

BRIGHTLINGSEA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held at
The Parish Hall, Victoria Place, Brightlingsea,
on: Thursday 14th December 2023 at 7.00pm.

Present:

Councillors

R Morgan (Mayor)

J Carr (Deputy Mayor)

D Atkinson, M Barry, J Chapman,

M Judson, C Paveley and G Steady

Also in attendance:

Tracey Pulford – Town Clerk

Julie Crittenden – Administration Assistant

County Councillor Goggin (via Zoom from 7.55pm onwards)

6 Members of the public

120. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Court and Howard. County Councillor Goggin will be joining via Zoom at around 7.45pm.

121. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 16TH NOVEMBER 2023 AND TO CONFIRM AS A CORRECT RECORD:

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 16th November 2023 were accepted as a true record.
Agreed.

122. MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A copy of the Mayor's Announcements are annexed to the Minutes.

The Mayor announced that it is with great sadness that one of our new Councillors, Sue Walsh, has tendered her resignation. He said that Sue was a well-respected and integral part of our Council, and her work was greatly admired and helped this Council in many ways. He added that we all wish Sue the very best in the future and sincerely thank her for her friendship, diligence and help in this Council. Thank you, Sue. A round of applause was given.

The Mayor mentioned the Christmas Tree Festival, and that the Council entry was called 'Democratree' where we asked for ideas on what we could do as a Council. The main suggestion was for a McDonalds in Brightlingsea; however, we did also receive some interesting comments.

The Town Clerk gave thanks to the Mayoress for agreeing to design this year's entry to the Christmas Tree Festival.

The Mayor then wished the Council, members and staff, and members of the public a wonderful Christmas, full of peace and goodwill and family fun. He then invited everyone to stay after the meeting closed for drinks and nibbles.

123. DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS:

The Mayor reminded Members to declare interests when necessary.

124. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THOSE MEMBERS EXAMINING THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE CURRENT PERIOD:

The Payments and Accounts for the period ending September and October 2023 (as shown on the attached appendix) were proposed by Councillor Steady as follows:-

General Account - 21 BACS Payments totalling £6,187.03 be authorised for payment and statements balances on the following accounts be accepted:-

November 2023

Current Account (7055)	£14,194.35
Business Premium Account (8295)	£113,629.34
Business Premium Account (9433)	£20,420.97
Making a total on all accounts of:	£148,244.66

Income for November totals:	£14,348.23
Expenditure for November totals:	£43,531.91
Income to date, totals:	£326,604.77
Expenditure to date totals:	£260,205.63
Employee payments made for the month of November 2023 were:	£22,330.60

The payments were then seconded by Councillor Paveley. **Agreed.**

125. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE MEETING HELD ON 12TH DECEMBER 2023 AND TO CONFIRM THE RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN:

Councillor Carr proposed that the Minutes of the Finance and Property Meeting held on the 12th December 2023 are accepted as a true record, and the recommendations (as written below) be accepted:

- (1) **S106 Projects – Kinetic Wheel** – The Kinetic Wheel would be purchased, using S106 monies.
- (2) **Process for Applications for Project Funding** – The ‘process for applications for project funding’ would be followed for all self-funded S106 and grant funded projects; and the flowchart would be added to the Financial Regulations.
- (3) **Council Bank Accounts** – Councillor Paveley and the Town Clerk would look at the creation of new bank accounts.
- (4) **Debtors List as of 30.11.23** – (1) Brightlingsea Rugby Club – A credit would be made to the Rugby Club debtor, to amend the amount to zero; (2) An Open Space Policy and Letting Agreement Booking System would be created; (3) The outstanding amount for the Beach Hut – A letter to be sent giving final warning for payment to be made otherwise the license will be revoked; (4) Any outstanding debts to be marked as ‘in dispute’.
- (5) **Interim Internal Auditor Report** – A new Financial Internal Auditor would be commissioned for the New Year, and also any training for the Town Clerk to attend to assist with her role.
- (6) **Reserve’s Policy** – The Reserves Policy would be looked at and any amendments made at a future meeting.

The minutes were then seconded by Councillor Paveley. **Agreed.**

126. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING MEETING HELD ON 28TH NOVEMBER AND 12TH DECEMBER 2023 AND TO NOTE PLANNING DECISIONS OF TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL:

Councillor Paveley proposed that the recommendations in the Minutes of 28th November and 12th December 2023 be agreed by Council, together with the planning decisions from Tendring District Council.

