

BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 14 APRIL 2011 AT 7.30PM IN THE CHAIRMAN'S ROOM TOWN HALL BRIDGWATER

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

Apology: Cllr Loveridge

98/10 POLICING IN BRIDGWATER:

The Town Clerk was requested to contact Insp. Carey as to non-representation from the police. The Town Clerk commented on the excellent response received in dealing with a problem, which had arisen on vacant land at the Bristol Road cemetery.

99/10 PUBLIC SPEAKING:

Mr Ian Tucker addressed the meeting following the recent Town Public Meeting convened in response to a petition from local electors, principally connected with Bridgwater Forward in relation to the intended disposal of land at Northgate to Tesco Ltd by the District and County Councils. Mr Tucker emphasised most of the points raised at the meeting in opposition to the planned Tesco development, remarking on the overwhelming opposition to the proposal from those present where only one of those eligible to vote had opposed the motion. Mr Tucker hoped for the support of the Town Council in carrying forward the motion approved by that public meeting requesting Sedgemoor District Council to review the position and consider alternative ways of developing the site to the benefit of the town and retail trading.

100/10 MINUTES:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 03/03/11 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

101/10 MINUTES OF THE TOWN PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON 28/03/11:

The report of the meeting held been circulated to all members. The outcome had been the focus of Mr Tucker's representations recorded in Minute 99/10 above.

Given the proximity of the election of the new town council and the position with PURDAH as outlined by the Mayor at the commencement of the meeting, the Town Clerk recommended that it would be inappropriate to bind the new council and this item should be deferred for consideration at the first appropriate meeting of the Council following the election on 05/05/11.

RESOLVED: That the Motion approved at the meeting held on 28/03/11 be deferred for consideration at the first full business meeting of the new Town Council.

102/10 REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE (30/03/11):

The decisions and recommendations arising from the meeting held on 30/03/11 (attached as an appendix) had been circulated and were introduced by the Chairman Cllr J Turner. Arising from the report, the Town Clerk recommended that Minute 22, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, be recommended for adoption to the new Council at the first appropriate meeting following the election. He also drew members' attention to Minute 23,

Risk Management – Review, Minute 24, support for the Sustainable Transport Fund bid for Bridgwater; and Minute 25, Christmas Lights – preferred features and additions; submitted for approval so that these could be progressed.

RESOLVED: That the report be adopted and all matters covered in the Finance Committee resolutions be noted and approved, subject to the submission of Minute 22, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to the new Council for adoption.

103/10 REPORT OF THE MUSEUM SUB-COMMITTEE (22/03/11):

The decisions and recommendations arising from the meeting held on 22/03/11 (attached as an appendix) was circulated. The Town Clerk drew attention to the issues discussed and in particular the proposed allocation of monies from the sinking fund to the much needed works to the roof, for which quotations had been obtained.

Cllrs Smeed and Turner commented on various issues within the report, including the plans for the formation of a trust, which it was hoped would be moved forward at the next meeting. They commended the transformation of the museum lead by the Honorary Curators, and the volunteers and Friends of the Blake Museum.

RESOLVED:

1. That the decisions be noted and adopted, including the performance against budget as at 27/03/11 and the approval of the budget for 2011/2012;
2. that the quotation from Westcountry Tiling of Frome as recommended by accepted for the roofing works;
3. that thanks of the Council be proffered to the volunteers, Friends, and to Cllrs Granter, Smeed and Turner the appointed Museum Sub-Committee

104/10 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND INCOME:

RESOLVED:

That the payments (including Section 137 payments) made since the last meeting recorded in the Town Clerk's report dated 07/04/11 and the credit income report be approved and confirmed, including acceptance of Cost Centre report to month 11.

