

# **BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 27 JUNE 2013 AT 7.30PM AT THE CHARTER HALL TOWN HALL BRIDGWATER**

**PRESENT:** Cllr DP Loveridge (Mayor of Bridgwater – in the Chair), Cllrs DL Baker, AM Glassford, AJ Moore, LP Redman, Mrs GJ Slocombe, IC Tucker, and J Turner (JP)

**Apologies:** Cllrs Austen, Lerry, Monteith, Mrs Morley, Parker, Richards and Smedley

### **01/13 PUBLIC SPEAKING –**

#### **1. Matters Relating to New Road and Eastover**

The Meeting was addressed by Ms Glen Burrows raising a series of issues which had been raised in a letter from herself, Ms C Wright and Ms S Jones, seeking the Town Council support for measures to improve the pedestrian nature of New Road and to brighten up this part of town with improved street furniture, planters etc, and suggesting other ways in which the environment might be improved and the area supported with free parking. This was also timely in that the Eastover SPD consultation had just begun, and the Post Office move to the corner of New Road and Eastover had been widely welcomed. It was being suggested that on the back of these things this part of the town could be made more attractive and add to public appreciation. The Mayor and Town Clerk responded and the Police representative also commented on the area suggesting also that Miller Construction, involved with the major police project at Express Park, might be able to assist. Members generally supported the proposals noting actions the BRI-Town Team had already taken and the support from Cllr Tucker, who had largely been responsible for planters being provided in the street. It was still essential to minimise the numbers of vehicles using the street.

#### **2. Chamber of Commerce, Cattle Market, Town Green Application**

Mr Bob Cudlipp spoke to the Meeting commenting on the recent Chamber Question Time held at Junction 24, prospective development at the Cattle Market (a subject later in the Agenda) and reminding members of the Town Council's view in relation to the application for Town Green status for the Brewery Field about to be heard again by the SCC Regulation Committee. The Mayor confirmed he would be attending this, and would emphasise the Town Council view which was documented in the Report to the Committee.

### **02/13 POLICING IN BRIDGWATER:**

PCSO Dan Wheller made a brief presentation to members in which he highlighted prospective arrangements upon the retirement of Inspector Roger Tolley, and the roles to be temporarily in the charge of Sergeant Elaine Linham, Chief Superintendent Nicky Weston and Inspector Pete Seban, across the newly amalgamated district. He also related increased policing presence in the Town Centre with the use of the mobile van and confirmed the success of the triage linking police, ambulance and street pastors location during the night time economy. Whilst the Town Centre offences had generally reduced problems were experienced in the use of bicycles and mobility scooters in Fore Street and signs of increasing shoplifting. He confirmed the steps being taken to combat these issues although Fore Street continued to be a problem because of the lack of clear designation and definition. Members also noted the possible impact of the recently announced reduction in

expenditure on the policing service but which was hoped would still not impact adversely on the front line.

PCSO Wheller noted issues related to mini bikes in Redgate Street and around, cycling in Fore Street, cars racing in the Town Centre and on the estates and it was confirmed that this would be followed up as well as further representations to Somerset Highways on matters within their purview.

**03/13 MINUTES:**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meetings held on 18/04/13 and the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 17/05/13 (Min 7 only) be approved and signed by the Mayor as correct records.

**04/13 MATTERS ARISING FROM ANNUAL MEETING AND MAYOR MAKING 17/05/13:**

Cllr Mrs Slocombe expressed her thanks to the Mayor for a most successful and enjoyable Mayor Making evening.

**05/13 CLLR KENNETH RICHARDS:**

Cllr Granter advised members that Cllr Richards was now at home and making progress following his recent serious operation.

**06/13 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON 09/05/13:**

The Minutes of the Annual Town Public Meeting were submitted. Members noted the issues that had been raised and action which was being followed up.

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes and actions be noted.

**07/13 REPORT OF THE MUSEUM SUB-COMMITTEE (20/05/13):**

The decisions and recommendations arising from the Meeting held on 20/05/13 (attached as an appendix) were circulated. Attention was drawn to the issues discussed and the continuing progress through the work of the volunteers and the Friends of Blake Museum.

The Chairman commented on the lack of progress in moving to a Museum Trust but acknowledged that this in no way impeded the operational progress of the Museum since the Town Council had taken over the function.

