



Committee and Date
Bridgnorth, Worfield,
Alveley and Claverley
Local Joint
Committee

19 June 2013
7.00 p.m.

Item No

5

Public

**NOTES THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2013 AT
ST LEONARD'S CHURCH, BRIDGNORTH**
(7.00 – 9.15 p.m.)

Responsible Officer Anne Cousins

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Committee Members Present:

Shropshire Council

Christian Lea (Chairman)
Tina Woodward (Vice Chairman)
John Hurst-Knight
William Parr
Les Winwood
Michael Wood

Town/Parish Councils

David Voysey, Alveley and Romsley Parish Council
Simon Elcock, Astley Abbots Parish Council
Terry Lipscombe, Badger Parish Council
David Tooth, Beckbury Parish Council
Edward Marshall, Bridgnorth Town Council
Richard Cotham, Claverley Parish Council
Ian Amos, Kemberton Parish Council
Isabel Faithful, Quatt Malvern Parish Council
Kathryn Ward, Stockton Parish Council
Peter Dent, Tasley Parish Council
Len Ball, Worfield and Rudge Parish Council

West Mercia Police

PC Richard Wood
PC Fletcher
PC Cole
CSO Eden

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service

Dave Jennings, Officer-in-Charge, Bridgnorth Fire Station

ACTION**21. Apologies and Substitutions**

- 21.1 Mr Adrian Tacchi of Bridgnorth Town Council gave apologies and Mr Edward Marshall substituted for him. Apologies were also received from Mr Malcolm Duff-Walker, Ryton and Grindle Parish Council and Mr Allan Chatham, Sutton Maddock Parish Council.

22. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- 22.1 Mr Ball declared an interest in funding application L12 (Worfield Recreation Room) and left the room during discussion of this application.
- 22.2 Mr Marshall and Mr Hurst-Knight declared interests in the application from Bridgnorth Library (L13).
- 22.3 Mr Voysey declared an interest in funding application C9 (Diabetes Awareness) and left the room during discussion of this application.

23. Notes of meeting held on 17 October 2012

RESOLVED: That the notes of the last meeting, held on 17 October 2012, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

24. Key current policing issues – PACT (Partners and Communities Together)

- 24.1 PC Wood reported on action to tackle burglaries, including the recent arrests of two people in Bridgnorth, and commended local residents for providing information. He also gave the latest crime statistics and detection rates. He went on to talk about anti-social behaviour, such as young people riding bikes and skateboards in public areas causing nuisance. He reported on the safer Internet day at Bridgnorth Endowed School, the work of the Bridgnorth Community Alcohol Project and other partnership working, such as the Tasley project.
- 24.2 There was discussion about the dangers of young people riding bikes without lights. PC Wood confirmed the police were working closely with the management of Sainsbury's on the anti-social behaviour by young cyclists and skate-boarders in the car park.
- 24.3 In response to a question about where young people could ride bikes and skateboards, Tom Brettell, Senior Community Action Officer, reported on the work going on to develop a BMX/skate-park in Bridgnorth.

ACTION

- 24.4 There was discussion about thefts of 4 x 4 vehicles and thefts of parts of 4 x 4 vehicles, including catalytic convertors, particularly in rural areas. PC Wood advised marking vehicles with Smartwater to deter thieves. He confirmed vehicle recognition cameras were used to trace offenders.
- 24.5 Some concern was expressed about numbers of police officers on the beat. PC Wood confirmed there were police on the beat in the town centre but commented that the team had a large area to cover.
- 24.6 Dave Jennings, Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, then spoke about fire safety, particularly chimney fires. He advised chimneys to be swept twice a year if coal was being burned and three times a year if there were log-burners. He also reported on the work going on with the fire service, police, council and others to improve motorbike safety.
- 24.7 Recruitment was on-going for retained fire-fighters throughout the area and anyone interested was advised to come to the fire station on a Tuesday evening at 7.00 p.m, or contact the Fire Service.

25. Current Issues at Shropshire Council

- 25.1 The Chairman apologised that Cllr Keith Barrow, Leader of the Council, had been unable to attend and introduced Cllr Gwilym Butler, Cabinet Member for Flourishing Shropshire Communities.
- 25.2 Mr Butler spoke about what had happened over the past four years at Shropshire Council; where the Council was now; and the future challenges facing the Council.
- 25.3 Summary of the past four years:
- Creation of unitary authority.
 - Front-loaded spending cuts of £80m (estimated £200m cuts if unitary had not occurred).
 - Frontline services protected from spending cuts.
 - Review of schools across the county had taken place.
- 25.4 The present:
- Schools converting to academies.
 - Personalisation agenda for social care.
 - Shift away from the state to local communities.
 - Localism Act – dramatic effect on local authorities, e.g. changes to town and parish planning, liberation of councils, ability of councils to trade.
 - The move to become a commissioning council; creation of ip&e, a wholly-council owned trading company.
 - Council tax has been frozen for the last four years and will remain frozen for this year.

