

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 25 April 2016**, at 6.00pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R G Beale (Mayor)
Councillor Ms J Bolton
Councillor Mrs C Bowden
Councillor G R Brookes
Councillor Mrs S Harris
Councillor Mrs A Hawkins
Councillor A Humphries
Councillor A H Laird
Councillor Mrs M A Lawley
Councillor R J Morris
Councillor R E Murphy
Councillor T J Noyes
Councillor A Roberts
Councillor Mrs K L Tomalin

APOLOGIES for absence: Councillors S Best, L Evans and A Sinton. Also County Councillor Mrs P E Davey.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS SESSION

There were no questions.

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267 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were none.

268 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2016

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 22 February 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

269 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor R G Beale advised of the Well Blessing on the morning of Saturday 30 April as part of St Richard's Festival. He also reminded those present that his Civic Dinner which would take place on Friday 6 May 2016, 7pm at the Gaudet Luce Golf Club. Tickets were £20 and the evening included a three-course meal and raffle.

270 TO RECEIVE A BRIEF UPDATE ON POLICING IN DROITWICH SPA

The Chairman welcomed Sergeant Sarah Kent to the meeting. Sergeant Kent reported and answered questions upon burglary and thefts that had occurred, including:

- Burglary from dwellings
 - Two had taken place, at Primsland Drive and Lilac Avenue. Calls were being made to other residents in the area to advise upon security measures.
- Purse-dipping
 - Again, there had been a spate of incidents during March and April similar to those that had taken place just prior to Christmas. These were of a similar format in following two distinctive modus operandi – one being the purse dippers and the second being those that used distraction techniques, the latter involving bank card/pin number thefts usually from the elderly and vulnerable. CCTV was being reviewed and liaison taking place. The ‘purse bells’ initiative had been instated, whereby officers targeted those whose purse was on show and gave them a bell for attaching to purses and wallets, as a warning method should they be lost or stolen.
- Theft from garden sheds and allotment sheds
 - Officers advised as to the ways in which sheds could be made more secure, this being the time of year when such thefts were noticed. She referred to the break-ins that had occurred on the allotment land.

Sergeant Kent then gave a brief introduction to the use of Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs) which as from October 2014 had replaced the old ASBOs (Anti-social Behaviour Orders) and CRASBOs (Criminal Anti-social Behaviour Orders ie made upon conviction). There were currently two, the persons being in prison at present. There were several CBOs in the rural areas. CBOs were able to contain both positive and negative requirements of the individual concerned.

The Chairman thanked Sergeant Kent for her report.

271 HIGH SCHOOL – UPDATE FROM HEAD GIRL AND HEAD BOY

Don Pickworth, Head Boy and Allie (Alice) Wilson Head Girl, were welcomed to the meeting.

Both advised upon:

- Examination schedules and university selection processes.
- Elections for the next Head Boy and Head Girl – the successful candidates being introduced hopefully to Council at a future meeting.
- Rebecca Redfern, a pupil at the school who was to represent Great Britain at the Rio Paralympics in Autumn after setting a new world record in the S13 category of the 100m breaststroke at the British Para Swimming International Meet in Glasgow.
- Fairtrade Week had raised £250 and arrangements for other fundraising events such as ‘Decades Day’ were underway.
- Political issues were under review and the Student Council was leading a referendum for Year 13s, mobile phones were being used for an interactive voting system.
- European Union debate arranged by Jordan Kettle that took place on Friday 22 April and included Nigel Huddleston MP, plus representatives from UKIP and other political parties together with contributions from the Youth Council.

- Trips and expeditions taking place to India and Thailand linked with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

Individual Councillors congratulated Rebecca Redfern on her success and wished her well, and also thanked Jordan Kettle for making the arrangements for the EU debate. It was noted that the referendum result was @ 50/50.

The Chairman thanked Don and Alice for their very informative report.

272 YOUTH COUNCIL – UPDATE FROM YOUTH COUNCILLORS

The Chairman welcomed Katie Bowen to the meeting. Katie reported upon the recent projects in hand for the Youth Council, including:

- Attendance at Westacre Middle School.
- The Youth Council was manning a stand at St Richard's Festival, which would need a rota sorting and would involve a Cupcake Competition. Vouchers for the competition prizes were being sought from sponsors.
- Councillor Mrs S Harris was in the process of setting up the Youth Council's Constitution and a bank account.
- Celia from Fresh Nous (website developers) had met with the Youth Council to initiate the website production and this would link in with the Town Council's website.
- Councillors S Best, A Humphries and Mrs K Tomalin would be attending the next Youth Council meeting on 18 May.

Councillor T J Noyes advised that he was pleased to hear that Town Councillors were assisting and thanked Katie for all her hard work for the Youth Council.

273 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 7 MARCH 2016

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 7 March 2016 be approved and adopted.

274 MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7 MARCH 2016

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Resources Committee held on 7 March 2016 be approved and adopted.

275 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 APRIL 2016

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Planning Committee held on 11 April 2016 be approved and adopted.

276 MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 APRIL 2016

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Resources Committee held on 11 April 2016 be approved and adopted.

