



BISHOP'S CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL



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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BISHOP'S CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL ON TUESDAY 20th FEBRUARY 2024 AT 7PM

PRESENT	APOLOGIES
Cllr J. Carroll Cllr A. Stelman Cllr G Perry Cllr T. Halford Cllr R. Houghton Cllr J. Dickin Cllr M Gayle Cllr L. Kasciuczyk Cllr B. Drake Cllr S. Jones Cllr L. Blundell	Cllr S. Morris
IN ATTENDANCE	

Mr G. Rippon, Mrs C. Owen, 7 members of the public

Fire Procedure

Presentation from Going Wild

Mr Pete Carty reported back on a conference held in December. The conference was sponsored by Severn Trent Water for local Parishes and Town Councils to deliver on biodiversity and conservation. Examples of recent projects include Restoring Shropshire Verges; Middle Marches Community Land Trust; Stepping Stones in Church Stretton; Shropshire Good Food Project; Caring for God's Acre; No Mow May; Swift Boxes; Kids Club and much more.

Going Wild has identified 32 green spaces in Bishop's Castle and is looking to work together with the owners to promote diversity. The Town Council has previously declared a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency and, with the help of this group and Lighfoot, has adopted an on-going Climate Action Plan.

A large bid of £250,000 to the National Lottery has been successful. A Project Officer and a Trainee will be appointed and managed by Enterprise House. This will support extra Kids Clubs and other projects, including the creation of a Tool-Kit for other local Parishes. Bishop's Castle is seen as a leading light in this area.

Cllr Stelman thanked Mr Carty and his team of volunteers for the excellent presentation and their hard work for which the town is grateful.

Climate Action Plan

Mr Bernard Edwards asked councillors to look at the draft Climate Action Plan for 2024-5 (previously circulated) and submit any comments/queries to the Clerk, so that the final version can be adopted at the next meeting.

Minute No.	Agenda Item	
18-24	1	<u>APOLOGIES</u> Cllr Morris
19-24	2	<u>CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLORS</u> The Clerk confirmed receipt of Declarations of Acceptance of Office. The new councillors were welcomed: Cllr Lucy Blundell; Cllr Brigit Drake; Cllr Michelle Gayle; Cllr Leon Kasciuczyk and Cllr Sharon Jones.
20-24	3	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> a) To declare any disclosable pecuniary interests. None b) To declare any personal interests. None
21-24	4	<u>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</u> of 16 th January 2024. RESOLVED Accepted after the correction of a name. Proposed Cllr Perry; Seconded Cllr Stelman. All in favour.
22-24	5	<u>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION</u> Ms Sue Cooper gave a presentation on behalf of the Allotments Society. Sue thanked the Council for its support over the last 17 years, including a much-appreciated compost toilet! There are now over 50 members and it is going well, with projects in the pipeline such as the planting of a community orchard, (9 th March). The present committee officers are standing down this year and asked that the Council continues to work together in partnership with the Allotment Society, but also that they enforce the rules as set down in the Tenancy Agreement. Thanks also go to John Marpole, who mows all the paths every year free of charge. The Council thanked the officers for their service and look forward to working together with the new committee and officers when appointed.
23-24	6	<u>REPORT FROM THE MAYOR</u> The Mayor had nothing to report in addition to agenda items.
24-24	7	<u>REPORT FROM THE CLERK</u> <u>Ox Leasowe Lighting.</u> Connexus has a new Chief Executive Officer. The Clerk has not yet had a reply to his email. Cllr Houghton will raise the lighting issue when she sees him at a meeting next month. <u>Water Bill</u> Following a proper inspection of the water meter in Station St, it has been established that the bill of £9,000 is indeed correct. This is because the bill has only been estimated for 5 years based on a very low estimate. The meter is often under water, making it impossible to check, and STWA have not pursued an accurate reading. The Clerk is pursuing paying the debt in instalments. <u>Buckingham Palace Garden Party 8th May 2024.</u> The Mayor has been nominated to attend.
25-24	8	<u>YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES</u> Cllr Stelman sought the Council's approval to vire £500 of the grant money obtained from Shropshire Council and give it to South Shropshire Youth Forum, to support the Going Wild Kid's Club. Councillors were in approval, but it's SSYF's decision. Update – about 10 youngsters are attending the 8-11year-old's session, and 22, the 11-16year-old's session. An after-school drop-in has started at St John's Church, also

supporting the older age group. Both groups are benefitting. The Youth Forum idea has not taken off.

