

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
 held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
 7 pm on Thursday 2 July 2015

PRESENT:

Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak (Chairman), Cllr. Mike Grace, Cllr. Bert Harper, Cllr. Mary Hill, Cllr. Paul Laming, Cllr. Robert Toft, Cllr. David Turner, Cllr. Joffrey Watson, and Cllr. Milner Whiteman OBE.

TOWN CLERK:

Sharon Clayton

IN ATTENDANCE:

Nick Wood, Shropshire Council
 Rev'd Matthew Stafford

1) CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the following councillors:

COUNCILLOR	REASON FOR ABSENCE
Robin Bennett	Illness
Dafydd Jenkins	Work commitments

Cllr. Mike Grace would be late.

These apologies were accepted as APPROVED absence.

3) DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Members were reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the register of members' interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

4) DISPENSATIONS

None requested.

Cllr. Turner arrived at this point in the meeting. As a Shropshire Councillor he declared an interest in any matters relating to Shropshire Council, and as a Member of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Management Board, in any matters relating to the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

5) AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Nick Wood, Communities and Housing Policy, Shropshire Council was in attendance to discuss the delivery of affordable housing. He apologised for not being able to attend the last meeting and gave the following report.

Affordable homes are low cost subsidised housing for those who cannot afford to buy or rent in the open market. Average prices in Much Wenlock to buy or rent are very high and demand is more than can be delivered. A two-bedroomed terraced house is considered to be the basic dwelling. To get planning permission a developer must deliver 20% affordable homes. On the open market the developer has to build the affordable homes himself and usually sells to a housing association at 50% of their market value. The housing association will then rent them out although it is difficult to allocate affordable homes to local people. On an exception site there is no cross-subsidy on the open market so all dwellings will be affordable. There is currently around £130,000 sitting in the Much Wenlock Place Plan area for potential affordable housing scheme(s). Exception sites are for local people because they are an exception to planning rules. The local connection therefore has more weight than housing need and is protected by s106 agreements. There is no requirement for a developer to provide affordable homes for developments on sites of 10 or less (5 or less in an AONB). The developer at Sytche Lane wants to sell the homes on that site as shared-ownership based on the open market value.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Wood for attending the meeting after which he left.

6) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Rev'd Matthew Stafford informed Members of his experience of affordable housing in the Telford & Wrekin area after which he left the meeting.

Cllr. Mike Grace arrived at this point in the meeting.

7) MINUTES

- a) The minutes of a Town Council meeting held on 4 June 2015 were considered for approval. Following a minor amendment to correct a spelling error at minute no: 12 and change the word "form" to the word "from", **it was RESOLVED that the amended minutes be signed and ADOPTED as a true record.**
- b) The minutes of a Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 30 April 2015 were **NOTED** and **ADOPTED**.
- c) The minutes of a Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on 28 April and 2 June 2015 were **NOTED** and **ADOPTED**.
- d) The minutes of a Personnel Committee meeting held on 26 May 2015 were **NOTED** and **ADOPTED**.

8) TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

- a) Members received a written report from the Town Clerk on outstanding matters and action taken since the last Council meeting. Members expressed disappointment that there was very little information on the report and asked for more information at future meetings.

The Town Clerk also gave the following verbal report:

- o She had taken two weeks annual leave and therefore her written report reflected this.
- o She had received confirmation from the Post Office that the Post Office was to move to new premises at the Spar Stores at 67 High Street, Much Wenlock. Date to be confirmed.
- o She was in liaison with the solicitor concerning the conveyance of the Youth Club building and waiting for the drainage survey to be completed.

It was AGREED that the Town Clerk's report be NOTED.

- b) Members received the minutes from a Market Town Clerks meeting held on 20 May 2015. The Town Clerk was questioned about the benefits of attending such meetings and the Town Clerk explained that she only went to meetings that she felt were of benefit to Much Wenlock Town Council.

It was AGREED that the minutes be NOTED.

9) ACTION PLAN

- a) Members considered the monthly review of the Council's Action Plan. A discussion ensued about how visitors to the town can be monitored and it was suggested that traders in the town would be able to offer some statistics. It was further suggested that the Market Town Clerk's meeting could be used as a forum to seek assistance.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the Finance & Resources Committee should seek quotes for re-painting the Buttermarket.

In accordance with Standing Order no: 10(a)(vi) it was PROPOSED that items 9(b) to 9(e) be considered as one item and that a working group be established to monitor Action Plan priorities and take the lead on each Action Plan project, and report and make recommendations to the Finance & Resources Committee.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that:

- i. **A working group be established to monitor Action Plan priorities and to take the lead on each Action Plan project.**
- ii. **The working group would make recommendations and report to the Finance & Resources Committee.**
- iii. **The working group would comprise of four members, Cllr. David Turner, Cllr. Bert Harper, Cllr. Mike Grace, and Cllr. Robert Toft.**
- iv. **The working group's Terms of Reference are to monitor the delivery of the Town Council's Action Plan projects, and to report progress and make recommendations to the Finance & Resources Committee.**

10) SHROPSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS LOCAL AREA COMMITTEE

Nominations were sought for someone to represent the Town Council on the Local Area Committee.

