



Bradford on Avon Town Council

Minutes of the Virtual Town Council meeting of
BRADFORD ON AVON TOWN COUNCIL
Held on Tuesday 2nd March 2021 at 7.00 p.m.

Attendance – Town Council

Cllr L Brown

Cllr E Franklin

Cllr D Garwood

Cllr S Gibson

Cllr A Kay (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr T Lomax*

Cllr J Lynch

Cllr S McNeill-Ritchie (Chairman)

Cllr D Newton (Leader of the Council)

Cllr J Parker

Cllr M Roberts

Cllr D Taylor

Mrs S Bartlett (Town Clerk)

Mr I Brown (Director of Operations)

Ms L Booth (Communications Manager)

*Left at 9pm

A statement was read out by the Clerk to inform participants attending this virtual meeting that it would be recorded and published on the Town Council's website via YouTube.

Members of the Public: Richard Craft from Walkers are Welcome, James Sullivan-Tailyour, Louise Weissel, Andrew Nicolson, Kai Jensen, Ben Wood, Marsha Mars, John Bishop from Natural Theatre Company and 61 others.

92. Declarations of interest - none

93. Minutes of the last meeting

After one correction was made, it was proposed by Cllr Newton seconded by Cllr Kay and with all in favour it was **RESOLVED**: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd February 2021 be accepted as a correct record.

94. Matters arising - none

95. Minutes of committees

The Environment & Planning Committee minutes from the 9th February 2021 were noted.

The minutes from the Environment & Planning Committee held on the 24th February 2021 to follow.

96. Chairman's Report

Chairman's Report included items on CEVs delivering prescriptions and helping with local vaccination programme in Melksham. He also mentioned the Fairtrade Fortnight from 22nd February to the 7th March 2021. Chairman said that the railings had been completed in Kingston Mills following his

correspondence with the CEO of Bovis Homes. He had an enquiry from Barnet Council in London about the Shop Local scheme. Chairman reported that the Castle Public House had been listed by Wiltshire Council as an Asset of Community Value. It will be listed for 5 years. Cllr Roberts reported that Link should be thanked and mentioned for their work in the community.

97. Borehole at Culver Close

Director of Operations Report considered together with the hydrogeological assessment. After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr McNeill-Ritchie seconded by Cllr Franklin and with all in favour, it was **RESOLVED**: To appoint M B Dowling Water and Geotechnical Drilling Services and to approve the council contribution of up to £5,000 for the project.

98. Local Plan

Cllr Kay introduced this item and explained the work carried out so far at Environment and Planning Committee. Leader of the Council and Cllr Lynch thanked Cllr Kay for all her hard work on the Local Plan. Cllr Gibson said that all Wiltshire Council's Strategies should be considered together holistically, these included Climate Strategy, Transport Strategy and Green/Blue Strategy. After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Franklin seconded by Cllr Newton and with all in favour it was **RESOLVED**: To send the draft Emerging Spatial Strategy Consultation Response Form, together with the Market Town Consultation Response Form, as drafted by the Environment and Planning Committee and send a covering rejection letter with additional comments. Cllr Newton said he would produce two easier to read documents which endorses these comments.

99. Skateboard Park

Leader of the Council gave an in-depth presentation on the skateboard park noting that this Council has confirmed by repeated resolution, it's intention to replace the town's skatepark which was removed by Wiltshire Council in 2018. He said that 1,292 signatures had been collected on a petition for a skatepark. £9,400 raised so far towards it and on-going. Further fund-raising in the form of selling merchandise and a book sale will be arranged later in the year.

Cllr Franklin said that the Community & Recreation Committee had chosen the site for the skatepark. She said that members should be ashamed, as the kids don't have anywhere to go safely.

Cllr Lynch said is not what you do it is the way that you do it. The Maverick report was published with only one site for a skatepark and that local democracy had not been represented. This was the first time the skatepark had been debated at Full Council. He said the town had been allowed no opportunity to discuss the site. He said there was no Full Council approval for the Poulton site. He said the basketball site was under used.

Leader of the Council advised that we were replacing a facility. He said that the MUGA was well used. Chains had recently been replaced on the basketball hoop.

Cllr Gibson said that she was hugely supportive of this scheme and hopes for the best one we can do. She was happy to support up to £100,000. She was concerned that not enough residents had been consulted on the Poulton site and wondered whether we were jumping in with enthusiasm. She asked are we building the right one in the right place, has it been thought through.

Cllr Lomax supported the Leader of the Council, that is was a replacement skatepark, with four years in the making, so no risk of jumping in. He said that a spade had not gone in the ground yet and it should be completed as soon as possible for a vote of confidence in the town.

Cllr Lynch said there had been no consultation on the location whatsoever. Victory Field was an obvious and ideal. This will just be railroaded through not giving the town a voice. An absence of democracy.

Chairman said that in BANES the skatepark was replaced with no public consultation required.

Cllr Kay supported the replacement of the skateboard site at Poulton. She said it would be there for future generations to use.

Cllr Roberts said that replacing the pavilion at Culver Close would be a big project and that the clubs who use it need the deteriorating pavilion to be replaced urgently to continue to play from there. He has seen the design concept from the contractor, he understands that the contractor will do some fundraising but is not aware of the full costs of the project in order to make a decision.

Cllr Garwood said that he had noticed a lot of positive comments in the 'chat'. He had investigated the anti-social behaviour problems and realised they could happen anywhere in the town. He endorsed what the Leader of the Council said. He thought this would be a good facility in the town, especially with Olympic status for skateboarding. He said it was good the youth service was involved. He said the kids in the town had been through a lot in the last 12 months and we need to get this done.

