



BISHOP'S CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL



Gwilym J Rippon Cert. He CEG, PSLCC
Town Clerk
Tel: 01588 638141
Email: townclerk@bishopscastle.co.uk

The Town Hall
Bishop's Castle
Shropshire
SY9 5BG

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BISHOP'S CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, ON TUESDAY 18TH MARCH 2025 AT 7.30PM

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

GR Rippon, CA Owen and 2 members of the public.
Fire Procedure

Minute No.	Agenda Item	
43-25	1	<u>APOLOGIES.</u> Cllr S. Jones.
44-25	2	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> a) To declare any disclosable pecuniary interests. Item 18.3 <i>Written request for dispensation:</i> <i>The Clerk reminded members that he had received a written dispensation from all Councillors in respect of the Public Hall as the Council corporate was the custodian trustee of the Public Hall. Without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited by section 31(4) from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of business.</i> b) To declare any personal interests. Item 10. Cllrs Dickin, Stelman and Houghton.
45-25	3	<u>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</u> of 18 th February. RESOLVED Minutes were accepted. Proposed Cllr Carroll; Seconded Cllr Halford. All in favour. Clarification was sought on item 34-25 (River Onny update) re the funding being proposed by STWA for community compensation via a sub-contractor.
46-25	4	<u>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION</u>

Mr Stuart Taylor spoke to the council as a trustee of the Community Land Trust.

Following on from the River Onny meeting and the continuing moratorium on house building (to protect the Pearl River Mussel colonies identified at risk in 2014 in the River Clun a Special Area of Conservation), Mr Taylor asked the Town Council to write to the Secretary of State, Angela Rayner MP, to intervene to find a solution. Bishop's Castle is fortunate because it has a neighbourhood plan in force, but it is unable to implement it with regard to new housing. There appears to be no apparent way forward, despite repeated requests by the Town Council to the relative agencies for a solution to be found. Cllr Halford is putting an article together for the town newsletter to explain the current situation and issues.

RESOLVED: Move Item 10 forward. Proposed Cllr Carroll; Seconded Cllr Perry. All in favour.

47-25

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RIVER ONNY UPDATE

Four agencies are involved: STWA; Natural England; the Environment Agency and Shropshire Council. (They make up the Strategic Clun Liaison Group tasked specifically to find a solution). Shropshire Council and Natural England did not attend the meeting held to discuss diverting waste water into the River Onny, although 200 members of the public attended. An example of a successful solution in Herefordshire was presented at the meeting, where Hereford Council were instrumental in facilitating what was necessary. The Town Council has been told that the only solution is to install reed beds/lakes in addition to improving the sewage treatment works. However, Shropshire Council has shown no interest in finding a solution, Natural England and the Environment Agency haven't got the resources, and STWA would apparently seem to prefer to just divert the problem elsewhere instead of treating the waste water.

The Town Council is dismayed at the length of time that has elapsed and does not understand why STWA/Shropshire Council have not made the necessary changes to the treatment of sewage. Is an anaerobic digester another solution?

The Town Council would like to know who holds these agencies to account? Who regulates them and enforces what should be done for the best interest of the local community?

RESOLVED: A letter will be written to the Secretary of State: with Shropshire Council, the Strategic Clun Liaison Group and the local MP copied in. Proposed Cllr Perry; Seconded Cllr Stelman. All in favour.

48-25

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REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

The public is invited to apply for the next round of grants.

49-25

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UNITARY COUNCILLOR

Shropshire Council's Local Plan is no longer in place.

50-25

7

VE DAY CELEBRATION 2025

There will be a beacon in the park. Small grants will be available if people want to hold street parties.

51-25

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SHROPSHIRE PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Nomination Papers have been sent out. If there are more than 14 nominees there will need to be an election. Proposers and Seconders need to come from the Bishop's Castle Council catchment.

Cllr Houghton has decided to stand down after 10 years of service. The Mayor thanked Cllr Houghton for her long service and expertise.

52-25 9 **THE THREE TUNS**

Following the public meeting on 17th March, the property surveyor from Star Pubs came to look at the buildings. The property is sound, but the Salop Street exterior needs attention and the living accommodation needs better fire escapes.

