

BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 29 APRIL 2010 AT 8PM IN THE CHARTER HALL TOWN HALL BRIDGWATER

PRESENT: Cllr KF Richards (Mayor of Bridgwater – in the Chair) Cllrs DL Baker, MD Cresswell, AS Downes, GJ Granter, D Hall, DP Loveridge, WJ Monteith, JR Munn, PGH Parker, DL Preece, Ms JA Raven, Mrs GJ Slocombe, P Smeed and J Turner (JP)

Apology: Cllr Busby

84/09 PUBLIC SPEAKING:

The Council were addressed by Sally Jones, Chairperson of Bridgwater Forward, raising a series of questions and issues in relation to the town, town centre and trade and tourism and leisure. In particular, she raised issues about future planning in the town through the LDF process and the unsatisfactory consultations on a series of issues undertaken by the District Council. She welcomed the reaction whenever she spoke to the Town Council and the interest displayed by Town Councillors. She also reported the support of other traders in the town for the Bridgwater Forward Campaign. Members accepted that illustrated through the District Council there were a number of external influences on the town rather than those that could be solely committed to the best interests of the town.

A second speaker who had registered in relation to allotments at Bristol Road was not in attendance.

The paper produced by Mrs Jones and circulated at SDC was circulated to all Members.

85/09 MINUTES:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 04/03/10 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of Cllr GJ Granter in the list of attendees.

86/09 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES 04/03/10:

- i. **EDF and National Grid and IPC consultations** (Min 76/09.ii) – a submission had been made to the Infrastructure Planning Commission drawing on the response to EDF. Minutes of the Community Forum had been circulated. It had been pleasing to note that in a Community Engagement Workshop run through the Somerset Community Council at the Town Hall, the Town Council's response had been utilised and indications were that this was well supported.
- ii. **Future funding and support for SDC** (Min 77/09[26]) – a workshop was being planned by SDC on 12 May for discussions with town and parish councils and it was possible that Cllrs Preece and Smeed and the Town Clerk would be in attendance.
- iii. **Report of the Museum Sub-Committee** (Min 78/09) – a workshop style training event for prospective trustees was being arranged for Monday 07/06/10 and any interested members were invited.
- iv. **Land adjoining 13 Friarn Avenue** (Min 81/09) – contracts had been exchanged and it was anticipated that completion would take place on 10/05/10.

- v. **“Connect-Three”, Bridgwater, Taunton and Wellington future transport strategy** (Min 83/09.i) – Cllrs Hall and Preece updated members following their attendance at the recent workshop. Some £100M had been set aside but not allocated. The Strategy was concerned principally with the A38 corridor and appeared to pay little heed to the need for a northern relief road for Bridgwater, with the concentration being on Taunton and Wellington. There was concern that this might be a tick box exercise although more would be known with the second phase due to be published on 14/05/10. Requests for a consultation meeting had been declined.

RESOLVED: That the Council press for the appropriate officials to attend and present to the Town Council once the second phase is published.

87/09 TOWN COUNCIL ASSETS AND CATTLEMARKE T & BRISTOL ROAD LANDS INCLUDING ALLOTMENTS AND THIS (THERP) PROJECT (MIN 80/09):

The draft Landowners’ Agreement and Lease for the Town Hall accommodation and the revised Promotion and Development Agreement were nearing completion. As part of this process, although no obligation to do so on the part of the Town Council not being a “principal” authority, an advert had been placed in relation to the future of the allotment land and the proposed relocation of the Bristol Road 1 site. As a result, two objections had been received to be considered by the Council. Copies of both were circulated. One of the objectors had indicated a desire to speak and had been informed of the date of the meeting and reminded by telephone message, but was not present. A number of other comments had been passed on to the prospective developers and would continue so to do. The most relevant stage for these additional comments would be when the layout of the overall site was prepared and pre-planning consultations were undertaken. This would be the responsibility of the developers. The Allotment Tenants Association remained supportive of the overall proposals and the relocation.

In respect of the objections, Members acknowledged that the first was primarily related to the development area and the road access and would be more properly dealt with when the layout was designed and through the planning process.

