

MINUTES
of the
**Buildings & Moorings Committee meeting held on 5th March 2024 at 6.00pm in the Town
Hall, Tewkesbury**

Present: Cllrs C Danter (Chair), H Bowman, P Jones, S Raywood

In attendance: D Hill (Town Clerk), Cllr J Raywood, three members of the public

B&M.23.068 Receive apologies for absence

Cllrs R Langdon, K Moran, C Robertson

B&M.23.069 Receive declarations of interest

Town Clerk regarding items 23.085 and 23.087.

B&M.23.070 Receive dispensations

None.

B&M.23.071 Approve the minutes of the Buildings & Moorings Committee meeting held on 12th December 2023

It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 12th December.
Proposed by Cllr S Raywood, seconded by Cllr Jones.

B&M.23.072 Matters arising from the minutes – for information only

22.048 TH Basement storage – the basement has been cleared of items to be disposed of and a skip has been booked. Cllr Danter to arrange final sort out.

Lease to Avon Navigation Trust – awaiting update from solicitor.

Town Hall heating improvements – some upgrade issues remain outstanding.

22.115 Mooring structure at Priors Court – Town Council requires a warrant to remove the structure – ongoing.

23.016 Building Condition reports – awaiting costs for Architect managed project at the Watson Hall (grant funding stream identified) and for Historic England to visit the Town Hall for possible inclusion on the at risk register.

23.033 Accessibility issues at the Town Hall – awaiting response from Highways Manager. This is now an active project for B&M committee and on agenda for this meeting.

23.041 Moorings working group - review of moorings and number of boats to be taken to working group – meeting to be arranged.

23.043 Budget - Committee chair to review expenditure for moorings maintenance vs project related expenditure – complete.

64 Barton Street 210 4590 - expenditure to be moved to 4500 – complete.

23.064 Removal of DPS at Watson Hall – no longer progressing but committee keen to have an update from Licensing team, especially regarding town safe project.

B&M.23.073 Receive correspondence relating to the Buildings & Moorings Committee

None.

B&M.23.074 Public Participation

A member of the public queried when the moorings working group meeting will be held as there remains concerns about the jetty structure on St. Mary's Road. The member of the public also stated that there remain outstanding questions for the working group from October 2023.

A member of the public read out a statement as follows:

My fit, active husband endured 3 strokes which have left him with significant mobility impairments.

We are well aware that any disability is limiting, and have become used to the disadvantages inherent with my husband's condition, and we know it is unreasonable to expect that every opportunity open to the able bodied will be also be made available to those with disabilities. However, we feel strongly that municipal buildings, and the services within them, should comply with legal requirements and the Equality Act says that public services must make 'reasonable adjustments' so disabled people can access them.

The issue of access to the Town Hall was brought home to us a few years ago when an event was organised in the venue by our local u3a, an organisation for retired people, and my husband, among others, was unable to attend, as the steps are insurmountable. I was alarmed to witness an elderly member of the u3a attempting to negotiate the steps with a walking aid. After the event, I raised the issue with the u3a committee who commendably undertook to raise the issue with the council and to find an alternative venue for future events until access to the Town Hall had been made possible. I also personally contacted the Mayor at around this time and received a positive response, but I ran out of steam when, despite requesting that the issue be added to the council agenda, I could find nothing in subsequent meeting notes which seemed to relate to the issue. I became despondent when reading in local publications about improvements to the High Street through the Heritage Action Zone fund and finding no reference to the Town Hall access.

I am aware that much work goes on behind the scenes and that I don't always know where to look for information about the councils committees and sub committees but I do feel that up to now disabled access has not been given the priority it should have. The Equality Act was passed over 13 years ago ... I appreciate the challenges involved with the building being listed, etc, but access 'through the back door' while not being ideal, as acknowledged in the meeting notes, would be a good indication to the community that the council at least acknowledged the needs of those with disabilities.

We are very pleased that the council now appears to be giving the issue some attention and it would be very helpful if you could share your progress with the community, by any means available. I also feel that to keep the momentum, the issue should be on the council's agenda until the matter is resolved.

B&M.23.075 Approve payments to be made

It was RESOLVED to approve the payments list totalling £2,747.98. Proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Bowman.

