

# BRIDGTOWN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting.

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

At Bethel Methodist Church

## **Present:**

Cllrs. Val Jones (Chair), Matt Freeman, Peter Kruskonjic, Bob Eccleston, Mandy Cook,

## **In Attendance:**

Chris Gracey – Clerk

2 residents

Members observed 1 minute silence for the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The Chair welcomed Councillors & residents to this month's council meeting.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION –**

A resident reported that the new bus timetable has commenced and that the only stop is on Delta Way, If you want to use the X51 you need to go into Cannock. Cllr. Peter Kruskonjic reported that all areas of Cannock have been affected by the changes, Cllr. Matt Freeman commented on what would be our next step, and should we write to Staffs CC. The chair noted that Cllr Paul Snape had given a response to a similar question raised previously by Cllr Cook. Cllr Kruskonjic stated that County does not own or run the bus services. In the past a subsidy was given however this is no longer financially possible. The bus services are a commercial operation and the bus operators refuse to operate routes that run at a loss due to very small numbers of passengers. The Chair agreed to write to Amanda Milling MP to make her aware of the bus situation in Bridgtown.

Cllr. Bob Eccleston reported for a resident who was unable to attend Mrs L Watkins, about the hedgerow in need of cutting back, The Chair reported that this is an agenda item and will be discussed during the meeting.

### **1. Apologies received in writing prior to the meeting.**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. Kevin Whittaker (Vice-chairman), Paul Snape

### **RESOLVED: To accept the apologies of above Councillors.**

The Chair thanked Cllr. Matt Freeman for attending as he is recovering from covid and not feeling 100%.

### **2. Declaration of Interests on agenda items and consideration of dispensations where appropriate.**

None

### **3. To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022**

3.1 Members discussed the minutes in detail and agreed to the minutes subject to any amendments and corrections, as below:

This was proposed by Cllr. Peter Kruskonjic, seconded by Cllr. Matt Freeman and carried to approve the minutes.

### **RESOLVED: MINUTES WERE APPROVED.**

### **4.0 Matters Arising from the Minutes. (Not already on the Agenda)**

4.1 8.3 Cllr. Mandy Cook reported that residents were not aware that volunteers were needed to carry out the work undertaken at park, as there had been no formal notice on the noticeboard or social media. The Chair apologised for not informing residents in the usual way.

4.2 8.5 Knotweed – Cllr Peter Krukonjic confirmed that the offending plant needs regular preventative treatment for a period of 5 years to eradicate.

4.3 Cllr. Mandy Cook asked if contact had been made with Amanda Milling MP on behalf of the Gentlemen who attended the last meeting & agreed to forward the details of their concerns to either the Chair or the clerk. The Chair

reported that as no information had been received, Amanda Milling MP had not yet been contacted on this matter which was raised in the context of other resident concerns around the refugees. However a meeting had been held with the Police and Serco with regard to allegations and concerns around refugee antisocial behaviour (see Chair's Report). The clerk will follow up the missing information.

## **5.0 Chairman's Report.**

### **5.1 Holiday Inn Refugees Update**

A meeting arranged at the request of the Chair was held on 1<sup>st</sup> August with representatives from Serco, the Community Safety Hub and the Police to address resident concerns around the refugees and anti-social behaviour. Allegations had been raised at the Parish Council of parties and other activity occurring within the Hotel. The Police Inspector reported that there had not been many calls to them and none of a serious nature. The Gym and Nursery were uncomfortable with the proximity of large groups of young men some of whom will have come from countries where the culture is quite different. The anti-social behaviour complaints by residents were generally attributed to the cultural differences and to the gathering in groups which residents found to be noisy and intimidating. In respect of the allegations inside the hotel Serco reported that they had CCTV and 24 hour security in place with nothing reported. The outcome of the meeting was that:-

- Police to visit the Hotel and speak to Serco security staff
- Serco to provide structured education sessions for refugees around cultural difference and appropriate behaviour
- Cllr Kraujalis to remain as the contact between Bridgtown Businesses and Serco and to provide the Gym and Nursery with a direct contact number to the Serco representative.
- The Police Inspector speak to Cllr Eccleston & Cllr Cook, for more information on the allegations and concerns raised at the Parish Council on behalf of residents.
- The issues discussed to be raised at the monthly meeting between Serco and the other agencies.

### **Death of Queen Elizabeth 11**

Condolences on the sad news of the death of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 11 were published on the Parish official website and Flags throughout Bridgtown were lowered as a mark of respect, including in Bridgtown Memorial Gardens by the Association of Royal Engineers. The District Council Proclamation Event was attended by Parish Councillors Cllrs Eccleston and Kruskonjic.

