



MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

HELD 2ND SEPTEMBER 2019 at 7.00PM GUILDHALL

PRESENT

Council Members Cllr J Byng - Town Mayor and Meeting Chairman
 Cllr L Kearns – Deputy Town Mayor
 Cllrs S Billett, A Coleman, R Coleman, S Collingridge, L Davies, C
 Edginton-White, P Gittins MBE, P Harrison, H Lacy, D Morehead.

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

8918 MAYOR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Mayor, Cllr J Byng welcomed everyone to the meeting, spoke of the emergency evacuation procedures and reminded Councillors that CALC training is available also that the Town Clerk needs to confirm the numbers for the WFDC planning training on 26/09/2019 5.30pm to 7pm.

The Mayor welcomed Police, Chief Inspector James Baker and spoke of a number of issues concerning residents on Severnside South and Load Street which had previously been reported to the Police; including anti-social behaviour, licensing and parking. The Council have received written complaints where people are choosing to remain anonymous due to fear of reprisal. This is of great concern to the Council and any reassurances that the Chief Inspector is able to give would be most welcome.

8919 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received in advance of the meeting from Cllr R Stanczyszyn.

8920 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded of the requirement to declare all interests.

None received

8921 COUNCILLORS' DISPENSATIONS

None received

8891 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

- 1) A member of the public raised concerns with regard to:
 - Noise pollution from motorcycles and cars and requested that the Town Clerk contacts Stratford Upon Avon Council to identify how they deal with motorbikes, as they have a motorbike night on Wednesdays. Also, at the Councils last meeting inappropriate language was used to describe motor cyclist, could everyone be reminded to mind their language.
 - The Mayor, Cllr J Byng acknowledged the comments made

- 2) A resident raised concerns with regard to:
 - Street lighting in Park Alley which has been out of operation for over 3 month following work undertaken by Western Power. Could any action be taken about this?
- 3) A local resident raised concerns that the temporary door on McColls newsagents had been in-situ for some time; could the Council chase McColls with regard to a replacement.
- 4) A local resident raised concerns with regard to motorbikes, noise and obstructions making reference to the WFDC conservation area document relating to tranquil and active areas. The resident stated that the document specifically mentions Severnside North, South and Load Street and asked for clarity as the police say it's a civil matter and WFDC say it's a police matter.

b. Representative members of the principal authorities

Both WCC Cllrs Becky Vale and Ian Hardiman sent their apologies. Mr Ian Hardiman sent an update which was read out by the Mayor, Cllr J Byng.

- 1) **Mr I Hardman's, WCC member for Cookley, Wolverley and Wribbenhall,** report read as follow:

Local Issues:

- Replacement Safety Barrier for the Kidderminster Rd /Westbourne Street junction has now been installed.
- Regarding overgrown hedges in Northwood Lane; as these are actually within Kidderminster Foreign parish, Paul Green, Highways Engineer has requested attention to this by the parish lengthsman.
- Tigers Teeth Road Markings for calming on the B4091; The Highways Engineer is supportive of this measure for installation near to the 30 mph signage; Mr I Hardiman agreed to cover the costs for this using his Divisional Funding.
- Bewdley Pines Golf Club, Cllr Byng has forwarded a request for Brown Signage to be erected before the entrance to their club, as golf visitors when driving from Catchems End, miss the entrance, then brake rapidly which is dangerous! The request has been forwarded to the Highways Engineer.
- Kidderminster Road: Residents have pointed out the absence of road markings designed to warn drivers of the very tight bend by the railway viaduct; this matter has been forwarded to the Highways Engineer.
- Road Signage when entering Wribbenhall from Stourport: this signage is very dirty and Algae covered, Mr I Hardiman asked Highways to arrange for these to be cleansed.

Still Outstanding and being chasing:

- The A456 Roundabout Repairs and maintenance transfer to the District Council
- Tactiles for the Catchems End Zebra Crossing
- The B4091 Vehicle Speed Check Results
- Replacement Cats – Eyes for the By-Pass, Lower section on the A456

c. Representatives of support services

1) James Baker Police Chief Inspector in Wyre Forest

The Chief Inspector spoke of his knowledge of Bewdley and his understanding of the motorbike issues that have been reported.

Sevenside South is a shared space that needs more clarity. Parking on double yellow lines has been de-criminalised and is a civil offence while vehicle obstruction sits with the Police. The landscape of the area is not conducive with local residents needs, more education is required and a more comprehensive response.

Noise - There is a plan for the Police to purchase decibel reading equipment to record the noise from cars and motorbikes.

Anti-social Behaviour – Police information shows that there has been a decline in this issue over the past 5 years. Weekend policing is focused on Bewdley.

The nature of policing has changed the focus is now on private not public spaces, mental health issues, violence in the home etc.

