

BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Brandon Town Council Meeting
held at Old School House, Market Hill, Brandon on Monday 11th December 2023 at 7pm

Present: Cllr P Wittam (Chair), Cllr B Brabbs, Cllr G Brocklehurst, Cllr P Etherington, Cllr P Gorringe, Cllr J Hughes, Cllr V Lukaniuk, Cllr T Nolan, Cllr D Palmer, Cllr P Ridgwell, Cllr J Savage, Cllr N Siebert, Cllr C Watts

Also Present: 15+ members of the public.

Cllr Wittam thanked the Town Keepers and everyone else for the hard work decorating the town and for the light switch on. Cllr Hughes presented the Anglia in Bloom silver cemetery certificate to Brandon Town Council. Cllr Wittam commented that we owe the Town Keepers a huge round of applause.

- 1 **APOLOGIES** for absence and approval of reasons tendered.
Cllr H Kostecki – apologies accepted.
- 2 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST** and additions to Members Register of Interest.
Cllr D Palmer – Non-pecuniary interest – item 13.
- 3 **TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM SQN LDR GEARY - RAF LAKENHEATH**
Sqn Ldr Geary did not attend the meeting.
- 4 **TO RECEIVE, CONFIRM AND SIGN MINUTES**
- Of the Brandon Town Council Meeting of Monday 13th November 2023.
Proposer: Cllr V Lukaniuk
Seconder: Cllr J Hughes
Resolution Record No: **BTC/121/11/Dec/23**
CARRIED: Unanimous

BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL RESOLVES THAT THE MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF MONDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 2023 BE APPROVED.

- 5 **MATTERS ARISING** for information exchange only of the Full Council Meeting of 9th October 2023.
Cllr Ridgwell raised the issue of the bridge being in a poor state of repair and questioned why it needed a specialist to repair it. Cllr Lukaniuk commented that it was a Highways issue and they were aware of the situation. Cllr Ridgwell further commented that Weeting does a traffic count and last September counted two hundred thousand vehicles going south all travelling through Brandon. He commented that if the government have 36 billion pounds to improve roads and rail, we should be pushing for a bypass. Additionally, Cllr Ridgwell commented that he had read that 75% of towns and cities are over the pollution levels and towns that have bypasses “fill in” with houses, which Brandon is in need of.

Signed.....

- 6 **URGENT BUSINESS** any items the Chairman considers a matter of urgent business.
None.

- 7 **TO RECEIVE WRITTEN REPORT** from the Town Clerk.
Report was received.

- 8 **PUBLIC FORUM** monthly event limited to 3 minutes duration maximum per resident, this will include reports from County, District and Town Councillors also Community Group Representatives.

Cllr Lukaniuk reported that the bushes have been cut back opposite the friendly bench and is still waiting for Highways to sort out Green Road. He further reported that the drain cover on Rattlers Road had been repaired and another near Tesco has appeared and been repaired already. Suffolk County Council have a new Highways Contractor called Milestone. There is a programme in the county for repairs for quieter roads and cul-de-sacs which hopefully will include Coulson Lane in the future. He further commented that with the upcoming budget there had been an 11.4 million overspend at the County which will translate to not more than 5%. Additionally at District level their increase will not be more than 3% and they have a shortfall of 1.2 million pounds.

Cllr Gorringe asked Cllr Lukaniuk if anything could be done about the visibility when turning from George Street into Bury Road. A discussion ensued and it seems there is a wall blocking the visibility. Cllr Lukaniuk stated he would enquire about this. Cllr Ridgwell commented that he thought the wall belonged to the George Street properties. Cllr Gorringe suggested a mirror might help to improve the visibility. Cllr Lukaniuk stated that Suffolk County Council do not fit mirrors to improve the visibility at junctions. Cllr Ridgwell suggested installing a one-way system which he thought would help to ease the traffic problems.

A member of Brandon Festival thanked all the town Council staff for all their hard work for all the lights and the Christmas Fair and remarked the Market Hill and High Street looked fantastic.

A resident addressed Cllr Wittam as the Chairman and asked if he thinks he is worthy of the position he holds and asked, with reference to the item that appeared in the local press on 1st December 2023, and asked if this was a type of fraud. They further asked if he was a Councillor that people can trust. Cllr Wittam responded by advising that if anybody had any problems, they should go to the Monitoring Officer at West Suffolk District Council.

