

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
7 pm on Thursday 2 October 2014

PRESENT:

Cllr. Mary Hill (Chairman), Cllr. Robin Bennett, Cllr. Kevin Hadley, Cllr. Bert Harper, Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak, Cllr. Paul Laming, Cllr. Robert Toft, and Cllr. Milner Whiteman OBE.

TOWN CLERK:

Sharon Clayton

IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllr. David Turner – Shropshire Council

Ben Walker, Marketing and Engagement Manager, Connecting Shropshire (Shropshire Council)

1 Member of the public

1) CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting. She informed the meeting that her Chaplain, Rev'd Stephen Lowe, was retiring and this was the last meeting where he would say prayers before each Council meeting. The Mayor thanked him for his wise words and presented him with a gift from the Town Council. The Reverend thanked the Council for its good wishes and wished the Council well for the future. He then left the meeting

The Mayor said she had attended 2 events since the last meeting, both very pleasurable. She was a guest at a concert in Bridgnorth at which the Male Voice Choir had performed. She had also been a guest of Ludlow Town Council where the Royal Welsh Regiment was given the Freedom of the Town. She said it was a very good event and very entertaining.

Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak arrived at this point in the meeting.

2) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr. Dafydd Jenkins and Cllr. Joffrey Watson, both of whom had work commitments.

Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak apologised for arriving late.

These apologies were ACCEPTED.

Cllr. Richard Kitchen was ABSENT.

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.

5) BROADBAND

The Chairman welcomed Ben Walker to present an update on 'Connecting Shropshire', a £25m programme to bring fibre broadband to the more rural parts of the Shropshire Council area.

It is a major engineering project funded by Shropshire Council with match funding from elsewhere. The contract was awarded in March 2013 and aims to provide as much fibre based broadband as available funds will allow. The fibre is installed in new green cabinets which people can connect to. Broadband speeds will not increase automatically; people will have to contact their broadband provider if they want faster speeds. There are three live cabinets in Much Wenlock. Broadband providers will not sell broadband via fibre unless it is faster than their current speed. The further away the resident is from the cabinet the slower the broadband speed will be. People closer to the cabinets will be able to benefit from superfast broadband. Some premises will have to have fibre installed directly because it is not physically possible to link from cabinets, however this is more costly.

There is a European funded project to optimise business broadband. There is also a broadband project to help women in business.

Councillors expressed concern that, since fibre had been installed in the cabinet in the Bull Ring their broadband speeds had dropped. Mr Walker said that they would have to contact their broadband provider directly since he could not speak for BT.

Mr Walker was thanked for attending the meeting after which he left.

6) REPORT FROM SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

Cllr. David Turner thanked the Council for inviting him to the meeting, and presented a verbal report as follows:

- Shropshire Council is reviewing grounds maintenance on public green spaces within market towns and wants to know whether the Town Council would be interested in taking over the management of Hunters Gate open space and Much Wenlock Railway Walk. Shropshire Council will pay 100% of the costs in 2015-16 and then reduce to 50% in 2016-17 with the Town Council taking on future costs from 2018-19.
- Cllr. Turner had convened a meeting attended by Shropshire Council's principal highways engineer, the police, Cllr. Kevin Hadley, Cllr. Paul Laming and the Town Clerk to discuss a number of traffic issues in the town. He advised the Town Council to agree its Road Safety Priorities and submit them under the scheme. So far, a sum is being allocated for a feasibility study of solutions for the A4169 issues.
- The police had re-launched a community speed watch initiative and leaflets are available from the Town Clerk.
- Cllr. Turner was pleased that the Planning & Environment Committee had invited him to the first of its Place Plan meetings.
- Planning applications for Fox Studio in King Street and Bradley Farm are to be heard by Shropshire Council's South Planning Committee on 14 October and Cllr. Turner hoped that the Town Council would be sending a representative to state its case.
- Cllr. Turner said that he is now a full member of Shropshire Council's South Planning Committee, a member of the Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee, a member of the Shropshire Hills Area Of Natural Beauty Partnership, Broseley and Barrow Local Joint Committee (Vice Chairman) and Much Wenlock and Shipton Local Joint Committee (Chairman). He is also Deputy Portfolio Holder: Transformation Performance: Town and Parish Councils.
- Cllr. Keith Barrow, Leader of Shropshire Council, has given his full backing to a campaign for the mobile telephone company to improve the service in the County. Cllr. Turner urged Members to sign the on-line petition and to encourage others to do so too.
- Plans for a university in Shropshire are advancing at a pace. It will be named University Centre Shrewsbury and based in the Guildhall. There will be a Post-graduate and Undergraduate curricula and a Shrewsbury Business Masters (MBA) type course offered to local employers.
- Cllr. Turner's next advice surgery would be at Much Wenlock museum on 25 October when he would be joined by Cllr. Robin Bennett and, hopefully, a representative of the police.

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

7) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no requests to speak from members of the public.

8) MINUTES

- a) The minutes of a Town Council meeting held on 4 September 2014 were **APPROVED**.
It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be signed and **ADOPTED** as a true record.
- b) The minutes of a Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 5 August 2014 were **NOTED** and **ADOPTED**.

9) 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.

