beeson
Councillor Mr J Byng
Councillor Mrs L Candlin
Councillor Mr R Coleman
Councillor Mrs C Edginton-White
Councillor Mr P Edmundson
Councillor Miss M Fishwick
Councillor Mr P Harrison
Councillor Mr D Killingworth
Councillor Mr G Yarranton

In attendance: Louisa Coleman – Young Mayor
Melbryn Krufft-Welton – Deputy Young Mayor
Nick Farress – Town Clerk
Kyle Daisley – Community Engagement and Events Officer
District/County Councillor Becky Vale
County Councillor Ian Hardiman
4 Members of the Public

8543

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Clee and Mrs Davies, District Councillor Rod Wilson and David Moore (Treasurer).

8544

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Byng declared a Pecuniary Interest in Minute 8548 and 8549 as his wife is a Council employee.
Councillor Mrs Edginton-White declared an Other Disclosable Interest in Minute 8548 as there was a family connection to a payee on the schedule.

8545

COUNCILLORS' DISPENSATIONS

The Town Clerk clarified that Councillors who reside in Bewdley have a dispensation granted until May 2018 to allow the Council to agree and set its level of council tax each year.

8546

MAYOR'S OPENING REMARKS & MONTHLY REPORT

(i) The Mayor reported on a very successful event over the previous weekend – the Russian Christmas charity evening. The Mayor extended her thanks to the Mayors and Chairs who attended and also to Councillor Byng for his support at the event. The next charity event is a charity dinner and jazz evening at the Pines Golf Club. Details via the Mayor's PA and all Members are welcome to attend.
(ii) The Young Mayor reported that the Bewdley School and Sixth Form Centre's Youth Forum had instigated "Gumdrop" which is a system that picks up and recycles used chewing gum. This had been very successful and its extension to the town centre is something that would be followed up. The Young Mayor also reported that the Mayor and herself had

attended several meetings about setting up a new girls football team in Bewdley by working with Bewdley FC to make this happen.

8547

**MINUTES
AGREED**

That the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 4th December 2017 be agreed as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Mayor.

8548

ACCOUNTS

The Council considered the revised schedule of accounts and payments for December 2017 drawn up by the Treasurer, together with the balances held at Unity Bank, Cambridge Building Society, Scottish Widows and HM Revenue & Customs and the current budgetary position as to income and expenditure for the period 1st April 2017 to 31st December 2017.

AGREED

(i) that the revised schedule of accounts be approved and signed by the Mayor with authority thereby given for the requisite cheques to be drawn;

(ii) that the cash balances be noted as follows:

- with Unity Bank current account of £77,443.96
- with Unity Bank deposit account of £10,557.77
- with Scottish Widows deposit account of £30,252.29
- with Cambridge Building Society saver account of £30,000.00
- with HMRC (VAT) of £10,719.09

(iii) that the reconciliation statement be noted;

(iv) that the Council's income and expenditure for the current financial year from 1st April 2017 to 31st December 2017 be noted.

8549

BUDGET 2018/2019

A report and recommendation was presented by Councillor Beeson, Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee and Budget Working Group. Three draft budgets were presented which used three different levels of reserves to support the precept with corresponding council tax rise percentages. The options were:

1. Reserves of NIL – Not using any of the Council's general reserves would attract an increase in the average Band D council tax of 16.3% (or 11p per week).

2. Reserves of £7,500 – This would attract an increase of 10.4% (or 7p per week).

3. Reserves of £15,000 – This would attract an increase of 4.6% (or 3p per week).

AGREED

(i) that the Council now set its budget in terms of expenditure as per budget option 2 presented above;

(ii) that a precept of £142,263 be levied by way of Council Tax at a Band D household equivalent of £39.43;

(iii) that such precept now be communicated to and demanded of the District Council as the billing authority pursuant to Regulations made under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

8550

POLICY DOCUMENTS

The Town Clerk presented three draft policy documents for adoption namely:

- (i) Vexatious Requests/Complaints Policy
- (ii) Data Protection Policy
- (iii) Community Engagement Strategy

AGREED

To adopt these corporate policies with immediate effect.

8551

WYRE HILL PLAY AREA

A report was presented by the Town Clerk recommending that this Council take on a licence to operate Wyre Hill Play Area from Worcestershire County Council. This would be on a peppercorn rent of £1 per annum for an initial period of 5 years. The Town Council would then be responsible for running the play area, providing new equipment, carrying out inspections and insurance.