ACTION

- 25.5 Future challenges:
- 2014-17 – The Council is expecting greater cuts, approximately £100m.
 - Individual communities will have to decide what is important for them, as it will no longer be possible for Shropshire Council to provide uniform services across the county.
 - Importance of annual place plan returns.
 - Business rates – from next year 50% of the business rates will come back to Shropshire and there will be a reduction of the grant from central government. It will be vital for town and parish councils to ensure the income from business rates grows in order to pay for other services.
 - Changes to the benefits system and the move to Universal Credit.
- 25.6 A question was asked about the operation of the Shropshire Community Leisure Trust. Mr Butler undertook to take up this matter with the relevant Cabinet Member.
- 25.7 A member of the public was concerned that the Council had spent £600,000 on consultants and asked what the staff of the Council were employed to do. Mr Butler commented that the use of consultants had already saved over £2 million for taxpayers and this saving would be repeated year on year with the move to a commissioning council and the creation of ip&e. The consultancy costs had been incurred to ensure the Council was moving forward safely into uncharted territory.
- 25.8 There was discussion about the operation of the new trading company, ip&e, and what would happen if it made losses rather than profits. Mr Butler explained it was a “Teckal” company, which would enable it to trade in the same way that the council did now. Council services would only be transferred into ip&e, a holding company, once they had developed a robust business plan which had been risk assessed. The intention was not to make profits out of Shropshire people. The company would make profits when it traded outside the county. Mr Butler suggested public sector organisations could concentrate on frontline services if they made savings by sharing back office costs.
- 25.9 In response to a question about what a rural market town like Bridgnorth should be concentrating on, Mr Butler explained that Shropshire Council’s role in future will be as an enabler. It will be up to local town and parish councils to decide their own priorities, bearing in mind that if there is no economic growth there will be no money for infrastructure.
- 25.10 It was confirmed the present centralised Shropshire Council precept would stay the same or reduce and individual town and parish councils would have to precept as necessary.

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officer**

ACTION

- 25.11 A suggestion was made that the Town Council and Shropshire Council could work together at a time of reducing budgets for the benefit of the town and should continue to roll out good practice such as the MTRP funded Riverside Enhancements project.
- 25.12 A Member was concerned that the current government might impose a 2% cap on parish council precepts which he felt would be unworkable.
- 25.13 In answer to a question, Mr Butler explained that the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership had replaced Advantage West Midlands as the partnership body responsible for driving economic growth across Shropshire, Herefordshire and Telford and Wrekin.
- 26. 2012/13 Finance Report, including update on funding requests for consideration**
- 26.1 Tom Brettell, Senior Community Action Officer, introduced this report.
- 26.2 It was proposed, and subsequently agreed, that the decision on funding for the Norton Defibrillator Project (C8) be deferred, pending information on whether or not back-up batteries would be required. It was felt all costs should be considered at the same time. It was agreed authority would be delegated to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to make the decision once this information had been obtained.
- 26.3 There was discussion on the funding application from the Bridgnorth Bathing Project (L10) because it exceeded the normal maximum of £2,000. Members heard from the applicants and considered the facts in some detail. On being put to the vote, a majority were in favour of the application.
- 26.4 The application for £2,500 from the English Haydn Festival (L11) was discussed in some detail. The applicant outlined the history of the Festival, its aim to increase tourism in the area, and the efforts which had been made to secure alternative sources of funding. Some Members spoke in support of the Festival, others felt it should not rely on LJC money every year. It was proposed that the Festival should be awarded £2,000, but on being put to the vote, a majority were against and the proposal was lost.
- 26.5 The Senior Community Action Officer explained the application from Bridgnorth Food Bank (L14) had been a late application. After discussion, it was agreed to defer a decision until the most appropriate sources to supply furniture and IT equipment had been identified. Authority was delegated to the Chairman and Vice Chairman to make a decision once this information was known.

		ACTION
26.6	Another late application was the request for funding towards CCTV in Bridgnorth Library (L13). A project was currently being developed with the Library and the Community Action Team, but details of costs had not yet been received. It was agreed to delegate authority to the Chairman and Vice Chairman to make a decision once this information was available.	
26.7	RESOLVED:	
A	The following grants were approved:	
	Community Chest	
	C9 Bridgnorth Diabetes Awareness Day	£330
	Larger Grants Scheme	
	L10 Bridgnorth Bathing Project	£5000
	L12 Worfield Recreation Room	£2300
	L15 Crucial Crew	£1000
B	The application from English Haydn Festival (L11) was refused.	
C	That authority be delegated to the Chairman and Vice Chairman to make decisions in respect of the following applications once additional information had been provided and circulated to all LJC Members:	
	C8 Norton Defibrillator Project	
	L13 CCTV in Bridgnorth Library	
	L14 Bridgnorth Food Bank	
27.	Public Question Time and Identification of Future Agenda Items	
27.1	The Chairman reported the Police and Crime Commissioner and West Midlands Ambulance Service had been invited to the next meeting.	
28.	Date of Next Meeting	
28.1	It was confirmed the next meeting would take place on Wednesday 19 June 2013 at 7.00 p.m. at Worfield Recreation Room.	
28.2	As this was the last meeting before the election, the Chairman thanked all Members of the Committee for their work over the past four years and gave his best wishes to all those standing for re-election.	

Senior CAO

Senior CAO

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....