The PCSO in attendance gave an update on activities locally:

- Youths have been chased out of Jubilee Gardens
- Youths at Wyre Hill Sand Park have been spoken too and the Police will continue to patrol the area.
- Millennium Green has been visited, the Police are working with the Town Council on this matter and are keeping an eye on the situation

Councillors raised a number of concerns – a summary of issues and responses are listed below:

Vehicle Obstruction – Police need to witness the obstruction

Motorbikes - The Chief Inspector agreed to work with the Civil Enforcement Officers with regard to motorbike parking by attending some patrols.

Wribbenhall Parish Rooms Drugs issue – the Police will patrol the area and follow this up.

Poor Driving and noise – The Chief Inspector will look at the new technology available including sound cameras. Operation SNAP captures inappropriate driving. The public can upload dashcam footage onto the West Mercia Police site and action will be taken.

Reporting Incidents – incidents should be reported to 101 or crime stoppers. Better reporting facilities are to be made available via the internet which will allow residents to raise community issues directly.

Anti-Social Behaviour – there is a presence in Bewdley late at night however if an incident occurs elsewhere the Police would have to attend

Southside South - Police resources are limited, both the Police and WFDC have a role to play. The landscape of Southside South needs to be altered to make it clearer for all users.

8923 MINUTES: To approve the minutes of previous Town Council meeting

It was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** that the original draft of the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 05/08/19 and the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held 20/08/2019 as a true and accurate record of those meetings.

8924 ACCOUNTS

The Town Clerk presented the financial 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 02/09/2019.
- ii. To note the most recent bank reconciliation
It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the bank reconciliation date 30/06/2019.

Bewdley Town Council
Unity Current Account, Period Ending 29/07/2019
RECONCILIATION REPORT
Reconciled on: 16/08/2019
Reconciled by: Sharon Hudson

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

Summary	GBP
Statement beginning balance	98,243.52
Cheques and payments cleared (30)	-14,907.24
Deposits and other credits cleared (5)	1,211.13
Statement ending balance	84,547.41
Uncleared transactions as of 29/07/2019	-5,493.94
Register balance as of 29/07/2019	79,053.47
Cleared transactions after 29/07/2019	0.00
Uncleared transactions after 29/07/2019	-18,153.43
Register balance as of 16/08/2019	60,900.04

- iii. To note actual financial position compared to agreed budget for 2019/20
It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the actual income and expenditure against budget date 31/07/2019.

8925 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Round-up of draft minutes, reports and updates arising since 05/08/2019:

- i) **Planning Committee**, meeting held 25/07/19:
It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the Planning Committee's minutes 25/07/2019.
- ii) **Finance and General Purposes Committee**, meeting held 21/08/2019.
The committee's Chairman Cllr R Coleman gave a brief update on the minutes.
It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the Finance and General Purposes Committee's draft minutes 21/08/2019.

The following committee's recommendations were put for approval:

- a) Contract Review
The following two contracts were identified as requiring action following the recent contracts review:

Alarm 2000 – It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** the renewal of the Alarm 2000 Limited contract with an agreement to spend up to £150 on an uninterrupted power supply (if required).

Pear Technology – It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** the cancellation of the Pear Technology Services Limited contract due to lack of use.

b) Beale's Corner noticeboard:

It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** that the quotation received from the Community Workshop Café to repair the Beale's Corner noticeboard in hardwood be accepted at a cost of £175.

c) Electricity contract - Feeder Pillar

It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** that the Feeder Pillar sited on Severnside North and operated by E-on be de-energised at a cost of £64.76.

d) Insurance cover review

Items recorded on the Asset Register are current under review for insurance purposes.

It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** that Thomas Fattorini Limited be approached to provide replacement valuation for the two Maces and the Mayoral chains.

e) Public benches

It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** that the bench currently stored in the garage is installed along the Cleobury Road near Winbrook Cottage. (Budget 2019/20 – seat maintenance of existing benches - £250)

f) Noticeboards

Discussions ensued relating to charges for charitable organisations, it was confirmed that, where possible, the £5 charge would cover putting leaflets in each of the three Town Council's small notice boards. It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** that the following should be applied, Cllrs, C Edginton White and P Gittins voted against the proposals:

- Noticeboard protocols are reviewed and updated.
- Charges for the Beale's Corner notice board are set at £10 per week
- Charges for other Council noticeboards are set at £5 per week and posters should be no larger than A4 size.
- Charges are payable at the time of booking
- Posters be placed on the noticeboards by Officers only
- Posters be place on the noticeboard on Mondays only
- Posters placed on the noticeboards should be done so at the discretion of the Town Clerk

g) Proposed Town Development Plan

Cllr R Coleman outlined the proposal to set up a regeneration working group to enable Bewdley to be ready to apply when the next round of grant funding becomes available. The following organisations will be invited along with the Town Council to work with WFDC on a regeneration application for the town centre. It was hoped that traders would become involved in the future.