AGREED

- (i) That the Council enter into a license agreement with Worcestershire County Council from a date to be agreed at an annual rent of £1 for an initial period of 5 years;
- (ii) That the Town Clerk draws up a maintenance and inspection programme for the Play Area.

8552

RESTORATION OF ROYAL ARMS

The Town Clerk presented a report recommending that the Council spend £650 from general reserves on restoring the Council owned Royal Arms artwork hanging in the stairwell of the Guildhall. The Town Clerk advised that a grant application to the Pilgrim's Trust had been successful and £2000 had been awarded. The Council needed to make up the shortfall of £650 to allow the work to go ahead.

AGREED

That £650 is made available from general reserves to fund the restoration of the Royal Arms and that the Town Clerk makes the necessary arrangements.

8553

PURCHASE OF SALT SPREADER

A report was presented by the Town Clerk recommending that the Council purchase two salt spreaders for use on minor roads and pavements during cold weather incidents. The machine could be operated by the Lengthsman or local volunteers. The machines and the supply of salt/grit would be kept in the new garage facility.

AGREED

To authorise the Town Clerk to purchase two suitable salt spreading machines up to a value of £300 for Town Council use.

8554

PLANNING COMMITTEE

The draft Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on the 6th December were noted.

8555

ADMINISTRATION MATTERS AND DIARY DATES

The Town Clerk brought the following administrative matters and diary dates to the attention of the Council:

- (i) 9th January 2018, Road Safety Working Group 2.00pm, Guildhall
- (ii) 14th January 2018, New Rector Licensing, St Anne's Church
- (iii) 15th January 2018, Community Development Committee 6.00pm, Guildhall
- (iv) 25th January 2018, Police Liaison Group 10.30am, Guildhall

The meeting was closed at 8.10pm

Signed.....
Mayor

4th February 2018

Town Council Meeting - Public Period Questions raised by members of the public

Mrs Gill Holland of Beale's Corner asked whether all Bewdley events can be listed on one website. Councillor Edginton-White replied by saying that the Town Council website does just that with a comprehensive listing of most local events. However, the Town Council are reliant on organisers as to the accuracy of the information.

Mr Ian Williams asked what had happened to the additional money raised this year through the precept that was going to be used to purchase Barclays Bank. Councillor Beeson replied that the money was in reserves and would partly be used to move the Town Council's offices into more accessible accommodation at 25 Load Street. The possibility of purchasing suitable premises in the future was still one of the Council's corporate aims.

Mr Rod Stanczyszyn reported that several grit bins remain empty following the recent cold snap, despite reporting these to WCC. Councillor Edmundson added that grit bins that appeared on the WCC mapping system did not exist on Spring Hill estate.

Police and Neighbourhood Watch Reports

There were no police representatives.

District and County Councillor Reports and Questions

District and County Councillor Becky Vale reported on the following items:

- Options for improving traffic flow and road safety in the town centre is being progressed with WCC and the Town Council's Road Safety Working Group of which Cllr Vale is a member.
- A works order for flood alleviation works at Tanner's Hill has been arranged.
- The empty grit bins reported by Mr Stanczyszyn and Cllr Edmundson will be followed up.
- Cllr Vale will follow up concerns about illegal parking and a break in the yellow lines at the bottom of Sandy Bank as reported by Cllr Roger Coleman.
- Work is now well under way on the new Load Street car park and Steve Brant is very happy to answer any questions.
- District wide – the former Forest Glades is to become a new cinema and leisure club; the demolition of Crown House is to be carried out at no cost to the taxpayer; and WFDC are to raise their portion of the Council Tax by 1.94%.

County Councillor Ian Hardiman reported on the following items:

- Work to renew cat's eyes on the A456 bypass is now scheduled for 19th February.
- Tactile paving at the zebra crossing at Catchem's End is still outstanding. The Highways Engineer has apologised and will follow this up personally.
- Trees behind properties in Sandbourne Drive – Cllr Hardiman will keep pressing for the inspection of these trees.
- Lodge Close parking problems – WCC have agreed to install double yellow lines around the inside corner of the road together with access bar markings.
- Bewdley High School safety concerns – Cllrs Vale and Hardiman have acquired the support of the Cabinet Member for Transformation and Commissioning who is arranging some further investigation.
- HGV weight restriction signage has been in place at Wharton Park island since March 2017 (picture circulated). Cllr Hardiman has requested similar signage at the Safari Park roundabout.