

BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

HELD ON THURSDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 7.30PM
AT THE CHARTER HALL TOWN HALL BRIDGWATER

PRESENT: Cllr GJ Granter (Mayor - in the Chair), Cllrs M Cresswell, AM Glassford, T Heywood, P Johnstone, L Leavy, MJ Lerry, DP Loveridge, AJ Moore, P Morley, K Pearce, LP Redman, D Rodrigues, BD Smedley and S Wilson

Apologies: Cllr Turner JP

23/17 POLICING IN BRIDGWATER (Min 11/17):

PC Dominic Bryant was present, representing Joe Piscina, the Town Centre Neighbourhood Sergeant. PC Bryant, a prominent Town Centre Officer, gave an itemised report following up issues raised at the last Meeting and the targeting action in relation to specific areas and individuals which had followed. Since the targeting operation some 20 Section 35 Orders had been issued and a PCSO had been up-skilled to prepare and issue Community Protection Action Orders. Three had been completed so far with some success and more were in course of preparation. Court action was now following in certain cases. The operation had resulted in some displacement from the locations at the Town Bridge, in Binford Place and Blake Gardens, specifically identified with some now meeting on the other side of the river.

On another point, PC Bryant confirmed that only two events had been logged in the past two years, as vehicle contraventions in New Road.

More recently, anti social behaviour and criminal damage had been subjected in Angel Place and Angel Crescent, with suspects, including identification on CCTV, due to be interviewed this weekend. Other steps including the location of the police van had continued as had moving on individuals through ASB or drink and drugs. Unfortunately, PC Mark Loker had moved on which meant that the full Town Team was awaiting replacement. However, an additional PCSO had been drafted in.

At this point in the Meeting, the Mayor adjourned proceedings to enable members of the public to address the issues.

Mr Steve Coram and Mr Adrian Fraser acknowledged the operations which had been undertaken, but confirmed that problems still continued in evenings and weekends, particularly in the areas of Binford Place, the Town Bridge, the Catholic Church, the riverside and opposite Hickleys, which necessitated 101 and logging calls.

PC Bryant confirmed that in order to invoke notices evidence was essential and this relied upon the number of logs and CCTV identifications recorded. He did distinguish those situations where 999 should be called due to the seriousness of the event.

Members then raised a series of issues recognising the actions taken but specifically identifying locations where problems continued. Reference was also made to a forthcoming licence review and the impacts of the 'Spice' drug now evident. Further questions were asked about response to travellers on unofficial sites and related issues. Attention was called to a converted mobile home on a long wheelbase which parked in the vicinity of Eastover School entrance and PC Bryant confirmed this would be passed on to the relevant officer.

Members duly emphasised the importance of all members of the public responding through the 101 system, or the SDC hotline, or CCTV so that as much information as possible was logged to support police action.

In this context, the Town Clerk re-emphasised these specific locations and, as had been pointed out to the Police and Crime Commissioner, the significant impact of police presence on the streets which made the real difference. The Friday Market was also identified for attention. The Town Clerk then brought to the fore a submission which had been received alongside a number of anti-social behaviour references over the past month, which outlined explicitly the problems faced in Angel Place and Angel Crescent and the possible ramifications if action was not successful. This was being pursued through the relevant channels. Members sought to ensure that the police presence would be back to full strength as soon as possible and recognised the continuing benefits of police attendance at Town Council meetings on a regular basis, enabling all parties to support the need for continuing action. PC Bryant was thanked for the very real support he maintained through his regular presence, and the follow-up action planned in relation to Angel Place and Angel Crescent.

RESOLVED:

1. That PC Bryant be thanked for his Report;
2. that the Town Clerk ensure that all representations of anti-social behaviour are compiled and submitted to both the police and SDC;
3. that SDC be invited to convene an ASB meeting for multi-agencies as soon as possible; and
4. that response be submitted in line with previous representations to the Police and Crime Commissioner and locally in research of increased police on the public beat, and in doing so question why PC Loker has moved on and when replacement can be expected.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 03/08/17 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record, and the follow-ups supplied by Cllr Heywood following meeting with John Woodman of SCC (Min 15/17 refers) be noted in relation to issues raised, the small improvement grant bid for 20mph zones, reference to the bypass fund and information on the Colley Lane relief road tendering.