Cllr Brown said that he was in favour of a 'state of the art' skateboard park, but he did not think that Poulton was a suitable site with problems with parking and anti-social behaviour. He did not think Bradford on Avon could be compared to Dorchester. He said that other sites in town need refurbishing too and had waited longer than the skatepark such as the asbestos Culver Close pavilion since 2017. He thought that Culver Close would be used more than the skatepark and should be done first in order of priority. He did not think that Poulton was the right site for the skatepark and it would cost in excess of £300,000. He said he would second the amendment.

Cllr Taylor said that the young people had waited long enough for their skatepark and they should be listened to. He said it was not about party politics and this project should not be delayed any longer by this council's members.

Cllr Parker said since hearing the Leader of the Council's presentation that she had found out a lot more about when things happened. She said that she has information that she did not have before. She thought it all should have been dealt with by now and she wants the skateboard park, just get on with it.

Kai Jenson said that he had been skating for 6-7 years and there was a growing skating culture in Bradford on Avon. He said there was very little anti-social behaviour and young people help each other with tricks etc. He thought Poulton a fine place to build the skatepark. He said young people will walk to Poulton. When the young people are there, they will pop out to buy food and that was available close by. He said it will attract other skaters from other towns. He and his friends have waited such a long time getting a design for the skatepark, please don't mull over it anymore.

Ben Wood said that he had been skating for years. He said there had been some anti-social behaviour in the underground car park but that was not caused by the skaters. He said Poulton skatepark had become too dangerous to skate there with metal shards. He said now it is a place of a.s.b. He skates at the Devizes, the park is in the middle of nowhere with lots of older skaters, he said that they police it themselves and there are no drugs. He said it was well maintained.

Cllr Lynch felt that the site should be discussed with the town and it has not been. He thought that Victory Field would have been a better site for a skatepark. He said it could have been a fabulous site and landscaped. He said he was not an older person delaying and prevaricating. He has known a lot of the skaters over many years. He withdrew his amendment.

Cllr Gibson asked that the skateboard site is communicated well to the town.

It was proposed by Cllr Newton, seconded by Cllr Franklin and with 9 in favour and 3 abstentions it was **RESOLVED:** 1. To replace the skatepark with a new wheeled sports facility at the same location as the previous facility, on Poulton Field;

2. In recognition of the ongoing public fundraising efforts, the reduced availability of some grant funding, and the delays in bringing this project forward, to ringfence up to £100,000 from Town Council reserves, to be released on completion of the project or as otherwise agreed under relevant contracts with the appointed Contractor;

3. To continue to provide all necessary Officer support and consultation to the project, including sourcing funds from external bodies.

100. Annual Report 2019-20

This was noted.

101. Standing Orders

As the changes were NALC's changes and not a change to the law. This item was deferred. Clerk explained that due to Brexit other changes from NALC should be forthcoming in the future. This item to be re-considered at the Annual Council meeting in May 2021.

102. Proposal from the Natural Theatre Company 'Bradford on Avon Unlocked'

John Bishop addressed the committee and explained the background to the Natural Theatre Company. He explained the Community Well Being Arts Project 2021 led by the Natural Theatre Company, to support the Mental Health of the town. Following the Covid restrictions over the past year, this project will promote creative reflection on the positives of 2020-21. It will explore things learnt through this period and will include whole families and individuals and virtual workshops will start at the end of March. Cllr Lynch said that he was supportive and was doing a Young Futures Creative at the next Area Board and would be happy to link in with Mark.

After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Newton, seconded by Cllr Kay and with 11 in favour it was **RESOLVED:** That the Natural Theatre Company be awarded £2,585 for the 'Bradford on Avon Unlocked' Community Well Being Arts Project 2021.

103. Slow Ways and Kingfisher Trail

(i) Slow Ways

Richard Craft reported that Walkers are Welcome Group had been working with Slow Ways. He offered if the Town Council endorses the initiative that Walkers Are Welcome members would help with the mapping, as they are already involved. He said Bath was involved too. Cllrs Kay and Franklin offered to help with the work. Members agreed to endorse this initiative with the assistance of Walkers are Welcome Group.

(ii) Kingfisher Trail initiative by Cotwolds National Landscape

Leader of the Council explained that this was a similar scheme to the owl the council sponsored a while back. It would cost £200 for a 2-weekly visit by a flying kingfisher sculpture on a wooden plinth. James Sullivan-Tailour said that he would ask the businesses if they wanted to sponsor another slot. It was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Cllr Newton and with 11 in favour it was **RESOLVED:** To sponsor a flying kingfisher at a cost of £200 to help boost tourism.

104. Accounts for payment

Leader of the Council reported that he was now digitally signing off invoices. He thought this system to be quicker than visiting the office and the invoices were looked at with more in-depth scrutiny. It was proposed by Cllr Franklin seconded by Cllr Newton and with all in favour it was **RESOLVED:** to accept the invoices and payroll for January 2021 amounting to £54,031.72.

105. Management Accounts Reports

Detailed management reports up to 31st January 2021 were noted. These included detailed balance sheets and income and expenditure by committee.

Meeting closed at 9.18pm

Members of the public who spoke at the Full Council meeting on the 2nd March 2021

1. James Sullivan-Tailyour asked when the People and Places Benchmarking survey which took place in 2013 and 2017 would be updated for the town.
2. Marsha Mars spoke in favour of the skatepark. She said that the young people needed a skatepark. She asked councillors to keep party politics out of the decision.
3. Louise Weissel spoke about the difficulties of accessibility on the consultation process for the Local Plan.
4. Andrew Nicolson reported on the Local Plan Review and had a list of potential brownfield sites which he had just emailed to Councillors. He said these would be more climate friendly and carbon neutral rather than the three sites in the Local Plan.