The Town Clerk also informed Members that:

- She was attending the SLCC National Conference in Bristol and would not be in the office from Wednesday 8 to Friday 10 October 2014.
- The new Christmas lights for the High Street had been delivered and would be installed at the same time as the new eye bolts on Thursday 9 October 2014.
- The Christmas lights switch-on would take place on Friday 14 November 2014 and the Town Clerk was trying to organise activities for the evening.

It was **AGREED** that:

- i. The Town Clerk's report be **NOTED**.
- ii. Mia Cunningham should be invited to write a poem to read at the Christmas lights switch-on.
- iii. Shropshire Council should be asked if it will acknowledge the policies relevant to flooding in the Neighbourhood Plan for Much Wenlock.

b) Members received the minutes from a Market Town Clerks meeting held on 12 September 2014.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes be **NOTED**.

10) COMPLAINTS

a) Members considered for approval the establishment of a Complaints Committee which would be responsible for handling complaints in accordance with the Town Council's 'Code of Practice for handling complaints'.

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED** that all complaints should be dealt with by the Personnel Committee.

b) Members considered for approval draft Terms of Reference for a Complaints Committee.

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** that, since the Personnel Committee would now be responsible for dealing with complaints, the Terms of Reference for a Complaints Committee should be incorporated into the Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee.

c) Members considered for approval a revised Complaints Procedure which had recently been reviewed by the Town Clerk.

It was **PROPOSED** that the Complaints Procedure should be revised to read that complaints should be kept on file for 5 years, rather than no more than 2 years so that, as membership of the Council changed, new Members would have access to an historical record should there be a need to do so.

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

- i. The Complaints Procedure be **APPROVED and ADOPTED**.
- ii. Complaints should be kept on file for 5 years.

11) WW1 WORKING GROUP

Members considered for approval a proposal from the WW1 Working Group which asked the Council to endorse that the Book of Remembrance be placed in the church for the November period pending permission from the church. The Group also wanted the Council to support an invitation for members of the community to place poppies around the commemorative tree in the old cemetery in November. The Group was working towards putting an exhibition on in the Guildhall in 2015 which would focus on the role of the hospital during the war. The Mayor would be invited to open the exhibition.

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

- i. The Book of Remembrance be placed in the church during November pending approval by the church.
- ii. Members of the public would be allowed to place poppies around the commemorative tree in the cemetery.
- iii. The 2015 exhibition could be held in the Guildhall free of charge.
- iv. In order to promote the exhibition the Town Council would provide a printing and copying service for the exhibition material free of charge.

12) POLICY FOR RECORDING OF MEETINGS

Members considered for approval a draft policy for the filming and recording of council meetings in order to meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously RESOLVED** that the policy be **ADOPTED**.

13) FLOOD REPORT

The Town Clerk informed Members that she had requested a report from the Chairman of the Much Wenlock Flood Forum and no report had been received and therefore, there was nothing to report.

NOTED.

14) CONSULTATION

There was no consultation for consideration.

15) CORRESPONDENCE

- a) SALC information bulletin and other information previously emailed to Members.
NOTED.
- b) Letter from Clive Wright at Shropshire Council in response to the Council's letter asking for a copy of the Emergency Plan. Due to Members' concerns that the response did not adequately address the Town Council's request the Town Clerk recommended that she write to the planning service team since it was they whom Mr Wright said was responsible for the Emergency Plan.
It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the Town Clerk should write to the planning service team and inform them that the Town Council has been asking for a copy of Shropshire Council's Emergency Plan for over 12 months and, in spite of repeated requests, is still waiting for a copy.

16) PLANNING

- a) There were no planning applications referred to the Town Council for consideration.
- b) The Chairman reported that she and Cllr. Bert Harper were to attend a meeting of Shropshire Council's South Planning Committee when it considers planning applications for Fox Studios and Bradley Farm. Shropshire Council was recommending both of them for approval and this was contrary to the Town Council's Planning & Environment Committee's objections to both applications.

The Chairman also reported that the Committee had considered a planning application to demolish a dwelling in Homer and replace it with a modern dwelling built with traditional materials to which the Committee had no objection.

It was AGREED to NOTE.

17) AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

It was **AGREED** that Members should contact the Town Clerk with any items they would like included on the next agenda. It was further **AGREED** that Members should be given more advance warning of the deadline for submitting items for future agendas.

18) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Thursday 6 November 2014 commencing 7 pm at the Guildhall.

The Town Clerk left the meeting at this point due to an interest in staffing matters.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act it was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press should not be present.

19) SHROPSHIRE COUNTY PENSION FUND

In pursuance of LGPS Regulations 1995, SI1995/1019, Reg. B1(1) and Sch. A1, and after being given the required 28 days notice, Members considered for approval the membership of an eligible member of staff to join the Shropshire County Pension Fund.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the member of staff should join the Scheme.

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

20) DRAINAGE

Members considered for approval quotes for a drainage survey to be carried out on the Gaskell Recreation Ground.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that Members should have an informal meeting with Ground Control Surveys to discuss in more detail what would be included in a drainage survey.

21) COMPLAINT

Members considered for approval a procedure to deal with a complaint made by a town councillor about a member of staff. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the complaint should be carried out by an independent investigator following advice from SALC.**

The meeting closed at 21:15.

Signed.....
Town Mayor

Date.....