

BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 15 DECEMBER 2011 AT 7.30PM
AT THE CHARTER HALL TOWN HALL BRIDGWATER

PRESENT: Cllr PGH Parker (Mayor of Bridgwater – in the Chair), Cllrs SB Austen, D Baker, AM Glassford, GJ Granter, MJ Lerry, WJ Monteith, LP Redman, KF Richards, Mrs GJ Slocombe, BD Smedley, IC Tucker and J Turner (JP)

Apology: Cllr Loveridge

53/11 SOMERSET YOUTH SERVICE:

The Council received a presentation from Fiona Jolley, a Senior Youth Worker based at the Rollercoaster in Bridgwater. She explained the anticipated impact of the expected reductions in SCC funding and the budget for the service. This would impinge severely on the operations of the youth service and lead to the loss of numbers of full-time and part-time staff upon whom redundancy notices had been served. The changes in the service that would affect the Rollercoaster and the provision of youth services, and adversely affect youngsters themselves, was in a period of formal consultation, which would conclude in early January. Responses would be put to a County Scrutiny Panel and she outlined the affects on various parts of the service, in terms of the loss of structure, the future of buildings, such as the Rollercoaster, and other commitments.

(Cllr Baker declared a personal interest as a SCC employee)

PUBLIC SPEAKING:

The Town Council were then addressed by Jess Pair and Troy Baker, who as members of the youth community stated their outrage at the impact that the cuts would have adversely affecting the roles of youth workers and older youths who, for example, provided a youth service to 8-11 year-olds. As active participants they had sought a dialogue with the County Council but none had been forthcoming. The impact on the Rollercoaster in particular was feared as the various services so necessary to younger people would be lost. Copies of the consultation brief for Communities would be provided.

Members of the Council debated the situation based on the information provided, acknowledging the severe impact that 75% cuts would have when implemented. The real loss would be the specialist advice which aided young people in the transition to adult status. Members recognised that there would be an impact on other youth provision in the town, for example, Victoria Park, ReCreation notwithstanding the involvement of the YMCA, and various other support, such as facilities for working with the Police and PCSOs.

Members wholeheartedly confirmed their support for a campaign by the youth of Bridgwater to oppose the swingeing cuts in funding and impacts.

RESOLVED:

1. That this Town Council supports the campaign by the youth of the town to protect and retain their facilities for future use by young people;
2. further, that the Council supports the retention of the County Council youth work as part of the facilities including the Rollercoaster;
3. that concerns be voiced about the community consultation and to this extent a meeting be sought with representatives of the County and the District Council be requested to do likewise;

4. that the Town Clerk seek out the specific terms of the agreement, whereby the Rollercoaster originally provided through SRB funding was transferred to the County Council: In particular whether this was specific for youth centre purposes

54/11 MINUTES:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 17/11/11 (previously circulated) be confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

55/11 MATTERS ARISING:

- i. **CIC for travel choices and access to work** (Min 44/11i) – deferred awaiting report;
- ii. **Town Hall – future of buildings and management and cultural partners** (Min 44/11ii) – the Town Clerk confirmed that the legal work was in hand to formalise the transfer with the completion date awaited. This would open up the way for preparations for the setting up of Trust. Members considered the necessity for the setting up of a working party in due course to assist the process.
- iii. **Museum Trust** (Min 45/11) – Cllr Mrs Morley had indicated that she no longer wished her name to go forward as a potential trustee and Cllrs Mrs Slocombe and Smedley offered their names alongside Cllr Tucker as interested in the role of Trustee.

56/11 BUDGET PAPER 2012/2013 AND DRAFT ESTIMATES:

The Town Clerk presented a draft budget prepared by cost centre and based on the high level principles established at the Town Council meeting on 17/11/11, which followed the consideration of the Rreport from the Finance Committee held on 15/11/11.

This produced a base line as a continuation budget to meet everyday expenditure on administration and level of service and support to the community provided by the Town Council. It sought to ensure the continued development of services bearing in mind the broadening of the Town Council's role and additional facilities taken over, as well as addressing some of the funding issues in the District Council likely to affect the town. Support funding was capped at the 2011/2012 level. This would enable the precept to be maintained at the current level with the aid of some income and use of balances.

Full details were presented and the Town Clerk responded to a number of questions. Members endorsed the budget paper and the recommendations. Particular note was taken of the situation with the Arts Centre where additional support was offered subject to matched funding coming forward.