Another member of the public stated that they reported a pothole in Church Road and they were told that the repair time would be eight to ten weeks and asked if Cllr Lukaniuk could chase this up. They also commented that there were a lot of leaves leading up to Church End and asked if they could be cleared.

Another resident stated that they wanted to talk to Brandon Town Council as they do not believe we are getting value for money from our Suffolk County Council representative. They further commented that potholes that had been fixed had not actually been fixed and some of those that had, were done very shoddily. The resident suggested that rather than phone the relevant authorities when we have an issue, we should be writing to them to ensure we have a paper trail and he further suggested that we write to Suffolk County Council to express the concerns of Brandon rate payers who are unhappy with their service and do not believe Brandon are getting service for money.

Cllr Lukaniuk compared the state of the roads in Bury St Edmunds, with the one issue he stated we have, in our High Street and stated he constantly phones to complain and gets a job number.

Cllr Wittam stated the problem with Suffolk County Council is the current shortfall of 11.5 million pounds for this current financial year. The resident further reminded Cllr Wittam that he was still to receive a letter in response to his questions that he had asked.

Signed.....

Cllr Wittam stated that the resident had made a Freedom of Information request that had superseded the request.

Cllr Nolan asked if other towns had the same volume of traffic as Brandon and would that volume of traffic mean we are given greater consideration when monies are distributed. Cllr Lukaniuk mentioned the by-pass and that another Councillor was dealing with this. Cllr Palmer stated that he had been in touch with the correct people to try and ensure that some of the money from the HR2 project would come our way.

Cllr Etherington stated that in relation to the potholes, as the Councillors represent the people of Brandon, we should definitely write a letter if that is what the people of Brandon are requesting. There was some discussion about who would be the best person to write the letter. Cllr Brocklehurst commented that he was happy to find out all the relevant information for someone to then help him write a letter.

Cllr Etherington then proposed a 'vote of no confidence' in the Chairman and Vice Chairman and the way the Council was being run.

Cllr Nolan commented that he supported the idea of a vote of no confidence as he thought that the idea that someone would misrepresent another Councillor was abhorrent. Cllr Etherington again proposed the vote of confidence and Cllr Nolan seconded it.

A member of the public stood up to express their displeasure at the fact that two Councillors had gone against the licence application for the Church Institute. They further commented that it has now been brought to everyone's attention that Cllr Wittam doctored evidence that was presented by Cllr Savage. They then questioned the legality of Cllr Wittams actions. Cllr Savage announced that she had resigned from the West Suffolk Independents and she was now an independent Councillor. Cllr Wittam asked for the vote to take place.

A member of the public asked if the public gallery could have their own vote of no confidence. The majority of the public gallery voted in favour of a vote of no confidence in the Chairman.

Cllr Wittam then requested the Councillors to vote. A vote then ensued.

Proposer: Cllr P Etherington

Second: Cllr T Nolan

Resolution Record No: **BTC/122/11/Dec/23**

CARRIED: By majority vote: 9 for, 3 against, 1 abstention.

BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL RESOLVES TO HAVE NO CONFIDENCE IN THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN.

9 CORRESPONDENCE

- Suffolk County Council – Street Lighting Contract – information received.

10 ACCOUNTS To approve the payments for November 2023.

Cllr Ridgwell queried why payment for the removal of the bike racks was listed. Cllr Lukaniuk explained that we had to pay first and then we were reimbursed the money, which we had already received. Cllr Lukaniuk queried the payments for Suffolk County Council for replacing lanterns to LED and asked if we had registered for the Decarbonisation Fund. Mrs Prior confirmed that we had registered for the fund and that she understood, based on the information we had received from West Suffolk Council, that they would be covered.

Proposer: Cllr N Siebert

Second: Cllr P Gorringer

Resolution Record No: **BTC/123/11/Dec/23**

CARRIED: Unanimous

Signed.....

BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL APPROVES THE PAYMENTS FOR NOVEMBER 2023.

