



Full Council meeting

Minutes

From the meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 31 October 2023

At St. Margaret's Hall, Bradford on Avon

Decision making

The **decisions** made by the Full Council at this meeting are at minutes [36](#) & [38](#).

Present

Councillors:

- Sam Blackwell
- Dave Garwood
- Alex Kay
- Simon McNeil-Ritchie
- Jennie Parker
- Alison Potter
- Tim Trimble
- Katie Vigar (Chair)
- Jack Vittles

Town Council Officers:

- Ian Brown - Chief Executive & Town Clerk
- Matthew McLaughlin – Communications Officer
- Chris Hogg – Green Spaces Officer
- Sarah Hawkins - Accountant

Meeting clerk:

- Sarah Howe – Committee Clerk
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Apologies

From Councillors unable to attend the meeting:

- Kate Bessant
 - Emma Franklin
 - Sarah Gibson
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35. Declarations of interest

Councillor Vittles declared his interest in the Cricket Club.

36. Minutes from the previous meeting of the full council

Councillor McNeil-Ritchie stated that his comment at Minute 29 regarding the River Crossing Project that the project was 'wishful thinking - with no real prospect of ever happening' should include 'without a plan to raise funds'. It was agreed to add this.

Proposed by Councillor Sam Blackwell

Seconded by Councillor Jennie Parker

And with all in favour it was **resolved**: that the Minutes of the last Full Council meeting held on 5 September 2023 be accepted as a true record of the meeting with the amendment as described above.

37. Matters arising

None.

38. Agenda item 5 – Culver Close Pavilion Presentation by NVB Architects

Richard Paige from NVB Architects provided a model and posters of the proposed new pavilion and gave a presentation to members and the general public. The model and posters were available to view ahead of the Full Council meeting.

Richard thanks the public for the comments on the proposed new pavilion so far. The new pavilion will replace the existing one on the existing site on Culver Close playing field. Shipping containers currently sited on Victory Field will also be replaced with a simple, stone, sympathetic 'barn' style storage facility.

The site is sensitive (due to the proximity of the Tithe Barn) and complicated as a Wessex Water pipe runs alongside the existing pavilion and their right of access limits the development options. Therefore, the footprint for the new pavilion will largely be following the existing one. A public footpath running close by also needs to be maintained.

The new pavilion will have a high environmental spec, and include: home and away changing rooms, showers and toilets, a clubroom and toilets, flexible, accessible and umpire changing facilities. There will also be storage space available for equipment to maintain the cricket pitch. A green roof and wall are proposed with roof lights and thermally efficient construction materials which are sympathetic in colour and texture to traditional local building materials.



The barn style storage facility on Victory Field will have storage space for green spaces maintenance equipment and the football club, public and disabled toilets.

The next stage will be to apply for planning permission with Wiltshire Council.

The public and councillors were invited to ask questions.

There was a question about whether any of the public toilets or the changing facilities will have natural light. The answer was no, not at the moment.

There was a question about costs. The Chair confirmed that there is no price as yet for the new facilities. The proposal is whether to apply for planning permission at this point.

How many new public toilets? The answer is 2 currently. Councillor Kay added that 2 is twice as many as we have now and there will be new facilities in the new pavilion too with the option to bring in portaloos as always if required.

A question was asked about parking: the answer was no change at all to the parking arrangements.

The Chair thanked Richard for his presentation.

Councillor McNeil-Ritchie stated it was a great project but needs a clear business plan, the Chair confirmed that approaching grant bodies including the England Cricket Board are underway.

Councillor Kay confirmed she was proud of the environmental elements within the design.

It was proposed by Councillor McNeil Ritchie and seconded by Councillor Trimble and with all in favour **resolved** to take the current proposal and plans for the new Culver Close Pavilion and Victory Field Storage facility to Wiltshire Council's planning committee for approval.

39. Agenda item 7 – Chair's Update and Announcements

The Chair began with the news that the Government has asked train operators to withdraw their proposals to close ticket offices across the country as a result of the public consultation in which, nationally, there were 750,000 responses with 99% objections. The Chair thanked all involved in signing the Bradford-on-Avon petition to keep the ticket office open. There were around 3,500 signatures. The town petition joined with others all over the country and the Chair went on to say that it just goes to show signing petitions is not necessarily in vain.

The Chair then referred to her report as supplied with the agenda.



Additionally, a traffic modelling update stated that the report from the consultants Atkins has been delayed and they hope to have the study completed by the end of November 2023. The council hopes to publish the results by the end of December and the information will be up on the website. Two options, including a one-way system with mitigations in the north of town, have been modelled and as a result a third option is now being modelled. The town council has repeatedly asked for the models to consider traffic volume, air quality and pedestrian and cyclist safety, priorities identified by the public consultation with a whole town focus, not just the town centre.

The Chair also read out the latest statement concerning Becky Addy Wood which is at Appendix B at the end of these minutes.

40. Agenda item 8 – Town Vision (draft) Update for comment and discussion

The Chair gave an explanation as to the development of the town vision stating that different councillors working on different topics or elements of the vision approached appropriate groups in the community for input. The outcome of those meetings and ideas have led to the drafting of the town vision document presented with the agenda. Councillors, the public and interested community groups have now been invited to comment. Councillor Kay added that as a climate emergency has been declared by the council the document should emphasise how this policy informs everything else the council does or plans to do.

41. Agenda item 9 – Call for Sites

The council has issued a call for sites to be developed for housing as Bradford-on-Avon on Avon still has an allocation of 80 homes to build by 2035. Currently the old golf course is still on the latest draft Local Plan for Wiltshire Council as a reserve site. Councillor Kay stated that one of the reasons why the old golf course is still in the mix is because alternative sites to build homes have not been suggested or offered. Councillor Vittles agreed stating that these 80 homes will have to be built somewhere, the town cannot keep saying 'no'.

