

BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 3 MARCH 2011 AT 7.30PM IN THE CHARTER HALL TOWN HALL BRIDGWATER

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

Apologies: Cllrs Busby, Hall, Loveridge, Ms Raven and Smeed

84/10 PUBLIC SPEAKING:

Mr Bob Cudlipp addressed the meeting in relation to anti-social behaviour activities concentrated on the Cornhill and High Street, principally skateboarding, football and cycling and made enquiries reference CCTV coverage and police response times. Inspector Carey replied to this in his policing item.

Mr Cudlipp also asked questions in relation to toilet provision, the position of EDF in relation to accommodation of workers and the community budget and sports facilities in their response to the phase two proposals and reaction to the expected arrival of Tesco on the Northgate site.

The Mayor and Town Clerk responded to the issues confirming the toilets that were available and were funded in part by the Town Council. They also confirmed the Town Council's proposals to respond to the preferred options and to information received, upon which all members would be given an opportunity to input. Following decisions by SDC and Somerset County Council it was expected that the Tesco proposals would be worked up into a planning application and further opportunities for comment would be available.

(Cllr Parker declared an interest in relation to Bridgwater College, and Cllr Preece in relation to Bridgwater & Albion RFC and took no part in the discussion in view of their personal interests).

85/10 POLICING IN BRIDGWATER:

Picking up firstly on the issues raised by Mr Cudlipp, Insp. Carey referred to the action plan for the Cornhill that had been instigated and the regular moves by officers and PCSOs in combating anti-social behaviour. Response times were sometimes dictated by other duties or previous call-outs. Following on from this Insp. Carey informed the Council on the action taken in relation to illegal parking and other motoring offences and promised to give further details on the fixed penalty notices issued in recent months. This would include a breakdown of those related to cycling in various locations as discussed previously.

Signs for "no cycling" were being pursued with the highway authority at the Cornhill end of Fore Street and SDC had similarly been asked to provide "no skateboarding" signs to assist efforts on the Cornhill.

With recent news of proposed closures of police stations, Insp. Carey confirmed that the Bridgwater station would remain open for full working days, 7 days per week and he anticipated a similar position when and if the police move to Express Park was undertaken and a town centre separate office provided.

The Mayor thanked Insp. Carey for his report.

86/10 MINUTES:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 13/01/11 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

87/10 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES 13/01/11:

- i. **Closure of Bridgwater Magistrates Court (Min 77/10):** the Town Clerk confirmed that correspondence had been received from Eileen Westwood the Chairman of the Sedgemoor Bench, confirming that a letter before claim had been submitted setting out the basis on which it was intended to challenge the decision to close Bridgwater Courthouse and merge the local justice area. This initiated the proposed claim for judicial review and in accordance with the previous decision acknowledged the Town Council support for the proposed action;
- ii. **Service Organisations March from Bideford to Bulford (Min 79/10):** the Mayor confirmed that he had followed up the plans with the service organisations and confirmed the Council's interest in supporting the event through the incumbent Mayor;
- iii. **The Bridgwater Cup 2010 (Min 83/10):** in response to a question from Cllr Parker the Mayor confirmed that it had been mentioned to hold a reception for Bryan Gillard following the meeting, but this had been deferred due to illness,

88/10 REPORT OF THE MUSEUM SUB-COMMITTEE (18/01/11):

The decisions and recommendations arising from the meeting held on 18/01/11 (attached as an appendix) were circulated. The Town Clerk drew attention to the issues discussed and the statement of performance against budget dated 17/01/11.

89/10 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND INCOME:

RESOLVED:

- i. That the payments (including Section 137 payments) made since the last meeting recorded in the Town Clerk's report dated 24/02/11 be approved and confirmed, including acceptance of the cost centre report to month 9 (details of Museum expenditure having been appended to the Museum Sub-Committee report as above).

90/10 NATIONAL GRID – HINKLEY POINT C CONNECTION PROJECT (MIN 76/10x):

The Town Clerk referred to the further information sheet issued in advance of the preferred connection proposals, which were expected to be announced in the Spring. Terms of reference and a protocol have been agreed for the town and parish representative on the HPCG and the initial feedback received from the meeting on 28/02/11.

91/10 EDF – STAGE TWO PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION (MIN 67/10iii):

The Town Clerk confirmed that representations on the preliminary works planning application had been submitted to West Somerset District Council and copies were circulated. The Town Council had also joined the transport forum, which was looking at the highway and transportation implications of the proposals at each of the stages. This was intended to feed into the community forum and provide a direct link to the authorities dealing with the separate applications as well as providing access to EDF and traffic consultants. The Town Clerk reported on the outcomes of the first discussions.

Since closure of stage 2 consultation, EDF had refined its proposals and with effect from 25/02/11 was launching the Stage 2 update consultation: update on and proposed changes to preferred proposals. The closing date for further submissions was 28/03/11 and documents would be made available at various public exhibitions and events, including the

EDF Energy offices in King Square. The Town Clerk had attended the initial presentation and identified a series of issues for further comment. A draft would be prepared for circulation to all members, giving the opportunity for input to formal representations to be submitted by 28/03/11.