25/17 REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE (13/09/17):

The decisions and recommendations arising from the Meeting held on 13/09/17 (attached as an appendix) were circulated and introduced by the Chair - Cllr Smedley and the Town Clerk. In confirming the Report, members noted the identification of the two bids by the Engine Room, which had been approved, and following information from the Town Clerk, agreed as per the Finance Committee recommendation a grant of £2,500 to fund Skate Park CCTV at the YMCA site.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Report be noted and approved as amended; and
2. that in the light of the information provided, the grant of £2,500 be agreed towards the Skate Park CCTV at YMCA.

26/17 REPORT OF THE YOUTH WORKING PARTY (17/08/17):

RESOLVED:

1. That the Report be received and approved;
2. that the approval of the Youth Grant Application and process by the Finance Committee be noted;
3. that with the available budget of £7,000 and maximum grant of £500 this be publicised to all Youth Groups; and
4. that receipt of the SCC funds (£4k) from the Youth and Community service specifically towards Youth Provision at the Rollercoaster over a three year period be welcomed.

27/17 TOURISM REVIEW WORKING PARTY (22/08/17):

The paper covering the Review and recommendations on the way forward was circulated and introduced by the Chair - Cllr Smedley. Cllr Smedley invited all members to respond to the Working Party conclusions, whereupon this would be submitted to a planned Tourism Forum. A wide cross section had shown interest in attending the Forum, which it was hoped would lead to a wider involvement in supporting tourism and provision of information across the town.

RESOLVED: That the Report be noted and approved and the action planned agreed.

28/17 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

i. **Forward Plan 2017/18 (Tracker) (Min 18/17i)** - Cllr Smedley introduced an updated version of the Forward Plan and references elsewhere on the Agenda. He confirmed that a meeting had been held with the Interim Chief Executive, Allison Griffin. He confirmed that a Town Centre walkabout was planned for 11am on 18/09/17 to which all members were invited.

The Mayor also raised the issue of affordable housing and Cllr Lerry confirmed the way in which this was raised through the Planning Panel in terms of both policy and specific applications for reference to SDC as Planning Authority.

ii. **Bridgwater Hospital - MIU, Mary Stanley Unit and Rheumatology Department and Endoscopy Unit (Min 20/17)** - The Town Clerk updated members on the response to the change of hours of the MIU, the success whereby the Mary Stanley Unit was now 24/7 and information in relation to availability for rheumatology and endoscopy at Bridgwater.

iii. **Quantock Road Cemetery - request for additional notice board (Min 22/17.1)** - The Town Clerk confirmed that the estimated cost of the notice board was higher than he had advised previously and as a result he had requested that further quotations be obtained.

29/17 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND RECEIPTS:

RESOLVED: That the payments, including Section 137 payments made during August (month 5) as circulated, be approved and confirmed, and income received during the period together with the cost centre reports and bank reconciliations and investments be noted.

30/17 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 07/09/17 (agenda item 11), and decisions taken as follows:

Decisions:

1. Quantock Road and Bristol Road Cemeteries - topple testing of memorials - **Resolved:** That the Town Clerk continue to pursue the most cost effective way of actioning topple testing five year requirements under the obligations of the Cemeteries Service Level Agreement;

2. Taunton Road Toilets Closure - **Resolved:** That in the light of the information supplied about usage and the saving of running costs in 2017/18 for the remainder of the financial year, the closure be accepted with effect from the end of the month.

For Information:

Items 1 - 19 as circulated - noted, and Cllr Heywood be invited as Chair of the Transport Forum and in relation to item 13 to establish the impact on bus services of timetable changes and to chase and confirm arrangements for those which had previously serviced the Bridgwater Hospital site.

The meeting finished at 8.45 pm

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Signed Chairman