

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

**HELD AS A VIRTUAL MEETING ON**  
**5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 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, H Lacy, M Maher, R Stanczyszyn

In attendance:        9 Members of the Public  
                              S Hudson - Town Clerk

**9223    OPENING REMARKS**

The Mayor Cllr A Coleman welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave an update on the High Sheriffs of Worcestershire's visit to Bewdley. The High Sheriff met with representative from local community groups who worked hard during recent flooding and the pandemic.

                              Bewdley Community Flood Volunteers (Irene Buxton)

                              Bewdley In Kind (Corinne Bailey)

                              Light Ideas International Ltd (Richard Heath)

                              Wyvern Omnibus (Lawrence Mortimore)

Were the recipients of the Mayor's Thank You Awards.

The Mayor read out a letter received from the High Sheriff following his visit.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> of October, the Mayor, reopened Clementine's coffee shop now known as Just Love at Clementine's. The coffee shop is run by volunteers and is owned by Elim Riverside Church. The Mayor wished them success in the future and stated that it is great to have one less empty shop in the high street in these difficult times.

**9224    APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr D Morehead

**9225    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.

                              None

**9226    COUNCILLORS' DISPENSATIONS**

                              None requested

## 9227 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

### i. **Members of the public.**

No members were registered to speak

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

**Mr I Hardiman, WCC member for Cookley, Wolverley and Wribbenhall** spoke on work he has undertaken on local issues.

Cabinet member, Councillor Tony Miller responsible for the Environment, will provide an update and explanation regarding computer modelling for future flood events.

#### **Local Issues:**

##### Completed

- Kidderminster Road Resurfacing: the work has been completed to a very high standard. County Highways' have rectified this "Gateway to the Town" road surface which had seriously deteriorated.

##### Continuing to chase

- Habberley Road Dragon's Teeth / further speed analysis
- Stourport Road speed analysis  
The County Highways Engineer has explained that there are delays in speed analysis projects due to high demand across the county.
- Disability studs for the Catchems End Zebra Crossing
- Lamps not working in Northwood Lane
- Lamp overgrown by tree in Northwood Lane
- Bench Repairs for County owned benches
- Pewterer's Alley Damaged Wall
- Catchems End and Blackstone Island Repairs: Awaiting a date for commencement; County and District Councils are in Discussions regarding future maintenance.
- Bewdley Bridge Pavements/ Social Distancing: the Highways Engineer agreed to respond to this and other issues raised by the Town Council's Road safety Group during this coming week.

#### **Strategic Issues:**

Cllr I Hardiman gave an update on Worcestershire County Council issues and confirmed that County Councillors have a fresh allocation of Divisional Funding for 2020/2021 for local causes; applications will be considered over the coming months.

#### **Wyre Forest Issues:**

An update was given of the Kidderminster Churchfields Spur Road.

Cllr R Stanczyszyn raised concerns about the maintenance of the Catchem's End roundabout. Cllr I Hardiman confirmed that brickwork repairs were required before WFDC take over the general site maintenance. Cllr R Stanczyszyn also asked about the cameras which had appeared around the town. Cllr I Hardiman had been told they were for traffic management.

Cllr P Gittins MBE raised a question about the gate fitted at Blackstone car park. Cllr I Hardiman confirmed that WCC deemed it necessary to close the parking area but that gates have been opened in the morning to allow for school drop offs.

**Cabinet member, Councillor Tony Miller responsible for the Environment**, provided an update regarding the flooding in Bewdley and Wribbenhall.

The flood evaluation (modelling) scheme is managed by the Environment Agency. The river in Bewdley is affected by coastal and local flooding also by the spring tides. There is a project to slow the flow of the River Severn starting from Shrewsbury and allowing for flood plains. Any flood defence changes at Beale's Corner will change the modelling of the river flow. No monies have been allocated and there is no immediate solution to the issue.

Cllr J Byng confirmed that WFDC are pursuing a permanent flood defence at Beales Corners. Cllr C Edginton White stated that 51 properties were flooded and over 140 residents evacuated. Cllr T Miller confirmed that the Environment Agency's modelling is the key and dependant on work being undertaken upstream.

**Mrs R Vale, WCC member for Bewdley and Rock**, sent her apologies. The Town Clerk confirmed a meeting is to be held with Cllr Vale and the County Highways Engineer in the following week, Members were asked to send any questions to the Town Clerk to be raise at this meeting.

- iii **Representatives of support services**  
None

**9228 ACTIVE TRAVEL INVESTMENT PLAN**

A slide presentation was received from Dr Clive Prince with regards to the active travel plan for Bewdley. Dr Prince asked the Council to support the concept of widening the path above the Safari Park towards Kidderminster allowing a safer travel corridor. Members debated the issues and options available; Cllr C Edginton White asked that this be consider at item 9247 – matters of urgency.

