



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 17th SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 7.30PM**

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

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr G Rippon, Mrs C. Owen, 3 members of the public and PC Stuart Coote.

Fire Procedure

Minute No.	Agenda Item	
148-24	1	<u>APOLOGIES</u> Cllr Perry.
149-24	2	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> a) To declare any disclosable pecuniary interests. None b) To declare any personal interests. Item 11 Cllr Dickin
150-24	3	<u>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</u> of 20 th August 2024. RESOLVED Accepted with slight correction. Proposed Cllr Kosciuczyk; Seconded Cllr Stelman. All in favour.
151-24	4	<u>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION</u> Miranda and Laurie Stanley complained to the council that repairs to the Town Hall chimney, identified 18 months ago, had still not been undertaken, despite repeated pleas to the council to do so. Mr and Mrs Stanly's property backs on to the Town Hall. The Mayor apologised for the delay. It was agreed that the Council should undertake the work as soon as possible.

A member of the public brought to the Council's attention the issue of trees in the playing fields with overhanging branches into Copall Paddock gardens. Some branches had come down in recent bad weather.

The Council resolved to look into it as part of works to tidy up the playing fields. A tree surgeon would need to be contacted.

152-24 5 **REPORT FROM THE MAYOR**

The Mayor welcomed PC Coote to the meeting to discuss the anti-social behaviour in the playing fields. Recently, a den has been made in the undergrowth, using discarded rubbish and furniture, and fires have been lit.

The Mayor had met with Inspector Kelly beforehand, but no incidents were being reported to the police. If none are reported, the police cannot divert resources to deal with the problem.

There are many ways to report incidents - by phone, on-line or at the Police Station (if the cars are there). PC Coote will send through some posters/media posts that the Council can use to educate the public in how to report incidents.

However, noise issues are environmental health issues, not police. Fly tipping is the Council's remit. Traffic violations come under traffic issues. If people spot a fire, they should send for the fire brigade.

The PCSOs have been asked to pop into the park of an evening, and the PCs will pop in in the early hours if not employed elsewhere, but it is imperative that incidents are logged with the police. (Not the Town Council)! People can report anonymously.

Inspector Kelly will write an article for the next BC Newsletter.

Playing Fields A skip has been ordered to remove the rubbish and brashings from the playing fields to discourage den making. Thanks go to the volunteers who regularly tidy up the playing fields – it is much appreciated. The Mayor will bring a proposal to the next meeting to discuss forming a Friends of the Playing Fields group.

CCTV. Cllrs Dickin, Stelman and Houghton met with the PC Commissioner to discuss grants for cameras on the crossroads. The rural aspect of Bishop's Castle was stressed.

The French visitors will be in town this weekend for Michaelmas.

The Monday open office from 1-4.30pm in the Town Hall is working well.

The War Memorial work is still awaiting permission to start.

The Year 11s at the Community College will be doing Community Service as part of the enrichment programme. Suitable work needs to be found for them.

153-24 6 **REPORT FROM THE CLERK**

The bins for boys have been ordered. Once in situ a photograph will be taken for publicity.

154-24 7 **UNITARY COUNCILLOR**

Green bin charge starting in October. There have been issues with paying on-line/phone. There are conflicting messages about what to do with food waste.

Hopefully, Shropshire Council's transport plans will be in line with what was in the place plan locally, once announced.

The finance scrutiny has revealed that Shropshire Council's cost-cutting exercise will leave it with very little in reserve. There is a full Shropshire Council meeting next week.

Cllr Houghton has sent two chasing emails to Shropshire Council re the graveyard extension and had no response. She has escalated the matter to the director.

An area of the swimming pool at SpArC has been closed off because the lining is damaged. Options are being considered. £190,000 out of £250,000 has been raised.

Thanks to Highways for their work and helpfulness re the resurfacing of the High Street. The residents and businesses are thanked for their patience. Business was impacted and going forward, Bishop's Castle needs to be promoted more as a destination to bring back the customers.

Some of the white lining has been done, e.g. the junctions. Some of the requests did not have a suitable traffic order so needed clarification before executing.