- Bewdley Civic Society
- Bewdley Development Trust
- Bewdley Conservation Area Residents Association
- Bewdley Festival

It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** that Cllr R Coleman approaches the above organisations to identify whether they would be interested in working together to create a regeneration project for Bewdley.

8926

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PROGRESS

Cllr C Edginton White had been into the office to review the Neighbourhood Plan files, it was unclear whether Bewdley still required a full strategic environmental assessment as the draft plan reflects land use but not housing sites.

Cllr A Coleman had also reviewed the files and suggested that it would be difficult to move forward without input from the leader of the Neighbourhood Plan Community Steering Group.

A decision to accept the Green Space Assessment, as completed by Pleydell Smithyman, was deferred until the next meeting when the Neighbourhood Plan Community Steering Group Lead, Cllr R Stanczyszyn, could present the report

8896 TOWN CLERK'S UPDATES

It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the following updates from the Town Clerk relating to ongoing concerns:

- Internal Audit working group – next meeting to be arranged – work is underway on the Internal Auditors recommendations relating to risks, the risk register has been updated and will be presented for review at the next Audit Group meeting.
- Localism – meeting to be held in the Council offices 10/09/19 at 7pm
To discuss the transfer assets such as the Museum, Guildhall, Gardens, Toilets, Paddling Pool, 6 Load Street, Parks and associated services.

WFDC have been approached to extend the toilet cleaning contract, which expired in January 2019, until the end of March 2020. Costs relating to the Toilets had been provided but further clarity has been sought relating to the calculations used.

- Town Council's Corporate Plan review – meeting to be arranged – Cllr L Davies asked to be included as a member of the review group.
- Wyre Hill Sand Park
The new equipment was fitted w/c 19/08.19 and the sand delivery was received 23/08/19. 20 tonnes of sand had been adequate to top up the sand pits. The Friends Group have reported issues with the finish of the new equipment these have been reported back to Wicksteeds for urgent attention. The Caretaker visited the site 01/09/19 and found not issues with the play equipment though Wicksteeds had not confirmed that action had been taken to rectify the reported issues.

8928 ROAD SAFETY GROUP

The Road Safety Group Leader Cllr S Collingridge gave an update for the benefit of the members of public present following the meeting held on 06/08/19. The Town Clerk confirmed that a meeting had been arranged with the Civil Enforcement team at WFDC to discuss the parking issues; Cllr S Collingridge asked that he also attends.

8929 CHRISTMAS EVENT AND LIGHT SWITCH ON UPDATE

The Mayor, Cllr J Byng asked that the Council consider the Signal 107 Radio's quotation for them to run the Christmas Light Switch On event on 30/11/19.

It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** that the Signal 107 Radio quotation be accepted and that they run the whole event. The Mayor, Cllr J Byng also confirmed that the line up of acts was near to finalisation.

8930 ITEMS OF URGENCY OR TO NOTE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

- Cllr R Coleman asked that at the next meeting a strategy for the re-valuation of assets be considered.
- Cllr A Coleman asked that the Green Space Assessment to be taken to the next meeting.

The Mayor, Cllr J Byng gave an update on the Mayoral engagements and reminded Councillors of the dates for:

Bingo Night (Mayors Charity event) - 12/10/19
Mayors Sunday - 27/10/19

8931 In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1(2) it was **RESOLVED** to exclude the public and the press from the meeting to allow for discussion of confidential matters relating to any of staff, legal matters or contractual arrangements:

The members of the public left the meeting.

8932 STAFFING

Prior to the commencement of discussions Cllr S Billet declared that she shared a Facebook connection with an ex-employee and that she had previously been one of his tutors.

No other declarations were received.

Members raised concerns about Cllr Edginton White's openness in relation to her attendance at an external meeting where she was seen to be supporting an ex-employee who is in dispute with the Town Council. Cllr Edginton White was asked but refused to leave the meeting.

Concerns were also raised with regard to Cllr Edginton White's honesty, integrity and her lack of transparency as there were inconsistencies and omissions in her previous declarations of interest to Council; her personal judgement was called into question as, during the external meeting, two attending Council Members witnessed the Councillor clearly giving advice to the ex-employee. Members were concerned that by representing the ex-employee, who has been identified as a close personal friend, the Councillor had not acted in the best interests of the Council.

Following heated debate, during which time a number of accusations were made, Cllr Edginton White's accountability was questioned as it was thought she had tainted the decision-making process and shown a lack of respect for fellow Members.

Cllr Edginton White left the meeting.

Cllr D Morehead explained to the council what both he and Cllr Collingridge had observed at the external meeting and gave a brief outline of the advice they had been given. Three points were discussed along with potential outcomes.

Following further discussion actions to be taken were agreed.

8933 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING – Monday 7th October 7pm

There being no further business this meeting was closed at 9.30pm

Signed.....
Mayor/Chairman
7th October 2019