

**Bishop's Castle Town Council Meeting
6th January 2016**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
BISHOP'S CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL
ON TUESDAY 6th JANUARY 2016 AT 7.30 PM**

Present: Cllr K Bavastock, Mayor in the Chair
Councillors: J Carroll (Vice-Chairman), R Houghton, A-M Jackson, S Harris, J Gaffney
In attendance: Unitary Councillor Charlotte Barnes and Mrs M Seldon (Clerk)

178.15/16 APOLOGIES

To note apologies
Apologies had been received from:
Cllr K Bance – Working
Cllr J Magill – Family Commitment
Cllr J Dickin – Illness
Two resignations had been received: Kelly Price and Sarah Lennox
Proposed to accept the apologies: Cllr Bavastock, seconded Cllr H and **RESOLVED**

179.15/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

a) To declare any disclosable pecuniary interests.
b) To declare any personal interests.
Cllr Carroll: 188.15/16
Cllr Jackson: 185.15/16

180.15/16 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 1st December 2015
Proposed Cllr Bavastock, seconded Cllr Jackson and **RESOLVED** with the following amendment to 172.15/16:
Delete the last phrase and replace with '.....plus black spots. More volunteers were still needed for other issues and she will provide information to Councillors before the next meeting to enable them to forward to her details of potential contacts.'

181.15/16 CLERK'S REPORT

a) Update on discussions from the December meeting and other matters for information only:
The Clerk reported that there was nothing to report that would not be dealt with on the agenda.

182.15/16 REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

Report from Councillor Bavastock to include Mayor's Charity Fund expenditure.

- Proposed meeting regarding Shared Spaces taking place in Shirehall. This might be useful for those undertaking the Town Plan. The Clerk was asked to forward the details to all councillors.
- Resignations had been received from Kelly Price and Sarah Lennox. The Clerk was asked to inform Shropshire Council and advertise the vacancies accordingly.
- Copy for the newsletter: February/March any contributions were due on 15th January.
- The scheduled meeting of full council on 26th January would concentrate on the legal position with regard the Town Hall and the completion of the project. It was hoped that all councillors would attend.
- Christmas meal at Castle Hotel enjoyed by those that came.
- Mayor's Fund – £100 to Town Hall for art competition – split between three people.

Money from Stone House Fund transferred to Mayor's Fund.

183.15/16 MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WISHING TO SPEAK

Members of the public wishing to speak must give prior notification of their wish to speak.
There were no members of the public present.

184.15/16 UNITARY COUNCILLOR

To receive a report from the Unitary Councillor

- SamDev had been signed off – now legally binding
- New Leader – Malcolm Pate
- SpArC – petition went to full council – discussion on what to do with a petition, but the reaction was positive
- Leisure Centre will have the PV Solar panels as soon as possible

185.15/16 TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Applications:

Reference: 15/05380/TCA (validated: 08/12/2015)
Address: 1 Grange Gardens, Bishops Castle, Shropshire, SY9 5AF
Proposal: Crown reduction by 30% and minor re-shaping of crown structure of 1 No Black Pine tree within Bishops Castle Conservation Area

Applicant: Mrs Alison Goldstone (2 Grange Gardens, Bishops Castle, Shropshire, SY9 5AF)

No objection

Proposed Cllr Bavastock, seconded Cllr Gaffney and **RESOLVED**

Reference: 15/05293/FUL (validated: 15/12/2015)

Address: Sports Centre, Bishops Castle Community College, Brampton Road, Bishops Castle, Shropshire, SY9 5AY
Proposal: Installation of a 50kWp roof mounted Solar PV Array

Applicant: Mr Andrew Nightingale (Sparc Leisure Centre, The Community College, Brampton Road, Bishops Castle, Shropshire, SY9 5AY, United Kingdom)

Support

Proposed Cllr Bavastock, seconded Cllr Carroll and **RESOLVED**

Decisions:

Reference: 15/04753/TCA (validated: 04/11/2015)

Address: 5 Union Street, Bishops Castle, Shropshire, SY9 5AJ

Proposal: To crown lift, clean out any dead wood and slightly thin 1no Oak Tree within Bishops Castle Conservation Area

Decision: No Objection

NOTED

Reference: 15/04594/FUL (validated: 10/11/2015)

Address: Adjacent The Old School, Church Street, Bishops Castle, Shropshire, SY9 5AE

Proposal: Ground floor extension to rear of retail unit; relocation of first floor access

Decision: Grant Permission

NOTED

186.15/16 MONTHLY FINANCES

i) To receive the monthly payment/receipt schedule and then approve the accounts listed below and instruct signatories to authorise payment.

