

Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held in the Guildhall, Much Wenlock on Thursday 1 February 2007 at 7.00 pm

Present: The Mayor, Councillor D M J Gibbon JP, in the Chair

Councillors: G D A Bowden, D N Hill JP, E W Humphries, W J Jones, N Mitchell, Mrs B Ward, P M Whiteman OBE, Mrs A Williamson.

Mrs A Downes Town Clerk

There was a minute's silence in memory of Mrs Kathleen Lamputt, Mayoress of this Town in 1971 and 1984, who had recently passed away.

The Revd Stephen Lowe said prayers.

23 Apologies: Councillor Mrs Thomas had sent apologies (attending meeting in London).

24 Declarations of Interest:

Councillor Whiteman declared a personal interest in all matters relating to Bridgnorth District Council (District Councillor).

Councillor Gibbon declared a personal interest in all matters relating to Bridgnorth District Council and Shropshire County Council (District and County Councillor).

Councillor Hill declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the item concerning the footpath on the Olympian Trail (family farm the land over which the footpath runs).

Councillor Hill declared a personal interest in the item concerning the Friendly Bus.

Councillor Bowden declared an interest in

25 Additional Business: The Town Clerk advised that there would be items of urgent business in Correspondence (Post Office Network Consultation and letter from Bridgnorth District Council), in item 9 (letter from the Gaskell Arms Hotel) in item 11 (minutes of the recent meeting of the Gaskell Recreation Ground Board of Management) in Planning (FUL/07/67) and two quotations to be considered in confidential business.

26 Minutes: The minutes of the meetings of 4 and 11 January 2007 were signed as a true record.

27 Matters arising from the minutes:

Post Office Card Account – a letter from the DTI, a copy of which had been circulated to Town Councillors. The Town Clerk had obtained the consultation document and will complete and return this to the Postal Office Network Consultation at the DTI stressing the importance of the Post Office and the Post Office Card Account to rural communities such as Much Wenlock.

Councillor Whiteman reported that he would be meeting with the Minister for Rural Affairs on 13 February 2007 and would be discussing this important matter with him.

Also reported were the difficulties being experienced by residents in a rural community in obtaining a television licence. The nearest retail outlet where one can be obtained is either Madeley or Bridgnorth. Although a licence can be obtained by telephone or on line, many elderly people find difficulty in accessing these services.

Letters of thanks for donations from Samaritans and Much Wenlock Live Arts Festival.

The Friendly Bus: It is understood that Broseley Town Council may not be making a grant towards the funds of the cost of maintaining the Friendly Bus Service. It was

RESOLVED: The £1000 allocated for a grant towards the Friendly Bus during 2007-8 remain in balances until further information is known about this service.

28 Finance: The Town Clerk presented the monthly and petty cash accounts, and the financial statement as reported in the cash book, as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| Bridgnorth District Council | 169.55 |
| Taylor's | 116.62 |
| Oce Imagistics | 7.16 |
| Eon Energy | 39.76 |
| Cash | 50.00 |
| R O Sandbrook | 258.50 |
| Balfours | 75.64 |
| Mrs A Downes | 1396.39 |
| Ms V Taylor | 178.25 |
| Mr A Firmstone | 370.54 |
| Inland Revenue | 584.14 |
| Shropshire CC | 564.36 |
| Mrs D Whitfield | 216.68 |
| Bridgnorth District Council | 41.12 |
| Norvid | 23.50 |
| Penny Farthing | 33.31 |
| Severn Trent Water | 404.98 |
| Npower | 1479.44 |
| AJ's | 77.57 |
| Viking Direct | 167.39 |
| Eon Energy | 1004.00 |

It was

RESOLVED: The financial statement be approved and signed.

Charity Accounts: The Town Clerk reported that the Charity Commission had now given permission for the Cooke Bequest No 1 and No 2 Accounts to be amalgamated into the Cooke Clock Account. The Mayor, Town Clerk and Councillor Hill will meet to discuss the investment of the money now held in the Cooke Clock Account.

CPRE: It was

RESOLVED: The annual membership of £27 be paid to the CPRE.

29 Correspondence:

Road Closure Wyke Lane from B4375 Benthall Lane, Posenhall to Manor Farm Junction at Wyke, Much Wenlock on 2 February 2007 for five days – notification from Shropshire County Council.

Items circulated included Neighbourhood Watch Newsletters; CPRE Landscapes; West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Consultation; Public Transport News February.

30 Planning: The following applications were dealt with:

FUL/06/2054 (3/4 High Street) – The Town Council has no objection, but regrets the loss of one shop in the High Street.

FUL/06/1055 (1 Wheatland Grove) – The Town Council has no objection.

FUL/06/1061 (Walnut Cottage) – The Town Council has no objection.

FUL/07/26 (16 High Street) – The Town Council welcomes this application which will enable vehicles to be parked off the High Street.

FUL/07/67 (Old School House) – The Town Council has no objection.

Notification that a planning appeal has been lodged in respect of FUL/06/666 (erection of two storey side extension at St Milburgha Cottage, 31 Copse Hill Lane, Homer).