277 CIVIC MATTERS

1. MAYORAL ROBES

Council considered a request for the Mayoral Robes to be worn on other occasions other than civic and ceremonial, for instance as part of the Well-Dressing tableaux at St Richard's Festival. At present the Civic Robes were used on Civic and Ceremonial Occasions ie Civic Sunday, Remembrance Sunday and Annual Council, together with other Civic Occasions such as Royal Visits and suchlike. This situation altered @ four years ago when they were worn by successive Mayors at Festivals and Events and following damage to the gown at either St Richard's Festival or Annual Council reversion to their use on civic and ceremonial occasions only was reinforced by Council at its meeting on 22 June 2015.

The Town Clerk advised that should Council wish to extend the occasions upon which the Mayoral Robes were worn beyond those of a civic and ceremonial nature then it was suggested that to preserve the gown as long as possible (bearing in mind the public outcry nationally over the repairs/possible purchase of new ones in 2015) that approval to wear the robes be decided on the merits of each occasion and that therefore the matter of the wearing of the Mayoral Robes at events be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor and Leaders of the Political Parties.

There was a full debate during which individual Councillors expressed their views. Councillor A Humphries suggested that the status quo be maintained but should this not end up to be the case then should any damage be sustained to the robes then consideration should be given to the wearer bearing the cost of any repairs. Reference was made to the forthcoming Well Blessing at St Richard's Festival, several councillors speaking in support of the Mayoral Robe being worn at that occasion.

It was proposed by Councillor Ms Bolton, seconded by Councillor Mrs M A Lawley that the robes be maintained for use on civic and ceremonial occasions only.

By way of an amendment proposed by Councillor T J Noyes and seconded by Councillor G R Brookes that the approval to wear the robes be decided on the merits of each occasion and that therefore the matter of the wearing of the Mayoral Robes at events be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor and Leaders of the Political Parties.

The amendment was declared carried, there voting For – 8 and Against – 3. On being put as the substantive motion it was declared carried, there voting For – 9 and Against – 3.

RESOLVED

That Council wishes to extend the occasions upon which the Mayoral Robes are worn beyond those of a civic and ceremonial nature and to preserve the gown as long as possible approval to wear the robes be decided on the merits of each occasion and that therefore the matter of the wearing of the Mayoral Robes at events be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor and Leaders of the Political Parties.

2. HONORARY ALDERMAN

In accordance with Section 249 the Local Government Act 1972 (As Amended) Council considered making arrangements to confer Honorary Alderman status on ex-Councillor M C J Barratt for his distinguished contribution to civic life having been appointed as Town Mayor upon five occasions and for his outstanding community service in a wide capacity, having served as a Justice of the Peace for many years and also served on several outside bodies including the Coventry Charity as well as many other worthy organisations.

Councillor G R Brookes referred to the mentoring he had received from ex-Councillor Barratt during his early days on the Council.

It was proposed by Councillor T J Noyes, seconded by Councillor A Humphries and

RESOLVED

That appropriate arrangements be made by the Town Mayor and Councillors of the Town of Droitwich Spa, acting by the Town Council, to admit ex-Councillor Michael Barratt to be an Honorary Alderman of the Town of Droitwich Spa, in recognition of the eminent service he has rendered to the community as an elected member of the town and for his meritorious services to the town in a non-civic capacity.

The Town Clerk was instructed to make the necessary arrangements.

278 ST NICHOLAS'S CHURCHYARD

Informal notification had been received that the Parochial Church Council was in the process of having St Nicholas's churchyard declared closed by Order, as it has been estimated that it will be full before the year's end. Once a churchyard was closed by Order, a PCC may pass its responsibility for the maintenance of the churchyard to the Parish or Town Council, which is obliged in law to accept that responsibility (Local Government Act 1972, section 215). However this legislation permitted the Town Council to pass this responsibility on to the District Council within three months from the date of service.

The practical arrangements once a churchyard was closed were queried. Councillor A H Laird advised upon the use of non-consecrated grounds following his discussions with ex-Councillor Harwood.

RESOLVED That given the contractual requirements for maintenance, health & safety inspection regime, expertise and costs required in this matter that this responsibility is passed to Wychavon District Council at the appropriate time.

279 COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS

1. REPORTS ON COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS

County Councillor Mrs P E Davey had submitted an apology for absence as she was poorly.

County Councillor A P Miller advised upon the following, some of which was in response to questions:

- The Annual Meeting of the County Council would take place in May and a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman appointed.
- Arrangements for Road Closures.
- An increase in the budget for pothole repairs.
- Completion of the road for the Copcut development was overdue.
- Monitoring of traffic on the A38 Worcester Road by the Safer Roads Partnership showed that perception of speeding was greater than actually recorded.
- The installation of 'double yellow lines' on Old Coach Road was due shortly as all legal arrangements were in place.
- Inspection of the pathway from Lawley Way had revealed no serious faults.
- A zebra crossing at Falsom Pits area was unlikely to be installed in the near future as the costs were prohibitive being in the region of £100,000 and required financial input from developers.
- Use of Vehicle Activated Signs

1. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Councillor T J Noyes reported:

- *“WDC Building, Pershore - Following the demise of the Leader of WCC having lost the confidence of the council because of a drink-driving offence, the offices at Pershore have been declared an alcohol-free-building with immediate effect. Not that this makes any difference to the Members from Droitwich Spa.*
- *South Worcestershire Development Plan [SWDP] - At the recent Overview and Scrutiny meeting the Head of Planning, Mr Gary Williams, was asked if the SWDP was sufficiently robust to allow officers to turn down developer’s spurious applications to build upon sites which were not in the plan. Put under pressure the answer came out as NO! As a member of the planning committee I am personally looking forward to the next application with some interest should one come forward. Residents and other interested parties are being asked for their views on how the vital infrastructure needed to support the delivery of the SWDP will be provided. This will cover funding for essentials such as transport schemes, flood defences, community facilities, green spaces and leisure centres. The consultations run for six weeks concluding May 16th at www.swdevelopmentplan.org, while printed copies of the consultation documents and forms will be available at libraries and council contact centres.*
- *Solid wall insulation scheme - The solid wall insulation scheme, which was part of the Green Deal Communities funding bid, has now reached its end. No new applicants being accepted. The project has been a success and the Department of Energy and Climate Change allowed WDC to exceed its target of insulating 750 homes to 823. Wychavon actually achieved 35% of the total funding across the county.*
- *Personnel - There has been some movement at Wychavon. On Planning, Neil Pearce has left to form his own consultancy business and Karen Wightman has left to join a planning department elsewhere. I understand that Janet Yates has secured a similar position in Worcester and that Long-Term Licensing officer, Sue Garrett, has retired*
- *Pay - Pay negotiations agreed some 2 years ago have still to be implemented. They were budgeted and agreed to be in place by April.*
- *Housing - The area continues its trend and house prices continue to soar. By 2020 home ownership could be an impossible dream for those not already on the housing ladder. The average house in Wychavon is now more than ten times the average income of £25,028, while the average rent is currently £730 per month. Housing associations are reporting that housing supply is not in any way meeting the demand and that there are many sites out there which have planning approval but as yet are a long way from being started.*
- *‘Purdah’ guidance – we are in the pre-election (purdah) period for the Police and Crime Commissioner elections. Afterwards we will be in purdah for the EU Referendum. I would remind you all that we have been given additional guidance regarding this in so much as we are not even allowed to encourage people to go out and vote in this particular election. This is from Her Majesty’s Government.”*

Councillor G R Brookes advised on the system of voting in these elections and the use of the 'second choice' vote.

Councillor A Humphries referred to an article in the press recently which criticised the reported £1.3m cost of the South Worcestershire Development Plan.

281 GENERAL MATTERS – COUNCILLOR S BEST

a) The Old Cock Inn, Possible Loss of Community Amenity

Councillor A Humphries presented a proposal submitted by Councillor S Best with regard to the impending changes in management of the above-mentioned hostelry. Mention was made of the excellent annual Friar Street Festival organised by the current incumbents Graham Leonard and Stuart Wilcox. They would be sorely missed.

Reference was made to the possibility of an increase in rental and other changes which may have impacted on this business.

It was proposed by Councillor A Humphries, seconded by Councillor G R Brookes and

RESOLVED That a letter be sent to Marston's Brewery re: concerns over the possible loss of a community amenity by the impending change of management of the Old Cock Inn and be advised that the Town Council wishes to see the continuation of this important facility for the town by the careful selection of management.

282 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Creditor Payments were presented to the Council. Supplementary Creditor Payments in the sum of £1,240.41 were also submitted as now appended.

RESOLVED That the statement of accounts for payment be received and the expenditure totalling £3,985.45 (£2,745.04 + £1,240.41) as now appended be approved and duly passed for payment.

The Meeting ended at 7.10pm.

Chairman of Council _____
25 April 2016

COUNCIL MEETING 25 APRIL 2016 – MINUTE NO 282 REFERS**Cheques signed 25 April 2016**

10799	Paradise Multimedia Video Production - Radio Room, TIC	£500.00
10800	GCD Consultancy New office router and installation	£204.00
10801	Dudley's Coaches Limited TIC Ticket sales in March 2016 less commission	£97.65
10802	N Hunt TIC sales from February to March 2016 less commission	£15.50
10803	Cheltenham Borough Council Grounds Maintenance January to March 2016	£7,651.57
	TOTAL	<u>£8,468.72</u>

Supplementary Cheques signed 25 April 2016

10804	R T Harrison Tree work carried out at Westwood Lodge Allotment Site	£540.00
10805	Bus Shelters Limited Work carried out on Bus Shelter - Celvestune Way	£288.00
10806	Merlin Office Supplies Limited Stationery & washroom facilities	67.02
10807	Paul Jones TIC Purchases	£25.00
10808	David Whyman Map Sales TIC Purchases	£10.39
10809	Bluebells Florist Flowers for Diamond Wedding Anniversary - presented by the Mayor to Droitwich residents	£40.00
10810	Mint Electrical Services Emergency light testing February, March & April 2016	£270.00
	TOTAL	<u>£1,240.41</u>
	GRAND TOTAL	<u>£3,985.45</u>