In the meantime, SDC and West Somerset Council had issued a consultation draft containing supplementary planning guidance for the project. This would give the Town Council further opportunity to comment as well as setting the scene for consideration of changes that included accommodation, further work on transportation and the processing of the community budget. The Town Clerk suggested this be referred to the planning panel and an invitation had been extended to Arup Consultants to attend the next planning meeting.

RESOLVED:

- i. that the process for submitting representations on each of the documents be approved;
- ii. that all members prepare to provide input to the draft representations with particular regard to the community fund, and compensation and mitigation for the effects on town and community life.

92/10 BRIDGWATER FORWARD – REQUEST FOR PARISH MEETING RE: NORTHGATE:

The Town Clerk had circulated a letter received from the Bridgwater Forward organisation with six signatures appended. This was requesting in accordance with the appropriate provision of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended, the convening of a parish meeting.

Advice was given on the council's position and the Mayor confirmed the process to be followed. Dates were considered for the public meeting, the notice for which would need to be signed by the Town Clerk, Mayor and the six local government electors entitled to make the request.

RESOLVED: That arrangements be put in hand to convene the meeting – a town public meeting – at 7.30pm on Monday 28/03/11 at the Charter Hall, for which the only item on agenda would be the proposal set out in the letter as circulated.

(Cllr Baker declared a personal interest in this matter and took no part in the consideration and did not vote thereon).

93/10 TOWN COUNCIL ELECTION 05/05/2011 AND REVIEW OF MEETING DATES:

The Town Clerk confirmed that nomination papers were available for the parish election for the 7 wards. This would mean a change to the date for the Annual Town Meeting.

RESOLVED: that the following meeting dates confirmed:

14/04/11 Town Council Meeting – non-controversial/routine business only

28/04/11 Annual Town Meeting – cancelled

05/05/11 Town Council Election

10/05/11 Town Council Special Meeting

13/05/11 Town Council Mayor-Making Meeting

Annual Town Meeting - date to be arranged at meeting on 10/05/11 for later in May.

94/10 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 24/02/11 and decisions taken as follows, as well as noting the additions recorded below:-

Decisions

1. Somerset transport plan (2011/2026) – deferred awaiting setting up of transport for Bridgwater meetings;
2. Bristol Road and Quantock Road cemeteries – agreement to extension of service level agreement for a further three years from 31/03/11 and similar lease back to SDC of the Lodge at Quantock Road for the same period;
3. Retail Initiatives – allocation of budgets together with the utilisation of the grant from Magnox confirmed, including the services of the local data company (if appropriate) which will also aid preparations for business improvement district status;
4. Business in Sedgemoor Awards 2011 – agreement to support the event within available budget.
5. Heritage Open Days – 08/11/11 – request for suggestions on how this worthy event might be supported.
6. Green Space South West – membership declined
7. Snow clearing – gritting of pavements – agreement to support purchase of equipment for use in Bridgwater to a maximum of £2000 within budget.
8. Grant application and Ward Grant (Victoria) and sponsorship – Civic Society core funding – grant of £300 approved; Marshal Arts Academy at the Victoria Centre – grant of £500 approved; and sponsorship of BGFCC pre-carnival firework display for 2011 – approved as included in 2011/2012 budget
34. SALC membership invitation (£2249.37 fee) - declined

For information:

9/33 Noted

Bridgwater Cluster meeting 02/03/11

Wessex Water – cleaning and rehabilitation works – confirmation of locations in allotment at St Matthew's field and Friarn Avenue

(Cllrs Cresswell and Mrs Slocombe declared an interest in item 8 of a personal nature and took no part in the consideration and did not vote thereon in relation to Bridgwater Carnival).

95/10 EXEMPT ITEMS – EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC:

RESOLVED: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of business recorded in Minutes 96/10 and 97/10 on the grounds that this will involve the disclosure of exempt information, as defined in section 100.1 of the Local Government Act 1972.

96/10 TOWN HALL – FUTURE OF BUILDINGS AND MANAGEMENT AND CULTURAL PARTNERS (MIN 82/10):

The Town Clerk reported on further discussions and negotiations that had continued with SDC. This had resulted in the offer of the freehold of the Town Hall and Island Site excluding the Engine Room and 50 High Street and an uplift in the transitional funding offered. Draft heads of terms were now expected based on the revised offer, although with one or two issues to be resolved it was hoped that the transfer would be enabled to take place for 01/04/11. A recent meeting with the representatives of the primary users and community groups had confirmed their support and looked forward to the formation of a Trust.

RESOLVED:

1. That the acquisition of the freehold as described be confirmed, subject to finalisation of the terms and the Mayor and Town Clerk authorised to complete the necessary documentation and seal;
2. that in order to meet this timetable the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor, be empowered to conclude terms for the acquisition and;
3. that work be pursued towards the creation of a trust and managing body.

97/10 RETIRING MEMBERS:

The Mayor gave notice of his intention to host a small reception for any retiring Town Council members.

The meeting finished at 9.30pm

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Signed
Chairman