



**Bradford on Avon
Town Council**



**LOCAL COUNCIL
AWARD SCHEME
QUALITY GOLD**

Minutes of the Full Council meeting of
BRADFORD ON AVON TOWN COUNCIL held
on Tuesday 5th July 2022 at 7p.m in St. Margaret's Hall

Attendance – Town Council

Cllr K Bessant
Cllr E Franklin
Cllr D Garwood
Cllr S Gibson
Cllr A Kay
Cllr S McNeill-Ritchie
Cllr J Parker (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr A Potter
Cllr T Trimble
Cllr K Vigar (Chairman)
Cllr J Vittles
Mrs S Bartlett (Town Clerk)
Mr I Brown (Director of Operations)
Ms S Hawkins (Accountant)
Mr C Hogg (Green Spaces Officer)

Members of the public: Joyce Shaw, Lisa Otter Barry and four others.

Apologies: Cllr S Blackwell

17. Declarations of interest - none

18. Minutes

It was proposed by Cllr Potter and seconded by Cllr Gibson and with all in favour it was **RESOLVED**: that the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on the 3rd May 2022 were accepted as a true record.

19. Matters arising – none

20. Chairman's report

The Chairman's report is attached to these minutes. The Chairman also mentioned the following items:-

- (i) Network Rail will be having public consultation on replacing the railway bridge in St. Margaret's Hall on the 11th July 2022 between 4pm and 6pm.
- (ii) On the 3rd July 2022 a fund-raising session for the skateboard park took place at the Youth and Community Centre. This event had been publicised on social media. She attended with Cllr Parker and all those present were encouraged to get involved and help with the fund raising.
- (iii) To update councillors, following the Community and Wellbeing Committee at which up to £5000 had been agreed to subsidise childcare provision over the summer holidays – Youth sessions for children and young people living in Bradford on Avon will be provided at a cost of £5 per child and to be held on two mornings a week.

21. Minutes of Committees

It was noted the minutes of the following committees:-

24.05.22 Sustainable Travel, 07.06.22 Environment & Green Spaces, 21.06.22 Resources Committee and 28.06.22 Community & Wellbeing.

22. Terms of Reference

It was proposed by Cllr Kay seconded by Cllr Franklin and with all in favour it was

RESOLVED: To accept the recommendation from the Environment & Green Spaces Committee that in 1.1 up to ten members including the Chairman of the Council and Deputy Mayor ex-officio. In 3.4 Policy regarding the provision of the following services: Parks, Open Spaces and Assets.

23. Reopening the High Street

The report from the Director of Operations was considered. A variety of concerns were expressed as regards the design and materials of the proposed installations and it was considered important that discussions take place with the designer before final approval is given. It was proposed by

Cllr Gibson seconded by Cllr Kay and with all in favour it was **RESOLVED:** To accept the proposal in principal but some councillors to meet with City Dressing to discuss the details and report back to Town Development Committee next week.

24. Next meeting

The next meeting has been arranged for the 6th September 2022.

25. Confidential business

It was proposed by Cllr Trimble and seconded by Cllr Garwood and with all in favour it was **RESOLVED:** to start confidential business.

APPENDIX 1

Members of the public who spoke at the Full Council meeting held on the 5th July 2022

1. Joyce Shaw wondered where the waste was going with the canal boats. She said that she had visitors coming and some of the boats look unsightly and take up a lot of the riverbank. Cllr McNeill-Ritchie said that it would be the Canal and Rivers Trust, although sometimes they had difficulties imposing their rules. Cllr Gibson said that there was a trust set up called the Floaty Boat Fund who helped boaters with training on how to do maintenance of their boats.

Joyce said that when she was doing lorry watch close to the town bridge, she was asked by tourists where the canal and Tithe Barn were located, as there is a complete lack of signage in the town. Chairman said that the Reopening the High Street item tonight on the agenda would help towards that with signage on offer.

2. Lisa Otter Barry asked two questions:-

(i) The Town Council agreed to sell Becky Addy Wood to FROBAW on the 8th April 2022.

Please would the Town Council accept FROWBAW's offer Subject to Contract which ensures that all parties are reimbursed their 20220 contributions which totalled £47,000. £30,000 of FROBAW member donations has already been subtracted FROBAW now agrees to pay: £9,000 to the Town Council for the funds they contributed and costs incurred £5,000 to be reimbursed to the Area Board, £3,000 to the Preservation Trust.

We hope this sale will now proceed swiftly since FROWBAW knows the woods well and they still have the 2020 pre-auction legal pack.

FROBAW is a Not for Profit company limited by guarantee and they intend to seek charitable status. We have Charitable Objects and on this basis, are granted membership of the NCVO National Council for Voluntary Organisations and are likewise eligible for free legal advice from the Environmental Law Foundation. FROBAW has agreed to insure and take on liability for the woods from the point of exchange of contracts.

(ii) Our second question is that, while the sale is underway, the council pauses their planned £15,000 worth of tree-works – especially during the bird nesting and bat breeding season – or, accepts our offer to discuss risk issues and agree any proposed tree-work with FROBAW.

Our legal teams cite the Memorandum of Understanding between FROWBAW and Town Council as a key partnership document requiring agreement with FROBAW as to significant tree management and Ash Dieback decisions.

FROBAW are also very significant stakeholders who donated 2/3 of the funds to buy the woods. With regard to issues around risk and public safety:

James Crawford, FROWBAW Committee member and career safety Risk Assessor is preparing a Safety Policy for BAW and will continue to monitor BAW on a regular basis.

Ian Monger an experienced Arboricultural consultant who specialises in tree risk assessment is now advising FROBAW as to risk and safety issues in Becky Addy Woods on an ongoing basis, following his site visit to the woods on 6th June. Ian Monger has worked as a senior council tree officer and now carries out tree risk assessments nationwide and works as an inspector deciding protected tree appeals.

Both FROBAW's legal teams have expressed their confidence that Ian Monger's expert advice can safely be followed with regard to the landowners duty to keep the public safe.

To quote from ELF's recent letter to the Town Council:

"Mr Monger's professional qualifications, considerable experience and his key observations, also taking into account the recent FROBAW Footfall survey, show that the frequency of occupation below the trees is very low, and that very little work is needed to maintain safety in the woodland, and any work at this time of year should be absolutely minimal".

This concurs with the advice of David Wyatt Wiltshire Council Tree Officer, He emailed FROBAW 9th February 2022 to say that, in relation to TPO permissions, he would give an exemption to work on “a couple of trees that are clearly a threat”.

Ian is one of a growing number of pioneers in tree and woodland risk management who use QTRA and VALID tree risk assessment – assessing tree risk in an objective and quantified way, working alongside the Professor of Natural Hazards and Risk Science at Bristol University, and using similar criteria as the Health and Safety Executive use to assess levels of risk.

This results in public safety being maintained but with far fewer trees being lost. He hopes to roll this out nationwide.

This is very timely with the Woodland Trust making a national appeal last month for Ancient and Veteran Trees and Woodlands to be better protected.

In conclusion – if FROBAW take ownership of the woods, the Town council will save up to £40,000 of public money, the estimated cost of the tree works advised by their surveyor last October.

Chairman thanked Lisa Otter Barry for her questions and explained that the issues were to be addressed in the private part of the meeting.