

Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the meeting of Droitwich Spa Town Council held in the Council Chamber, St. Richard's House, Victoria Square, Droitwich Spa on **Monday 19 June 2017**, at 6.00pm.

PRESENT: Councillor S Best (Mayor)
Councillor R G Beale
Councillor G R Brookes
Councillor G A Duffy
Councillor L Evans
Councillor Mrs A Hawkins
Councillor A Laird
Councillor R J Morris
Councillor W T Moy
Councillor R E Murphy
Councillor T J Noyes
Councillor A Roberts
Councillor A M Sinton
Councillor Mrs K Tomalin

APOLOGIES for absence: Councillors Ms J Bolton, Mrs C Bowden, Mrs S Harris and A Humphries.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS SESSION

No questions were submitted for consideration.

-ooo000ooo-

37 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor W Moy declared a non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 10 – Brine Heritage Group – Update Report inasmuch as he was Chairman of SOBBS (Save Our Brine Baths).

Councillor Mrs A Hawkins declared a non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 9 – Neighbourhood Planning Group – Update Report inasmuch as she and her husband were members of the Neighbourhood Planning Group.

At the appropriate point in the Agenda, Councillor R J Morris declared an interest in Item 18 – Land at Kidderminster Road, inasmuch as he was Wychavon District Council's Portfolio holder for Economy, Growth and Housing

38 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 24 APRIL 2017

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 24 April 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

39 MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 15 MAY 2017

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council held on 15 May 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

40 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor S Best thanked everyone involved in:

- the Food & Drink Festival, especially Patrick Davis the organiser, it had been an astounding day all round; and also
- the Civic Service, the Revd Nigel Byard having officiated very ably.

He advised upon future events, namely:

- The 'Best' Ladies Evening at the Community Hall on Saturday 1 July, 7pm onwards;
- The Mayor's Summer Concert at St Andrew's Church on Friday 14 July at 7.30pm;
- The 'Best' Pig Roast at The Talbot Inn on Thursday 3 August, a drop-in event from the afternoon into the evening.
- John Corbett 200th Birthday Picnic at Chateau Impney on Sunday 25 June from noon to 5pm. This was to be preceded by a Thanksgiving Service at Dodderhill Church at 10.30am that day.

Councillor Best also reported that he was due to present awards at Dodderhill School Prizegiving Ceremony, although the school was currently an independent girls' school it was previously co-educational and had been his first school attended 59 years ago.

41 TO RECEIVE A BRIEF UPDATE ON POLICING IN DROITWICH SPA

The Chairman welcomed Sergeant Sarah Kent to the meeting. Sergeant Kent advised that recent terrorism events had impacted on all police forces nationally with a greater police visibility required. One instance was the recent Food & Drink Festival when additional police officers had attended to reassure the public. Sergeant Kent then reported and answered questions upon burglary and thefts that had occurred, including:

- Burglary from dwellings
 - o Three burglaries had taken place at Yew Tree & Clydesdale, the male responsible having now been imprisoned for 44 months. Two further burglaries at the same property in Robeson Close had occurred.

- Distraction Burglaries
 - o On 12 June in Vines Mews an elderly person had let someone into her property to use the telephone believing it to be to call for medical assistance. Her purse had been stolen.
- Theft from Motor Vehicles
 - o This was continuing albeit at a low level of activity, some vans had been broken into and tools taken.
- Theft of Pedal Cycles
 - o Bicycles were being stolen from a variety of areas including sheds, garden areas and streets. These appeared to be opportunist thefts and an article was due to appear in the press shortly to raise public awareness.

Sergeant Kent also reported upon police attendance during the recent Local Government and Parliamentary Elections and advised that given the current spell of warm weather, the public needed to be aware as to leaving windows open etc, it being advisable to open small windows only and to lock away any ladders.

Councillor G R Brookes thanked Sergeant Kent and her Team for their response to his request for assistance with some recent problems. In reply to a question from Councillor A H Laird regarding the theft of lead from churches Sergeant Kent advised that lead was a high value commodity at present and ideally should be replaced by another material, which was not always possible given that churches were historic buildings. There were no scrapyards in the vicinity so the lead was probably being transported to those in the West Midlands. Councillor T J Noyes thanked Sergeant Kent and her team for keeping the area safe. Councillor Best echoed this sentiment and thanked Sergeant Kent for her informative report.

