

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
 held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
 7 pm on Thursday 5 June 2014

PRESENT:

Cllr. Mary Hill (Chairman), Cllr. Robin Bennett, Cllr. Kevin Hadley, Cllr. Bert Harper, Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak, Cllr. Joffrey Watson and Cllr. Milner Whiteman OBE.

TOWN CLERK:

Sharon Clayton

IN ATTENDANCE:

Cllr. David Turner – Shropshire Council
 2 Members of the public

1) CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting. She said that the most significant event she had attended recently was the Count for the referendum which was a very interesting experience, with a satisfactory outcome. She hoped that the weather would be better for the start of the forthcoming Wenlock Festival.

2) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

COUNCILLOR	REASON
Dafydd Jenkins	Work commitments
Richard Kitchen	Business commitment

These apologies were **ACCEPTED**.

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.

COUNCILLOR	INTEREST	MINUTE NO:
Milner Whiteman	Wife buried in section of cemetery for discussion	12

4) DISPENSATIONS

None requested.

5) REPORT FROM SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

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

- Sheinton Street was closed last week for essential work by Severn Trent Water. The diversion and the signage were carefully planned but unfortunately some motorists ignored the signs and used Station Road as a cut-through. Some residents were seen to move barriers on to the pavement to make passage down Station Road easier and blocking the footpath in the process. The Police have advised that if they catch anyone moving road signage they will be reported for summons.
- There will be some disruption arising from the superfast broadband rollout. This does not, however, allow BT and its contractors to ignore the usual regulations and considerations that apply to any undertaking. Earlier this week there were traffic lights on a coned-off section of road outside the telephone exchange during the day with no apparent work being undertaken. Anyone who suspects that no work is underway should inform the highways department or contact the Town Clerk for information.

- The next meeting of the Much Wenlock & Shipton Local Joint Committee was to take place on Wednesday 16 July at Shipton Village Hall. Although the agenda had not been published it was anticipated that Kate Garner, one of Shropshire Council's Locality Commissioning Managers, would attend to speak about local commissioning and governance bodies, which will enable to Town Council and others to have greater influence over how local services are delivered.
- Cllr. Turner attended the hearing into the appeal by the owners of the Landowner chemical works in Farley to the Environment Agency's water pollution notice. He was invited to speak and referred to the history of the site, the scale of the challenge and Much Wenlock Town Council's support for local residents. He said that his over-arching concern is public safety, especially of local residents, and expressed concern about the possibility of contaminants not only leaking into the Farley brook and thence the Severn, but also the risk to groundwater and the aquifer that provides water for thousands of homes locally.
- Cllr. Turner reported that there was a 42% turnout at the recent Neighbourhood Plan referendum. 85% of those voting said "Yes" to the Plan. He said that the Town Council should consider how development in the parish can be delivered and may want to engage with partners to enable social and affordable housing development. He also said that the Much Wenlock Place Plan will have to be reviewed with effect from September and the Town Council should consider how this could be done. He advised that members of Shropshire Council's South Planning Committee should be given a hard copy of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Cllr. Turner attended the last Planning & Environment Committee meeting to urge the Committee to delay considering some matters to enable Members to gain a better understanding of the community's views in support or objection of some applications. He said that the Committee had pressed on however, and that he disagreed with the Mayor's comment that the Town Council is only a consultee and, as such, Shropshire Council does not always pay attention to the Council's comments. He said that parish councils' reasons for support or objection to planning applications are given considerable weight although objections or expressions of support without material reason are given little attention. If planning matters are determined by Shropshire Council's South Planning Committee, members give very serious consideration to public and parish council comments at the meeting, and at a recent meeting planning applications were refused contrary to the planning officer's advice.
- Cllr. Turner's next advice surgery would be at Much Wenlock museum on Saturday 12 July with Cllr Robin Bennett and a representative of the police.

It was RESOLVED that the report be NOTED.

Cllr. Milner Whiteman said that Cllr. David Turner had worked hard on the Neighbourhood Plan and he was pleased that a positive outcome had been achieved.

Cllr. Bert Harper said that the Town Council also needs to provide evidence to support comments in response to planning applications.

6) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the public asked Members how Sheinton Street could be make a one-way system because vehicles pose hazards to pedestrians. She asked because of her recent experience when a runaway vehicle narrowly missed a member of her family. She said something needs to be done before someone is killed.