**08/13 REPORT OF THE EDF/HPC SUB-COMMITTEE (18/06/13):**

The decisions and recommendations arising from the Meeting held on 18/06/13 (attached as an appendix) were circulated. Cllr Moore commented on issues raised at the recent Transport Forum in relation to the Taunton Road/Broadway junction which was already working over capacity, and the Town Clerk in relation to the proposed roundabout at Sandford Corner. The Chairman, Cllr Redman and the Town Clerk had also made contact with the Somerset Community Foundation and the Chief Executive had offered to attend the Town Council to outline the work of the SCF and also, when appropriate, to relate their involvement with the HPC Project when procedures and processes were better established.

The Chairman also drew attention to the targeted responsibilities being followed by individual members of the Sub-Committee which would become a Working Party through this municipal year.

**RESOLVED:** That the actions and decisions in the Minutes be noted and adopted and an invitation extended to the Chief Executive of the Somerset Community Foundation to attend a future meeting(s).

**09/13 REPORT OF THE PLANNING PANEL (13/06/13):**

The Reports of the Planning Panel was presented with the Town Clerk drawing particular attention to items referred to Council for follow-up, namely:

- i. Draft guidance on residents parking – extension of consultation and suggested reduction from 80% to 51% majority for scheme to proceed;
- ii. Economic Development SPD – consultation to 09/07/13;
- iii. Local Enterprise Partnership – local transport board consultation on Bridgwater Town Centre pedestrian improvements and Eastern Distributor Road with website link;
- iv. Eastover SPD – next stage consultation recently issued.

The Town Clerk also referred to the making of the Eastover (Cranleigh) car park order restricting larger vehicles.

**RESOLVED:** That members be invited to respond on each of the issues raised either directly to each of the responsible bodies or collectively through the Town Clerk's Office.

**10/13 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES (18/04/13):**

- i. **Bridgwater Railway Station** (Min 84/12) – the Report highlighted the issues which had been followed up with the appropriate authorities and through the Bridgwater Challenge in relation to the Celebration Mile concept and pursuit of disabled access between the platforms at the station;
- ii **Wheeled Sports Facility Action Group** (Min 86/12i) – the preferred contractor had been chosen and the contract would be let following the grant of Planning Permission and the completion of the Agreement covering the SDC and BTC contributions. An amendment to the Planning Permission was needed as a formality to accommodate the actual agreed design;
- iii **Town Hall** (Min 90/12) – the legionella risk assessment had been completed and the Town Clerk advised work to water tanks necessary. Annual boiler servicing and essential repairs were also underway and would be completed in July. Members agreed that the Sub-Committee to become a Working Party from this municipal year would be convened shortly with a User Group Meeting also to be arranged to take forward the refurbishment programme and take advantage of offers to support this programme, including new stage curtains which had been made by the Bridgwater Theatre Trust;
- iv **York Herald and Coat of Arms** (Min 96/12) – the initial response suggested that the transfer of the Coat of Arms to the Town Council would be much more costly than thought. This would be pursued;
- v **St Mary's Church Corporation Pews** (Min 97/12iii) – remedial works to the fabric and repairs to the pews had been commissioned.

**11/13 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND RECEIPTS:**

**RESOLVED:** That the payments, including Section 137 payments, made during April and May (months 1 and 2) as circulated be approved and confirmed, and income received during the period be noted (including the Museum performance against budget 2013/14 as of May 2013).

**12/13 POST OFFICE RELOCATION (Min 86/12iii):**

The decision following the consultation had been announced and the Post Office would be established in Eastover at the corner of New Road. Final information on the funding

arrangements was awaited to enable the Town Council and SDC to sanction support funding which would assist the creation of the premises as one of the new main style Post Office branches.

**RESOLVED:** That the outcome be welcomed and appreciation expressed to the efforts of the community, and members of the Councils to secure this successful outcome.

**13/13 NATIONAL GRID – HINKLEY POINT C CONNECTION PROJECT:**

A copy of the joint response on behalf of Somerset County Council, Sedgemoor District Council, West Somerset District Council and North Somerset Council to the Draft Statement to Community Consultation had been circulated and was noted – a further round of consultation before the DCO application submission was expected.

**14/13 FRIARN AVENUE COMMUNITY GARDEN:**

Design proposals for the Community Garden on the land transferred to the Town Council had been prepared in a project by a group of Bridgwater College students. The Town Council backing was sought so that funding could be secured for the scheme.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the concept be approved, as in the design displayed;
2. that this be referred to the Finance Committee for consideration of support funding to set the ball rolling.

