

Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held in the Guildhall, Much Wenlock on Thursday 1 March 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, Mrs B Ward,
 P M Whiteman OBE, Mrs A Williamson.
 Mrs A Downes Town Clerk

The Mayor said prayers.

46 Apologies: Councillor N Mitchell was absent.

47 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).

48 Additional Business: The Town Clerk advised that there would be items of urgent business in Finance (rateable value of Cemetery), in Correspondence (letter from Dr Gainer concerning car parking in Queen Street, information from Bridgnorth District Council concerning disabled car parking space, letter from Shropshire County Council concerning complaints, letter from Much Wenlock Bowling Club, an email from the Charity Commission and letter from The Edge (Mr R Petty) regarding the Gaskell Recreation Ground), in Planning (FUL/07/131 and FUL/07/127 and TPO/07/17) and in Confidential Business (Letter concerning kerbstones at Cemetery).

49 Minutes: The minutes of the meeting of 1 February 2007 were signed as a true record.

50 Matters arising from the minutes:

Street Collections 2007 – confirmation of permits issued for street collections in 2007 from Bridgnorth District Council.

Right of Way at Barrow – letter from Shropshire County Council pointing out that the objection lodged by the Town Council was not a valid objection. Councillor Gibbon said he would be in talking to the Rights of Way Department at Shropshire County Council concerning this.

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

B L Corfield	908.00
CPRE	27.00
Cash	50.00
British Telecom	189.20
Mrs D Whitfield	264.83
Mrs A Downes	666.93
Ms V Taylor	173.94
A Firmstone	371.34
Inland Revenue	377.42
Shropshire County Council	1499.74
James Lister and Son	80.77
Cash	50.00
Balfours	75.64

RMW Electrical	77.55
Norvid	23.50
Norman H Shuker	375.00
Information Commissioners	35.00
Oce Imagistics	16.23

It was

RESOLVED: The financial statement be approved and signed.

Charity Accounts Investment: This would be reported to the next meeting.

Donation to improvements to footpath: The cost of the stone required was not yet known. £240 had been raised towards this.

Appointment of Internal Auditor: It was

RESOLVED: That Mr John Henry be appointed as the Town Council's Internal Auditor for the financial year 2006-2007.

External Auditor: Notification from the Audit Commission that UHY Hacker Young will be continuing as auditor for Much Wenlock Town Council for the financial year 2006-7. The Town Council do not object to this proposal.

Hallmark Awards 2007: A letter from Bridgnorth District Council with information concerning the Hallmark Awards for 2007 which are presented to achievements in sport. Councillor Mrs Thomas will report to the next meeting.

Bridgnorth District Arts: It was

RESOLVED: To pay the affiliation fee of £10 to the Bridgnorth District Arts.

The Cemetery: The Town Clerk reported that having appealed against the rateable value set in 2005 for the Cemetery, she had negotiated a reduction to £410 per year.

52 Correspondence:

SALC Events: The Town Clerk had circulated details of meetings arranged by the SALC for Chairmanship Training, Audit Issues, Basic Bookkeeping and Introduction to Local Councils.

Defect Notices issued by Shropshire County Council to Severn Trent in respect of manholes in Sheinton Street and Racecourse Lane.

Social Research Questionnaire – Transport Innovation Fund – a copy of the household interview surveys which would be sent out randomly to 1500 households.

Meetings with PCT: The Town Clerk had written to Paul Haycox, General Manager of the PCT, and had received a reply with up to date information on the reorganization of the PCT. It was agreed that the Town Clerk would set up a meeting with appropriate representatives of the PCT to discuss Health Provision – arrangements/shortfalls/issues especially for Much Wenlock where there are more over-85's than anywhere else in Shropshire, the loss of the physiotherapy and chiropody departments at the Nursing Home, Shropdoc and its place in the system, the Community Car Scheme and Patients First.

Draft Open Space Interim Planning Guidance – consultation by Bridgnorth District Council – comments of Town Councillors to be sent to the Town Clerk.

Revised Model Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members – paper from Communities and Local Government.

Sustainable Communities Bill – information from Local Works (circulated to Town Councillors).

Bridgnorth District Council had submitted letters of support. It was

RESOLVED: A letter of support be sent to Philip Dunne MP as requested in the papers.