42 HIGH SCHOOL – UPDATE FROM HEAD GIRL AND HEAD BOY

Ella Comerford, Head Girl and Joe Barley, Deputy Head Boy were welcomed to the meeting. Both gave a short report upon the current recruitment process for the Sixth Form Council and progress to date with the installation of an amphitheatre (relocated from a school in Henley-in-Arden, Warwickshire). The 200-seat theatre, complete with roof, was to be used for drama lessons and school productions etc and act as a base for sporting events hosted by the school. Despite not winning the competition on Absolute Radio, the school had received a consolation prize which meant that Wickes were completing the decking and rock band Kasabian would perform live at the official opening. The school had again achieved a ‘Good’ Ofsted report and copies were available at the meeting or by going online. Pupils had participated in the Mock Trial competition at Worcester Magistrates’ Court and the defendant had been found guilty. In response to a question from Councillor W T Moy it was confirmed that the amphitheatre was to be permanent structure.

The Mayor thanked Ella and Joe for reporting upon the activities at the school so well.

43 YOUTH COUNCIL – UPDATE FROM YOUTH COUNCILLORS

The Chairman welcomed Katie Bowen to the meeting. Katie reported upon the final preparations that were underway for the Youth Fest to take place on Saturday 8 July 2017 in Lido Park. ‘Ade’ the Creative Director had some thirteen or so local acts from across Worcestershire and promotion of the event was taking place through social media and local radio. She thanked Councillor Best for giving the honour of opening the event officially at noon on that day.

Councillor Noyes stated that he had been pleased to see Katie in the Civic Party for the Civic Service on 4 June. He apologised as he would not be able to attend Youth Fest. Councillor R J Morris thanked Katie for her motivation in bringing the event to fruition, and also thanked Councillor Mrs Harris and all others involved.

44 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GROUP [NPG] – UPDATE REPORT

[Councillor Mrs A Hawkins declared an interest in this item as detailed in Minute No 37 above.]

Pursuant to Minute No 263 Resources Committee meeting 6 March 2017 and Minute No 282 of Council meeting 24 April 2017 Councillor R J Morris presented the Neighbourhood Planning Group’s second report which included

- the minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2017 at St Andrew’s Parish Centre;
- a document the property of the Droitwich Arts Network that had been prepared by Mr P Hawkins linking the activities of the Working Groups with the benefits map;
- the prepared Constitution of the Group;
- a copy of ‘Creating the Vision’ which included a projected timetable; and
- a record of Interests pertaining to the Management Group.

Councillor Morris confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan had not really progressed owing to holidays and periods of ‘purdah’ in relation to the Local Government and also the Parliamentary Elections. The Group had not been able to identify a minute-taker nor a treasurer. He advised of the need to progress to enable public consultation to take place in the autumn. He confirmed that there had been progress with other Neighbourhood Plans within the District eg Drakes Broughton.

Councillor Morris then advised that although the Group had made some progress since the meeting of Council on 26 September 2016, the constraint of attaining £30,000 prior to commencement of working on the Plan had not proven possible. He proposed the following motion:

“That Droitwich Spa Town Council agrees that Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan can begin to develop their plan and provide an update at each council meeting for sign off. The Droitwich Neighbourhood Plan group will not request any monies from the Town Council and if costs become prohibitive then the group will fold, no cost can be incurred without funds being available. Details of activity are held within the group’s constitution.”

The Town Clerk supported this approach although she noted that there was still no budgetary information presented nor was there any meaningful reference to housing other than affordable housing. She also reserved the right to monitor the use of the

Town Council's website and other resources should the requirements of the NPG become onerous. In response to a question Councillor Morris confirmed that 'signing-off' meant approval of Group documentation by Council. It was noted that the Group's constitution had been agreed in principle at its meeting on 11 May 2017 (Minute No 3 of NP Group refers).