Invoice Date	Invoice No	Supplier	Expense Type	Nett	VAT	Gross	Payment
11/12/2023		Abbeycroft Leisure	S137 Grant	£1,950.84	£0.00	£1,950.84	BACS
02/12/2023		Breckland Brass Band	Entertainment - Christmas Ev	£100.00	£0.00	£100.00	BACS
13/12/2023		M Skinner - Liam Fund	Donation re Christmas Event	£300.00	£0.00	£300.00	BACS
14/11/2023	IV104490	Aurora Ltd	Photocopier - Copies	£447.16	£89.43	£536.59	Direct Debit
16/11/2023	INV-3513	Hugofox Limited	Website Subscription	£29.99	£6.00	£35.99	Direct Debit
18/11/2023	M007 GE	BT	Phone OSH	£94.54	£18.91	£113.45	Direct Debit
21/11/2023	M072 HZ	BT	Phone OSH	£75.72	£15.14	£90.86	Direct Debit
22/11/2023	M048 1U	BT	Phone OSH	£37.52	£7.50	£45.02	Direct Debit
10/12/2023	S026 WU	BT	Phone OSH - Credit	-£3,079.00	-£615.80	-£3,694.80	Direct Debit
01/12/2023	10938	Cranberry Comms.	Microsoft 365	£119.95	£23.99	£143.94	Direct Debit
02/12/2023	1398724	YU Energy	Electric OSH	£142.13	£7.11	£149.24	Direct Debit
02/12/2023	1398726	YU Energy	Electric BRPF Yard	£171.81	£8.59	£180.40	Direct Debit
02/12/2023	1398722	YU Energy	Electric Pillar 8 Market Hill	£34.21	£1.71	£35.92	Direct Debit
02/12/2023	1398727	YU Energy	Electric Pillar 9 Market Hill	£11.76	£0.59	£12.35	Direct Debit
02/12/2023	1398725	YU Energy	Electric Cemetery Yard	£11.29	£0.56	£11.85	Direct Debit
02/12/2023	1398728	YU Energy	Electric Christmas Tree Pillar	£9.23	£0.46	£9.69	Direct Debit
04/12/2023	1419184	YU Energy	Gas OSH	£114.46	£5.72	£120.18	Direct Debit
16/12/2023	2746086	Everflow Water	Water OSH	£22.27	£0.00	£22.27	Direct Debit
28/12/2023	1215028	West Suffolk Council	Trade Waste	£75.76	£0.00	£75.76	Direct Debit
29/12/2023		Unity Trust Bank	Bank Charges	£0.90	£0.00	£0.90	Direct Debit
31/12/2023		Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge	£41.70	£0.00	£41.70	Direct Debit
30/11/2023	96536	Sky High Access Ltd	Boom Lift - Christmas Light.	£372.00	£74.40	£446.40	BACS
01/12/2023	3754 AJF887	Travis Perkins Ltd	Rocksalt	£17.16	£3.43	£20.59	BACS
02/12/2023	3754 AJF908	Travis Perkins Ltd	Rocksalt	£34.32	£6.86	£41.18	BACS
09/12/2023	R9527/LOR	Ray Tuttle Lift Sers. Ltd	6 Month LOLER - Lift Inspect.	£99.09	£19.82	£118.91	BACS
11/12/2023		Mrs A Barnes	Reimbursement - Leaf Grab.	£13.30	£2.66	£15.96	BACS
12/12/2023		Mr G Brocklehurst	Reimbursement - Stamps	£30.00	£0.00	£30.00	BACS
13/12/2023	44925	Amazon	Moss Clear	£74.96	£14.99	£89.95	BACS
18/12/2023	994087	J & D Green	Window Cleaning OSH	£20.00	£0.00	£20.00	BACS
19/12/2023	1085620963	Stannah Lift Services Ltd	Quarterly Lift Service	£116.67	£23.33	£140.00	BACS
21/12/2023	62373	Chase Timber Products	Post Mix - Market Hill Bin	£4.68	£0.94	£5.62	BACS
22/12/2023	3774	Evolution Town Plan.	New Cem. Fees 7/9 to 20/12	£508.25	£101.65	£609.90	BACS
22/12/2023	271437	Fengate Fasteners Ltd	Secateurs, Sign re H & S	£30.50	£6.10	£36.60	BACS
31/12/2023	20240000005	Finevale Service Station	Fuel	£68.12	£13.62	£81.74	BACS
05/01/2024		HMRC	NICS	£3,186.54	£0.00	£3,186.54	BACS

11 TO RECEIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT AGAINST BUDGET FOR OCTOBER 2023

The Income and Expenditure Statements against Budget for October 2023 was received.

