

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

**HELD AS A VIRTUAL MEETING ON**  
**2<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 2020 at 7.00PM**

This virtual meeting was held using Zoom software

*(Voting was recorded by a show of hands where Councillors were able to access the meeting using a camera and could be seen by the Town Clerk; Councillors who had no access to a camera were asked to speak out or use the CHAT function on Zoom)*

**PRESENT**

Council Members      The Mayor, Cllr A Coleman, Cllrs S Billett, J Byng, R Coleman, S Collingridge, L Davies, C Edginton White, P Gittins MBE, P Harrison, M Maher, D Morehead, R Stanczyszyn

In attendance:        3 Members of the Public  
S Hudson - Town Clerk

**9251    OPENING REMARKS**

The Mayor Cllr A Coleman welcomed everyone to the meeting and spoke of the Remembrance Sunday arrangement for this year. The Mayor also spoke of an item to be discussed at Urgent Matters, lighting Bewdley bridge and the Civic Society's support for the project.

**9252    APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr H Lacy

**9253    DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors were reminded to submit their Register of Interests and to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary and/or Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.

Cllr C Edginton White declared an Other Disclosable Interest in agenda item 9274 as a friend of an ex-employee.

**9254    COUNCILLORS' DISPENSATIONS**

None Received

**9255    PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

**i.        Members of the public.**

One member of the public spoke with regards to the new railings, fitted by WFDC at Beale's Corner. He raised concerns about the stability of the structure and the lack of consultation with the Town Council and the district's Conservation Officer.

Members confirmed that no consultation had been held with Town Councillors and raised the question as to whether the Environmental Agency had been consulted.

**ii       Reports from representative members of the principal authorities**

**Cllr C Edginton White WFDC member for Bewdley and Rock** confirmed that the WFDC Overview and Scrutiny committee would be reviewing Museum proposals on Thursday and that the WFDC medium term plans would also be re-visited.

**Cllr R Coleman WFDC member for Bewdley and Rock** confirmed that confirmed that WFDC would be introducing free parking after 3pm between 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2021.

**Mr I Hardiman, WCC member for Cookley, Wolverley and Wribbenhall** provided a written report which was shared with Councillors prior to the meeting

The Mayor Cllr A Coleman, noted the notes provide by the Town Clerk following a meeting held with WCC Cllr R Vale and WCC Highway Officer Mr P Green. Following discussions, it was agreed to write a letter to Mr P Green thanking him for the support he offers to Bewdley and its residents.

- iii **Representatives of support services**  
None

## 9256 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the draft minutes (with a minor amendment) of the Town Council meeting, held on 05/10/2020, as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

## 9257 ACCOUNTS

The Town Clerk presented the position as follows:

- i. The updated schedule of accounts including approval of invoices to be paid and approval of invoices paid as a matter of urgency.

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the schedule of payments as at 31/10/2020.

The following documents were presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee 16/09/2020

It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the bank reconciliation as at 30/09/2020.

Bewdley Town Council				
Unity Current Account, Period Ending 30/09/2020				
RECONCILIATION REPORT				
Summary				
GBP				
Statement beginning balance				89,416.52
Cheques and payments cleared (20)				-23,007.84
Deposits and other credits cleared (5)				93,594.22
<b>Statement ending balance</b>				<b>160,002.90</b>
Uncleared transactions as of 30/09/2020				-50.60
Register balance as of 30/09/2020				<b>159,952.30</b>

- ii. It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the current financial position actual against budget as at 30/09/2020.