With regard to the housing element, Councillor G R Brookes advised upon an email he had received from Mr A Ford, Senior Planning Officer at Wychavon District Council as follows:

"I was slightly concerned to read the piece in the newspaper that reassurances had been given that the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) was providing the growth and the NP wouldn't need to. Until one embarks on the NP process it isn't possible to predict what issues may emerge. Additional housing need may emerge, either through an early review of the SWDP or evidence pointing towards a specific need that could see a NP identify a site. We'll have to wait and see what emerges once it is up and running. Inevitably there will be additional housing needed as we move forward into the next decades and a NP may want to take the opportunity to think about where this growth might go in the town. There have been legal challenges to NP, or Local Authorities have not proceeded to adopt them because of a threat of a challenge. These examples tend to have been where a NP has allocated sites other than those being put forward by promoters/developers. So it is not really possible to future proof this aspect, other than to ensure the NP has been prepared in conformity with all the procedural regulations."

Councillor Brookes stated that the £30,000 to be attained emanated from Councillor Morris's original report to Council on 26 September 2016 and that he had no objection in principle to the removal of this requirement, but wished to see all other requirements and caveats outlined by Council at that meeting to be honoured. Savings could perhaps be made by the removal of matters that were not part of the adopted SWDP and land-use only addressed. He supported the making of the Neighbourhood Plan but was aware fully of his duty to safeguard public monies and therefore put forward the following proposal:

"That the requirement agreed on 26 September 2016 (Minute 126 refers) for the Group to lodge £30,000 with the Town Council before starting work be rescinded. However application(s) for government funding will only be made once a costed action plan has been produced showing that the group has every reasonable prospect of bringing a Neighbourhood Plan to fruition. All funding applications must be made through the Town Clerk following procedures laid down in Minute 126 (2016-17). Appropriate evidence (eg receipts) must be furnished to the Town Clerk to confirm that the funds have been appropriately spent. The other requirements of the motion in Minute No 126 (2016-17) also remain in place and must be fully adhered to."

Councillor A H Laird commended the work undertaken by the Group to date and suggested that the NP could be drawn up by volunteers and without the use of consultants, but was advised by the Town Clerk and Councillor Morris that as it was a highly-technical document with a legal standing the use of consultants was to be recommended.

Councillor T J Noyes pointed out two amendments that could be incorporated into the Group's Constitution, namely the correct spelling of Mr P Karakashian's name and retention of the terms of reference should the list of sub-groups be altered.

Councillor Morris advised that to enable any progress to be made and to retain/engage with the public it was necessary to access grants. He confirmed that the budgetary information could be drawn up at the same time as grant aid was progressed.

It was therefore proposed by Councillor R J Morris, seconded by Councillor G R Brookes and unanimously

RESOLVED

1. That Droitwich Spa Town Council agrees that Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan Group can begin to develop its plan and to provide an update at each council meeting for endorsement by the Council ('sign off'). Details of activity are held within the group's constitution.
2. That application(s) for government funding be now progressed with immediate effect, with applications being made through the Town Clerk as detailed in Minute 126 (2016-17).
3. That it be noted that the requirement for £30,000 prior to the outset is therefore no longer valid, however all other requirements laid out in Minute No 126 (2016-17) remain and that prior to the expenditure of any grant received the required budgetary information/costed action plan be submitted to the Town Clerk confirming the reasonable prospect of bringing a Neighbourhood Plan to fruition.
4. That it be noted that the Droitwich Neighbourhood Plan Group will not request any monies from the Town Council. If costs become prohibitive then the group will fold, no cost can be incurred without funds being available.
5. That therefore the report be noted and the Neighbourhood Planning Group's documentation as now presented be accepted.

45 **BRINE HERITAGE GROUP – UPDATE REPORT**

[Councillor W T Moy declared an interest in this item as detailed in Minute No 37 above.]

Pursuant to Minute No 283 of Council meeting 24 April 2017 Councillor R J Morris presented the report of the Brine Heritage Group, there being advancement in several areas. Chef Brian Turner who had attended the recent Food & Drink Festival at which the Droitwich Brine Salt and associated products had been showcased had agreed to be an ambassador for the foodstuff, Wychavon District Council had tendered for the brine contract and several other matters had progressed, the details of which were

noted. In addition Councillor W T Moy summarised the discussions to date with the District Council's Officers for the location of the proposed brine facility and similarly Councillor G R Brookes referred to possible options for Tower Hill.

It was proposed by Councillor R J Morris, seconded by Councillor G R Brookes and unanimously

RESOLVED That the report be noted and endorsed.

