



BROMYARD & WINSLOW TOWN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

Minutes of The Full Council meeting
held on Monday 23rd October, 2023 at 7:00pm in
The Council Chamber, The Old Vicarage,
1 Rowberry Street, Bromyard.

MINUTES
C23/99-C23/115

Members Present: Dr D Dunne-Thomas (Chairman), M Franklin (Vice-Chairman),
P Andrews, N Brookes, G Churchill, F Clark, C Davies, L Law,
P Nielsen, R Page, C Robinson and M Stevens.

Officers Present: K Mitchell (Town Clerk)

Also present: Cllr P Stoddart (Bromyard Bringsty Ward Councillor)

C23/99 Apologies

LGA 1972 S85 (1)

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs L Holman (ill health) and
J Lester.

C23/100 Declarations of Interest and written requests for dispensations

Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 SI No. 1159

None declared at this point in the meeting.

C23/101 Policing Matters

Apologies had been received from the Bromyard Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) who were unable to attend the meeting due to staffing cover and other incidents. A written update on local matters had been provided and circulated to members for information. Noted.

C23/102 Public Question Time

No members of the public were present.

C23/103 Ward Members Reports

Cllr P Stoddart (Bromyard Bringsty ward) provided a written report on matters at county level.

In response to questions raised, Cllr Stoddart advised that:

- Regarding the footpath from the Porthouse Rise development to the town, he had been actively following up with the Project Officer from the Herefordshire Council Project Management Office (PMO) and confirmed that a footway will be installed, with a minimum width of 1.6 meters.
- He would seek an update on the situation concerning the s215 notice issued to the owners of the Old Library on Church Street. The notice requires them to address the poor state of the building.
- The proposed changes to on-street parking in Cruxwell Street and Rowberry Street are being processed; an update from Balfour Beatty is awaited.

Cllr Stoddart left the meeting at this point.

Cllr C Davies (Bromyard West ward) provided a written update on her activities at county level.

Initials Date

C23/104 Chairman's Report

Members received the Chairman's written report. The Chairman conveyed her gratitude to all councillors for their support during the past year, especially after her surgery and radiotherapy treatment and was relieved to report that a recent scan had given her the all-clear. She also thanked individuals who had accompanied her to various events when her husband/consort was unable to do so due to his own surgery. Noted.

C23/105 Town Clerk's Report

Members received the Town Clerk's written report itemising matters completed and outstanding. Noted.

C23/106 Exclusion of members of the Public and Press

LGA 1972 ss 101, 102

The were no items identified for consideration in private session.

C23/107 Full Council Minutes

LGA 1972 Sch 12 para 41(1)

It was RESOLVED to confirm as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the ordinary Council meeting held on 24th July 2023 and the extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 25th September, 2023.

C23/108 Committee Minutes**1. Finance Committee**

1.1 **It was RESOLVED** to receive and note the Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 9th October 2023.

1.2 Members considered the following recommendations from the Finance Committee meeting held on 9th October 2023.

F23/42 – Car park ticket machines

That, as a matter of urgency, Full Council be recommended to purchase and install new ticket machines through a new supplier.

Councillor Law, Chairman of the Properties Committee, provided an update on the current situation. An engineer had been on site to repair the Rowberry Street machine; however, it remains out of order. She informed members of a possibility of purchasing two second-hand Metric machines from Herefordshire Council. The estimated cost for each machine is £200, plus installation costs. These machines are no longer needed by Herefordshire Council as they cannot be upgraded to 4G, but they can still operate on a cash-only basis.

Following discussion, **it was RESOLVED** to purchase and install new ticket machines through a new supplier.

It was further RESOLVED that the matter be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council and the Chair of the Properties Committee to pursue the matter.

F23/45 – Award of contract for internal audit services

It was RESOLVED that the contract be awarded to Company A: Mulberry & Co.

Initials Date

F23/46 – Appointment of Lengthsman Scheme

It was RESOLVED that the contract be awarded to company B: DC Gardening Services.

2. Planning & Economic Development Committee

It was RESOLVED to receive and note the Minutes of the Planning & Economic Development Committee meetings held on 4th September and 2nd October, 2023.

3. Properties Committee

It was RESOLVED to receive and note the Minutes of the Properties Committee meeting held on 11th September 2023.

4. Staffing Committee

It was RESOLVED to receive and note the Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 19th September 2023.

5. Traffic Management Committee

5.1 **It was RESOLVED** to receive and note the Minutes of the Traffic Management Committee meetings held on 16th October, 2023. Cllr Dunne-Thomas's name to be added to the attendee list.

5.2 **It was RESOLVED** to approve the following recommendation from Traffic Management Committee meeting held on 16th October 2023.

TM 23/31 – Linton Lane (single lane section/back of Linton Park)

To request that Herefordshire Council implements an emergency prohibition notice for HGV's to use Linton Lane; with the view to imposing this as a permanent measure on safety grounds.

C23/109 Banners – A44

Referring to F23/41, the Finance Committee had agreed to repurpose the banners currently displayed on the A44 and relocate them to the Council's car park(s). Members were asked to deliberate on whether replacement banners should be installed and, if so, to determine whether to continue with the same design or to explore alternative options.