Bewdley Town Council					
Budget vs. Actuals 2020-21					
April to September 2020					
	Total				
	Actual	Budget	Remaining	% of Budget	% Remaining
<b>Income</b>					
Christmas Event Income		1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Community Flood Volunteer Schem	400.00		-400.00		
Interest Received	10.61	100.00	89.39	10.61%	89.39%
Lengthsman Scheme	195.71	2,800.00	2,604.29	6.99%	93.01%
Lifebuoys replacements 2020-21	200.00		-200.00		
Load St Toilets- WFDC	8,948.00	8,790.00	-158.00	101.80%	-1.80%
Miscellaneous Income			0.00		
Markets		1,300.00	1,300.00	0.00%	100.00%
Total Miscellaneous Income	£ 0.00	£ 1,300.00	£ 1,300.00	0.00%	100.00%
Planters-External Funding	2,257.96		-2,257.96		
Precept	182,350.00	182,350.00	0.00	100.00%	0.00%
VAT coding error	837.73		-837.73		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£195,200.01</b>	<b>£196,340.00</b>	<b>£ 1,139.99</b>	<b>99.42%</b>	<b>0.58%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Capital Expenditure			0.00		
Lifebuoys		1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Notice Boards & Town Signs		2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Planters	1,453.91		-1,453.91		
Seats		2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Street Poles, baskets & tubs		250.00	250.00	0.00%	100.00%
Town Clerk Office		2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
VAS Signs		3,800.00	3,800.00	0.00%	100.00%
Total Capital Expenditure	£ 1,453.91	£ 11,050.00	£ 9,596.09	13.16%	86.84%
Council Costs			0.00		
Badges & Shields	648.80	620.00	-28.80	104.65%	-4.65%
Civic Award		200.00	200.00	0.00%	100.00%
Civic Ceremonies	-1,215.00	1,500.00	2,715.00	-81.00%	181.00%
Councillor Allowances		1,300.00	1,300.00	0.00%	100.00%
Hats & Robes Maintenance	145.83	500.00	354.17	29.17%	70.83%
Insurance Valuations		150.00	150.00	0.00%	100.00%
Mayor's Chain Maintenance		1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Mayor's Expenses	420.41	5,000.00	4,579.59	8.41%	91.59%
Mayoral Roll	141.26	200.00	58.74	70.63%	29.37%
Public Meetings		100.00	100.00	0.00%	100.00%
Total Council Costs	£ 141.30	£ 10,570.00	£ 10,428.70	1.34%	98.66%
Election cost & Provision	397.52	5,000.00	4,602.48	7.95%	92.05%
Employment Costs		74,000.00	74,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Admin Apprentice	6,924.64		-6,924.64		
Load St Toilets Cleaner	4,596.54		-4,596.54		
Mayor's PA & Administrator	5,739.48		-5,739.48		
Town Clerk	19,899.27		-19,899.27		
WFDC Admin Charge	240.00	450.00	210.00	53.33%	46.67%
Total Employment Costs	£ 37,399.93	£ 74,450.00	£ 37,050.07	50.23%	49.77%
Grant Aid & Donations		12,000.00	12,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Bewdley Petanque Club	500.00		-500.00		
Donations	50.00		-50.00		
Wyre Forest CAB	1,000.00		-1,000.00		
Total Grant Aid & Donations	£ 1,550.00	£ 12,000.00	£ 10,450.00	12.92%	87.08%
Millennium Green Maintenance	558.22	750.00	191.78	74.43%	25.57%

Operating Costs			0.00		
Advertising & Official notices		100.00	100.00	0.00%	100.00%
Audit Fees	285.00	1,000.00	715.00	28.50%	71.50%
Broadband	155.31	500.00	344.69	31.06%	68.94%
Computer	25.00	200.00	175.00	12.50%	87.50%
Garage Rent- rear 14 Load st	1,797.74	4,500.00	2,702.26	39.95%	60.05%
Insurance		5,300.00	5,300.00	0.00%	100.00%
Intruder Alarm	379.25	700.00	320.75	54.18%	45.82%
Legal Fees	5,006.25	5,000.00	-6.25	100.13%	-0.13%
Maintenance	784.40	1,500.00	715.60	52.29%	47.71%
Office consumable and cleaning	-85.95		85.95		
Photocopier	535.10	1,500.00	964.90	35.67%	64.33%
Postage	66.23	200.00	133.77	33.12%	66.89%
Refreshments	20.58	150.00	129.42	13.72%	86.28%
Service Charge & Business rates	-533.59	900.00	1,433.59	-59.29%	159.29%
Small Office Equipment	13.51	150.00	136.49	9.01%	90.99%
Software & Support	1,150.00	5,000.00	3,850.00	23.00%	77.00%
Staff Advertising		50.00	50.00	0.00%	100.00%
Staff Travel		150.00	150.00	0.00%	100.00%
Stationery & Print	464.19	2,000.00	1,535.81	23.21%	76.79%
Subscriptions	1,718.70	2,000.00	281.30	85.94%	14.07%
Telephones	386.85	600.00	213.15	64.48%	35.53%
Town Clerk- Temp Cover		500.00	500.00	0.00%	100.00%
Training- Staff	105.00	1,000.00	895.00	10.50%	89.50%
Travel & Training- Councillors		500.00	500.00	0.00%	100.00%
Unity Bank Charges	56.25	150.00	93.75	37.50%	62.50%
Website	1,000.00	1,500.00	500.00	66.67%	33.33%
Total Operating Costs	£ 13,329.82	£ 35,150.00	£ 21,820.18	37.92%	62.08%
Padding Pool		5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Property Costs & Loan Repayment	4,135.00	7,000.00	2,865.00	59.07%	40.93%
Small Grants Fund	-20.99		20.99		
Together Project	-57.23		57.23		
Town Events			0.00		
Carnival Fireworks		2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Christmas Festivities		5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Christmas Lights	11,207.14	11,500.00	292.86	97.45%	2.55%
VE DAY Grants		1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Total Town Events	£ 11,207.14	£ 19,500.00	£ 8,292.86	57.47%	42.53%
Town Maintenance			0.00		
Bus Shelters cleaning & maint		1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Churchyards		500.00	500.00	0.00%	100.00%
General Maintenance	57.34	2,000.00	1,942.66	2.87%	97.13%
Lengthsman	551.02	2,800.00	2,248.98	19.68%	80.32%
Lifebuoys		250.00	250.00	0.00%	100.00%
Load Street Toilets	772.02	1,000.00	227.98	77.20%	22.80%
Maintenance of existing seats		1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Signs & Notice Boards	30.00	500.00	470.00	6.00%	94.00%
Street Poles, Tubs & Baskets		3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Town Clock	294.16	200.00	-94.16	147.08%	-47.08%
Wyre Hill Play Area	809.20	4,000.00	3,190.80	20.23%	79.77%
Total Town Maintenance	£ 2,513.74	£ 16,250.00	£ 13,736.26	15.47%	84.53%
Total Expenses	£ 72,608.36	£ 196,720.00	£ 124,111.64	36.91%	63.09%
Net Operating Income over expenditure	£ 122,591.65	-£ 380.00	-£ 122,971.65		
Other Income					
Small Business Grant Fund	10,000.00		-10,000.00		
Total Other Income	£ 10,000.00	£ 0.00	-£ 10,000.00		
Net Other Income	£ 10,000.00	£ 0.00	-£ 10,000.00		
Income over expenditure	£ 132,591.65	-£ 380.00	-£ 132,971.65		

