

BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 10 JANUARY 2013 AT 7.30PM AT THE BURGESS ROOM TOWN HALL BRIDGWATER

PRESENT: Cllr GJ Granter (Mayor of Bridgwater – in the Chair), Cllrs SB Austen, DL Baker, AM Glassford, MJ Lerry, DP Loveridge, AJ Moore, Mrs PM Morley, LP Redman, KF Richards, Mrs GJ Slocombe, BD Smedley, IC Tucker and J Turner (JP)

Apologies: Cllrs Monteith and Parker

57/12 THE LATE MR BRIAN GILLARD:

At the commencement of the Meeting, all present observed one minute's silence to the memory of Mr Bryan Gillard, former Town Councillor and Chairman of the Friends of Blake Museum who had recently passed away following a short illness.

58/12 POLICING IN BRIDGWATER:

PCSO Ryan Kelly was in attendance to give members an update on recent events in Bridgwater. This concentrated on the actions during the Bridgwater College Rag Day and in the implementation of Operation Grotto which had taken place in the lead up to Christmas and into the New Year.

The Police had worked closely with the Bridgwater College successfully in managing the traditional Rag Day building on the experience of previous years so that throughout the Town Centre this had been a very much more orderly and controlled event. Incidents were isolated and only four arrests made.

Operation Grotto had concentrated on shoplifting and car theft in the Town Centre area and had shown significant improvements on previous years. The Town Centre Sergeant had now obtained additional funding to manage a similar operation throughout the year.

PCSO Kelly then dealt with questions in relation to locations targeted by police in the operations, numbers and incidents of homeless people in the town, and the successful combatting of antisocial behaviour in the docks area.

Members acknowledged the excellent support received from the Police and PCSO's in the conduct of the Snowflakes and Shopping event, and the squibbing on the Town Bridge in particular.

59/12 MINUTES:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 08/11/12 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

60/12 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES:

- i. **Wheeled Sports Facility Action Group** (Min 46/12i) – Minutes of further meetings of the User Group had been circulated. Members noted that presentations with skate company representatives present had been arranged for Saturday, 19/01/13 between 10.00 am and 5.00 pm at the YMCA.
- ii. **West Quay Wall Re-instatement and Proposal for Pedestrianisation** (Min 46/12ii) – the processing of the Traffic Regulation Order was underway and if objections were maintained, the Order would be placed before a Regulation Panel of the County

Council. Members noted that the hoarding had been removed in the main, and that the project had won the prestigious Planning Award for Excellence in Geo-technical Design.

Whilst it was still not clear when a completion date would be forthcoming, it was noted again, as referred in the Finance Committee Report, that the Council had agreed in principle to contribute to the Pedestrianisation Scheme matching funding proffered by SDC. SCC were also contributing and it was hoped more detailed information on the breakdown of costs anticipated would be available for the Finance Committee.

- iii **Tesco Planning Application** (Min 44/12) – A meeting to deal with submitted questions with SDC and Tesco representatives had been held at the Town Hall on 09/01/13. In addition a number of revised documents and plans as part of the application had been received resulting in an extension of the consultation period to 23/01/13. This would be examined by the Planning Panel on the 17/01/13 and Members were invited to attend or to submit views in advance for consideration by the Panel before presentation to SDC.

In answer to one of the questions at the meeting, there had been an indication that the Town Council were party to discussions about the eventual take-over and management of the remaining part of the Brewery Field. The Town Clerk and Members confirmed that this was not the case and that the Town Council had been involved in no discussions either with SDC, or Tesco or collectively on this point.

RESOLVED:

1. That the revisions to the application and additional information be noted;
2. That the Town Clerk write to SDC seeking clarification of the position following the statement made in public in relation to the Brewery field;
3. That the requests from members of the public for written responses to the questions submitted to SDC be noted.

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

61/12 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND INCOME:

RESOLVED: That the payments, including Section 137 payments, made during November (month 8) and December (month 9) now circulated, be approved and confirmed, together with the Museum Performance against Budget as of November, and income received in these periods.

62/12 EDF – PROPOSALS FOR NEW BUILD AT HINKLEY POINT C (MIN 48/12):

The Town Clerk gave a progress report in the period leading up to the awaited decision by the Secretary of State on the DCO Application. A Visitor Centre had been opened in the Angel Place Shopping Centre and it had been announced at that meeting that an extension of the life of the B Station had been granted. Members of the Select Committee on Energy and Climate Change had visited the area and Members and the Town Clerk had been able to emphasise to MPs specific issues about the public engagement process and community benefit and mitigation.

Following the resolution at the previous meeting SCC as Highway Authority had been invited to a Town Council meeting to give updates not only on the EDF proposals but on the many major schemes effecting the Town due be implemented. Although the representatives were not available for this meeting, for other reasons a meeting of the Council needed to be brought forward to the 07/02/13 (see Min 67/12 below) and this date had been diared for the Highway Authority.

Members re-addressed the importance of the EDF proposals and their impact on Bridgwater, and considered that to ensure the best interests of the town were met through all the various aspects of the DCO Application, the Section 106 Agreement and obligations in the event that the Secretary of State granted planning permission an EDF/HPC Sub-Committee should be established to look after these interests.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report and presentation from the Highway Authority be noted;
2. That a Sub-Committee comprising of the Mayor, Cllr Granter, and Cllrs Baker, Moore, Redman and Tucker, and the Town Clerk, be appointed to over-view all EDF involvement with the Town.