Local Democracy Pack received from SALC which could be given out to prospective candidates for the elections in May 2007. Town Councillors felt it important that the Town Council raises its profile in the community.

Parking in Queen Street: Dr A Gainer had written about the dangers of parked buses and cars in Queen Street when exiting on to New Road. Town Councillors supported his opinions and

RESOLVED: A copy of Dr Gainer's letter be sent to the Police for action and also to the bus companies asking them to instruct their drivers to draw well off the junction with New Road when parking at the Queen Street Terminus.

St Mary's Lane Car Park: Notification from Bridgnorth District Council that an additional space for disabled drivers will be provided on St Mary's Lane Car Park.

Complaints: A list of matters needing attention had been sent to Shropshire County Council and a reply had been received setting out the action to be taken.

Items circulated: Neighbourhood Watch Newsletters; Harper Adams Courses; International Tree Foundation Newsletter February; Bridgnorth District Council Members Bulletin February.

53 Planning:

FUL/07/119 (Brockenhurst, Farley Road) – The Town Council has no objection.

FUL/07/127 (6 Callaughton) – The Town Council has no objection.

FUL/07/131 (10 High Street) – The Town Council supports this application and would welcome an ATM at these premises.

TCA/07/12 – Removal of Norway Spruce Tree at rear of 13 Barrow Street – no objection.

TPO/07/17 – Application to carry out work to trees at Lady Forster Nursing Home – The Town Council objects very strongly to this application. These trees form an important backdrop to the Nursing Home, to properties on Sytche Close and to Farley Road and the Town Council believes that they should be treated and preserved, especially as they are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order.

54 Dates: The following dates were agreed:

Gaskell Recreation Ground Board of Management – 6.30 pm Thursday 29 March 2007 at the Guildhall;

Annual Town Meeting – 8.00 pm Thursday 29 March 2007 at the Guildhall.

Town Council May Meeting – 7.00 pm Thursday 26 April 2007 at the Guildhall.

Maymaking Ceremony – Thursday 17 May 2007 7.00 pm at the Guildhall.

55 Traffic Study and Survey of Much Wenlock: The consultants acting for Shropshire County Council will be commencing this in the third week of May 2007.

The Town Clerk was instructed to write to Shropshire County Council requesting that the double yellow lines be extended further up St Mary's Road from the junction with the A458. Any further areas where it is considered double yellow lines should be installed should be reported to the Town Clerk for onward transmission to Shropshire County Council.

56 William Brookes School: Councillor Mrs Williamson referred to the suggested alternative site for the new William Brookes School and the advantages of the construction of a new building on a new site. The site would be less crowded and traffic visiting the school would be taken out of the town. She felt the difficulties of the reconstruction of the present school would be insurmountable. The Mayor had spoken to an officer at Shropshire County Council who had assured him that both sites were being considered but no decision had yet been made. Several Town Councillors agreed that a new site would solve many problems at the present school and the old site could be utilized for community use. The Mayor had been assured that all interested parties and the public would be consulted and informed when a decision had been made.

57 Gaskell Recreation Ground: The Town Clerk confirmed that the sight screen had now been moved but the cricket covers were still stored on site at the side of the bowling green, and were an eyesore and posed a health and safety problem especially for children. The tree that blew down in the recent storms was also still lying on the site. The Town Clerk was instructed to ask the Manager to deal with these complaints.

In response to a query, the Charity Commission had advised it may be possible to give the cricket club a licence for land on which to site a pavilion and the Town Clerk had contacted the Town Council solicitor for advice on the granting of a licence.

13/07

The Town Clerk reported a letter of appreciation from the Bowling Club for the support for the installation of a septic tank and the provision of a key to Linden Lodge gates.

A letter had been received from Mr R Petty of The Edge at William Brookes School who sought permission to stage a production of A Midsummer Night's Dream at the rear of the Bowling Green on 18 and 19 July 2007 with rehearsals from 2 July 2007. The event was covered for Public Liability Insurance and the event would be stewarded and any mess cleared up following performances. It was

RESOLVED: The Town Council fully supports this production and wishes the Year 11 students every success and good weather.

58 The Guildhall: Quotations should be with the Town Clerk by 21 March 2007. However, rain is continuing to come into the building through the cupola and it was

RESOLVED: Immediate repairs be carried out to prevent egress by rain on the roof of the Guildhall.