Town Council:

Staff costs (excluding HMRC)	1487.31
Shropshire Council Pension Fund	369.06
HMRC PAYE and NI	435.02
Andrew B Wallace – extra time Mondays (Invoice No. 201)	32.50
Andrew B Wallace – extra time Mondays (Invoice No. 203)	19.50
Exemplum – November photocopying (Invoice No.22394)	41.92
Andrew Evans Landscapes – November contracted work (Invoice No.1791)	625.56
Highline Electrical Ltd – Street Light repairs (Invoice No.827)	193.20
KT Gooch – certificate covers (Invoice No. E0392)	240.00
Information Commissioner Data Protection Registration (Ref:035816d2015e)	35.00
Telescopio Window Cleaning (Invoice dated 09/12/15)	45.00
SALC Training – The Civic Role (Invoice No. 8443)	20.00
HALLS SMS – bin liners (Invoice No. 8680)	24.82
Bishop's Castle Town Hall Trust – ¼ cleaning and agreed other costs (Invoice No. 1516-116)	170.00
Mary Seldon expenses – travel and subsistence Fire Marshall training	53.70
Meg Gwilliam expenses – travel to/from BC on non-work day	7.20
Highline Electrical Ltd – Lighting repairs (Invoice No. 884)	333.60

Approved for payment: Proposed Cllr Carroll, seconded Cllr Harris and **RESOLVED**

Town Hall Renovation Project Costs

Communities Can – November Project Management (Invoice No. CC2015027) 250.00

Approved for payment: Proposed Cllr Carroll, seconded Cllr Gaffney and **RESOLVED**

Mayor's Charity Account

Midlands Air Ambulance Charity – Christmas Cards (Invoice dated 21/12/15)	7.00
Town Hall Trust – Childrens' Art Competition prize	100.00

Approved for payment: Proposed Cllr Houghton, seconded Cllr Harris and **RESOLVED**

Direct Debits:

Pitney Bowes – reset franking meter (Invoice No. 53491303)	50.00
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Approved for payment: Proposed Cllr Bavastock, seconded Cllr Carroll and **RESOLVED**

ii) **MONTHLY REVIEW:**

- To receive the November monitoring report and estimated December report

The Clerk was asked to find out about the quarterly payments to Shropshire Council and what this covered.
Monitoring Report **NOTED**, Cllr Gaffney proposed the report be received, seconded Cllr Harris and **RESOLVED**

b) To receive the November bank reconciliation statements

November bank reconciliation **NOTED**, Cllr Bavastock proposed the report be received, seconded Cllr Carroll and **RESOLVED**

iii) **BUDGET**

- To agree and set Council Budget 2016/17
- To agree and set Precept 2016/17

These two items were discussed and considered in tandem:

The Clerk had previously distributed a third draft of the proposed budget, based on a 5% increase on all expenditure and a 5% increase on the precept requirement for 2015/16, as requested at the December meeting. This had meant a precept demand for £61,367.25 and a working budget of £61,348. It was possible, therefore, when calculating the expenditure for 2016/17 to include items that the Clerk had been asked to discount for the year:

- SALC membership was put back into the package**
- Training allocation for Clerks and Councillors was returned to its previous level of £300**
- The Financial Package from RBS Omega was put back into the budget**
- The Mayor's annual allowance was returned to its previous level of £320**
- Contingency fund was set at £1,000**

Councillor concerns:

Councillors discussed the implications of the '5% budget' and the Clerk was asked questions about the expenditure for 2015/16 and 2016/17. One concern was that the estimated expenditure for the present financial year would have a **shortfall** of nearly £10,000 from the agreed budget. The Clerk explained that this would mainly be made up from monies from ear-marked reserves for play areas (for the new equipment that had been installed on the Playing Fields following the RoSPA report) and the last payment that was due from HLF for the renovation project.

