

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
 held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
 7 pm on Thursday 5 October 2017

Present:

Cllr. Graham Edgcumbe Venning (Chairman), Cllr. Trevor Childs, Cllr. Adam Davy, Cllr. David Gibbon, Cllr. Herbert Harper, Cllr. Mary Hill, Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak, Cllr. Marcus Themans, Cllr. Allan Walter, and Cllr. Milner Whiteman OBE.

Town Clerk:

Sharon Clayton

In attendance:

Cllr. David Turner - Shropshire Council
 Charles Teaney, Much Wenlock Christmas Fayre
 1 member of the public

1) Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Mayoral engagements were as follows:

- Attendance at the blessing of the new church roof at Holy Trinity Church, Much Wenlock.

Future engagements would be:

- To attend the commissioning of a new tender for Much Wenlock Fire & Rescue Services.
- Flood attenuation ponds tour
- JL Edwards Trust Awards at William Brookes Academy

The Chairman informed the meeting that on behalf of everyone he had written to two students at William Brookes Academy who had won places at the World Biathlon Championships in Spain and had wished them well. One had achieved 3rd place and one was beaten by just one place to bring back a medal. He said that he would write once again to congratulate them on how well they had done and this was agreed by all Members.

In accordance with Standing Order no: 10(a)(vi) the Chairman **PROPOSED** that the order of business be changed and, after being **SECONDED**, it was **RESOLVED** that agenda item 18, 'Emergency Planning' be considered before item 5, 'Shropshire Council report' to allow Cllr. David Turner to make a contribution to this matter and participate in the discussion.

The Chairman also advised Members that a written request to speak had been received from Charles Teaney who had offered to give advice concerning agenda item 10b, 'Celebrating the 550th Anniversary of the Borough of Wenlock Charter'. The Chairman advised that he would allow Mr Teaney to speak at the appropriate time.

2) Apologies for absence

COUNCILLOR	REASON
Dafydd Jenkins	Work commitment

This apology was **CONFIRMED** and **AGREED** 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.

None declared.

4) Dispensations

None requested.

5) Emergency planning

Cllr. Trevor Childs asked Cllr. David Turner a number of questions concerning Shropshire Council's response to a recent water leak in Telford which led to residents in Much Wenlock being left without water. Although bottled water had been distributed from William Brookes School communication had been sadly lacking. Cllr. Turner was asked to inform what emergency plans Shropshire Council had in place for Much Wenlock should a serious/major emergency occur in the future.

As the Town Council's representative on the Shropshire Council Emergency Planning Committee Cllr. Herbert Harper explained that emergency plans are in place and were available to view online.

Cllr. Childs expressed concern that the Town Council had received no communication from Shropshire Council and, had the Town Council been informed, Town Councillors would have been able to distribute water to residents in need.

Cllr. Turner was unable to answer many of the questions due to their short notice. However, he endeavoured to respond and said that Severn Trent had acted swiftly and effectively and their PR had been pretty good, even though they were not fully aware of what had caused the problem.

The Chairman asked whether Members were aware of the local emergency plan and none were familiar. Cllr. Harper explained that parish councils are not part of local authority emergency plans. Cllr. Childs said he thought the Town Council should have been informed and expressed concern that many elderly residents were not aware of the situation and could not get to the school. He felt that the Town Council could have done more if it had received appropriate information and he suggested that there should be a contact point for future emergencies.

Cllr. Turner informed Members that Severn Trent had pumped water into the system to help alleviate the water shortage. He also said that local people with local knowledge had pulled together to help each other. He felt that Severn Trent had worked well under the circumstances and should be congratulated for the speed at which they had resolved the situation. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that emergency planning should be discussed further at the next meeting.**

6) Shropshire Council Report

Cllr. David Turner gave the following verbal report:

- Detailed information was now available concerning proposed demolition work at Buildwas Power Station including vehicle routes to dispose of the waste. Assurance had been given that Much Wenlock would not be affected by additional traffic flow.
- The order had been placed to carry out white lining although the date for the work was unknown.
- The flood alleviation site visit would take place on Friday 10 November 2017.
- The next community litter pick would take place on Friday 13 October 2017 commencing in the Square.
- His next advice surgery would take place on 14 October 2017.

Cllr. Turner's report was **NOTED**.

Cllr. Turner expressed concern about the Management Committee's recent decision to stop William Brookes Academy from using the Gaskell Recreation Ground and the school had done a deal with Broseley to enable the football team to use the Birchmeadow.