It was agreed that alternative design options could be explored.

Following discussion, **it was RESOLVED** that the matter be urgently referred to the Planning & Economic Development Committee but that the final decision on design rests with the Full Council.

C23/110 Community Governance Review

Members discussed a proposal put forward by Cllr Clark to consider decreasing the number of seats on Bromyard and Winslow Town Council to better reflect the number of electors in the parish.

'Guidance on Community Governance Reviews' published by The Local Government Boundary Commission for England, had been circulated to members for information.

Members were advised that any change to the allocated number of Councillors would require a Community Governance Review conducted by Herefordshire Council. The last consultation with parishes took place in 2016.

Herefordshire Association of Local Councils (HALC) has gathered requests from various parish councils seeking to decrease their number of allocated Councillors.

Initials Date

HALC is preparing to ask Herefordshire Council to review and consider these requests and is willing to incorporate Bromyard and Winslow into the request if the Council expresses interest.

It was acknowledged that historically the Council had found difficulty in attracting sufficient candidates to stand at the whole council elections every four years. This had resulted in uncontested elections and the subsequent need to co-opt members to fill these vacancies, as well as any casual vacancies which arose during the four-year term.

Some members felt that the absence of elections could be perceived as undemocratic. It was argued that reducing the size of the council would result in a more balanced representation between the number of Councillors and electors e.g., with 18 filled seats, each town councillor would represent between 199 and 250 electors, whereas Herefordshire Council ward members for Bromyard represent significantly larger numbers ranging from 2,500 to 3,000 electors. It was observed that going back as far as 1998, had there been only 12 seats on the council, there would have been contested elections every four years.

A differing view highlighted that co-option provides a valuable opportunity for individuals to join the council without committing to a four-year term. Concerns were raised regarding the potential difficulty of attracting candidates if an election process was always required. Additionally, reducing the number of seats could result in a higher workload for committee members and the risk of a lack of diversity on the council, with the same individuals serving for extended periods. It was argued that such a scenario may not effectively serve the public interest.

Following discussion, **it was RESOLVED** to request a Community Governance review through Herefordshire Council, with the assistance of HALC.

C23/111 Public Toilets

Members received a report prepared by H+H Drainage on drainage issues at the public toilets in Tenbury Road and considered the recommendations therein.

Two main problems were identified: -

- A blockage just off-site is causing regular problems and needs to be rectified by Welsh Water.
- The poor standard of pipework inside the building can only be rectified by completely replacing the sub-standard drainage system.

Following discussion, **it was RESOLVED** to: -

1. Repair the access cover and frame on the foul drain identified at F1.
2. Talk to Welsh Water to resolve the off-site blockage issues.
3. Obtain quotes to address all of the works required and refer to the Properties Committee to prepare a proposal for Full Council.
4. Shutdown the public toilets and hire in temporary portable facilities.

C23/112 Financial Matters

1. Quarterly Reports for the period 1st July 2023 to 30th September 2023:
 - a) Cash & Investment Reconciliation
 - b) Receipts & Payments Summary report
 - c) Income & Expenditure Report by Account code.

It was RESOLVED to receive and accept the above quarterly reports.

At this point, the Chairman declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the following agenda item and left the chamber.

Initials Date

2. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the release of the second half of the Town Mayor's Allowance for 2023-24.

The Chairman returned to the meeting at this point.

3. Invoices for scrutiny
In accordance with internal controls in respect of invoices above the value of £2,500, the following invoice was presented for payment.

Invoices		Net	Vat	Total
Citizens Advice	Weekly outreach sessions October – December 2023	2,500.00	0.00	2,500.00

It was **RESOLVED** to approve payment of the above invoice.

4. Cyber Insurance Renewal
Members considered a recommendation from Sutcliffe & Co. Insurance Brokers in respect of the renewal of the Council's Cyber Package Insurance Policy which falls due on the 9th November 2023.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation to renew the Council's Cyber and Data insurance policy with CFC Underwriting Ltd in the total sum of £1969.60 for the year commencing 9th November 2023.

C23/113 Citizens Advice Herefordshire (Part of Worcester CAB & WHABAC)

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and note the Report on the Bromyard Outreach Service for Quarter 2 – 2023/24 (July to September), copies having been circulated.

C23/114 Outside Bodies

Reports from Councillors who have attended meetings of the following outside bodies were noted:

- a) Bromyard and District Chamber of Commerce and Industry – The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th September were circulated to members for information.
- b) Bromyard Downs Common Association - The Minutes of the meeting held on 13th September were circulated to members for information.
- c) Bromyard Grammar School Foundation – No Meeting.
- d) Bromyard Relief in Need - A meeting had taken place at which confidential applications had been considered.
- e) Festivals Association – No meeting.
- f) HALC Executive – No meeting.
- g) Kempson Players – No report available.
- h) Public Hall Committee – Refurbishment of the public hall kitchen had been completed.

C23/115 Correspondence

None.

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:38pm

CHAIRMAN

DATE