Cllr. Kevin Hadley acknowledged the issues that people experience and said that drivers can be prosecuted for driving on the pavement. He said that it was unfortunate that these issues are not policed and there is no-one to take offenders to task.

Cllr. David Turner offered to convey concerns to Shropshire Council and he said that any plans to make Sheinton Street one-way would depend on consultation.

Cllr. Joffrey Watson expressed concern about moving the problem elsewhere if Sheinton Street was to be made one-way.

The Chairman thanked the local resident for bringing her concerns to the Town Council which would be conveyed to Shropshire Council.

7) MINUTES

- a) The minutes of an Extraordinary Town Council meeting held on 3 April 2014 were APPROVED.
It was RESOLVED that the minutes be signed and ADOPTED as a true record.
- b) The minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting held on 8 May 2014 and the re-convened Annual Town Council meeting held on 15 May 2014 were APPROVED.
It was RESOLVED that the minutes be signed and ADOPTED as a true record.

- c) The minutes of a Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 1 April 2014 were **NOTED** and **ADOPTED**.
- d) The minutes of a Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on 8 April 2014 were **NOTED** and **ADOPTED**.

8) TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

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:

- The by-election to fill the casual vacancy caused by the resignation of Sally Chapman would be held on Thursday 26 June 2014.
- A further by-election had been called following the resignation of Phil Hipkiss and a second by-election would take place either at the end of July or the beginning of August 2014.

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

9) FINANCE COMMITTEE

Members considered for approval the appointment of a councillor on the Finance and Resources Committee to replace Cllr. Richard Kitchen.

It was proposed that this appointment be deferred until another councillor had been elected. However, the proposal was not seconded.

It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Bert Harper be appointed as a Member of the Finance and Resources Committee.

10) BRIDGNORTH AREA TOURISM ACTION GROUP

Members considered for approval the appointment of a councillor to represent the Town Council on the Bridgnorth Area Tourism Action Group.

It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that Cllr. Milner Whiteman be appointed to represent the Town Council on the Bridgnorth Area Tourism Action Group.

11) COMMEMORATIVE SEAT

Members considered for approval a request for a commemorative seat to be placed on the Gaskell Recreation Ground.

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

- i. **Approval should be recommended to the Gaskell Recreation Ground Board of Management.**
- ii. **The Gaskell Recreation Ground Operational Working Group should be asked to plot a seating map for the Gaskell Recreation Ground, to include a limit of seats, for approval by the Gaskell Recreation Ground Board of Management.**

Cllr. Milner Whiteman declared an interest and left the Council Chamber.

12) HEADSTONES

Members considered increasing the dimensions allowed for headstones in the new part of the cemetery for cremated remains because one particular stonemason was not adhering to the Town Council's policy and his actions had caused additional grief to the bereaved. The Town Clerk recommended that the depth be increased from 2" to 3".

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- i. **The maximum dimensions allowed for headstones in the new part of the cemetery for cremated remains would be 19" x 15" x 3" deep.**
- ii. **A depth of 3" to be the maximum that will be accepted.**
- iii. **All stonemasons should be notified and asked to sign an agreement to adhere to the rules otherwise they would no longer be allowed to install memorials in the cemetery.**
- iv. **The Town Clerk be granted delegated authority to use discretion in the event of a dispute.**

Cllr. Milner Whiteman returned to the Council Chamber.

13) FLOOD REPORT

Members received a written report from the Much Wenlock Community Flood Action Group. A river level gauge and rain gauge had been installed at the Pound. The Environment Agency had contributed £4,000 towards the equipment which was owned by the Flood Action Group. There was an annual service charge of almost £700 and the Environment Agency had paid for the first two years. The Town Council was asked to consider taking on this responsibility in future years.

Shropshire Council's proposals for the installation of two attenuation ponds were broadly supported by the Flood Action Group although the Town Council was alerted to key issues.