59 Linden Lodge: To be taken in committee.

60 Unitary Authority for Shropshire: A decision is to be made by the end of March on whether Shropshire County Council will be one of the eight authorities to be considered for unitary status.

61 Avenue of Trees: No suggestions had been received following the article in the Wenlock Herald.

62 2012 Olympics: Councillor Mrs Thomas reported that the bid for 'A Better Welcome for Market Towns' is to be submitted. An audit is being undertaken of all businesses in the town. The Heart of England Tourist Board will be consulting with people in the town and members of the Town and Parish Plan Group will be visiting a town to make comment on their signage and ease of access to tourist attractions, with another group making comment after visiting Much Wenlock.

63 Statue of William Penny Brookes: The Town Clerk reported that she and the Wenlock Olympian Archivist wished to put forward a suggestion that in recognition of the importance of William Penny Brookes in the town, a statue should be erected of him in a suitable location in the centre of the town. The Royal British Society of Sculptors was very interested and had said their member sculptors would be very keen. Various sites in the town had been suggested – at the end of the Guildhall (which is between his home at 4 Wilmore Street and his grave in the churchyard), the square (which could be renamed William Penny Brookes Square) and on the Museum forecourt. It had been suggested that finance for the project could be obtained from descendants of those who subscribed to the building of the Corn Exchange and the setting up of the Agricultural Reading Society, from local businesses, the British Olympic Association and Heritage Lottery.

The suggestion met with general approval and support and Councillor Mrs Thomas and Councillor Gibbon offered to help in any way they could.

64 Town Repairs and Refurbishment: The Town Clerk will write to the Chief Executive of Bridgnorth District Council and ask when the wall around the Gasworks Corner is to be repaired. Councillor Bowden drew attention to the poor state of the hedge and verge opposite the entrance to The Priory. A street light on Oakfield Park will be reported for repair.

65 Reports of Representatives on Shropshire County Council and Bridgnorth District Council: Councillor Whiteman reported that there would be a 4.16% increase in the Bridgnorth District Council Rate for 2007-8.

Councillor Gibbon reported that the firm carrying out the consultancy work in connection with the benefits of a bypass for Much Wenlock could not commence work until May.

14/07

The Town Clerk will write to Glyn Shaw of Shropshire County Council asking that double yellow lines be extended in St Mary's Road. Councillor Gibbon asked that further sections of road in the town where double yellow lines should be provided should be given to the Town Clerk for onward transmission to Mr Shaw.

66 Outside Bodies: There were no reports from outside bodies.

67 Items for next Agenda:

1. Nomination of Mayor and Deputy Mayor.
2. Toilet on Gaskell Recreation Ground – Councillor Mrs Williamson.

68 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.

69 CCTV Camera: The Town Clerk reported that despite efforts, the camera installed in the High Street continued to be noisy. The installation firm had now suggested the camera be exchanged but an alternative camera and equipment would cost £1150.00. It was decided that before another camera be installed, the firm be asked to carry out a trial period to demonstrate that it was quieter.

70 Kerbing at the Cemetery: The Town Clerk reported that a complaint had been received that kerbing had been broken at the Cemetery. It had been removed in August 2004 to allow amendment to the wording of the headstone and had been placed against the fence. It was alleged that some time during the period from August 2004 to February 2007 this kerbing had been moved into the field adjacent to the cemetery and had been found broken. The owner of the grave and memorials now wished to claim from the Town Council. The Town Clerk reported that it was not 'agreed practice' to place parts of memorials against the fence. The Town Council considered this matter and

RESOLVED: That the complainant be informed that as he had instructed a firm of monumental masons to remove the kerbstones it is their responsibility and any claim should be directed to them.

71 Linden Lodge: The Town Clerk reported that a painter and decorator had been to the property and that a quotation had been received for repairs to cracks in the walls and ceiling in the three bedrooms, hallway, livingroom, diningroom and bathroom, for stripping off the paper from the ceiling in the diningroom and repaper and rubbing down and undercoat and top coat all woodwork. However, under the terms of the lease the tenant is responsible for the internal decoration of the property and will be asked if she will contribute towards the cost of redecoration.

Signed Chairman

Dated 5 April 2007