### **Bridgtown & District History Society Latest History Board**

The Chair had the honour of unveiling the last History Board in the Bridgtown & District Heritage Trail on the 7<sup>th</sup> September. This marked the importance and origins of Wooton's Corner on which the social club is now located. This seventh history board is the last in a remarkable Heritage Trail established by the history society of important people and places that have influenced the development of Bridgtown and the district. It was well attended with refreshments and food provided in the Bridgtown Social Club.

### **Bridgtown Memorial Gardens & Play Park Renovation**

The refresh of the murals in the Park by a young artist commissioned by the Parish Council is has been completed and there have been complimentary comments by residents on Facebook at the work. The play slide now fully repainted work undertaken by Val Jones, Peter Kruskonjic and another volunteer Chris Horribow over some weeks. The renovation is continuing with the repainting of the benches and a call will be put out for more volunteers. Sadly the work has been hampered by continuing acts of vandalism. There has been damage again to one of the benches which the District Council have repaired and one of the bins was also damaged. Time has been lost repainting over marks and deliberate damage to newly painted areas. It should be noted that Park is not unusual in that there have been spates of vandalism across many of the other Parks in Cannock; some where the damaged has been more extensive. There is substantial outstanding work needed on the garden beds and Park generally which requires initial work to bring it up to standard before the onset of winter and then some regular garden maintenance to maintain a reasonable standard. A proposal is to be made that the Parish Council reinstate a gardener to do the work with the money already set aside in the budget for this.

### **Replacement of Safety Barriers on North Street**

The Parish Council used continuing infrastructure levy (CIL) monies to commission the firm, Boundary Services to replace the ornamental safety barriers in North Street which had been badly damaged. Highways have refitted the two bollards adjacent to O Malleys and will refit the other two when they are made available. On Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> October the safety barriers were replaced and the firm are to be congratulated on the quality of their work. This is part of the Parish Council's renovation plan for North Street. The ornamental lamp posts are scheduled for replacement by EON originally for September but have been delayed for a short time. The stands for the flower baskets will be repainted once permission has been granted by the District Council.

### **Remembrance Parade – 6<sup>th</sup> November**

Arrangements are being put in place for Bridgtown's Remembrance Parade on the 6<sup>th</sup> November. This is led each year by the Association of the Royal Engineers, supported by the Salvation Army Band. The Chair has been in contact with

the 116 Pro Coy RMP regiment based at the Army Reserve Centre in Bridgtown and they will be sending a small detachment to participate in the parade. The Vice chair is sourcing volunteers to marshal on the day. A proposal was made by the Chair to fund for a hot drink, sandwich and cake at Bridgtown Social Club following the parade as a thank you, seconded by Cllr. Mandy Cook and carried. This was not possible last year due to the pandemic. Advance notice of the parade and the arrangements will be posted on the Parish Council website and on the notice board at least 10days before the event.

## **6.0 Consideration of reports received from the PCSO.**

6.1 None received – The Chairman had written to the Police Inspector after the previous meeting, informing him that the Parish Council had received neither written report or representation at the meeting. She will contact the police again.

8.05pm The 2 residents left the meeting – One of the residents fell whilst leaving the hall going into the entrance hall, the meeting was suspended whilst Members assisted the residents, the lady had fell onto the hard floor and hit her head, Cllr. Bob Eccleston rang for his car and took the residents home. The lady was later hospitalised and is receiving treatment for her injuries.

8.30pm The meeting was resumed without Cllr. Bob Eccleston.

## **7.0 County Councillor's Report**

7.1 None

## **8.0 Recreational Areas.**

8.1 The Leighton Memorial Garden – No comments

8.2 War Memorial - No comments

8.3 Bridgtown Memorial Gardens & Play Park in Union Street – The Chairman reported that although volunteers assist in the work at park, the area needs an extensive tidy up and proposed that the gardener position is reinstated, seconded by Cllr. Peter Kruskonjic and carried. Cllr. Mandy Cook requested that the work be monitored to ensure that it is carried out to the required standard. This was agreed.

## **9.0 Adjournment to receive reports from 'Friends of Bridgtown Park'**

9.1 Bridgtown Friends of Bridgtown Park – None present

9.2 Local Community Group Reports – None present

## **10.0 Planning:**

All planning applications have been circulated to Councillors for comment.