**9229 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 07/09/2020, as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

**9230 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 30/09/2020.

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 31/08/2020.

BEWDLEY TOWN COUNCIL				
Unity Current Account, Period Ending 31/08/2020				
Bank Reconciliation				
Reconciled on: 09/09/2020				
Reconciled by: Sharon Hudson				
Any changes made to transactions after this date aren't included in this report.				
Summary				
GBP				
Statement beginning balance				88,131.17
Cheques and payments cleared (15)				-9,972.61
Deposits and other credits cleared (2)				11,257.96
Statement ending balance				89,416.52
Uncleared transactions as of 30/09/2020				
Register balance as of 30/09/2020				-0.6
				89,415.92

- ii. It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the current financial position actual against budget as at 31/0/2020.

Bewdley Town Council					
Budget vs. Actuals 31st August 2020-21					
	Total				
	Actual	Budget	Remaining	% of Budget	% Remaining
Income					
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	1,000.00		-1,000.00		
Precept	91,175.00	182,350.00	91,175.00	50.00%	50.00%
Total Income	£101,929.32	£196,340.00	£ 94,410.68	51.91%	48.09%
Gross Profit	£101,929.32	£196,340.00	£ 94,410.68	51.91%	48.09%

Expenses					
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		620.00	620.00	0.00%	100.00%
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	20.29	5,000.00	4,979.71	0.41%	99.59%
Mayoral Roll	53.76	200.00	146.24	26.88%	73.12%
Public Meetings		100.00	100.00	0.00%	100.00%
Total Council Costs	-£ 995.12	£ 10,570.00	£ 11,565.12	-9.41%	109.41%
Election cost & Provision		5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Employment Costs		74,000.00	74,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Admin Apprentice	5,777.13		-5,777.13		
Load St Toilets Cleaner	3,830.45		-3,830.45		
Mayor's PA & Administrator	4,791.14		-4,791.14		
Town Clerk	16,526.17		-16,526.17		
WFDC Admin Charge	200.00	450.00	250.00	44.44%	55.56%
Total Employment Costs	£ 31,124.89	£ 74,450.00	£ 43,325.11	41.81%	58.19%
Grant Aid & Donations		12,000.00	12,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Bewdley Petanque Club	500.00		-500.00		
Wyre Forest CAB	1,000.00		-1,000.00		
Total Grant Aid & Donations	£ 1,500.00	£ 12,000.00	£ 10,500.00	12.50%	87.50%
Millennium Green Maintenance	73.22	750.00	676.78	9.76%	90.24%
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	130.31	500.00	369.69	26.06%	73.94%
Computer	25.00	200.00	175.00	12.50%	87.50%
Garage Rent- rear 14 Load st	1,534.47	4,500.00	2,965.53	34.10%	65.90%
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	709.40	1,500.00	790.60	47.29%	52.71%
Office consumable and cleaning	-103.55		103.55		
Photocopier	321.01	1,500.00	1,178.99	21.40%	78.60%
Postage	58.03	200.00	141.97	29.02%	70.99%
Refreshments	3.85	150.00	146.15	2.57%	97.43%

Service Charge & Business rates	1,047.90	900.00	-147.90	116.43%	-16.43%
Small Office Equipment		150.00	150.00	0.00%	100.00%
Software & Support	1,120.00	5,000.00	3,880.00	22.40%	77.60%
Staff Advertising		50.00	50.00	0.00%	100.00%
Staff Travel		150.00	150.00	0.00%	100.00%
Stationery & Print	426.96	2,000.00	1,573.04	21.35%	78.65%
Subscriptions	1,706.71	2,000.00	293.29	85.34%	14.66%
Telephones	333.66	600.00	266.34	55.61%	44.39%
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	29.85	150.00	120.15	19.90%	80.10%
Website	1,000.00	1,500.00	500.00	66.67%	33.33%
<b>Total Operating Costs</b>	<b>£ 14,119.10</b>	<b>£ 35,150.00</b>	<b>£ 21,030.90</b>	<b>40.17%</b>	<b>59.83%</b>
Paddling Pool		5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00%	100.00%
Property Costs & Loan Repayment	4,080.00	7,000.00	2,920.00	58.29%	41.71%
Small Grants Fund	-20.99		20.99		
Together Project	-60.00		60.00		
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%
<b>Total Town Events</b>	<b>£ 11,207.14</b>	<b>£ 19,500.00</b>	<b>£ 8,292.86</b>	<b>57.47%</b>	<b>42.53%</b>

## 9231 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Round-up of draft minutes, reports and updates arising since 07/09/2020:

### i) Planning Committee,

It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the planning draft minutes, as presented by Cllr S Billett, of the meeting held on 24/09/2020.