31 Traffic Study and Survey of Much Wenlock: Town Councillors had held a very useful meeting with officers of Shropshire County Council and two representatives from the Parish Plan Monitoring Committee concerning the draft Much Wenlock Transport Study and Reappraisal of a Relief Road/bypass for Much Wenlock. Also discussed was the scheme for improvements to the Gaskell Junction and the proposals to make adjustments to the kerb lines and other works to make the junction safer and easier for heavy goods vehicles to manipulate. A copy of a letter sent by the proprietor of the Gaskell Arms Hotel to Shropshire County Council was reported setting out the problems they had experienced. It was RESOLVED: The proprietor of the Gaskell Arms Hotel be sent a letter expressing the Town Council's concern that they had experienced so many problems and hoping that the matter would be resolved satisfactorily.

There is to be a Scrutiny Meeting at Shropshire County Council on 20 March 2007 when the problems experienced over the implementation of this scheme will be examined and scrutinized.

32 William Brookes School – Redevelopment: The Town Council will be receiving a presentation by an officer of Shropshire County Council on the proposal to replace the current William Brookes School as part of the Building Schools for the Future One School Pathfinder Programme.

33 The Gaskell Recreation Ground: The Town Clerk presented the draft Plan for Play 2007 which is to be submitted to Bridgnorth District Council for comment before submission of the initial proposal to allow an application for funding from the Lottery. It was

RESOLVED: The Plan be endorsed by the Town Council and approval be given for its submission to Bridgnorth District Council.

The Town Clerk reported that an application for an Amenity Grant was also to be submitted to Bridgnorth District Council and investigations were under way to provide a 'Goal End' for older children on land adjacent to the children's play area.

The draft minutes of the Gaskell Recreation Ground Board of Management were circulated. It was RESOLVED: The resolutions made by the Board of Management be approved by the Town Council.

The Town Clerk had obtained costings for a new lock and keys for the Linden Gates. It was

RESOLVED: A new security lock and keys costing in the region of £50 for the lock and £4 for each key be obtained for the Linden Gates, to be issued against signature, to those needing a

key.

A charge will be made for replacement should a key be lost.

34 Olympian Trail Footpath: Councillor Hill left the room whilst this item was discussed. Councillor Mrs Williamson reported that the footpath from Priory Car Park across The Cutlings was very muddy at the kissing gate. This footpath is used extensively by children from the town walking to William Brookes School and by visitors walking The Olympian Trail. She wished to provide a load of stone to improve conditions at the kissing gate – the owner of the land had no objection. Councillor Jones offered to try and obtain stone free of charge and the Mayor said he would inform the Rights of Way Officer of the work to be undertaken. It was

RESOLVED: If there are any costs involved in carrying out this work, the Town Council makes a donation towards expenditure.

Councillor Mrs Williamson said she had organized a stall to raise money towards this work.

35 The Guildhall: No quotations had yet been received.

36 Linden Lodge: No report or quotation had yet been received.

37 Unitary Authority for Shropshire: A very interesting public meeting had been held on 31 January 2007 at Shrewsbury when this subject was vigorously debated.

38 2012 – Avenue of Trees: Suggested sites included Southfield Road, on the A4169 from William Brookes School to The Crescent and along the footpath from Priory Car Park through The Cutlings. It was decided to place an article in the Wenlock Herald asking residents to put forward their suggestions.

39 2012 Olympics and ‘A Better Welcome for Market Towns’ initiative: It was reported that consultants had been appointed to carry out a feasibility study into the potential benefits for Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin of London hosting the 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games. They have commenced work and the Town Council would be one of the consultees.

40 Town Repairs and Refurbishment: Councillor Bowden was thanked for preparing a list of items requiring repair and attention in the town. It was felt the state of the town was unacceptable and that the County and District Councillors and Town Councillors must press Bridgnorth District Council and Shropshire County Council to carry out works for which they are responsible. The Town Council handyman will be instructed to tidy up and clean the William Penny Brookes graves and the bus shelter in Victoria Road.

It was reported that following a road traffic accident some eighteen months ago, the wall on Gasworks Corner had still not been repaired. Bridgnorth District Council will be informed.

41 Reports of Representatives on Shropshire County Council and Bridgnorth District Council: Councillor Whiteman reported that Bridgnorth District Council were proposing to install two automatic unisex toilets to replace the existing ones at St Mary’s Lane Car Park and one to replace the toilets at Queen Street. It was proposed to employ a local person to clean and look after the toilets. It was suggested that one of the new automatic toilets should be provided at the Gaskell Recreation Ground – this should be investigated.

He reported that £54,000 had been set aside for capital works at the Joint Use Centre at Much Wenlock, held in reserve until completion of William Brookes School.

Concessionary fares will continue as at present.

There is to be a 4.16% increase in the budget at Bridgnorth District Council with no cut in services.

Mr Tom Clark, Legal Adviser, is leaving Bridgnorth District Council.

42 Items for next Agenda:

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| 1. Town Council Meeting in May. | 3. Unitary Authority in Shropshire |
| 2. Charity Accounts. | 4. Traffic Survey and Study |

43 Confidential Business: In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was

RESOLVED: The press and public be excluded from the meeting pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

44 Hanging Baskets: It was

RESOLVED: A quotation for £490.80 for the supply, erection and taking down of the hanging baskets by Abbey Gardens Nurseries be accepted.

45 Mayoral Regalia: The Town Clerk had taken the Mayoral chains and badges to Fattorinis. A quotation for the repair, provision of discs with three Mayor’s names thereon, new Mayoress’ regalia box, repairs to the Mayor’s regalia box, and provision of carrying box for the two chains and badges was reported. It was

RESOLVED: This quotation be accepted, and the works be carried out as soon as possible.

Signed Chairman

1 March 2007