Councillor Paveley highlighted the following:-

- The Cricket Club proposal has come before the Town Council Planning Committee for comment, and as this development is on Town Council land the Council remained ‘neutral’, however we supported the aspirations of the project.
- An amendment to the planning permission on Lower Farm had been received, which changed some of the procedures on how they go forward with the planning, which would indicate Artimus will be building in January and maintaining their long-term planning permission. He added that this application was ‘for information only’.

Councillor Chapman mentioned Application Number 23/01572/FULHH and that the Town Council had asked for this application to be ‘called in’ however as the application was for ‘householder development’ it is therefore exempt from the members referral scheme and cannot be called in to the Planning Committee.

The minutes were then seconded by Councillor Chapman. **Agreed.**

127. TEAMS REPORTS:

Reports from the Facilities, Community and Assets Team, and the Environmental and Transport Team had been circulated to all.

Facilities and Community Assets Team – Councillor Morgan briefed members that a meeting with the Harbour Commissioners took place yesterday and that it was a very positive meeting.

Councillor Chapman mentioned that the boat park charges need to be agreed, and asked the Council to recommend that there is no increase for 2024/2025. This recommendation was proposed by Councillor Carr, seconded by Councillor Chapman. **Agreed.**
Councillor Atkinson declared an interest in this item and took no part in any discussion.

The Facilities and Community Assets Team report was then **accepted**, and the following recommendations were **agreed**:-

- **Western Promenade Update on the Brightlingsea Leisure Village** – (1) Tendring District Council are contacted to ask for their comments on an extended opening period; (2) Councillors Atkinson and Carr look at the lease regarding sub-letting and/or holiday letting.
- **Use of Boating Lake and Hut** - The Town Clerk would contact the Scouts to see if they wish to continue renting out rowing boats on the lake, and that an answer is given before the end of December 2023.
- **Boat Park** – The charges for the Boat Park would be frozen for the year 2024/2025.
- **Chartered Land Surveyor for the William Pannell Land on the Hard** – John Phillips FRICS FCI Arb would be contacted to obtain a quotation for surveying the William Pannell Land at the Hard.
- **Community Notice Board** – If any member has any ideas on possible locations for a Community Notice Board, to let the Town Clerk know.

Environment and Transport Team – Councillor Atkinson briefed members.

Councillor Chapman mentioned the trolleys at Tesco's and that there are no trolleys parked outside at the moment. She added that the lorries are coming in very early in the morning.

A discussion took place on the following:-

- Bus shelters - Essex County Council are looking to dispose of its estate of Bus Shelters and give them to one company to look after.
- The Community Energy Initiative – The Neighbourhood Plan Group are enthusiastic about becoming part of this initiative, and it was **agreed** to write to them to ask for help with this scheme.

The Environment and Transport Team report was then **accepted**, and the following recommendations were **agreed**:-

- **Tesco Express – Trolleys** – (1) Ask Councillor Chapman for an update on her discussions with the local store; (2) Any letter should come from the Town Council, not an individual Councillor.

Welfare & Residents Services Team – No report had been submitted.

Communication & Tourism Team – No report had been submitted, however Councillor Carr informed members that the Town Guide is nearing completion and thanked Julie for doing all the work. He added that we have a very full guide and this year it looks like we will make money on it. Councillor Paveley also congratulated Julie on all her hard work on the guide, and that she had been able to recruit a lot of new advertisers.

128. UPDATE FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS:

Councillor Barry briefed members on the following:-

- A Sport and Leisure Strategy for the District is currently being written.
- A meeting was held with Local Delivery Pilot Managers on the 21st November 2023.
- A meeting with the Sigma Trust is scheduled for mid-January 2024.

Councillor Chapman updated members on the current pay awards.

Councillor Steady briefed members on the following:-

- Transport Task and Finish Group Meeting held on the 20th November 2023.
- Meeting with Corporate Director where Transport Regeneration was discussed.
- Meeting held on 27th November 2023 where Devolution and Levelling Up was discussed.

The report from the District Councillors was then **accepted**.

129. ISSUES ON B1029:

The Mayor reported that this item has had major impact on the Town, and residents were dismayed to see all the mud on the B1029. However remedial action was taken quickly.

The Town Clerk briefed members that on the 23rd November 2023, following many complaints from residents, contact was made with SRC, who temporarily closed the site with immediate effect, and installed new wheel washing facilities. The site reopened on Friday 1st December 2023.