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the responses to the White Paper - Planning for the Future survey, as emailed to Members on 01/10/2020.

### ii) Finance and General Purposes Committee, meeting held 16/09/2020.

It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the Finance and General Purposes Committee's draft minutes 16/09/2020 as presented by Cllr R Stanczyszyn.

Approval was sought for the recommendations as follows:

#### a. Policies and Procedures

BTC029 Child and Vulnerable Person Protection Policy.

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

BTC030 Training Policy

Following debate amendments were **Approved** to the wording of paragraph 1.1. Approval of this policy was deferred until the next meeting

BTC031 Equality and Diversity Policy

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the above policy with a minor amendment.

BTC047 Email Policy

Following debate amendments were **Approved** to wording in paragraph 1 and 3 and the addition of reference to the Data Protection policy. It was then **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the above policy

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

b. **Asset Register – Mayor’s Parlour**

It was **RESOLVED** to **Note** the amendments to the Mayor’s Parlour asset register.

iii) **Together Group** meeting held 11/08/2020.

Cllr J Byng presented the notes from the Together Group. The Mayor raised concerns about the amount of time taken by Officers to support the Together Group meetings. Cllr L Davies confirmed that reconciliations were undertaken by the group with only monies being banked by the Office. Cllr R Coleman thought that all risk assessments should be reviewed by the Finance & General Purposed Committee. It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the Together Group notes 02/09/2020.

iv) **Road Safety Group** meeting held 10/09/2020.

Cllr C Edginton White presented the Road Safety Group notes and thanked the Town Clerk and Cllr I Hardiman for taking on work from this group. With regards to the flower tubs on the corner of Dog Lane, action was taken, and the number of tubs reduced. It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the Road Safety Group notes 10/09/2020.

**9232 SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENTS**

The Mayor Cllr A Coleman made a statement about the different types of local government and their relevant powers. The Mayor referred Members to the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government Association website which states that in Worcestershire there are two tiers of local government, with the first tier being Worcestershire County Council and the second tier being Wyre Forest District Council; also known as principle councils and local authorities. The Mayor hoped that the new white paper on devolution will give powers to the local parish/town councils.

**9233 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PROGRESS**

Cllr R Stanczyszyn presented the Neighbourhood Plan Community Steering Group Notes from 24/09/2020; it was confirmed that there is no requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment; the plan can now progress to a section 14 consultation, possibly mid-November/December. To progress to section 14 consultation additional funding would be required as there no NP budget in 2020-21.

It was **RESOLVED** to **note** the Neighbourhood Plan Community Steering Group notes 24/09/2020.

It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** to make an application for £4000 funding from Locality to complete the consultation phase. If this funding application were to fail it was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** that the £4000 should be taken from reserves to enable the plan to progress.

Cllr S Billett lost connection to the meeting

**9234 FLOOD DEFENCE GROUP**

Cllr C Edginton White gave an update on the WFDC Overview and Scrutiny Committee final Flooding report and read out the eight recommendations. The recommendations were unanimously voted through by the District Council. Cllr C Edginton White confirmed a business case is being worked on by WFDC and that the Environment Agency are working on a technical plan. Members raised concerns about County support.

Cllr M Maher lost connection to the meeting

The Mayor suspended standing order 3w to allow for the meeting to continue for more than three hours.

**9235 CHRISTMAS LIGHT SWITCH ON**

The Mayor moved this agenda item to Confidential Matters on the request of Cllr R Coleman.

**9236 BEWDLEY TOWN MARKET**

During discussion with regards to the re-instatement of the Bewdley Town Markets Members raised concerns about Covid-19 cases and the recent spike in the Wyre Forest. It was **RESOLVED** not to re-instate markets in Bewdley in this current year.

**9237 REMEMBRANCE DAY**

The Mayor Cllr A Coleman confirmed that following a Remembrance Day working group meeting, which included a representative of the Royal British Legion, a decision was made that there will be no BTC event this year. A poster will be displayed on the Beales Corner noticeboard and the Mayor will lay wreaths at both war memorials. It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** a donation of £100 to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

**9238 ARMED FORCES FLAG FLYING CEREMONY**

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** that Bewdley Town Council hosts the 2023- Armed Forces flag flying ceremony.

**9239 LOCALISM**

The Mayor moved this agenda item to Confidential Matters due to sensitive contractual data.

**9240 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSION – ANNUAL TOWN & PARISH SURVEY**

Members were asked to forward their responses to the Annual Town and Parish Survey to the Town Clerk.