Cllr. David Gibbon suggested that Cllr. Turner should be supported in his comments concerning Shropshire Council's parking strategy and expressed concern about the impact the strategy proposals would have on the town. He also expressed concern about HGVs inconsiderately parking part on the pavement outside the Shell garage on the busy A458. On one occasion an elderly woman was forced to walk on the busy main road to get round a vehicle. Cllr. Gibbon asked for bollards to be installed to prevent further instances. He also expressed concern about the speeding traffic using Hodgecroft as a rat run to and from the primary school and asked Cllr. Turner to support a 20-mph limit.

Cllr. Turner urged the Town Council, and individuals, to respond to Shropshire Council's parking strategy consultation. He also advised that the police should be informed of any vehicles that were parked obstructively. He said he would pursue Members' concerns with Shropshire Council. He also advised that the Town Council's concern about traffic issues should be presented to Shropshire Council for inclusion in the Road Safety Policy.

Cllr. Herbert Harper and Cllr. David Gibbon advised Cllr. Turner that the decision to prevent William Brookes Academy from using the Gaskell Recreation Ground had been brought about because the school had been unwilling to allow access between sites in accordance with the terms of the lease between the Academy and Shropshire Council.

The Chairman advised that there would be an agenda item for discussion on the November Town Council meeting concerning use of the Gaskell Recreation Ground.

7) Public session

Charles Teaney had asked to speak concerning the Charter celebrations and had been invited by the Chairman to speak at the appropriate time before Members made a decision.

8) Minutes

- a) The minutes of a Town Council meeting held on 7 September 2017 were considered for approval.
It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the minutes be signed and ADOPTED as a true record.
- b) The minutes of a Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 1 August 2017 were **NOTED** and **ADOPTED**.
- c) The minutes of a Finance & Resources Management Committee meeting held on 25 July 2017 were **NOTED** and **ADOPTED**.
- d) The minutes of Personnel Committee meetings held on 20 October 2017 were **NOTED** and **ADOPTED**.

9) Town Clerk's Report

Members received a written report from the Town Clerk on outstanding matters and action taken since the last Council meeting. Cllr. Trevor Childs confirmed that the land adjoining the Pound was owned by Wenlock Estates.

The Town Clerk also gave the following verbal report:

The Help2change mobile health clinic would be situated on the Corn Exchange car park for 2 weeks commencing on Monday 16th, Thursday 19th, Friday 20th, Monday 23rd, Thursday 26th and Friday 27th October 2017.

NOTED.

10) Devolved Services

The Chairman reported that the library would be closed on 6 November and re-opened with ceremony on 18 December 2017, during which time it would be totally re-furbished. A programme of refurbishment activity was available to those who were interested. A public notice had been prepared by Shropshire Council Library Services, a copy of which was also available. The notice included a statement about why the library was closing and what would happen during that period, and a citation from the Chairman. An official opening ceremony was to be arranged.

Shropshire Council had been informed that the Town Council had declined taking over any land other than Hunters Gate and Shropshire Council had advised that the land came as a parcel and therefore Hunters Gate could not be devolved as a single piece.

Since all discussions concerning asset transfer had been concluded there would be no further devolved services meetings other than to discuss the library.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to NOTE.

11) Celebrating the 550th Anniversary of the Borough of Wenlock Charter

- a) Members considered for approval Terms of Reference for the Charter Celebration Task & Finish Group.
It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the Terms of Reference be APPROVED.
- b) Members received a written report on plans and ideas for Charter celebration events from the Charter Celebration Task & Finish Group. On behalf of the Group, Cllr. Mary Hill informed the meeting that the Group had met and had agreed that a History Day should be held on Saturday 17 November 2018 when the Charter, or a facsimile of it, would be on display. The Priory Hall had been booked for this day. The Task and Finish Group had divided into two groups, a History Group and a Charter Day Fair Group. The latter had begun with enthusiastic ideas however, finding a suitable day on which to hold a Fair during the summer had been very difficult because of other planned activities with which it would clash. The Group had therefore decided that this idea be abandoned.

At this point, Charles Teaney was invited to offer advice from his own experience in organising stalls for the annual Much Wenlock Christmas Fayre. Charles had kindly volunteered to assist with a Charter Day Fair. However, there were many questions that needed to be answered before firm plans could be made, such as who would be responsible for financial activities, road closures and other behind the scenes tasks. It then became clear that there was insufficient time to put something together in time for summer next year.

Cllr. Milner Whiteman, a member of the Task and Finish Group, explained the difficulties the Group had experienced in trying to find a suitable summer date and it had therefore been suggested that the celebration be combined with the Christmas Fayre, especially since the granting of the Charter 550 years ago was only two days before the date of the 2018 Christmas Fayre. The Christmas Fayre Committee had been approached about this prospect and had expressed a willingness to work with the Town Council to celebrate the 550th anniversary of the granting of the Borough Charter.