10.1 **Applications for Consideration** - none

10.2 **Applications Approved/Rejected by District Council** - none

11.0 **Correspondence** – Items of correspondence received during the month are emailed to Councillors, as received and for this month included the following:

### **11.1 Incoming –**

- CCDC News roundup emailed to council 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2022
- SPCA Bulletin emailed to council 24<sup>th</sup> July 2022
- SPCA Bulletin emailed to council 27<sup>th</sup> July 2022
- SPCA Bulletin emailed to council 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2022
- SPCA Bulletin emailed to council 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022
- CCDC details of Christmas Carol service emailed to council 8<sup>th</sup> October 2022
- Details of 20's plenty in Staffordshire remote meeting emailed to council 8<sup>th</sup> October 2022
- SPCA Bulletin emailed to council 8<sup>th</sup> October 2022
- CCDC News Roundup emailed to council 8<sup>th</sup> October 2022

11.2 **Outgoing** - None

**RESOLVED: ALL RELEVANT POST HAD BEEN CIRCULATED AND NOTED.**

## 12.0 Accounts

### 12.1 Payments for Approval

Date	Payee	Cheque Nr.	Amount VAT	Approved/declined
12/10/2022	Bethel Methodist Church (Hall hire 14/09/22) cancelled	0102074	-	
12/10/2022	HMRC Clerk's August & September PAYE)	0102075	81.40	approved
12/10/2022	C E Gracey Clerk's salary August & September salary )	0102076	325.16	approved
12/10/2022	Lewis Pritchard Graffiti Work(Refresh murals in park balance of invoice	0102077	400.00	approved
12/10/2022	Staffs CC – Website & domain name)	0102078	131.95	approved
12/10/2022	Inside Out (Additional compost for planters)	0102079	38.50	approved
12/10/2022	Mazars LLP(Ext. Audit for 2021-22)	0102080	240.00	approved
12/10/2022	Bethel Church(Hall hire 12/10/22)	0102081	20.00	approved
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£1237.01</b>	

RESOLVED: Authorisation of the accounts presented for payment totalling £1237.01 was agreed proposed by the Cllr. Peter Kruskonjic seconded by Cllr. Matt Freeman and carried.

12.2 Consideration of the Current financial situation of the Council - The financial statement 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 was presented, proposed by Cllr. Peter Kruskonjic seconded by Cllr. Matt Freeman and carried.

12.3 Consideration of infrastructure projects update – as below.

12.4 Consideration of any grant funding application opportunities - Nothing to report

12.5 Consideration of any Grant applications received – None

12.6 Conclusion of 2021-22 accounts - agreed

**13.0 Highways Issues** - No reports from County Council regarding any Highways issues

13.1 Cllr. Peter Kruskonjic reported that the hedgerows will be cut shortly, but a section of Delta Way belongs to the housing association and this is their responsibility.

13.2 Cllr. Peter Kruskonjic will confirm the ownership of the ornamental stands for the flower baskets on North Street.

**14.0 To receive reports from Councillors who have attended outside meetings** - None

**15.0 Queens Platinum Jubilee Celebrations Review** – As mentioned in Chair's Report

**16.0 HGV Signage – North Street – New Street – Cross Street**

16.1 Map of the area for signage required. In future all offenders will be reported to the clerk with the vehicle registration number and the company details, the clerk will then contact the Companies & ask them to notify their Drivers that they should not be driving through the village area.

**17.0 Review – approve Data Protection Policy**

17.1 Proposed by Cllr. Matt Freeman seconded by Cllr. Peter Kruskonjic and carried

**18.0 Risk Assessment Policy**

18.1 Proposed by Cllr. Matt Freeman seconded by Cllr. Peter Kruskonjic and carried.

**19.0 Lakeside Boulevard**

19.1 **CCDC** has reported that no adoption will take place until all issues have been addressed by the contractors. No

date has been given for this.

19.2 Cllr. Peter Kruskonjic reported that the signage at the play park has been removed.

**20.0 New Lamp Posts**

20.1 Date for work has not been confirmed, the clerk will follow up.

**21.0 Replacement of safety barriers & reinstatement of bollards**

21.1 The work to replace the safety barriers has been completed.

21.2 Highways have refitted the two bollards outside O'Malley's. They will refit the remaining two bollards when they are available. Need to agree a date with Cllr. Bob Eccleston who has them stored for safe keeping.

**22.0 Commemorative plaque for Late David Williams**

22.1 The plaque is not large enough to have a lengthy inscription. Parish Councillors are asked to send in their suggestions for the plaque to the clerk.

**23.0 Items for Information or Future Agendas**

23.1 20's plenty Staffordshire

**24.0 Date of Next Meeting.**

24.1 It was agreed that the next meeting would be Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**RESOLVED: NEXT MEETING: 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

**25.0** The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 9.20pm.

26.0 Confidential Items – exclusion of the press and public when applicable.

Signed By Chairman .....

Date .....