B&M.23.076 Review the budget report and earmarked reserves report

The budget and earmarked reserves reports were reviewed. It was noted that the Moorings maintenance budget and project budget had not reflected the journal of £3,237 from maintenance to projects.

B&M.23.077 Review Watson Hall income and expenditure – from Finance Committee

The committee reviewed Watson Hall income and expenditure and it was noted that current income over expenditure was £4,205.

B&M.23.078 Agree any vires, movement of existing earmarked reserves and new earmarked reserves

It was RESOLVED to approve the following movements in earmarked reserves. Proposed by Cllr Bowman, seconded by Cllr Danter.

EMR 351 Moorings St. Mary's Road to be combined with EMR 349 Moorings Projects

EMR 363 Watson Hall maintenance to be released to 600 4450

EMR 364 to be renamed to Buildings fundraising

Remaining budget at year end to be earmarked

200 4480 Moorings Projects to EMR 349

210 1100 64 Bartons Street grant income to new EMR

210 4450 64 Barton Street maintenance to EMR 320

220 4450 Town Hall maintenance to EMR 354

220 4590 Town Hall projects to EMR 360

230 4450 War Memorial maintenance to EMR 328

600 4913 Watson Hall bar equipment to EMR 356

600 1835 to new EMR

B&M.23.079 Review quotes and approve expenditure for replacement fire exit door to the balcony at the Watson Hall in financial year 2024/25

It was RESOLVED to approve the replacement fire exit door at a cost of £2,441.60. Proposed by Cllr Raywood, seconded by Cllr Jones.

B&M.23.080 Receive a report on accessibility to the Town Hall and to approve the next steps

Cllr J Raywood gave an overview of the report. She reported that the potential loss of car parking space in front of the Town Hall is acceptable in principle with Gloucestershire Highways. Tewkesbury Borough Council's Conservation Officer is also in favour in principle of the accessibility proposals. It was noted that the public status of the building may be in the Town Council's favour for the proposed alterations. The next step is to commission a Topographical Survey. **Action:** Town Clerk to contact Nick Joyce Architects for recommendation for a contractor to undertake the Topographical Survey. The Town Clerk has registered the Town Hall with Historic England regarding possible at risk status. The Town Clerk is looking into funding possibilities with the Town Council's fundraiser.

B&M.23.081 Note the Mechanical & Electrical Buildings Services Condition Report for 64 Barton Street

The report was noted. **Action:** Town Clerk to look into gas service recommendations.

B&M.23.082 Receive an update from the Town Clerk on the refurbishment project at 64 Barton Street

The Town Clerk reported that internally the radiators are being installed, internal plaster repairs and decorations are ongoing. A damp proof specialist has been appointed to instal a membrane and drain in the South room on the ground floor that has historically been a problem. It is hoped that this will help with humidity levels in this room. Externally the scaffolding is being taken down. Remaining roofing works should be completed by 18th March and also the repairs to the decorative ceiling. Anticipated completion of grant funded refurbishment works is now the end of April.

B&M.23.083 Delegate authority to Cllrs Danter, Jones & Raywood to appoint a contractor to undertake improvement works up to the value of £10,000 to the mooring area adjacent to St. Mary's Lane car park being funded by the High Street Heritage Action Zone fund

It was RESOLVED to delegate authority. Proposed by Cllr Bowman, seconded by Cllr Danter.

The meeting was extended for up to 30 minutes. Proposed by Cllr Danter, seconded by Cllr Jones.

B&M.23.084 Delegate authority to Cllrs Danter, Jones & Raywood to appoint a contractor to undertake improvement works up to the value of £10,000 to the mooring area adjacent to St. Mary's Lane car park being funded by the High Street Heritage Action Zone fund

B&M.23.085 Note expenditure for health & safety works to the mooring at the Back of Avon
Emergency expenditure of £1,360 was noted.

B&M.23.086 Note increase to mooring rate with effect from 1st April 2024 as advised by Avon Navigation Trust

It was noted that the mooring rate will increase to £3.25 per foot and £3.60 per foot for commercial vessels.

B&M.23.087 Consider a request to retain a commercial mooring at 15% of the normal commercial mooring fee at the Back of Avon from 1st November 2023 to 31st March 2024

The additional information requested had been received from the Finance Officer. It was RESOLVED to approve the request. Proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Bowman.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:12

Signature of Chairman upon approval of the minutes 28th May 2024