

BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN PUBLIC MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 9 MAY 2013 AT 7.30PM
AT THE CHARTER HALL TOWN HALL BRIDGWATER

PRESENT: Cllr Graham Granter (Mayor – in the Chair), 9 other members of the Town Council, and some 3 members of the public.

01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Cllrs Austen, Monteith, Mrs Morley, Parker, Richards and Smedley.

02. WELCOME:

The Mayor welcomed members of the public to the 10th Annual Public Meeting of the Town Council since its inception in 2003. He welcomed guest speakers Inspector Roger Tolley and Kenny Brown (1610 Sports and Leisure).

03. CLLR KEN RICHARDS:

The Mayor gave members an update on progress being made by Cllr Richards following a serious illness and major operation. All present wished him a speedy recovery to full health.

04. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2012:

The Minutes of the 9th Annual Town Meeting held on 03/05/12 had been circulated to members of the Council and were available at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 03/05/12 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

05. MATTERS ARISING: no specific matters were raised.

06. POLICING IN BRIDGWATER:

Inspector Roger Tolley, one year on from his first meeting as Lead Officer of the new combined district, thanked the Town Council for their support through the year, and the community who had helped the force achieve a reduction in crime of some 15 – 16% with some 800 fewer offences. The Force locally were also achieving a 47% solve rate which was the best in the Force area. He relayed some of the statistics behind this and highlighted areas such as drug trafficking where there had been a concentration of effort through particular operations. Attacking this at the core had also meant targeting shoplifting and burglary, sources of paying for the drug culture. Work had also been effective with Trading Standards in dealing with counterfeit goods. With exceptions, late night behaviour had significantly improved.

The Force had responded to comments about boundaries for the beats and Officers and PCSOs continued regular Beat Surgeries within the new areas. There had been improvements in contact with schools, through both Head Teachers and mentoring schemes and often using these contacts combining with other agencies to support the more troubled families. The Force locally had received the Ray Robinson Trophy, a significantly acknowledged award locally and nationally.

The Force were now entering into a further period of re-structuring following the appointment of the new Chief Constable and the Police and Crime Commissioner election. The re-structure reduced from six to three the number of police districts.

Members raised a series of issues to which Inspector Tolley responded, including night time behaviour in the Town Centre, drinks promotion in the night time economy, shoplifting, and arrangements in place specifically flowing from the EDF plans and contributions.

Cllr Tucker made a particular point of congratulating the Force for their efforts in involving the community and asked Inspector Tolley to take this praise back to the individual officers. The Mayor then thanked Inspector Tolley for his attendance.

07. 1610 – TRINITY SPORTS & LEISURE AND POOL

Kenny Brown gave a presentation and progress report on behalf of the Company which had relatively recently re-branded. Investment had been considerable in recent years culminating in the opening of the new Trinity Pool and increasing usage both children and adults recognisable at Chilton and Blake. He explained the contracts the Company held at Chilton and Blake and as examples, the number of users in the pool and the numbers which could be accommodated longer term.

Work was also ongoing with adults with learning difficulties integrating into the main stream of activities. 3G pitches were planned at Blake and Chilton. One significant success being the community involvement hugely increasing numbers in fun runs, 10 km and half marathon races. In answer to the Mayor, Kenny also touched on usage at East Bridgwater.

Mr Brown then dealt with questions relating to disabled user groups, timetabling and capacity issues and the provision of additional car parking at the Trinity Pool. The 1610 Sports Development Team were actively pursuing healthy lifestyles across the piece in many ways. He confirmed that the 1610 Business Plan was firmly on track and that, not least, significant energy savings were being obtained in the way in which the new facilities had been developed. The Mayor thanked Mr Brown for his presentation.

08. EDF – PROPOSALS FOR NEW BUILD AT HINKLEY POINT C:

Cllr Leigh Redman, the Chairman of the EDF HPC Sub-Committee, gave a brief report on the position with the EDF plans in terms of the preliminary works underway, and the Development Consent Order approval and all related matters.

09. BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL – RESUME OF THE YEAR 2012/13:

The Mayor presented a list of items that had been dealt with by the Town Council during the past year and previous years, copies of which were circulated. This showed the continuing development of the Town Council's role which had progressively increased in its activity, breadth and commitment during the past six years in particular. The Resume was fully available and included on the Council's website. The Mayor made a special point of thanking the Town Clerk and the Mayor's Secretary for their hard work and commitment, evidenced in the actions and activities with which the Town Council were involved.

10. ISSUES FROM THE PUBLIC:

No matters of significance were raised in this section. Members did note that there was an Open Day for the Bridgwater Food Bank on the following Saturday.

11. MAYOR AND MAYORESS:

Members made a particular point of thanking the Mayor and Mayoress for their support for Bridgwater in undertaking their many engagements through the year.

12. PUBLIC MEETING:

The Mayor thanked all those who had participated for their attendance and contributions, and their interest in the Town and Town Council, and all Members of the Council for their commitment.

The meeting finished at 8.52 pm

Signed – Chairman