**15/13 AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 2012/13 – OUTTURN AND GOVERNANCE ( Min No 7 17/05/13):**

The preparation of the Accounts and Internal Audit had been completed and as per decision taken at the Annual Meeting, papers were ready for submission to the new Auditors Grant Thornton. Copies of the Balance Sheet, Year End Return and working details were attached for members information.

Members noted that Internal Audit had raised issues for consideration relating to monitoring of actual spend against budget throughout the financial year, thus meeting more precisely requirements of the Annual Return. Identification of quarterly bank reconciliations had also been highlighted and would be referred to the Finance Committee for examination.

**16/13 APPOINTMENTS 2013/14:**

On presentation of the current list of appointments, members were invited to determine appointments and representation on outside bodies for the coming year.

**Finance Committee** - Cllrs Glassford, Granter, Lerry, Moore, Parker, Richards, Mrs Slocombe & Turner

**Planning Panel** - Cllrs Baker, Lerry, Monteith, Mrs Morley, Parker, Tucker and Turner

**Museum Sub-Committee** - Cllrs Granter, Richards and Turner

**Town Hall Working Party** (Pre. Sub-Committee) – Cllrs Austen, Granter, Mrs Morley, Redman, Mrs Slocombe, Smedley and Turner

**EDF / HPC Working Party** (Pre. Sub-Committee) – Cllrs Austen, Baker, Granter, Moore and Redman

**Electoral Review Working Party** – *to be re-appointed when and if needed*

**Blake & Gilbert Charity** - 5 – Cllrs Richards and Turner (4 years from June 2011). Mrs Briscoombe, Ms Pearce, Mr JRB Taylor (for 4 years from 2013)

**Brent Marshall and Mansfield Charity** - 5 – Cllrs Granter and Richards (4 years from 2011). Mrs Briscoombe Loveridge and Turner (4 years from 2014)