Councillors were also concerned that the Town Hall **electricity costs** were something of an unknown entity, due to the continuing problems with Npower and the lack of meter readings. The Clerk explained that the Town Council was now paying £200 per month by Direct Debit so as to minimise the final invoice when it did arrive and that the Town Hall Trust would be paying 70% of all electricity costs when the problem had been resolved.

The Environment Grant (£3000 for 2015/16) was also an unknown entity and the Clerk had not been able to establish whether it would be available again for 2016/17. As this covered flower displays, public seating and road sweeping there was some concern that these services to the town would need to continue into 2016/17 whether the grant was available or not.

Footpath lighting was also discussed – but the Clerk explained that provision had been made to pay to install lighting on the continuing beside Crowgates in 2016/17 and this money would therefore be carried over if not spent during the current financial year. It was not proposed that any further work be needed for the footpaths at present.

Cllr Gaffney proposed

- 10% increase** on the precept (making a Precept demand for 2016/17: **£64,300**)
- The 5% budget remain as proposed with the addition of **£4,000 in the contingency fund**

(this would cover the lack of Environment Grant if necessary, or any other unforeseen expenditure required due to any reduction in services given from Shropshire Council).

- The budget requirement for 2016/17 was therefore **£64,303**
- Agreed expenditure for Bishop's Castle Playing Fields and Oak/Brick Meadow would be taken from the Playing Areas earmarked reserves - **£16,700 from Reserves**

Proposed Cllr Gaffney, seconded Cllr Bavastock and **RESOLVED**

- To appoint **internal auditor for 2016**

The Clerk had previously distributed information sheets for new councillors on the role of the internal auditor and a letter from the previous internal auditor asking if her services were required this financial year end and a letter from Audit Solutions detailing their services too and prices. Whilst the latter was more expensive the Clerk requested it be considered in the light of the fact the previous auditor had been in post for at least five years and this was not considered best practice. It was also important in the light of the demise of the external auditor from 2017/18.
Proposed that Audit Solutions be appointed for one year and then this be reviewed, Cllr Bavastock, seconded Cllr Gaffney and **RESOLVED**

iv) **PENSIONS DISCRETIONS POLICY**

Review and adoption of the Pensions Discretions Policy
It was agreed that this item be deferred to the Staffing Committee at their next meeting. See new meeting structure proposals agenda item: 18.15/16

187.15/16 TOWN COUNCIL COMMITTEE AND MEETING STRUCTURE

To review the committee structure proposed by the Town Clerk
The Town Clerk proposed full Town Council meetings be scheduled to fall at the same time each calendar month as it would aid both office processes and encourage attendance by all. It was therefore proposed that meetings would be scheduled for the **third Tuesday in each calendar month** and this new timetable commence from the March 2016 meeting with 26th January and 23rd February remaining unchanged.

Proposed Cllr Carroll, seconded Cllr Bavastock and **RESOLVED**

The Clerk was asked to organise a calendar to be distributed amongst councillors and other interested parties to this effect.

The Clerk also requested that committees of the council be formalised and met on a regular basis. It was agreed that this be reviewed after a six month period. It was noted that all committee meetings would be public meetings and advertised as such, with Minutes available in the public domain afterwards.

The Clerk had distributed proposed terms of reference for each committee and these were discussed with the proposed Finance Committee and Resources being amalgamated as one committee.

- FINANCE COMMITTEE**
- To set **Terms of Reference for Finance Committee**

There was some discussion regarding the proposed terms of reference as it was deemed important that the committee should not be taking the place of the full town council and therefore decisions about certain aspects of finance should not be made, but recommendations be made by the committee to full council. Amendments were made to the document and the proposal to adopt the Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee, with the proposed amendments was made by Cllr Gaffney, seconded Cllr Bavastock and **RESOLVED**

- To agree members of the Finance Committee and their delegated powers

The unofficially constituted Finance Committee had previously included Cllrs Bavastock, Carroll, Harris, Magill and Farr. It was proposed that Cllr Houghton be appointed to this committee in addition and councillor's delegated powers were reflected in the Terms of Reference for this joint committee. Proposed Cllr Bavastock, seconded Cllr Jackson and **RESOLVED**

The Finance and Resources Committee would meet monthly during the week before scheduled Full Council Meetings. The frequency of the meetings would be reviewed in the future.