There was a question over whether any site can be put forward? The answer was only if the owner of any given site is interested.



42. Agenda item 10 - Bradford on Avon Town Council comment on the Local Plan.

The Chair confirmed that a new petition will be set up for the public to sign to remove the old golf course from the reserve list for sites for housing development.

Councillor Kay reminded those present that Local Plan response forms are available in the library if anyone is having trouble with the online arrangements.

The Chair asked if any councillors had any comments or to send them to Councillor Potter who will prepare a draft response.

43. Next meeting

The next Full Council meeting is arranged for Tuesday 9 January 2024.

End of the meeting

The meeting finished at 8.15 pm



Appendix A: Comments and questions from the public

There were various comments and questions from members of the public and Councillors at the meeting. There were 35 members of the public present in total.

Question regarding the dispute between the Town Council and claimants regarding Becky Addy Wood.

(Q1) Despite an email response from the council regarding a settlement meeting between the town council and claimants regarding Becky Addy Wood, the question was asked again: why can we not have a face-to-face meeting to limit costs and resolve the matter?

The Chair noted their offer and confirmed that it was not possible at this stage to have a 'without prejudice' meeting. She also confirmed that she would read a statement detailing as much information as possible given the restrictions of the ongoing legal process during the agenda item 5 - Chair's Update.

[Q2] There was a question regarding agenda item 8 the Draft Town Vision

Why does the Town Vision say more parking? Surely, we should be building more homes instead?

The Chair confirmed that the Town Vision should state more disabled parking and both she and Councillor Trimble said they would look into getting the wording adjusted.

[Q3] A resident referred to his statement read out at the Sustainable Travel meeting on the 3 October 2023 regarding grants available for some A routes including the A363. Councillor Trimble confirmed that he would pursue Wiltshire Council vigorously for additional grant funding if possible.

[Q4] A question regarding agenda item 8 – the Draft Town Vision

Shouldn't the town becoming carbon neutral by 2030 be a priority and not so far down the list?

At the recent Area Board meeting Councillor Kidney recommended that climate strategies are developed by Climate Friendly Bradford on Avon (CFBOA) not by the Area Board.



The Chair confirmed that CFBOA are welcome to work with the town council on climate matters and the Town Vision can be adjusted to reflect that.

[Q5] A question regarding agenda item 10 – the Local Plan

‘High Level review of the Wiltshire Local Plan’ document has been emailed to all councillors. How will Local Plan comments be drafted and also receive input from Climate Friendly groups in town?

The Public can of course respond to the Local Plan themselves. Councillor Potter also stated that she is happy to hear concerns.

Can the council put in transport priorities? Both the Chair and Councillor Trimble stated they are happy to add transport comments, however at the Area Board meeting on the 1 November 2023 the modelling for the Traffic management project will not be revealed as it has been delayed so Area Board cannot comment yet in that regard for the Local Plan consultation.

[Q6] The council was thanked for their work with the petition to prevent ticket office closures. It was suggested that a new petition to object to the development of the old golf course might be a good idea.

The Chair confirmed an online one could be arranged before the 22 November closing day for comments on the Local Plan.



Appendix B – Council Statement of 31 October regarding Becky Addy Wood
Statement for October 31st Full Council

I provided a brief overview and update on the legal situation concerning Becky Addy Wood at the last full council meeting and provide another such update now.

As a result of the actions following the Case Management Conference in September, we now know that the claim against BOATC is being brought by the Claimants: Lisa Otter-Barry and Christopher Humphries on their own behalf and as representatives of 6 other individuals.

The Council previously understood the claim to be brought as a representative action on behalf of FROBAW, however this is no longer the case given the represented parties now comprise 6 individuals and not FROBAW as a whole. The Council understands FROBAW is made up of a much greater number of individuals.

There are two parts to the legal action brought against the council in the High Court:

1. The temporary injunction preventing the council from carrying out work to trees in the wood.
2. The ongoing claim against the Council based on the claim that:
 - a. The Council is in breach of a Memorandum of Understanding which was signed by the Council and FROBAW (who at the time of signing, the Council understood comprised 59 persons); and
 - b. Some persons (at present unidentified) have a common intention constructive trust claim i.e. a claim that they have a beneficial interest in Becky Addy Wood as a result of donations they gave for the initial purchase.

The Council vigorously contests the Claimants' position.

As to the injunction, the Council has been working hard to implement a process whereby independent joint experts can assess Becky Addy Wood and create a new joint management plan, which would supersede the previous joint management plan for a defined period. This process requires input from the Claimants to progress. To date, their solicitors have been slow to engage on the detail which has unfortunately delayed expert instruction. The



Council's solicitors continue to press. Once the new joint management plan is in place, the parties have agreed the injunction can be lifted.

As to the claim, there is little the Council is able to say whilst this process is ongoing. There are no live settlement offers from either party. The Council made, what it considered to be a very reasonable settlement offer in May 2023 but regrettably, this was not accepted.

As I explained at the last Full Council meeting, the claim will continue to trial unless either the claimants discontinue it (which they declined to do but which they could do of their own volition at any time), or terms of settlement can be agreed. As the defendant, the Council cannot withdraw from the claim.

At present, the trial is anticipated between 4 March and 13 May 2024. The Council will continue to keep settlement under careful review to see if costs can be saved and the trial avoided. It will also comply with the timetable to be ready for the trial should settlement not be achieved.

Ultimately, the Council wishes to be able to manage the woodland responsibly for biodiversity and for the people who enjoy visiting it.