Cllrs Stelman and Dickin met with Shaun Cullis, Bishop's Castle's Community Support Officer, to discuss anti-social behaviour in the town. The discussion included excessive noise by youngsters meeting around the shelter in the skate park, (now removed), Graffiti boards; Vaping; and setting up a 'Friends of the Park' group, formed of young people and older adults. Vaping is a serious issue in schools, (mostly secondary but not exclusively). Local Government Associations are producing guidelines, for example Cllr Gayle is involved with an exhibition produced by Monmouthshire County Council, raising awareness of vaping addiction.

26-24 9

UNITARY COUNCILLOR

Pearl River Mussels. Cllr Houghton had received a written response from Shropshire Council to her question tabled in December re the stalled house-building situation.

Natural England needs to define a Restoration Plan for STWA to say what mitigation can be made. However, Natural England does not appear to have the resources to define a Restoration Plan, so the issue is going nowhere. In the meantime, the Shropshire Plan, (Shropshire Council's plan for housing in the county), is with the inspectors who will come back with queries. Shropshire Council has secured some grant money to do a Habitat Regulation Assessment, to test the local water quality. It is acknowledged by Shropshire Council that Bishop's Castle needs more housing, particularly as some social housing in the area is being sold off.

Connexus housing. Cllr Houghton has asked Connexus why the Town Council has not been informed that new tenants are being sought for two properties on Ox Leasowe, as in section 106 of the agreement. She has also sought clarification as to whether a property is being sold off on Corporation Street. The Council is very concerned that Connexus is not listening to the local needs with regards to houses and street lighting.

RESOLVED The new CEO will be invited to a future Council Meeting. Proposed Cllr Stelman; Seconded Cllr Perry. All in favour.

Cllr Houghton had received a query from Highways re the High Street works. She (and the Mayor) will reply.

There had been a query about street cleaning.

There had been reports of people speeding up Union St.

27-24 10

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL BUDGET CONSULATION

Shropshire Council's budget has been released. £62 million needs to be saved. There is very little detail of how this can be achieved. It is feared that rural services and vulnerable families will be hardest hit. It is too late for local Parish Councils to be asked to fund extra local services as their precepts have already been set for 2024-5.

The Mayor of Church Stretton has called a meeting inviting other local Mayors of South Shropshire to discuss the situation.

28-24 11

WAR MEMORIAL

There has been no reply from the Archdeacon's Office as yet with regard to a faculty. Fundraising events are planned.

29-24 12

PLANNING

1. 24/00320/LBC

Applications for works to facilitate conversion of outbuilding into overspill domestic accommodation, including renewal of roof coverings, installation of replacement windows and doors, and internal alterations | 16 Market Square Bishop's Castle Shropshire SY9 5BN

RESOLVED Support. Proposed Cllr Stelman; Seconded Cllr Perry. All in favour bar 1 abstention.

2. 24/00181/DIS – for information.

Application for the discharge Conditions 3 (materials), 4 (bat and bird boxes) and 6 (external lighting) of planning permission No. 22/05157/FUL | Long House 17 Bankshead Bishops Castle Shropshire SY9 5JQ

30-24 13 **PUMP TRACK AND YOUTH SHELTER**

The Mayor has received donations of £400 and commitments of £3000 towards the pump track, which will be built once enough money has been raised to finish the project. There has been confirmation of the Commonwealth Grant.

A group of 6 – 12 youngsters are working hard with the Mayor putting together ideas for fund-raising – cake stalls; sponsored bike rides etc. (This will also have the advantage of improving their CVs and can be put towards their Duke of Edinburgh Awards). They are putting together grant applications with the Coop, Spar, Connexus, and the Bakewell Foundation.

The Mayor is hoping to commission an artist’s impression of what the pump track will look like.

31-24 14 **COMMUNITY HOSPITAL**

The 4th Recruitment Day is on 24th February, with one more on 16th March. 3 Band 5 nurses are still required, although they can start the procedure of re-opening with 2. The Integrated Care Board will meet on 4th April. Nothing will happen before then.