46 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 5 JUNE 2017

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 5 June 2017 be approved and adopted.

47 MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY & AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 JUNE 2017

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community & Amenities Committee held on 5 June 2017 be approved and adopted.

48 MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 JUNE 2017

Pursuant to Minute No 31, the Town Clerk thanked Councillor L Evans for raising the query on the Estimates for 2017/18 and confirmed that he was correct. Councillor Evans advised that this matter had no bearing on the Accounts. He also commented that with regard to Minute No 44 above, he had no intention of taking up Councillor Morris's invitation to be Treasurer of the Neighbourhood Planning Group.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Resources Committee held on 5 June 2017 be approved and adopted, save for Minute Nos 32 and 33 which were to be dealt with as a separate item [see Minute Nos 49 and 50 below].

49 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE TOWN COUNCIL'S ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT MADE AS PART OF THE ANNUAL RETURN REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017

As recommended by Resources Committee at its meeting on 5 June 2017 (Minute No 32 refers), Council considered the approval of the Annual Governance Statement within the Annual Return report for the year ended 31 March 2017.

RESOLVED That the Annual Governance Statement made as part of the Annual Return Report for the year ended 31 March 2017 be accepted and approved.

50 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE TOWN COUNCIL'S ACCOUNTS AND ANNUAL RETURN REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017

As recommended by Resources Committee at its meeting on 5 June 2017 (Minute No 33 refers), Council considered the approval of the Town Council's accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017 and the Annual Return report for the year ended 31 March 2017.

RESOLVED That the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017 and Annual Return Report for the year ended 31 March 2017, be accepted and approved.

51 COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS

1. REPORTS ON COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS

County Councillor Tony Miller, Cabinet Member for the Environment sent apologies but presented a written report, as follows:

"I would firstly like to thank you for keeping me informed and sending me the Agendas, which I find most valuable in deciding where to direct my energies. Droitwich is very fortunate in having a mixture of Town, District and County councillors on the Town Council which leaves you very well represented at District and County level. As you will know the improvement in roads and footpaths are one of the priorities of the County. I have had positive feedback from residents in York Avenue with the re-planting of trees and the installation of root guards to prevent the tree roots destroying the footpath in future. There are still negotiations continuing with the developers of Yew Tree Hill as the road traffic scheme does not meet the County Council criteria. This squarely falls within the developers remit and I will continue to place pressure on them to get this matter resolved. Worcestershire - firstly we are the strongest growth in higher level workforce skills secondly the highest growth in productivity, thirdly the highest growth in prosperity and these are the LEP economy statistics. Worcestershire are proud in creating 16000 apprenticeships. Worcestershire's Tourism and Economic growth is worth over £850m per year and I will be supporting Droitwich in having a fair bite of that cherry. I will be supporting the Brine and Brine Production and establishing Droitwich once again as a Spa Town. I can only thank you for the time you all give to your community and the continuing care of the town of Droitwich."

Newly elected - Councillor G R Brookes advised that he was still undergoing training and Councillor R J Morris confirmed that he did not wish to make a report at this stage.

52 DISTRICT COUNCIL MATTERS

1. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Councillor T J Noyes stated that he had no report, he had been poorly and his computer had been out of action.

Councillor G R Brookes advised upon the safety checks that Wychavon District Council had carried out following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower. He also confirmed that the Chairman of Wychavon District Council, Councillor Liz Eyre, had chosen SOBBS (Save Our Brine Baths) as one of her chosen charities for the municipal year.

53 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Creditor Payments were presented to the Council. A supplementary creditor payment was submitted as shown attached.

RESOLVED That the statement of accounts for payment be received with the amendments as now reported above and the expenditure totalling £2,290.94 (£1,964.54 + £326.40) as now appended be approved and duly passed for payment.

54 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

RESOLVED That the press and public be now excluded from the meeting under the provision of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by virtue of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted which involved financial and legal matters.

CLOSED SESSION

55 LAND AT KIDDERMINSTER ROAD

[Councillor R J Morris declared an interest in this item as recorded in Minute No 37 above.]