## 9231 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Round-up of draft minutes, reports and updates arising since 05/10/2020:

### i. Finance and General Purposes Committee, meeting held 21/10/2020.

It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the Finance and General Purposes Committee's draft minutes 21/10/2020 as presented by Cllr R Stanczysyn.

Approval was sought for the recommendations as follows:

a. **Election VAT Payment**

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the repayment to WFDC of overclaimed VAT on 2017 Election payments.

b. **Fireworks**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council would not provide a fireworks' display on New Year's Eve 2020.

c. **Purchases**

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the following:

- Floral Displays
  - to undertake a one-year contract for the supply of baskets and floral displays from Mr L Griffin
- Lifebuoy Replacement
  - to purchase a replacement lifebuoy from Glasdon and undertake cleaning of all lifebuoys own by BTC.
- Noticeboard (Beale's Corner)
  - to purchase a new metal noticeboard from Greenbarnes following design approval from the WFDC Conservation Officer

ii. **Staffing Committee**

It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the minutes of the Staffing Committee meetings held on 06/10/2020 and draft minutes of the meeting held on 19/10/2020.

Approval was sought for the recommendations as follows:

a. Mace Bearer Vacancy

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the advertisement for a replacement Mace Bearer

b. Relief Cleaner Vacancy

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the advertisement for a Relief Cleaner.

c. Office COVID19 Risk Assessment

Members raised concerns about poor office ventilation and the suitability of the exit doors. The Town Clerk was asked to contact the landlord with regards to both concerns.

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the office COVID 19 risk assessment with an added fire risk.

**9259 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PROGRESS**

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group's leader Cllr R Stanczyszyn gave an update on the grant funding application. Funding would provide for each household be sent a consultation document also for the same document to be available on-line.

**9260 POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

To review and approve the following policy.

- BTC030 - Training Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the Training policy

As recommended for approval by the Staffing Committee – amendments to current policies/standing orders –

- **BTC008 - Members/Officer Relations**  
Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the Members/Officer Relations with minor amendments.
- **BTC047 – Email Policy** – this item was deferred until April 2021
- **Standing Orders – Handling Staff Matters**  
It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the amendments to standing orders 19-Handling Staff Matters.

As recommended for approval by the Finance & General Purposes Committee – changes to current policies/procedures

- **Adopt a Planter scheme**  
It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the amendments to the Adopt-A-Planter scheme allowing for those adopting a planter to be recruited as volunteers.