Cllr Stelman asked that the Council recognise the hard work put in by the chair of the campaign committee, Jenny Sargent. The ICB issued a press release last week which was very positive and thanked the campaign group for their help in getting to this point.

Outpatient services also need to be expanded in conjunction with re-opening.

32-24 15 **MONTHLY FINANCES**

i) To receive the bank reconciliation.

RESOLVED. Noted. Proposed Cllr Perry; Seconded Cllr Stelman. All in favour.

ii) To approve the following invoices for payment. – see agenda item 16.

iii) To discuss and decide on group members to discuss the receive grant applications

The group will consist of the 5 new councillors and the Mayor.

33-24 16 **MONTHLY FINANCES**

Payee	Item	Invoice	Amount £
Shropshire County Pension Fund	Monthly pension payment	February Return	1042.29
HMRC	PAYE and NI	February Return	738.06
Staff salaries	4 staff	February Return	3080.64
C. Owen	Minute taker	362.	40.04
G. Dudley	Toilet cleaning	363.	500.00
D. Turner	Grass cutting	364.	1115.75
IG Inspections	Lift Maintenance	365.	210.00
Enterprise House	Printing	366.	658.27
PCPS	Window cleaning	367.	48.00

BCBS	Materials	368.	1.50
High line	Street Lighting	369.	132.98
High line	Street Lighting	370.	1200.00
Andrea Pellegram	Neighbourhood plan	371.	369.89
Halls SMS	Minute taker	372.	147.08
Mousemat	IT	373.	345.00
J.C. Jones	Playing fields	374.	912.00
PCPS	Window cleaning	375.	48.00
Viking	Stationery /postage	376.	112.38
BCAS	Membership subs	377.	327.00
For information			
BT	telephone /broadband	378.	426.98
Lloyds Bank	Bank charges	379.	3.00
	Total		£11525.83

Extra Invoices: Kevin Clancy (hedge cutting) £176; Tony Baker (Benches, bins and windows) £320; BCBS £52.02; Health Centre £162.50; Julian Simpson £250.

RESOLVED The invoices plus the extra ones be paid. Proposed Cllr Perry; Seconded Cllr Halford. All in favour.

34-24

17

ALLOTMENTS – POLICIES PAPER FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION:

To consider the recommendations contained in the circulated document, including revising deposit charges, limiting the number of plots a tenant may hold (one plot policy), concessions.

Deposit. The National Allotments Society have suggested that £100-£200 is more acceptable as a deposit.

RESOLVED. The deposit be set at £200, with a concession of half the fee for those in receipt of benefits and the option of paying this in instalments. Proposed Cllr Perry; Seconded Cllr Carroll. All in favour.

One Plot Policy Amendment - 1 Plot per household, as opposed to 1 plot per person.

RESOLVED. The amendment be made and the new wording was agreed. Proposed Cllr Perry; Seconded Cllr Carroll. All in favour.

Inspection and Enforcement. These would be in June and September.

RESOLVED. The new wording was agreed. Proposed Cllr Perry; Seconded Cllr Carroll. All in favour.

In between inspections.

RESOLVED. The new wording was agreed. Proposed Cllr Perry; Seconded Cllr Carroll. All in favour.

35-24

18

REPORTS FROM MEETINGS ATTENDED

Cllr Carroll had attended an Enterprise South West Shropshire meeting.

It is considering changing over to a Community Interest Company. The workshops and offices are all full with a waiting list. However, it has lost all its grant funding now apart from a grant for the library from Shropshire Council.

The Business Park has spaces available, but the rent is much higher and some EU restrictions apply, for example not permitting a trade counter. It would help if more businesses used it, rather than waiting for space at Enterprise House.

- 36-24 19 *** UPDATE ON THE PUBLIC HALL**
Following a recent burst in the ceiling of the Public Hall there has been considerable damage which would be very costly to repair. Quotes have been obtained.
RESOLVED The Public Hall Committee pursue open discussions to explore how to dispose of the building, rather than repair it. The Public Hall Trust has strict rules so any monies recovered can only be re-invested on specific projects in the town.
Proposed Cllr Perry; Seconded Cllr Stelman. All in favour.
- 37-24 20 **NEXT MEETING** Tuesday 19th March at 7.30pm. Meeting closed at 21.25pm.

* TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To resolve that by the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting on the grounds the business to be discussed involves the likely disclosure of confidential information as defined in the Acts.