**Tamlin Charity** - 4 - life term – Mayor and Deputy Mayor (by designation), Cllrs Moore and Richards.

**Towell Charity** - 2 - life term - Ms Pearce and Mr Smeed (commenced June 2006)

**Bridgwater/La Ciotat Link Society** - 1 - Cllr Smedley

**Bridgwater/Homberg Society** - 1 (President) - Cllr Loveridge (as Mayor)

**Bridgwater/Marsa Society** - 1 (President) - Cllr Loveridge (as Mayor)

**Bridgwater/Czech/Slovak Friendship Society (UH Twin)** - 1 - Cllr Lerry

**Wyndham Lecture Trust for the Schools of Bridgwater** - 1 - Cllr Lerry

**Bridgwater Chamber of Commerce (and Trade)** - 1 - Cllr Parker

**Bridgwater Retail Initiative (Committee)**– 1 – Cllr Tucker

**Bridgwater Heritage Regeneration Partnership** - 1 - Cllr Redman (Deputy Cllr Parker )

**Bridgwater Arts Centre (Observer)** - 1 - Cllr Austen

**Bridgwater Challenge (Board Member)** - 1 - Cllr Tucker (sub Cllr Austen)

**BCI Partnership (Victoria Park Community Centre)** - 2 - Cllrs Lerry and Richards

**Hamp Community Association** -1 - Cllr Turner

**Sydenham Community Centre** - 1 - Cllr Loveridge

**Sedgemoor Youth Forum** - (if invited) – 1 Cllr Tucker

**Cluster Group (SDC)** - Cllrs Monteith, Parker, Mrs Morley and Turner and Town Clerk

**Westover Green Community School** - minor LA Governor - 1 - Mrs EH Hudson

**Bridgwater Transport Strategy Review and 'Connect 3' (if convened) and LSTF** - 1 - Cllr Moore

**Internal Auditor** - 1 - Mrs Geri O'Loughlin

**Hinkley Point (ex-Liaison Committee) site stakeholder group** - 1 - Cllr Moore or substitute Cllr Monteith

**EDF Energy HPC Community Forum** - 1 - Cllr Monteith (and Town Clerk)

**EDF Energy HPC Transport Forum** -1 – Cllr Moore (and Town Clerk)

**National Grid HPC Connection Project South Local Community Forum** – 1 - Cllr Redman

**BSF – Strategic Project Board** (if invited) **includes representative from SCC Bridgwater Ward**

**Bridgwater Memorial Homes** - 1 - Cllr Moore

**Friends of Wembdon Road Cemetery** - 1 - (President) Cllr Loveridge (as Mayor)

**SDC Standards Committee Town & Parish Member** (1 of 3) - Cllr Turner

**Grievance & Disciplinary Panel** – Cllrs Loveridge (Mayor), Baker, Lerry, Moore, Smedley and Turner

**Appeals Panel** - Cllrs Austen (as Deputy Mayor), Cllrs Mrs Morley, Redman and Mrs Slocombe

**Cheque Signatories** - Cllrs. Granter, Loveridge, Mrs Slocombe, Turner and Town Clerk

**Museum Trust** - (provisional) - Ian Tucker

**Town Hall Trust** - (provisional) – Graham Granter/Pat Parker/Leigh Redman/Gill Slocombe

**RESOLVED:** That all the above be confirmed

## **17/13 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 20/06/13 (Agenda item 12) and decisions taken as follows:

### **Decisions:**

1. Allotments Lease Expiry 28/03/13 (10 years) – **Resolved:** That the Agreement be reviewed with the Bridgwater Allotment Tenants Association for renewal for a further 10 years and subject to no major changes, completion of the Agreement and formal Authority to Seal be granted;
2. Tri-annual Review of Licencing Policy (SDC) – **AGREED** that as circulated this be left to members to comment directly;
3. Somerset Heritage Service – **AGREED** that in the light of the consultation on future provision as circulated, members be requested to comment by email response;
4. Somerset Youth and Community Service (and first meeting of Sedgemoor Youth Forum 21/06/13) – **Resolved:** 1. That in the light of the situation with youth provision in Bridgwater in the several locations, an invitation be extended to Geoff Bown Service Manager to attend the Council to discuss new models due in 2014; and 2. That Cllr Tucker be nominated to represent the Town Council if invited on the Sedgemoor Youth Forum (and this be added to the list of Appointments);
5. Somerset Skills and Learning – report on neighbourhood learning in deprived communities (NLDC) – **AGREED** that the offer to present to members be declined;
6. Grant Applications – **Resolved:** That the Grant Applications listed be referred to the Finance Committee for determination with power to act within budget and that the Eastover Ward Grant for St John's Church Memorials be approved.

*(Cllr Mrs Slocombe declared a prejudicial interest in BGFCC and took no part in the item raised under this heading)*

### **For information:**

Items 1/20 as circulated – noted.

## **18/13 EXEMPT ITEM – EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC:**

**RESOLVED:** That the press and public be excluded from the Meeting during the consideration of the business recorded in Min 19/13 on the grounds that this will involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Section 100.1 of the Local Government Act 1972.

## **19/13 TOWN COUNCIL ASSETS AND CATTLE MARKET AND BRISTOL ROAD LANDS – PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT AND PROPOSED SALE:**

The Town Clerk updated members on the proposed Promotion and Development Agreement and the Agreement with SDC which had never been completed. He then reported the reconsideration by the Executive Committee of SDC and submitted the resolution which had evolved.

The course now taken effectively meant that the tripartite Promotion and Development Agreement was defunct. SDC were planning a separate Option Agreement purely in relation to the Bridgwater Cattle Market and immediate adjoining land. The Town Clerk outlined the ramifications of this and the significant issues; including highway access for the number of residential units now planned on the Cattle Market site. This was unsatisfactory from the Town Council's point of view given the work which had gone into getting to this stage

including substantial legal fees, interest of adjoining owners, relocation of allotments, agreement relating to the allocation of resources to the Town Hall refurbishment, and highway improvements planned as part of the overall scheme.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the position the Town Council are now left in which is entirely unsatisfactory be noted;
2. that the Town Council explore a claim for compensation for costs incurred from the District Council;
3. that prospective negotiations be continued with adjoining land owners and interested development companies etc with a view to bringing forward the Town Council land for development;
4. that as part of this exercise, options for re-siting the allotments onto the former site or the alternative of the Bristol Road green space be examined; and
5. that in the absence of development, SDC be invited to source the existing Bristol Road Playing Fields as a sports hub as an alternative to, or in addition to, land at Old Morganians outside the town boundary.

The Meeting finished at 9.30pm

.....  
Signed  
Chairman