

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting
held in The Coach House, Crown Yard
on Thursday 31st January 2019 at 7pm

Present: Chairman: Cllr J Devlin
Vice-Chairman: Cllr J Clark

Councillors: A Adshead, R Clark, C Dyer, J Henshaw, K Herlock, M Moore,
C Roberts, M Roessler, A Talboys, M Thomas, F Tomlin

Also in attendance: Borough and County Cllr Dr R Moore and the Town Clerk

95. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R Chapman, M Dear,
L Mitchelmore, D Spencer, G Talbot and J Tutton

96. Declaration of interest with regard to item(s) on the Agenda

None.

97. Public participation session with respect to items on the Agenda and other matters that are of mutual interest

Borough and County Cllr Moore informed those present that Basildon Council are looking at heritage and a sense of Place. The Royal Society of Arts Networked Heritage states "whilst heritage gives places their unique character it will only create a strong identity if local people understand their heritage and know how to maximise its potential to shape distinct and cherished places in the future". Cllr Moore said that Basildon Council are currently looking at what they want to see in the Borough - what will Billericay look like in thirty year's time? What do people value about Billericay present and past? What do people value about Billericay's past that makes it distinct? What makes it different to other places in the Borough?

He asked the Council to consider whether they would be prepared to contribute suggestions as to what kind of place they want to see Billericay become. Cllr Devlin thanked Cllr Moore for bringing this to the Council's attention and said that the Town Council would certainly give this consideration.

98. Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 13th December 2018

Members received the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 13th December 2018.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting be approved and adopted.

99. Chairman's Report

Members received a report from Cllr Devlin detailing events that he had attended since the 13th December Town Council meeting.

RESOLVED: Information noted.

100. Committee Meetings

(a) Planning Committee

In the absence of the Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman, Cllr Moore presented the minutes of the meetings held on 18th December 2018, 8th and 22nd January 2019. 18th December - 11 applications considered and 3 objections. 8th January - 8 applications and 3 objections. 22nd January - 7 applications and 3 objections. She also informed members that a zebra crossing would now be installed in Radford Way near the Sainsburys Local, something which the Town Council had proposed initially.

(b) Environment Committee

The Chairman, Cllr Moore, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2019 and informed members that following a proposal from Cllr Dyer a log of highways issues will be reported in the Town Crier going forward. The Festival of Remembrance will again be organised by the Town Council to take place on 9th November and Brightside Primary School have been lent litter picking equipment as part of their community initiative, they intend to use it to keep Alyssum Walk clean and tidy. She also advised that the War Memorial cleaning party scheduled for 2nd February is to be postponed until March as there is no work that currently needs doing.

(c) Finance & General Purposes Committee

Cllr Adshead, Chairman of the Committee, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 24th January 2019. He said that the latest Town Crier is at the printers and will be distributed on 15th/16th February. The interim internal audit was recently undertaken and a few action points have been identified for updating the Risk Assessment. Chantry Way - the Council is now using their own solicitors for the eviction of the unauthorised occupants and the hearing is scheduled for 1st February. Also, the demolition company is going to attend the site and fence it off on Saturday 2nd February. This now means that there will be additional costs to cover the legal fees and securing the site. The demolition cannot take place until the gas has been disconnected and that has had to be rescheduled due to the squatters. The first draft of the tender documents has been reviewed and the boundary definition and trees are currently under discussion with Mr Green, owner of the adjoining land.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of all the above Committee meetings be approved and adopted.

101. Training Courses

Members received and considered details of the courses being offered by the EALC in 2019.

Resolved: (i) information noted, and; (ii) that the Town Clerk and Committee Clerk are approved to attend the EALC First Aid Training Day on 17th July at a total cost of £220.

102. Removal of LCTS grant

Members received and considered a proposal from Cllr Tomlin that the Council sends all copies of the correspondence received on this issue to John Baron MP asking that he provide clarification of the Government's policy. Cllr Tomlin said that the letters previously received from Government would indicate either an unannounced change of policy or that the Treasury is not fully aware. He wants the Town Council to seek a definitive response from Government as to what the position is with regard to local authorities passing on grants to their Town and Parish Councils. Seconded by Cllr Adshead. Following discussion it was:

RESOLVED: that a letter is sent to John Baron MP seeking clarification as to whether it is still Government policy to pass support grant funding down to local councils.

103. Operation London Bridge

Members considered the information from the SLCC regarding the various protocols to follow and it was;

RESOLVED: (i) that suitable wording for the website will be prepared by the Chairman; (ii) the Council's website homepage will be overwritten with a black page carrying a portrait of HM The Queen from the date of her passing until the day after the funeral; (iii) the Council is to be mindful of events having to be cancelled during the same period, and (iv) black ribbon to be purchased.

104. Meeting Dates 2019-20

Members received and considered the dates for Committee and full Council meetings between May 2019 and June 2020.

RESOLVED: that the dates are approved.

105. Inaccurate Publicity

Cllr Devlin proposed that the Town Council formally responds to the claims from Basildon Borough Council's Labour party about the cost of the hanging baskets. Following discussion it was;

RESOLVED: (i) that Cllr Devlin attends the next meeting of Basildon Borough Council to ask the following question of the leader "given that Billericay Town Council currently provide and pay for the hanging baskets in Billericay could the leader clarify Basildon Council's position with regard to their funding", and; **(ii)** a letter is sent to the Basildon Labour Party correcting their inaccurate statement and to request they stop referring to the High Street rejuvenation project budget as being expenditure on hanging baskets.

106. Items for Information

Members received and considered the following:

(a) an open letter to all Town and Parish Councillors from NALC

(b) notes from the Chelmsford and Basildon transport meeting held on 2nd October 2018

RESOLVED: information noted.

107. Consideration of Items for Social Media/Press Release

The Chairman of F&GP will prepare a statement to be issued following removal of the squatters.

108. Questions from the Press and Public

Borough Cllr Moore reminded those present that the question for the leader regarding the hanging baskets would need to be submitted in writing prior to the meeting on 14th February.

Cllr Devlin closed the meeting at 8.02pm

Cllr Devlin.....Date.....
Chairman