**9261 BEWDLEY TOWN COUNCIL FLOOD VOLUNTEER GROUP**

Cllr Edginton-White (flood group co-ordinator) gave an update regarding partnership working with the Environment Agency Area flood team. A zoom meeting is to be held to with the Environment Agency which will include an update on volunteers' procedural changes.

**9262 LOCALISM**

Members received feedback from the Localism Group following a meeting held on 22/10/2020 with WFDC. WFDC are to provide the Town Council with revised financial transfer package.

**9263 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

Cllr R Coleman spoke on the committee terms of reference and the scheme of delegation and requested that the Town Clerk provides a new document which clearly show all amendments. It was agreed that each committee would review their own terms of reference which in turn will be collated and presented to Council.

**9264 CORPORATE PLAN**

Due to the lack of responses Cllr L Davies agreed to formulate a document for review by the Corporate Plan Group, to be presented to Council in January 2021.

**9265 REMEMBRANCE DAY**

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the Remembrance Sunday risk assessment and note that there will be no formal ceremony this year in line with Government guidance.

**9266 IT EQUIPMENT**

It was **RESOLVED** to **Note** the purchase of Council IT equipment (13 tablets and 3 laptops, associated anti-virus software and home WiFi support) from the Small Business Grant Fund.

**9267 WEBSITE**

There are still several updates to be made to the website which will be actioned in the next few weeks, Members **RESOLVED** to **Approve** a go live date of 01/12/2020.

#### 9268 TOWN CLERK'S UPDATES

Councillors are asked to **note** the Town Clerk's updates relating to ongoing concerns, including:

- i. **Benches** –benches falling behind the flood barriers require refurbishment, this could be undertaken on a rolling programme with the inclusion of an appropriate budget over the next few years.
- ii. **Budget** – Members were asked to email the Town Clerk with their considerations for the 2021-22 budget.
- iii. The Town Clerk read out an email received from LSD Promotions with regards to re-starting the Bewdley Markets on 07/03/2021 on the original Severn Side South site.

#### 9269 MAYOR'S DIARY AND FUTURE EVENTS

- i. To receive an update on the Mayor's diary  
The Mayor has been invited to several events on Zoom
- ii. Future Civic and Community events  
No civic events are planned at this time

#### 9270 ITEMS OF URGENCY OR TO NOTE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

- Charitable Donations  
Cllr R Stanczyszyn spoke of providing donations to charities supported by the families of those Mayors who have recently passed away as was done for former Mayor John Latham. Consideration to be given to providing charitable donations for former mayors including Mike Hadley, Peter Terry, Frank Baillie and Kenneth Peers.  
It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** a donation of £50.00 to each chosen charity.
- Lighting Bewdley Bridge  
The Mayor Cllr A Coleman spoke of providing the town with a positive, uplifting experience during December by lighting up Bewdley Bridge, similar to that provided during the lockdown when the bridge was lit up to support the NHS. The budget for this would come from the Mayoral Allowance and a generous grant of £500 from the Civic Society.  
Concerns were raised about any possible flooding also, whether there was a possibility of the lights becoming a permanent feature. In the first instance a temporary licence would be required from WCC.  
It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** that the Town Council applies for the temporary licence and supports the installation of lights on Bewdley Bridge during December 2020.

9271 In accordance with the **Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s1(2)**, it was **RESOLVED** that the public and the press be excluded from the meeting to allow for discussion of confidential matters relating to any of staff, legal matters or contractual arrangements, the publication of which would be prejudicial to the public interest

#### 9272 CONTRACTUAL MATTERS

Following discussions, the Town Clerk was tasked with writing to the landlord to request an extension to the current term.

**9273 STAFFING MATTERS**

Recommended for approval by the Staffing Committee

Staffing Restructure (including job description) and associated budget.  
Members discussed the needs of the Council now and in the future and considered the budget implications.

Following a named vote

For: The Mayor, Cllr A Coleman, Cllrs S Billett, J Byng, S Collingridge, L Davies, P Gittins MBE, P Harrison, D Morehead, R Stanczyszyn

Against: Cllrs R Coleman, C Edginton White

Abstained: None

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the staffing restructure in principle.

**9274 ON-GOING STAFFING MATTERS**

Recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee

Following discussions relating to the payment for the provision of a statement it was **RESOLVED** that as no payment had formally been agreed therefore Council could not accept this charge.

Members received and noted the final advice relating to the concluded legal case.

**9275 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING – Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020  
7pm**

**The meeting closed at 9.52pm**

**Signed.....**  
**Mayor/Chairman**  
**16<sup>th</sup> November 2020**