Pursuant to Minute 207 of the Resources Committee meeting held on 16 January 2017 and Minute No 296 of the Council meeting held on 24 April 2017, when it had been agreed:

1. That the action taken to date be endorsed and the land at Kidderminster Road be made available via an option purchase - requirements of this to be £15,000 non-refundable placed at the beginning of the granting of a two-year option.
2. The Client then (at his cost) seeks to obtain planning permission and if successful completes the purchase of the land at 80% of full market value less his planning costs. In the report prepared the District Valuer this is indicated at £600,000 as a guide. There would on this occasion be no overage attached.
3. That should any other offers or negotiated terms be identified then the Council be advised accordingly by the Town Clerk for a decision to be made in due course.

Council received a presentation from Mr Matt Nicol of Nicol & Co Estate Agents who advised upon the interest to date, there being three initial approaches of which one had been withdrawn subsequently.

The preferred way forward was identified by Council as being that proposed from Mr P and Mr N Major, this enabled relocation and expansion of existing town centre businesses and also would bring forward an estimated 70+ jobs. This was in accordance with the primary objective of the South Worcestershire Development Plan to promote “development that focuses on improving the area’s economic prosperity, delivering new jobs, retaining key employers and maximizing high value employment opportunities through the right employment sites”.

Steps to be taken involved reference back to the District Valuer to ascertain the application of ‘special assumptions’ and in particular the flood protection, civil engineering and infrastructure works required to facilitate development, and the following:

- Buyer to draft an Option Agreement;
- Agreement to allow 90 days from signing for the required due diligence to agree a final Option to Purchase value;
- Day 90 - Option premium of £15,000 is paid or buyer walks away with no payment due;
- Option agreement extends for a period of 2 years from initial date signed;
- Purchase of land at agreed price is subject to planning consent for commercial/light industrial development being issued.

It was proposed by Councillor T J Noyes, seconded by Councillor G R Brookes and

RESOLVED That Mr M Nicol be authorised to proceed with the offer from Mr P and Mr N Major for the ultimate purchase of the land at Kidderminster Road as now reported.

[Councillor R J Morris requested that his abstention from voting be so recorded.]

56 HERITAGE MANAGER (JOB-SHARE) VACANCY – APPOINTMENTS PANEL

Council noted the resignation of the current postholder Miss Lisa Backhouse with regret and thanked her for all her hard work to date. She was wished well in her new venture.

RESOLVED That an Interview Panel for the post of Heritage Manager (Job-Share) be established, comprising:
Councillor Mrs K Tomalin, Chairman of Resources Committee;
Councillor Mrs S Harris, Chairman of Community & Amenities Committee; and
Mrs Pam Craney, Town Clerk
Mr Mark Keld, Assistant Town Clerk Community & Amenities

and that the arrangements for dealing with the job-share vacancy be delegated to the Town Clerk.

The Meeting ended at 7.53pm.

Chairman of Council _____
25 September 2017

COUNCIL MEETING 19 JUNE 2017 – MINUTE NO 53 REFERS**Creditor Payments List**

| | | |
|-------|--|-----------|
| 11044 | Rowena Davis TIC Purchases | £27.30 |
| 11045 | British Legion Poppy Appeal Wreath - Remembrance Sunday 12th November 2017 | £23.00 |
| 11046 | Dawn Critchley Designs TIC Purchases | £175.00 |
| 11047 | Amberley Publishing TIC Purchases | £12.34 |
| 11048 | Bryland Fire Protection Limited 6 Monthly Fire Alarm Service - St Richard's House | £265.20 |
| 11049 | ADT Fire and Security plc Maintenance of Access Control System 29.6.17 to 28.9.17 | £146.06 |
| 11050 | Petty Cash Reclaim Voucher Nos. 1429 to 1439 | £172.08 |
| 11051 | Performing Right Society Limited Music Licence for Community Hall 6 April 2017 to 5 April 2018 | £736.56 |
| 11052 | Weldon Heating & Plumbing To attend defective radiators - St Richard's & Community Hall | £50.00 |
| 11053 | Droitwich Spa Allotment & Leisure Gardening Association Allotment Association Annual Subscription 2017/2018 | £357.00 |
| | SUB-TOTAL | £1,964.54 |

Supplementary Creditor Payments List

| | | |
|-------|---|-------------------------|
| 11054 | Avidean Limited (Droitwich Print) Civic Service Booklets | £326.40 |
| | TOTAL | <u><u>£2,290.94</u></u> |