

BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ANNUAL TOWN PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 19 MAY 2016 AT 7.00PM AT THE CHARTER HALL TOWN HALL BRIDGWATER

PRESENT: Cllr Alex Glassford (Mayor of Bridgwater - in the chair), eight other members of the Town Council, and some ten members of the public

01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Cllrs Granter, Lerry, Loveridge, Moore, Ms Pearce, Rodrigues and Turner, and PC R Smith.

02 WELCOME:

The Mayor welcomed members of the public to the thirteenth Annual Public Meeting of the Town Council since its inception in 2003.

03 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN PUBLIC MEETING 2015:

The Minutes of the twelfth Annual Town Public Meeting held on 28/05/15 had been circulated, received by members of the Council, and were available at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Annual Town Public Meeting held on 28/05/15 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

04 MATTERS ARISING:

No specific matters were raised - the key issue of Northgate and future development of the land was a key item on the agenda.

05 NORTHGATE PROPOSALS - HYBRID PLANNING APPLICATION AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAND:

The meeting received a progress report on the planning application 08/16/63 (for Hybrid Development Proposals by SCC and SDC) and a report following the meeting of the Town Development Forum on 17/05/16 following up previous public meetings and a consultation process conducted through the Town Development Forum.

Cllr Smedley, Leader of the Council, submitted minutes of the Town Development Forum, highlighted the key issues and ran through the recommendations which had been submitted to Bridgwater Town Council and considered by the Planning Panel earlier in the day in responding to the planning application. Members

noted the key phasing plans for the development identified as 1. the primary school, 2. parking, 3. commercial marketing, 4. Brewery Field and 5. commercial. Links into the Celebration Mile were also explained.

Issues including those submitted by local residents concentrated on traffic, in particular phasing of road layout and junction improvements, loss of trees, impact on residents, enhancement of the Brewery Field and relationship to the Celebration Mile and future of the docks as a significant element as well as intentions to commence with improvements at the Bridgwater Railway Station. Integration of the site and access and reinstatement of a footpath through the site were identified. The interpretation panels and plans for future use of brick materials was welcomed although the school was described as uninspiring.

In concluding the discussion the meeting noted the key points raised and supported representations going forward via the Town Development Forum and in the Planning Panel submission.

06 TRANSPORTATION UPDATE (FOLLOWING CEASATION OF TRADING BY WEBBERBUS LTD):

Cllr Leigh Redman, County Cllr, District Cllr and Town Cllr, gave an update on the situation in relation to WebberBus Ltd. He confirmed that SCC had made arrangements for the takeover of school transport, and were now examining packages of the routes previously run by Webber and being put out to other providers.

Comments were offered in relation to out-of-town companies and availability, and particular routes which would be under pressure in rural areas. The situation was being monitored and information was available on the SCC website. Cllr Smedley confirmed that a Transport Forum had been arranged for Tuesday 24/05/16 with invitations extended to appropriate SCC representatives.

07 BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL - RESUME OF YEAR 2015/16:

Updated copies of this annual production were issued and introduced by the Mayor. The Town Clerk commented on the further increasing role of the Town Council and the wide ranging involvement in the community and all projects etc that affected community life. Copies of the document were available on the Town Council website.

08 FORWARD PLAN TRACKER 2015/16:

Cllr Smedley spoke to the Forward Plan and highlighted the updates and actions promised from the previous public meeting. The document was circulated listing actions taken on a monthly basis and from the key Town Council meetings. The establishment of Forums and the desire for continuing and improving public

involvement and consultation processes had proved successful and Cllr Smedley confirmed all those areas of activity. Particular actions had been taken to improve co-operation with SDC and to develop a mutual work programme and members of the Town Council were particularly pleased with the work supporting the five identified priorities for 2015/16.

Cllr Smedley concluded with his thanks to the retiring Mayor, Cllr Leigh Redman, for all his hard work and echoed the sentiments of the new Mayor for members of the public to get involved.

09 PUBLIC ISSUES:

Mr Ian Tucker sought information on the Celebration Mile and progress, and the Town Clerk and Cllr Smedley responded with news that contracts and arrangements were in place for improvements at the Railway Station. Also, as had been mentioned through the meeting, in terms of Northgate and the Forward Plan review, links at the docks and Northgate and actions planned through the Town Centre supported by CIM bids and the work of the Councils collectively and the Town Team were pressing ahead.

Cllr Mrs Morley drew attention to actions by the Community Assets Working Group and implored people with an interest in particular buildings under threat to bring this to the attention of the Town Council and to lend support to community initiatives. The Town Council were examining improved ways of working for the objective of securing community assets.

Mr Mike Slade drew attention to the works of volunteers at the docks and other recent clean-up campaigns suggesting that there was scope for a "Clean-Up Our Town" where all groups undertook and campaigned together. It was suggested that Cllrs might identify locations in Wards and 'champion the cause'.

Mr Slade also expressed concerns about recycling methods, how these operated and a desire that more should be done to lobby Government in relation to the age old problem of litter.

The Town Clerk responded to a request that informal guided tours of the Town Hall might be arranged and explained circumstances under which this might be possible.

10 PUBLIC MEETING:

The Mayor thanked all those who had participated for their attendance and contributions and their interest in the Town and the Town Council's work, and emphasised the continuing commitment of all those elected to the Town Council.

The meeting finished at 8.05pm

Signed

Chairman