Star pubs are keen to invest in the property and maintain it as the tourist attraction it is. Thank you to the Councillors involved in arranging the meetings.

10 **RIVER ONNY**

Already discussed.

53-25 11 **STAGING OUTSIDE THE TOWN HALL**

The current staging used at Festivals is difficult and time-consuming to erect and take down. A suggestion is to make an area of staging in front of the town hall with steps up to it and a rail around as an alternative. This area could be used for leisure seating with storage space underneath. Estimated cost is £15,000 to paid for using a grant and the existing staging sold.

RESOLVED: Costs and planning permissions be sought. Proposed Cllr Perry; Seconded Cllr Gayle. All in favour.

54-25 12 **PLANNING**

None received.

55-25 13 **MONTHLY FINANCES**

i. To note the Bank Reconciliation

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

ii. To appoint Ms J Ince as internal auditor.

RESOLVED. Agreed. Proposed Cllr Carroll; Seconded Cllr Stelman. All in favour.

iii. To approve the following invoices for payment:

MARCH 2025 PAYMENTS			
Shropshire Pension	Pension	383	1143.48
HMRC	HMRC	384	831.37
Staff Wages	Staff Wages	385	3673.05
C. Owen	Minute taker	386	60.00
G. Dudley	Toilet cleaning	387	500.00
Dan Turner	Grasscutting	388	1338.90
Lloyds Bank	Bank charges	389	3.00
BT	telephone /broadband	390	523.21
Siemens		391	219.62
Mark One	Fire Safety	392	106.80
SSE	Electricity	397	1317.11
BCBS	Maintenance	391	23.06
Unity Trust Bank	Bank charges	392	10.80
Dan Turner	Maintenance	397	908.40

Town Hall Trust	Civic expenses	398	62.80
Salop Hire Services	Maintenance	401	300.00
Manthrig Ltd	Maintenance	402	6584.40
TOTAL			17626.00

An extra invoice has been received from Enterprise House for £2880.

RESOLVED. The invoices plus the extra one, be paid. Proposed Cllr Perry; Seconded Cllr Blundell. All in favour.

56-25 14 **PLANNING FOR BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN**

Everyone is encouraged, now spring is here, not to use illegal pesticides and herbicides.

57-25 15 **CLIMATE ACTION PLAN**

There will be a meeting on 20th March to discuss changes needed to the Climate Action Plan after its 3-year review.

58-25 16 **REPORTS FROM MEETINGS ATTENDED**

Cllr Carroll had attended and Enterprise South West Shropshire meeting. It will make a small profit this year. The library figures are positive. It is still trying to get the lease sorted with Shropshire Council. It is still in the process of becoming a Community Interest Company.

The SpArC fundraising finale was very good and the sum of £252,000 has been raised. Well done to all involved.

There was a meeting to review the Town Hall's Wedding package. Feedback is sought from previous wedding couples. Maybe an open day? Suggestions are to have set days when weddings will be permitted, rather than a blank calendar. Details of the licence will be reviewed before renewal.

59-25 17 **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.

RESOLVED: Proposed Cllr Carroll; Seconded Cllr Stelman. All in favour. The 2 members of the public left the room.

60-25 18 **STAFFING UPDATE AND UPDATE ON THE PUBLIC HALL**

1. To ratify the job description for the Town Warden.

Some suggestions were made and alterations discussed.

RESOLVED: Authority is delegated to Cllrs Stelman and Dickin to make the changes and proceed. Proposed Cllr Perry; Seconded Cllr Gayle. All in favour.

2. To discuss celebrations for a long serving business.

It was decided to thank the company for their 50 years of service by giving them a civic award at Mayor's Service.

3. To receive an update on the Public Hall.

The deeds and bank account statements have now been acquired and are locked safely away. A valuation of net value will be arranged and the sale can then

proceed. Money from the sale needs to be ring-fenced for charity meeting venues in town.

61-25

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NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 15th April 2025.

There being no further business the chairman declared the meeting closed at 21.10pm.