- STAFFING COMMITTEE**
- To set **Terms of Reference for Staffing Committee**

The proposed terms of reference were amended to reflect the proposal that any future applicants for the post of Town Clerk be interviewed by other councillors other than those on the staffing committee if they so requested it. This would then draw on a wider experience of councillors when appointing the Town Clerk.
With this amendment the Terms of Reference for the Staffing Committee were proposed for adoption by Cllr Gaffney, seconded by Cllr Carroll and **RESOLVED**

- To agree members of the Staffing Committee and their delegated powers

The unofficially constituted Staffing Committee had previously included Cllrs Bavastock, Carroll, Magill and Farr. It was proposed that Cllr Gaffney be appointed to this committee in addition and councillor's delegated powers were reflected in the Terms of Reference for this committee. Proposed Cllr Bavastock, seconded Cllr Carroll and **RESOLVED**

The Staffing Committee would meet four times a year (unless any particular incidents occurred) and this would take place at 6.30pm before scheduled Full Council Meetings (ie. the third Tuesday of the month). The frequency of the meetings would be reviewed in the future.

- PROPERTIES & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**
- To set Terms of Reference for the Properties and Resources Committee

Again, there was much discussion about the terms of reference to allow the full council to continue to have the opportunity to discuss certain issues that were important to the whole council. With these amendments it was proposed that the Terms of Reference be adopted for the Resources Committee and be amalgamated with the Finance Committee. Proposed Cllr Gaffney, seconded Cllr Carroll and **RESOLVED**.

- To agree members of the Properties and Resources Committee and their delegated powers

Due to the amalgamation of the two proposed committees membership is the same as Finance Committee Minutes above with the delegated powers established in the Terms of Reference.

188.15/16 TOWN HALL RENOVATION PROJECT

a) To receive any report from Trustees
Cllr Carroll reported that the Trustees of the Town Hall Trust was in a transitional period as Sue Wilmer had left at the end of December. There had been an increase for the two managing staff by 3 hours a fortnight as they were taking on her role. It had been decided that the Town Hall would be open all through the winter, with no decrease in hours. The young persons' art exhibition and competition before Christmas had been a great success.

b) To appoint a councillor as a Town Hall Trust Trustee
Two councillor representatives were now needed as Trustees as Kelly Price had resigned from the Council.

189.15/16 TOWN PLAN

To receive an update on the Town Plan and the working parties involved
Cllr Jackson reported that there was to be a Steering Group meeting on 22nd January to collate outstanding contacts of relevant people who might have different useful contacts within the community.

190.15/16 BIKE TRACK PROJECT
To receive an update on proposed transformation of the site to date.
The Clerk reported that she was waiting for a quotation and plan of work from Access and Habitat Management for the work on this area. It was hoped that it might be received in time for consideration at the next meeting.

191.15/16 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS ATTENDED
To receive reports from meetings attended:

- Fire Marshall Training: the Clerk and Cllr Magill had attended a training session. It was hoped that they would be able to collaborate and inspect the building together to report at the next meeting.
- COMA: Cllr Bavastock reported that there had been a meeting to discuss the progress of the business park asset transfer. A number of meetings were scheduled in the next few weeks and there would be a full update at the next meeting.
- Public Hall: Cllr Houghton reported as the Town Council representative. The snooker club had vacated the building and it was felt that the committee had handled the situation very well. They had advertised for a cleaner and caretaker, and were now looking at this role. An Open Day at the end of January was proposed.

The Clerk was asked to include booking contact details in the newsletter

192.15/16 ITEMS FOR FACEBOOK/WEBSITE

To consider items for inclusion on the Facebook page

- Contact details for public hall
- Councillor Vacancies
- Numbers to phone for dog mess and street scene

193.15/16 TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve that by the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1992, the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting on the grounds the business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Acts.
Proposed Cllr Bavastock, seconded Cllr Harris and **RESOLVED**

194.15/16 STAFFING ISSUE

The Clerks had prepared a report on the Auction Yard Toilets, their condition and stock levels and these were discussed. The Clerks had also instigated a booking out system for all stock leaving the Town Hall and being taken to public toilets. It was suggested that additional shelving in the caretaker's area of the auction yard toilets and the Clerk was asked to liaise with the handy-man.
Cllr Gaffney agreed to discuss the situation with the employee.

The meeting concluded at 9.20pm

**DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS:
Tuesday 26th January 2016
7.30pm Council Meeting**