12 GRANT APPLICATION discussion to consider S137 grant from Abbeycroft Leisure (Explore Outdoor.)

Cllr Wittam invited the representative from Abbeycroft Leisure to present their case. The representative gave an overview of why Abbeycroft Leisure were applying for the grant and gave details of all the activities they run in Brandon. Cllr Brocklehurst commented that it is a fantastic scheme and we should fully support it.

Signed.....

Cllr Lukaniuk asked Mrs Prior how much money was left in the grant budget. Cllr Lukaniuk suggested that it was for a noble cause and suggested we pay out the total amount requested.

Cllr Etherington asked if advertising can be done, so Brandon is easily identified. The representative commented that they can and they do send information directly to the schools in Brandon. A vote ensued.

Proposer: Cllr V Lukaniuk

Seconder: Cllr J Hughes

Resolution Record No: **BTC/124/11/Dec/23**

CARRIED: Unanimous

BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL RESOLVES TO APPROVE THE GRANT FROM ABBEYCROFT LEISURE FOR £1950.84.

13 RESOLUTION from Cllr P Wittam No. 448

Brandon Town Council resolves to pay the grant to Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields in one payment at the start of the financial year.

Cllr Wittam stated that he saw no reason why we could not pay the Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields in one payment at the start of the financial year. Cllr Lukaniuk commented that we always used to pay the Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields in one payment. A vote took place.

Proposer: Cllr P Wittam

Seconder: Cllr V Lukaniuk

Resolution Record No: **BTC/125/11/Dec/23**

CARRIED: By majority vote: 12 for, 1 abstention.

BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL RESOLVES TO PAY THE GRANT TO THE BRANDON REMEMBRANCE PLAYING FIELDS IN ONE PAYMENT AT THE START OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR.

14 TO NOTE MINUTES OF EVENTS COMMITTEE MEETING of 23rd November 2023.

The minutes from the above Events Committee meeting were noted and received. Cllr Hughes commented that the office staff did a brilliant job of organising the Christmas Fair.

15 TO NOTE MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING of 4th December 2023.

The minutes from the above Planning Committee meeting were noted and received. Cllr Ridgwell commented regarding the planning application for the Old Library Site, that he did not think we would be able to get a 20mph zone in Bury Road. Cllr Brocklehurst commented that it was a comment that Highways might take notice of.

16 DISCUSSION re Queens Memorial.

Cllr Brocklehurst opened the discussion stating a previous resolution for a memorial for our late Queen. He further commented that three members of the public thought it was a good idea to have a memorial for the late Queen on Victoria Avenue and that one thought it would be good to put something in the centre of the new cemetery. He further commented that no one else had made any suggestions.

Signed.....

Cllr Etherington commented it was a good idea to have a memorial but what and where? She further commented that it would be a good idea to ask the people of Brandon their thoughts.
Cllr Brocklehurst agreed that we do need ideas.

Cllr Siebert suggested putting something on social media. Cllr Etherington commented that it should be something stand alone and away from Victoria Avenue. There was a short discussion on how we might gather ideas.

17 RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

That pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Public and Press be excluded from the Meeting temporarily due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed concerning QUOTES: LAND: STAFF: CONTRACT.

Proposer: Cllr N Siebert

Seconder: Cllr P Etherington

Resolution Record No: **BTC/126/11/Dec/23**

CARRIED: Unanimous

Signed.....

BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL

Confidential Minutes
of the Full Brandon Town Council Meeting
held at Old School House, Market Hill, Brandon on Monday 11th December 2023 at 7pm

THIS PAGE IS CONFIDENTIAL
ONLY THE RESOLUTIONS MAYBE DISPLAYED
AS A MATTER OF PUBLIC RECORD

18 TO RECEIVE, CONFIRM AND SIGN CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

- Of the Brandon Town Council Meeting of Monday 13th November 2023.

Proposer: Cllr P Etherington

Seconder: Cllr B Brabbs

Resolution Record No: **BTC/127/11/Dec/23**

CARRIED: Unanimous

BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL RESOLVES THAT THE CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF MONDAY 13TH NOVEMBER 2023 BE APPROVED.

19 MATTERS ARISING

Mrs Prior brought to the attention of the Council that the Citizens Advice Bureau have asked if they could have a sign erected outside the building, no bigger than the Council sign. A vote ensued.

Proposer: Cllr V Lukaniuk

Seconder: Cllr P Wittam

Resolution Record No: **BTC/128/11/Dec/23**

CARRIED: By majority vote: 12 for, 1 abstention.

BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL RESOLVES TO ALLOW THE CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU TO HAVE A SIGN OUTSIDE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE.

Mrs Prior then commented that the bike racks had been removed and she had managed to negotiate an extra £50 off the price.

Mrs Prior then brought to the attention of the meeting that she had carried out further work on HR support. Cllr Etherington commented that it would have to be a proper resolution at another meeting. Cllr Lukaniuk asked what the HR Committees thoughts were on the Town Clerks sickness absence. Cllr Wittam commented the HR support needed to go as a resolution for the next meeting.

Mrs Prior next raised the age limits on our insurance due to us running the Santas Grotto at our Christmas Event and had been in contact with our insurers. Mrs Prior commented she had found out that we were covered for any Council events but any other groups using the premises would need their own adequate Public Liability Insurance and risk assessments. Mrs Prior produced a form to the Councillors which was a written agreement for room hire which incorporated the need for insurance and risk assessments. Cllr Etherington commented that we would need to see copies of Public Liability Insurance and risk assessments from the users of Old School House. She further commented that the form can be adopted by the office as part of the administration.

Signed.....

Cllr Ridgwell enquired on how the Town Clerk was. Cllr Nolan commented he had tried to contact the Town Clerk and asked him to strengthen the contact between them.

Cllr Ridgwell further enquired if there was a date for the new bus shelters to be installed on London Road. Cllr Lukaniuk commented that the money had now been raised. Cllr Lukaniuk thanked Mrs Prior for doing the admin on this. Cllr Lukaniuk further commented that we had met the criteria to get the money from County and should receive it in the new year.

Cllr Siebert commented that the that the Town Clerk must have a contact check for long term sickness. Cllr Nolan commented that the Town Clerk had agreed to make contact weekly. Cllr Siebert suggested writing a letter to the Town Clerk from the Chairman demonstrating concern for his welfare.

Mrs Prior was asked to leave the meeting at this point.

20 RESOLUTION from Cllr T Nolan No. 445

Brandon Town Council resolves to approve the salary increases as agreed by H.R.Committee. After discussion it was resolved to approve one employee a salary increase. A vote ensued.

Proposer: Cllr B Brabbs

Seconder: Cllr P Etherington

Resolution Record No: **BTC/129/11/Dec/23**

CARRIED: By majority vote: 8 for, 4 against, 1 member did not vote.

BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL RESOLVES TO APPROVE ONE EMPLOYEES SALARY INCREASE.

Mrs Prior returned to the meeting.

21 QUOTES

21.1 RESOLUTION from Cllr P Wittam No. 450

Brandon Town Council resolves to accept the quotation to carry out the remedial electrical works at the BRPF yard. A vote then ensued.

Proposer: Cllr P Etherington

Seconder: Cllr B Brabbs

Resolution Record No: **BTC/130/11/Dec/23**

CARRIED: Unanimous

BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL RESOLVES TO ACCEPT THE QUOTATION TO CARRY OUT THE REMEDIAL ELECTRICAL WORKS AT THE BRPF YARD.

Signed.....

21.2 RESOLUTION from Cllr P Wittam No. 451

Brandon Town Council resolves to accept the quotation to replace the complete street lighting column/lantern, unit 532 on Tower Close.

Cllr Lukaniuk confirmed that we could claim the money back for replacement of the column on Tower Close through the Decarbonisation Fund from West Suffolk Council. A vote took place.

Proposer: Cllr P Wittam

Seconder: Cllr P Etherington

Resolution Record No: **BTC/131/11/Dec/23**

CARRIED: Unanimous

BRANDON TOWN COUNCIL RESOLVES TO ACCEPT THE QUOTATION TO REPLACE THE COMPLETE STREET LIGHTING COLUMN/LANTERN, UNIT 532 ON TOWER CLOSE.

21.3 RESOLUTION from Cllr G Brocklehurst No. 452

Brandon Town Council resolves to consider quotations from Hampshire Flag Company Ltd to replace the worn town flag at Old School House (various options.)

A discussion took place about the different options for a new town flag. Cllr Lukaniuk asked if it would help if a Councillor paid for the flag out of their Locality Budget. After further discussion, Cllr Etherington suggested we enquire as to if it can be seen on both sides and then bring it back to the January meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.04pm

Signed.....