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

14) TREE PRUNING ON THE GASKELL RECREATION GROUND

Much Wenlock Cricket Club had asked the Town Council if some low hanging tree branches could be pruned on the Gaskell Recreation Ground and, because the trees are protected by TPOs, the Town Council needed to apply for permission.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that:

- i. **The Town Council should recommend that the Gaskell Recreation Ground of Management approves the request.**
- ii. **The Town Clerk be granted delegated authority to apply for the necessary permission in advance of approval from the Board.**

15) CEMETERY

As a member of the Friends of the Cemetery, Cllr. Mary Hill updated Members on the Friends' activities at the cemetery. The Friends had been pruning lower branches where people walk and cleared the cemetery chapel so that it was empty. The cemetery chapel was to be opened to members of the public on 28 June 2014 to commemorate WW1. Poppies would be displayed inside and visitors would be invited to see its potential. The Friends intended to use the occasion to try and raise some funds from enthusiastic members of the public.

It was RESOLVED that the information be NOTED.

16) TRAFFIC ISSUES

Members considered a letter from a member of the public who had had a narrow escape from being hit by a runaway vehicle which had been parked near the Square without the hand brake being engaged. This issue had already been discussed during the public session earlier in the meeting.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that:

- i. **The incident should be reported to the police.**
- ii. **Shropshire Council should be asked to install priority signs, and stop and give way markings, at Wilmore Street.**

17) PLANNING

There were no planning matters referred by the Planning and Environment Committee for consideration by the Town Council.

The Chairman of the Planning & Environment Committee, Cllr. Mary Hill, informed Members how, at its last meeting, to which Cllr. David Turner alluded in his report earlier, the Committee had considered a planning application to develop Wenlock Edge Inn. She told of the opposition that had ensued and, after a site visit and bearing in mind the letters of objection that had been received, the Committee had agreed to oppose the proposals because, whilst the Committee supported development on the public house site, it found it inappropriate to develop the car park because of its close proximity to an area of AONB and SSSI. The Committee also considered an application to develop Bradley Farm which would offer a variety of recreational activities including riding for the disabled. The Committee objected to this application because it felt that the site was not suitable for the proposals due to poor road access and its proximity to the fertiliser factory. However, the Committee did support the proposals and it was with reluctance that the Committee made the decision to object.

18) CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was received:

- a) SALC information bulletin and other information – emailed to Members.
- b) Invitation from Much Wenlock Tree Forum to attend the WW1 tree dedication ceremony on 28 June 2014.

It was RESOLVED that the correspondence be NOTED.

19) CONSULTATION

There was no consultation received for consideration.

20) NEWSLETTER

Members were asked to grant retrospective approval for a monthly Town Council newsletter to be published on the Town Council's website. The newsletter would essentially contain the same information as that written for the Wenlock Herald and the What's What magazine.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the Town Council should publish its own monthly newsletter on the Town Council's website.

21) YOUTH CLUB BUILDING

Members were informed that the Town Clerk had written to Shropshire Council stating that the Town Council would accept its offer, subject to an independent building and drainage survey being carried out at cost to Shropshire Council. The Town Clerk had received a response stating that Shropshire Council may not agree to meeting the costs and advice was being sought from within the Council.

William Brookes School had also written to the Town Council stating that it was prepared to contribute towards the maintenance for School use of the Gaskell Recreation Ground and that it would relocate the equipment currently stored in the garages at the Youth Club building. The School also expressed a desire to work jointly to improve facilities on the Gaskell Recreation Ground and the Youth Club building.

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

- i. **The Town Clerk should wait two weeks (from today) for a response from Shropshire Council.**
- ii. **If no response was received within the time frame the Town Clerk should ask Shropshire Council if it is willing to put 50% towards the surveys.**
- iii. **The Town Clerk should acquire further quotes if the Town Council had to meet any costs.**

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

22) AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

It was **AGREED** that the following items should be included on the next agenda:

- Neighbourhood Plan – how will new development be monitored?
- Youth Club building

23) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Thursday 3 July 2014 commencing 7 pm at the Guildhall.

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.

24) CCTV

Members considered whether to ask Shropshire Council to put in a bid to the PCC, on behalf of the Town Council, to upgrade the Town Council's CCTV system. Only one quote had been received although Shropshire Council had agreed that it would be sufficient provided the Town Council agreed with the proposals.

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that the Town Council should ask Shropshire Council to put in a bid to the PCC on behalf of the Town Council.

The meeting closed at 21.14.

Signed.....
Town Mayor

Date.....