105/10 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES 03/03/11:

- i. **Closure of Bridgwater Magistrates Court** (Min 87/10i) – the SLJ (Sedgemoor) Ltd's claim for judicial review on the decision to close Bridgwater Magistrates Courthouse had been submitted.
- ii. **National Grid – Hinkley Point C Connection Project** (Min 90/10) – a further report from Dr PR Gregory the town and parish representative on HPCG from the meeting held on 18/03/11 had been circulated. As previously reported the preferred proposals were expected to be notified in the spring.
- iii. **EDF Stage 2 Pre-Application Consultation** (Min 91/10) – Members had been supplied with a copy of the response to the Stage 2 update preferred proposals. Response was also being finalised to the Supplementary Planning Guidance consultation. In the meantime further meetings of the Transport Forum had been held and a further meeting with EDF representatives, at which the council's views on all transport implications had been re-enforced.

106/10 TOWN HALL – FUTURE OF BUILDINGS AND MANAGEMENT & CULTURAL PARTNERS (MIN 96/10):

The Town Clerk reported that the handover of responsibility of the operation for the Town Hall had taken place on 01/04/11. Appointments of Steward and Cleaner had been made to ensure a smooth handover and continuity for hirers, etc. In the meantime with the terms agreed as empowered at the previous meeting, the legal work to complete the freehold acquisition was in hand with the prospect of early completion.

The process for the formation of a trust to manage and operate the theatre and the community parts of the building was also being progressed.

The Town Clerk also reported on Bridgwater Guy Fawkes Carnival Committee's occupation of the former cash hall and their agreement to allow other organisations joint use for ticket sales, etc.

Members noted and accepted the Town Clerk's observations and were aware of the increasing pressure that the operation and management of the town hall would place upon the town council office and that this would be monitored closely to achieve the best operational structure with the implementation of a trust. With the experience of other buildings and operations taken over by the Town Council in the past couple of years the management of the buildings and the commercial units would require bringing in additional resources.

RESOLVED:

1. That the overall position be noted;
2. that the carnival committee be granted a licence for a further 6 months from 01/04/11 on the terms and conditions previously agreed;

107/10 TOWN COUNCIL ELECTION 05/05/11 & MAYOR MAKING ARRANGEMENTS:

The Town Clerk reported that all wards (7) would be contested in the parish election. A draft paper was circulated to establish the arrangements for the Annual Meeting and Mayor Making, subject to the election and the first special meeting planned for 10/05/11. A Calendar of Meetings 2011/2012 including Mayor Making 13/11/11 at St Mary's Church would be submitted to that meeting.

RESOLVED: That this be noted and the plans for Mayor Making on 13/11/11 approved.

108/10 NOTICE OF AUDIT AND NEW ACCOUNT & AUDIT (ENGLAND) REGS 2011

The Town Clerk referred to the new regulations that had come into effect on 31/03/11 and announced the date for the audit for the year ending 31/03/11, which was 01/06/11.

109/10 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 07/04/11 and decisions taken as follows, as well as noting the additions recorded below:-

Decisions

1. Somerset Transport Plan (2011/2026) – Members endorsed the letter written in support of the local sustainable bid by SCC;
2. Review of County Council land holdings – consideration of a request to take over woodland and walking area at Saltlands part of which was outside the town boundary – referred to new Council for consideration pending information on land area, and present costs and budget;
3. Retail Initiatives – Springtime and Shopping event on day of Royal Wedding – funding confirmed and Town Clerk authorised to proceed with contribution to each of the initiatives;
4. Somerset broadband speeds bid – Members invited to give online support in an effort to secure government funding for the bid;
5. Wessex Water – notice of pipework at St Matthew's Field and Friarn Lawn allotments – further information on next stages of the contract, involving Castle Street area and

- Eastover and Salmon Parade – Town Clerk to request that May Gurney provide better control of parking vehicles in serving the contract;
6. Kidsbury Allotment extension – removal of rubble request from the BATA – Town Clerk authorised to negotiate with BATA;
 7. Portraits of early Mayors – estimates for conservation and cleaning – approval granted for work to “Reed” painting and consideration of other similar paintings on an annual basis.

For information:

8/33 Noted

110/10 MAYORAL ITEMS:

As the last meeting of the existing council prior to the election and in the absence of the Annual Town Meeting (to be held after the election), the Mayor thanked all members of the Council for their support during his year of office and to all for attending and supporting him at the many functions. He made particular note of retiring members thanking them for their services and wished the best to all candidates standing on 05/05/11.

The meeting finished at 8.50pm

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Signed
Chairman