It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Milner Whiteman and Cllr. Mary Hill, would represent the Town Council on the Local Area Committee.

It was further **NOTED** that any Members may attend Local Area Committee meetings and, as the Council's representatives both Cllr. Whiteman and Cllr. Hill would be able to attend and vote at the SALC AGM.

11) YOUTH CLUB BUILDING

Members received an update from the Town Clerk on prospective hirers of the Youth Club building. The police were still considering the option but were not able to give a definitive answer at present, the Scouts still showed some interest, and the Town Clerk had arranged to meet on site with the Medical Practice to explore further usage.

It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that the information be **NOTED**.

12) GRANT FUNDING

Members received a written report from Cllr. David Turner who gave an update on behalf of the Grant Funding Working Group. The Group had looked at external funding streams including grants, donations, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and s106 monies. The Group suggested how available funds could be spent which amounted to circa £67,000.

It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that the progress to date be **NOTED**.

13) AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

Members received a written report from Cllr. Mike Grace concerning the delivery of affordable housing for local people as outlined in the Neighbourhood Plan for Much Wenlock which commits the Town Council to work with one or more housing associations to bring forward exception sites to meet affordable housing needs. The Shropshire Housing Group had established a community-led housing initiative and formed a group, which included members of the community and councillors Holyoak, Bennett, Grace, and Turner, although these councillors were members of the group in a personal capacity. The group had held a series of meetings and the Town Council was now invited to meet with the group to learn of its work and consider how the Council can work with the community-led housing initiative.

It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that:

- i. **The Town Council would meet with the group at 7:30 pm at the Priory Hall on 1 September 2015.**
- ii. **The Town Council would consider a possible way forward for working with the community-led housing initiative at its Council meeting on 3 September 2015.**

14) TRAINING

- a) Members considered a review of the Town Council's Training Statement of Intent. It was proposed that each committee should consider what their training needs are and these should be incorporated into the Training Statement of Intent.

Cllr. Joffrey Watson left at this point in the meeting.

It was **PROPOSED** that online training would make learning easier for councillors who did not wish to attend training sessions.

It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that:

- i. **Each committee would consider their training needs and appropriate training would be sourced by the Town Council.**
- ii. **The Training Statement of Intent should be updated to include online training options to enable greater councillor participation.**

- b) Members received information on forthcoming training events.

It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that the training events be **NOTED**.

15) REPORT FROM SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

Cllr. David Turner presented a verbal report as follows:

- **"HGVs - You'll recall that I've previously referred to proposals for traffic lights on the A4169 Sheinton Street between the two junctions of Station Road. The precise location of the traffic signals has not yet been agreed. Shropshire Council's consultants, Mouchel, will be taking this project forward to detailed design at which stage these specific details will be finalised. When we have a location on a plan I will advise you. Funding is available this financial year to take this named scheme to completion of detailed design and, all being well, implementation subject to a formal Portfolio Holder's Decision. This is planned to take place on 15th July.**

As regards the approach to HGV restrictions jointly with Broseley Town Council and Barrow Parish Council, I have heard no more, and the Town Council may wish to write to Alice Dilly seeking an update.

- **Parking enforcement** - As a result of large vehicles – lorries, coaches and agricultural vehicles – in the middle of the town, there have been a number of traffic conflicts. This is not helped by vehicles parked thoughtlessly or, in some cases, illegally. As a result of my approach, there is a stronger presence by the enforcement officers and one has been on our streets only this afternoon.
- **Planning** - Members will be aware that there was recently speculation in the press about how planning applications are to be handled by Shropshire Council in future. Indeed, some town and parish councils were urged to protest about a Task & Finish Group which met, as planned, to review arrangements put in place some eighteen months ago. There was an assumption about anticipated changes fuelled by Ruyton XI Towns Parish Council, that "this could very likely mean that just the larger applications would be referred to committee, smaller ones would all be decided by officers." This is baseless so far as I'm aware. Currently, some "large" applications are determined by officers and some small applications are determined by committee. Complexity in the balance of planning considerations, or particular controversy, tend to be the trigger for referral to committee. This sometimes, of course, coincides with being a large application. There were also doubts that planning officers were giving regard to local plans and concerns, I can only suggest that you ensure that the Town Council's comments on applications spell out very clearly the policy considerations that you think are pertinent. This would, of course, include reference to the Neighbourhood Plan, which you know I have referred to in committee. In fact, you might wish all your comments on planning applications to be prefaced by a standard introduction. This will assure members of the public and remind planning officers. Once the Task & Finish Group's final recommendations are published I'll advise you.
- **Post Office** - As you should know, the Post Office has confirmed that it will be moved to the Spar store at 67 High Street at a date yet to be confirmed. I have written asking whether the post box is to be relocated as well.
- **Local Joint Committee** - The Wenlock & Shipton Local Joint Committee meets at Shipton Village Hall at 7:00pm on 15th July. Items up for discussion include highway maintenance and youth provision. I urge Town Councillors to attend and to encourage others to do so.
- **Shadwell Quarry** - I have been in touch with both the police and Shropshire Council's public protection team about the safety implications of intruders entering the quarry site. Parked cars on the verge and the attendant litter are further problems. On occasions the gates are open. Trespass is a civil, not a criminal matter, and I suggest that the Town Council increases the pressure by writing to the operators of the site.
- **Advice surgery** - I will be holding an advice surgery on Saturday 15th August at Much Wenlock museum. I'd be grateful if a Town Councillor could join me."