RESOLVED:

That the estimates as now submitted be approved for the purposes of securing the precept for 2012/2013 of £519548.46 for Town Council purposes including cemeteries, facilities and service support, and ear-marked funds, equating in total to £49.799 per band D property equivalent as part of a total budget set at maximum of £564050.00 for the year.

57/11 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND INCOME:

The payments including Section 137 payments, made during November (Month 8) be approved and confirmed, together with income received in this period (details of museum expenditure through performance against budget as at 04/12/11 was also received).

58/11 EDF – PROPOSALS FOR NEW BUILD AT HINKLEY POINT C (Min 47/11):

The Infrastructure Planning Commission had validated the application and formal consultation on the new build submitted by EDF. Members noted that representations to the IPC had to be made by 23/01/12 in order to register. The Town Clerk outlined the process and reminded members of the representations and key issues identified by the Town Council at each stage of the EDF consultations. This again highlighted the Town Council view that the company's investigations into the need for a northern by-pass for Bridgwater had been inadequate and the apparent absence of an evidential base for evaluation.

Members noted a series of public information events planned and also the notice of adoption of the HPC Supplementary Planning document. An "interim statement" had also been issued by the Environment Agency following their assessment of new nuclear plant designs, which would inform decisions on any site-specific applications received for new nuclear power stations in due course.

The Town Clerk and Cllr Moore also updated information from the Transport Forum and from a meeting of local groups and parties with the MP.

RESOLVED:-

1. That the Town Clerk register with the IPC on behalf of the Town Council;
2. that Members consider representations and registration on an individual basis in addition;
3. that the Town Clerk seek additional information from SCC and SDC and from their consultants Messrs Arup on examination of traffic information and the by-pass issue in particular

59/11 NATIONAL GRID –HINKLEY POINT C CONNECTION PROJECT:

The Town Clerk had circulated a report by e-mail from Wraxall and Failand Parish Council on the option for undergrounding, cable costings etc. It was reported that the original 5 forums had been reduced to 3 with that for the local area taking in the routes from the power station to the Westonzoyland Road sub-station and the connection towards Avonmouth as far as the Mendip AONB. Consultation was moving from Stage 2 to Stage 3.

RESOLVED: That the position be noted and Cllr Redman nominated to represent the Town Council in addition to the arrangements in place with the parish councils representative from Mark PC.

60/11 PROPOSED NORTHGATE TESCO DEVELOPMENT (Min 50/11):

Communication had continued with Tesco representatives seeking arrangements for a Town Council meeting, which would be held as usual in public. A positive response had been received although dates were likely to be offered in January when the company indicated that they would be in a position to respond more fully on some of the questions raised. The Town Clerk continued to press for the meeting to be early enough to form part of the pre-application consultation report, which agents were preparing

RESOLVED: That this be noted

(Cllr Baker declared a personal interest in the matter as a SCC employee).

61/11 SOMERSET ELECTORAL REVIEW:

Details of the SCC proposals which aimed to satisfy the LGBCE proposals for the creation of a County Council with a membership of 55 Councillors had been issued. This retained 12 County Councillors in the Sedgemoor area. Details were available on the website.

RESOLVED: That Members be invited to review the detail of the proposal for the district and for the electoral divisions within the Town in particular and to bring comments to the next meeting.

62/11 MAYORAL ITEMS:

The Mayor reminded all members of the need to respond in good time to book places as a response to mayoral invitations.

63/11 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 08/12/11 (Agenda item 10) and decisions taken as follows, as well as noting the additions recorded below:-

Decisions

1. Bridgwater Retail Initiative and Snowflakes and Shopping/Xmas Lights switch on 18/11/11 (Children in Need) and application to Magnox – successful outcome acknowledged, including the launch of the town guide App for smart phones, the application to Magnox for additional community funding to support the town centre and the BRI and the continuing support within allocated budgets be endorsed;
2. Eastover Community and Sports trust – request approved to submit planning application on behalf of the trust for outline consent for the multi-purpose covered sports facility and meeting rooms etc,
3. SLCC membership 2012 – approved at 50% of £175.00
4. Sedgemoor Citizens Advice Bureau – invitation to be extended to Mr Chris Kettle for the Annual Town Meeting
5. Network Rail – future proposals – documents circulated to members and Cllr Monteith to be invited to make presentation in due course

For information:

Items 1/12 as circulated, including the Meads Draft SPG – summary of current situation and outline of potential – noted.

(Cllr Parker declared an interest in item 4 and took no part in the consideration and did not vote thereon)

64/11 SEASONS GREETINGS:

Compliments of the season were exchanged between the Mayor and all Members of the Town Council.

The meeting finished at 9.22pm

Signed
Chairman