In relation to the other objection, members determined that the reference to an incorrect section did not prejudice the individual who had responded to the notice anyway (see reference to “principal” authority above) and that any disposal would take place under the Allotments Act with the Secretary of State’s approval and not under the Local Government Act 1972.

In this context, members determined that neither objection was sustained.

Members also questioned the principle of use of allotments intended for use of people living within the town and took the view that priority should be for those and not for people living outside the town.

In the meantime, the refurbishment project for the Town Hall continued to move forward on time with the removal of the scaffolding now underway. Regular updates were circulated by e-mail.

RESOLVED:

1. That the position be noted;
2. that the objections be not sustained for the reasons set out above and the application to the Secretary of State proceed;

3. that the priority for residents of the town in allotment holdings be confirmed, advised to the Allotment Tenants Association, subject to the Town Clerk confirming the position and levels of rental for residents and non-residents;
4. that possible Notice of Motion in this regard for the next meeting of the Town Council from Cllr Smeed be noted.

88/09 TRINITY HALL (MINS 81/09):

The 125 year lease had now been completed and the hall transferred to the Town Council. The £6000 transitional funding had been received and remaining outstanding issues confirmed to be dealt with. Bookings in addition to the regular commitments were now made through the town council office. A Caretaker had been appointed who fortunately lived close by.

RESOLVED: That this be noted and the arrangements and terms & conditions of the Caretaker's appointment confirmed.

(Cllr Cresswell declared a personal interest in the appointment of the Caretaker and took no part in the consideration and did not speak or vote thereon).

89/09 NOTICE OF AUDIT 2009/2010:

The timetable for the audit had been received and this year required the calling of the audit with the annual return by 01/06/10, although the approval of the accounts was due by 30/06/10. Given the shortage of time and the transfer to the new accounting system, the Town Clerk had sorted a deferment and this had been agreed.

RESOLVED: That the position be noted

90/09 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2010/2011

RESOLVED: That the calendar of meetings for the forthcoming municipal year as circulated be approved.

91/09 ANNUAL MEETING AND MAYOR MAKING 14/05/10:

Members discussed detailed arrangements for the Mayor Making meeting.

RESOLVED: That the agenda and programme be prepared as now agreed.

92/09 MAYORAL ITEMS:

Cllr Preece had raised a question in relation to the Council's website. It was confirmed that other pressures had meant that updates had been delayed, but that the web designers were now introducing changes that could make the process easier. All were conscious of the need to ensure that the website carried up-to-date information as far as possible.

93/09 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND INCOME:

RESOLVED:

1. That the payments (including Section 137 payments) made since the last meeting recorded in the Town Clerk's report dated 22/04/10 and the museum expenditure contained in the schedule of payments against budget to 31/03/10 be approved and confirmed
2. that the income relating to the Town Council and that attributable to the Museum be noted

94/09 PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE:

The Town Clerk reported on correspondence and papers received: those for decision and those for information.

RESOLVED: That all items be noted as listed in the report dated 22/04/10 (agenda item 8) and decisions taken as follows, as well as noting the additions:-

Decisions

1. SLCC regional conference for the south west – 18/05/10 – attendance by Town Clerk authorised;
2. Local artist – offer of opportunity to commission pieces of artwork – Town Clerk to discuss costs and possibilities with artist and to examine alternatives;
3. Community Council for Somerset – subscription 2010/2011 (minimum £30) – declined;
4. Christmas lights in Bridgwater (BTC) – contract and options – authority to pursue additions for North Street and St Mary Street, subject to costs;
5. Grants 2010/2011 – all applications received together with ward grant applications referred to the Finance Committee for decision.

For Information (added)

20. Zurich Insurance – premium raised to £13,679.14 due to increased activities, additional land and property ownership and cover costs;
21. Rights of way management – now administered by the Environment Directorate of SDC with consequent restructuring of Rights of Way Team;
22. BSF update (circulated by e-mail)

95/09 MAYOR AND MAYORESS AND MAYORAL YEAR:

Cllr Smeed on behalf of all Members of the Town Council and the people of Bridgwater thanked the Mayor and Mayoress, Ken and Margo Richards, for the way in which they had conducted the mayoral year and their contribution to the life of the town and to the community through the engagements they had undertaken.

The meeting finished at 9.04pm

.....
Signed
Chairman