155-24 8

TESTIMONIAL BENCH

The bench outside Church has broken after 20 years. It had a plaque thanking Cllr Carroll for her work as Mayor. A member of the public is interested in providing towards a bench in memory of her partner. There is a similarly aged bench on the straight mile dedicated to another former Mayor. (Food for thought as how to recognise the work of other former Mayors).

RESOLVED The clerk will ask Anthony Jones to make a replacement bench of the same style. The member of the public will be asked for a donation. There will be a memorial plaque made as well as the mayoral plaque. Proposed Cllr Houghton; Seconded Cllr Gayle. All in favour.

156-24 9

TOWN HALL MAINTENANCE

Several maintenance issues have arisen with regard to exterior decor, chimney repairs and guttering. The toilets need a deep clean. The Council has a general maintenance pot of £4000 for the Town Hall. The Town Hall Trust pays £2000 rent per annum to the Town Hall. However, income hasn't recovered fully since the pandemic, and costs and salaries have risen. The trustees are asking for a long-term maintenance plan and funding in next year's budget to meet the costs.

RESOLVED A plan is drawn up of jobs that need doing, with the chimney and high up jobs dealt with as priority. Year 11 students be utilized to help with decorating jobs where appropriate. The Trust's current finances and actions going forward be prepared for the next meeting. Proposed Cllr Houghton; Seconded Cllr Gayle. All in favour.

157-24 10

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL PROVISION

The South Shropshire Mayors met with Shropshire Council to discuss its request for Parish Councils to assist Shropshire Council to reduce its deficit by increasing their precepts. 10% was suggested.

This was rejected on the grounds that one council cannot ask another council for money, and also because the Parish Councils need to justify what the increased precepts would be used for.

Shropshire Council replied that if refused then their services would be cut. Shropshire Council is duty-bound to deliver some services, e.g. schools, but other services could be cut unless the parish councils pay for them in their precepts. Without knowing which services would be cut specifically, the Parish Councils cannot adjust their precepts. It was strongly felt that the smaller rural councils would be poorly served by this proposal, particularly with the local housing ban preventing any growth in population to spread the cost. Bishop's Castle would be disproportionately affected because some of the services provided in its catchment are used by residents from other parish councils, e.g. library and swimming pool.

157-24 11

MAYORAL POLICY

RESOLVED. The council changes the mayoral policy by deleting the last sentence in paragraph 2 which refers to the length of term of office being 3 years. Proposed Cllr Houghton; Seconded Cllr Carroll. All in favour.

158-24 12

PLANNING

None received.

159-24 13

MONTHLY FINANCES

- i. To note the Bank Reconciliation

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

- ii. To approve the following invoices for payment:

Payee	Item	Invoice	Amount £
Shropshire County Pension Fund	Monthly pension payment	September Return	1166.10
HMRC	PAYE and NI	September Return	808.95
Staff salaries	4 staff	September Return	3363.85
C. Owen	Minute taker	187	60.00
G. Dudley	Toilet cleaning	188	500.00
Dan Turner	Grass cutting	189	1338.90
Viking	Stationery		118.98
G.J. Rippon	Expenses		58.02
CR Hamer	Town pride/playing		1040.00
P Chamberlain	Window cleaning		48.00
ABC Fire	Fire Safety		1017.69
PHS	Toilet consumables		104.45
PHS	Toilet consumables		17.18
BCBS	Materials		95.44
Mousemat	IT		605.00
JJ Historical Plasterers	Old Markt Square		1400.00
Highline	Street Lamp		469.20
For Information			
BT	telephone /broadband		487.96
water plus	Water rates		359.25
water plus	Water rates		49.99
water plus	Water rates		85.40
Lloyds Bank	Bank Charges		9.00
Corona	Electricity		75.36
Corona	Electricity		36.61
Corona	Electricity		84.31
Shropshire Council	Electricity		1317.11
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Shropshire Council	Rates		187.00
	Total		16220.86

RESOLVED. The invoices be paid as presented at the meeting (above). Proposed Cllr Houghton; Seconded Cllr Stelman. All in favour.