It was **AGREED** that the report be **NOTED**.

16) BUS SERVICE

Members received a new timetable for the 436 bus service between Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth following the recent re-tender of service. The service was to be operated by GHA Coaches Ltd. and would come into effect from 20 July 2015. The late bus service from Shrewsbury had been cut but two new services from Bridgnorth had been added.

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that the information be **NOTED**.

17) FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Members received information concerning a recent Freedom of Information (FOI) request from "Making Parishes Better Places" which asked for a copy of an organisation chart detailing the structure of the Town Council and its committee membership. The Town Clerk had supplied the requested information.

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that the FOI request be **NOTED**.

18) CONSULTATION

Members considered information concerning the two NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups in Shropshire which were considering a number of options to organise future health services and had set up a program called Future Fit which affects emergency and urgent care services.

*At this point in the meeting it was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and unanimously **RESOLVED** to revoke Standing Order no: 3w and continue with the meeting.*

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that, since this was not formal consultation, Town Councillors should respond individually if they wished.

Cllr. Milner Whiteman left at this point in the meeting.

19) CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was received:

- a) SALC information bulletins and other information.
- b) Anonymous letter from a local resident concerning a large parked vehicle in the High Street.

It was **AGREED** that the correspondence be **NOTED**.

20) PLACE PLAN REVIEW

Members considered for approval how the Place Plan should be reviewed.

It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk should respond on behalf of the Town Council.

21) GUILDHALL

Members considered for approval whether the Guildhall should be nominated and registered as an Asset of Community Value in pursuance of the Localism Act 2011 s88(1) and (2). There was some concern expressed about what benefits could be gained and how members of the public would react. After being put to the vote,

it was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that:

- i. **The Guildhall be registered as an Asset of Community Value.**
- ii. **The Finance & Resources Committee should consider what other assets might be worth registering.**

Cllr. David Turner abstained from the vote.

22) PLANNING

- a) There were no planning applications referred by the Planning & Environment Committee to the Town Council for consideration.

NOTED.

- b) The Chairman of the Planning & Environment Committee informed the meeting that the Committee had considered a planning application for Fox Studios at King Street which was for a proposed extension and conversion of existing studio building to form two residential units and one commercial unit. Some local residents opposed the application although the Committee had supported it.

NOTED.

23) FLOOD REPORT

Members received a report from the Community Flood Action Group as follows:

A meeting had taken place between the Environment Agency and the Flood Action Group to better understand issues concerning the quality of Shylte/Farley Brook river. A test of the water quality revealed that this river was almost bottom of the list out of 21 others which were also tested. This was mainly due to ammonia and phosphate content. All rivers in Europe should be classed as 'good status' by 2015 and the Action Group recommended that the Town Council should write to the Environment Agency for an update on the classification of the river.

It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that:

- i. **The report be NOTED.**
- ii. **The Town Council should write to the Environment Agency for an update on the water quality of the river.**

24) GASKELL RECREATION GROUND

- a) Members considered for approval a request from the Gaskell Recreation Ground Much Wenlock (charity) that the budget for the Gaskell Recreation Ground be transferred from the Town Council to the charity's bank account.

It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that the budget be transferred once the charity's bank account was fully operative.

- b) Members considered for approval the revised Management Agreement between the Town Council and the Gaskell Recreation Ground Much Wenlock (charity).

It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that the Agreement be accepted subject to an annual review being carried out by both parties.

25) FACEBOOK/TWITTER

Members considered for approval whether the Town Council should use Facebook and Twitter as a means of communication, especially for the promotion and raising awareness of events such as the recent "Food Fair".

It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that this be deferred to the next meeting.

26) EVENTS AT THE CORN EXCHANGE

Members considered for approval a review of its charging policy for festivals and events at the Corn Exchange. It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that this be deferred to the next meeting.

27) AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

It was **AGREED** to include the following on the agenda for the next meeting.

- Supporting information included with agendas.

28) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Thursday 30 July 2015.

The meeting closed at 22:01.

Signed.....

Date.....

Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak
Town Mayor