Councillor Barry briefed members that Tendring District Council did not respond to the issues, as it is not their responsibility. Tendring District Council are responsible for the gutters, and clean the drains, but the roads are the responsibility of the Highways Authority, however the ultimate responsibility lies with the contractor – SRC. After discussion it was **agreed** that the Council would write to Essex County Council Legal Department to ask (a) for a copy of the Extraction/Mineral License and to ask (b) are Essex County Council the Enforcement Officers for these issues.

130. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT:

- (1) Recycling Containers – **Agreed** that the Town Council would continue to be a 'collection site' for the recycling containers, however there would be a cost involved to the Council to purchase from Tendring District Council. There would also be a cost to the resident to purchase new boxes. Councillor Barry briefed members on the proposed scheme.
- (2) Co-Option – **Agreed** to put Vacancy 1 on hold until Tendring District Council have confirmed the outcome of Vacancy 2 i.e. Election or Co-Option.

The Town Clerk informed members that the window display in the front office is part of the 'Brightlingsea Window Wanderland' hosted by the Lemmings Theatre Company.

The Mayor showed members a Christmas Card from the Mayor of Margate, which was designed by a Year 1 student. He said that it is a lovely card, and perhaps the Council could encourage the local Infant and Junior School to design a Card next year for the Town Council to use. Councillor Chapman said that her Grandsons attend a school in Clacton, and they design a card, which the parents can then purchase.

131. UPDATE FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR GOGGIN:

County Councillor Goggin briefed members on the following:-

- Attending a meeting on the 20th December to scrutinise the results from the trial booking system for recycling centres.
- Item 5 – Street Lights in Bellfield Avenue - Advised about the issue at 4pm on a Sunday afternoon, however within 2 hours a contractor had been out as there could have been a danger to life.
- Item 9 – Attended a special planning meeting at Clacton regarding the Market Field Grows Charity.
- Item 9 – Asked to help a resident regarding a Year 11 student mid-term entry at the Colne Community School.
- Item 12 – Mud on the road - The two people I contacted at Tendring District Council were excellent, they accepted that Tendring were responsible for the mud on the road and dealt with it. They were first class.

Councillor Atkinson asked County Councillor the following question:-

There is an organisation called Community Energy South, which is funded by the County Council, who selected Brightlingsea as a centre of excellence for energy efficiency. Are you aware of this?

County Councillor Goggin replied no, and this is the first I have heard of this. If you can find some more details, he would be happy to look into this further.

132. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Q1) What has happened to the road works that were due to take place this week, with sections of the High Street being closed off at night?

A1) County Councillor Goggin replied that he did not have any update but will call the office tomorrow to find out.

Q2) Has anything happened about mobility scooters and dropped kerbs?

A2) County Councillor Goggin replied that the Town Council is running a review of road related issues, including parking, red lines, double yellow lines etc., and it is down to them to think what is appropriate. Councillor Carr replied that we are looking at all the 'pinch points' in the town, and our ideas/suggestions then have to go to the Parking Partnership for consideration/approval. The resident then asked if someone could contact the Chronicle to advise why the dropped kerbs are there, and the issues around vehicles parking there. The Mayor replied that an awareness campaign needs to be carried out to highlight the issue.

Q3) Councillor Goggin – The recent diversion that was due to take place for the works in the High Street – two buses went the wrong way and went down Spring Road. This was due to the fact that Essex County Council did not put out any diversion signs. Cars were damaged, including Councillor Courts.

A3) The Town Clerk replied that as the road was not closed, the diversion was not in place.

Q4) Wish the Councillors a Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year. Also thank the Staff, as these are the people who keep the town going. Thank you to the lads.

Q5) Regarding the mud on the road, if you refer to Section 148, 149, 161 of the Highways Act 1980, it states that it is an offence and action can be taken against the perpetrators of that offence.

Q6) Thank Councillor Carr for not increasing the Boat Park charges.

Q7) Regarding the planning permission for the Cricket Club Pavilion includes the shed, club house and toilets. Can you enlighten me on what the shed and toilets will be altered to?

A7) The Mayor replied that the planning application includes their own showers and toilets. Councillor Paveley replied that it is an outline planning application, which shows the structure. It includes the footprint of the old stand, and attached to it is the toilets and changing rooms, which will have outside access. The plans have to come through planning process 2-3 times before the design is agreed. The resident replied that the best location for this building is alongside the Playcentre Pavilion.

A resident then thanked the Council for all their hard work. Since attending these meetings, I had no idea how much you got involved in items around the town, so Thank You.

133. CLOSE OF MEETING:

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20.18 p.m.

Chair

Date: 18th January 2024