**9241 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

It was **RESOLVED** to defer this item until the next meeting

**9242 CORPORATE PLAN**

Cllr L Davies presented her report and suggested a small group of Members form a review group. Cllr L Davies asked Members for their input and agreed to formulate a discussion paper for the next meeting.

**9243 THANK YOU AWARDS**

Cllr L Davies asked that the Council acknowledges and thank all those who have helped in these difficult times with the floods and the pandemic.

The Mayor moved confidential item 9250 to the public section of the meeting as both items were related.

**\*9250 COMMUNICATION**

Cllr L Davies raised concerns about the lack of communication with regards to the recipients of the Thank You awards presented at the High Sheriff of Worcestershire visit. The Mayor confirmed that they were awarded inline with the current policy as published on the BTC website. Both Cllrs S Collingridge and L Davies spoke of not being aware who had received an award and that they would have not been unable to answer question about the recipients if asked.

Cllr S Collingridge left the meeting



#### **9244 IT EQUIPMENT**

The Town Clerk presented a report with regards to the provision of IT equipment for both Councillors and Officers to support new operating systems, virtual meetings and working from home. Cllr R Coleman raised concerns that there was no home working policy and that there was no formal agreement that Officers should work from home. The Mayor asked the Town Clerk to formulate a policy and risk assessment.

It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** delegation to the Town Clerk allowing for the purchase of Council IT equipment, to be funded from the small business grant fund.

#### **9245 TOWN CLERK'S UPDATES**

i. **Toilets**

Over the past few weeks syringes have been found in the toilets, these incidents have been reported to the police.

ii. **Bollards**

WCC Cllr B Vale confirmed that the bollards have been ordered. Issues with installation are being looked into.

iii. **Planters**

Four planters are in-situ; funding has been received for 3 more (curtesy of Cllrs Anna and Roger Colemans' District Funds). Adopt a planter - 12 expressions of interest were received; 12 applications sent out, only 1 has been returned. This may be due to the need for public liability insurance and the need for continual watering.

The insurers recommended two options these will be reviewed at the next Finance & General Purposes Committee

iv. **Wyre Hill Sand Park**

A report had been received with regards to a loose panel on the new play equipment in the sand park. This had been reported to the manufacturer. WCC, Place Partnership has also been contacted with regards to cutting back overhanging trees. No response has been received.

v. **Benches**

A request has been received to refurbish a memorial bench located on Severn Side South. The bench has been reviewed and needs repair. It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** that the Lengthsman undertaken the repair of the bench.

#### **9246 MAYOR'S DIARY AND FUTURE EVENTS**

i) The Mayor's diary

The Mayor is planning to honour a recently retired Load Street trader who has been in business for 50 years. This should take place in December.

ii) Future Civic and Community events

#### **9247 ITEMS OF URGENCY OR TO NOTE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Mayor asked that a motion relating to the Active Travel Investment Plan be taken forward to the next Town Council meeting

**9248** 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

The following members remained in the meeting The Mayor, Cllr A Coleman, Cllrs J Byng, R Coleman, L Davies, C Edginton White, P Gittins MBE, P Harrison, H Lacy, R Stanczyszyn

**\*9239 LOCALISM**

The Mayor moved this agenda item to Confidential Matters to discuss correspondence received from WFDC CEO Ian Miller and estimated maintenance costs. Following discussions on the localism agenda Members considered that a phased programme of transfer be reflected in the Town Council budgets. It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** that Bewdley Town Council take up the following asset transfers:

Load Street Toilets.  
6A Load Street.  
Riverside North Park.

Members wished to consider investigating the possible transfer other assets.

**\*9235 CHRISTMAS LIGHT SWITCH ON**

The Mayor moved this agenda item to Confidential Matters on the request of Cllr R Coleman. It was **RESOLVED** to **Agree** that the Christmas lights will be switched on at the discretion of the Town Clerk after the fitting of the Christmas tree and that there would be no Christmas market. Discussions ensued about the provision of New Year's Eve fireworks. No decision was made until options for an alternative site had been explored.

**9249 CONTRACTUAL MATTERS**

To received and agree quotations for the following purchases.

- Bus Shelter Cleaning  
It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** the appointment of Fletchers Access to clean the bus shelters for a period of 12 months
- Fireworks  
Defer back to F&GP
- Replacement Gateway Signs  
It was **RESOLVED** to **Approve** a sign replacement budget be included 2021-22.

**9250 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING** – Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020, 7pm

**The meeting closed at 11.01pm**

Signed.....  
**Mayor/Chairman**  
**5<sup>th</sup> October 2020**