63/12 POST OFFICE RELOCATION (MIN 49/12):

Following the decision by the Post Office to reject the proposed location in Sainsbury's, interested parties had resumed the search for premises within the Town Centre. Proposals by the Town Council and the District Council to assist in this process had been made known. A further period of consultation would be required once the location was confirmed.

RESOLVED: That the confirmation of the Town Council position to provide match funding up to the £10,000 for a favourable position in the Town Centre be delegated to the Town Clerk in conjunction with the Mayor and Chairman of Finance Committee.

64/12 REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE (14/11/12):

The decisions and recommendations arising from the meeting held on 14/11/12 (attached as an appendix) were circulated. The Chairman presented the Report and the Town Clerk expanded on those minutes dealing with draft estimates for 2013/14 and Precept (Min 18) and Precept Resolution and Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Min 19).

RESOLVED: That the decisions in the Minutes be noted and adopted subject to an amendment to the Declaration of Interest in Min 17 by Cllr Turner to that of Personal and Prejudicial rather than Pecuniary.

65/12 REPORT OF THE MUSEUM SUB-COMMITTEE (12/11/12):

The decisions and recommendations arising from the meeting held on 12/11/12 (attached as appendix) were circulated. Arising from the Minutes, the Town Clerk expanded upon the item relating to the Brick and Tile Museum (Min 23) and especially the actions of the Somerset Heritage Service in examining the future of the Brick and Tile Museum in the light of the service review currently being undertaken by SCC. Members expressed their support for the Brick and Tile Museum and for measures which would enable continuity of provision but were aware of the possible ramifications of Town Council involvement, and further reliance on the voluntary sector.

66/12 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH-ON AND SNOWFLAKES & SHOPPING (MIN 50/12):

The Town Clerk reported on the success of the annual Christmas Lights Switch-on and the Snowflakes & Shopping event held on 23/11/12. This had been widely commended. A debrief meeting was being arranged to determine what lessons may be learned for the future. A further meeting of the BRI had been held on 05/12/12 and notes circulated.

Members confirmed excellent feed-back on the event and congratulated those involved. Robson Electrics were also thanked for their work under the terms of the Christmas Lighting Contract.

67/12 NEXT MEETING – 07/03/13 – CHANGE OF DATE:

The Town Clerk drew attention to the Finance Committee Report and Mins 18 and 19 in particular. Due to changes introduced by the Government to the way in which Benefits were to be dealt with and the effects on the tax base, it had not been possible to declare a final recommendation on the draft estimates. Details were still awaited on the tax base and the final figures on the amount of compensatory grant via SDC. The Town Clerk therefore recommended that a Council meeting be held on 07/02/13 (rather than 07/03/13) which should enable a meeting of the Finance Committee to be convened prior thereto once the tax base and grant figures were known which should be no later than 25/01/13.

RESOLVED: That the next meeting be brought forward to 07/02/13 and the Town Clerk arrange a meeting of the Finance Committee prior thereto in consultation with the Chairman.

68/12 MAYORAL ITEMS:

The Mayor announced that Sports Sponsorship for 2012/13 would be the Bridgwater Town versus Shortwood United match on 16/02/13. Invitations would be issued in the usual way.

69/12 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 03/01/13 (Agenda item 10) and decisions taken as follows:

Decisions

1. National Grid Consultation – Cllr Redman provided an update on the recent announcement of the draft Preferred Route. **AGREED:** to note the issues around the proposed compounds and impacts on the outskirts of the Town.
2. Bridgwater Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) – **AGREED:** to invite the LSTF Officers to give a presentation on the proposals, either to the Town Council or to the Cluster Group as the project develops.
3. The Forces March 2013 – **AGREED:** to support the event on Friday 24/05/13 in the same manner as in previous years (Church bells arranged).
4. Bridgwater Town Evacuation Plan to be prepared by Civil Contingencies Unit – **AGREED:** through the involvement of the Town Clerk to support the preparation of the Plan.
5. Bus Shelter at Rear of Angel Place – **AGREED:** to take responsibility for the Bus Shelter once missing panel replaced and shelter cleaned and refurbished.
6. South West in Bloom Competition – **AGREED:** to publicise and “invite” champion to lead entry and involvement from Bridgwater, if not possible this year then in the future.
7. Consolidated Traffic Regulation Order – **AGREED**
 - i. to confirm the representations submitted; and
 - ii. note SCC meeting 17/02/13 reference residents parking schemes (Cllr Loveridge in attendance).
8. Grant Application – Sydenham Community Centre – **AGREED:** approval of £10k as per budget.

For information:

Items 1/26 as circulated – noted.

70/12 EXEMPT ITEM – EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC:

RESOLVED: That the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of business recorded in Min 71/12 on the grounds that this would involve the disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in Section 1 of the Local Government Act 1972.

71/12 THE BRIDGWATER CUP 2012:

RESOLVED:

1. That having considered the worthy merits of the eligible nominations, the cup be awarded to Mr Chris Kettle in recognition of his services to the people and community of Bridgwater through service in a range of social, cultural and sporting and in official public office;
2. That a suitable presentation and photo opportunity be organised;
3. That members recognise the work of others nominated and their invaluable support to the community, and nominees be thanked for their submissions.

(Clls Baker and Turner declared interests of a personal and prejudicial nature, took no part in the consideration and left the meeting)

The Meeting finished at 9.15 pm

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Signed
Chairman