Cllr. Mary Hill PROPOSED that the two events be combined and that the Town Council and the Christmas Fayre Committee work together to organise the event.

The Chairman invited comments from Members and the general consensus was that a summer fair was not feasible. Cllr. Allan Walter informed Members of an idea to hold some story telling events as were previously done by the Festival at the Edge. These events would be themed around the Charter celebrations at various places around the town and would help to boost the local economy.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously AGREED:

- i. **To support the Task and Finish Group with its endeavors.**
- ii. **The Town Council would work in partnership with the Christmas Fayre Committee to celebrate the Charter on the same day as the Christmas Fayre in 2018.**

Charles was thanked for his advice after which he left the meeting.

12) Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Members considered for approval an invitation to join the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak would represent the Town Council on the Partnership.**

13) Litter picking

Members considered for approval a request for litter picks and high viz vests for use by the community litter pickers. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously AGREED that:**

- i. **The items be purchased within a budget of £100.**
- ii. **The high viz vests should include the words "Much Wenlock Town Council" for identification purposes.**

14) Public Art Trail

Members considered for approval whether to take ownership of, and responsibility for, the Public Art Trail that belonged to the William Penny Brookes Foundation and move them to other more prominent and suitable locations. Concern was expressed about whether moving them would cause damage.

It was PROPOSED that the Windmill Trust should be approached to determine whether they would allow those situated on their ground to be moved. An amendment to the proposal was put forward: to accept in principle the pieces of art subject to agreement of the Windmill Hill Trust giving permission, and that they could be moved.

It was therefore PROPOSED to accept, in principle, the ownership of the art features, subject to agreement with and approval from the Windmill Trust, and subject to their movability, and after being SECONDED the PROPOSAL was AGREED.

15) Local Joint Committee

Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak gave a verbal update on the last meeting of the Local Joint Committee. Current policing issues were discussed and it was revealed that local crime had increased. Motoring offences were also discussed. The meeting was attended by the PCC, John Champion, who gave a presentation on his role and future police initiatives. Shropshire Council's car parking strategy was also discussed.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to NOTE.

16) Consultation

Members received feedback from Cllrs Mary Hill and Milner Whiteman who had attended a public meeting concerning Shropshire Council's parking strategy consultation. The meeting had been well attended and concern had been expressed about proposals to extend parking charges until 9 pm. In small towns, such as Much Wenlock, this would have a serious impact. Concern had also been expressed about proposals to remove the first 15 minutes of free parking. Proposals also included the introduction of linear parking so that parking charges would be based on the quality of each car park.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that any further comments from Members should be given to the Town Clerk to be conveyed to Shropshire Council.

17) Correspondence

The following correspondence was received:

- a) SALC information bulletin and other information sent to Members via email.

NOTED.

18) Planning

- a) There were no planning applications referred to the Town Council for consideration.

NOTED.

- b) The Chairman of the Planning & Environment Committee gave a verbal update following the last meeting of the Committee. She informed Members that the Committee had objected to some trees being felled because there was no good reason. The Committee had also discussed the demolition of Buildwas Power Station and had sent comments to Shropshire Council and Uniper requesting assurance that traffic from the site would be managed in accordance with the management plan so that traffic did not travel through Much Wenlock.

NOTED.

19) Agenda items for the next town council meeting

It was **AGREED** that Members should inform the Town Clerk of any items for inclusion on the next agenda.

20) Date of next meeting

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Thursday 2 November 2017.

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.

21) Drainage on the Gaskell Recreation Ground

Members received a verbal report from the Gaskell Recreation Ground Management Committee concerning drainage plans on the ground. The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr. David Gibbon, informed Members that Alan Lewis had been commissioned to carry out a feasibility study to develop a drainage plan for the Gaskell Recreation Ground.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to NOTE.

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) Complaint

Members considered for approval how to conclude an ongoing complaint from a member of the public.

It was **PROPOSED** that legal advice should be sought in relation to the way in which this complaint had been handled by the Town Council and that a barrister be appointed to deal with the matter. However, the proposal was not supported.

The following **PROPOSAL** was put forward:

"We shall not be taking any further action, we have behaved properly in this matter, and we do not intend to enter into any further correspondence".

A recorded vote was requested.

**With five Members in support of the proposal,
Cllrs. Milner Whiteman, Mary Hill, Marcus Themans, Yvonne Holyoak, Allan Walter,**

none against,

**and five abstentions,
Cllrs. Graham Edgcumbe Venning, Herbert Harper, Trevor Childs, David Gibbon and Adam Davy,**

it was RESOLVED to write to the complainant and state: "We shall not be taking any further action, we have behaved properly in this matter, and we do not intend to enter into any further correspondence".

The meeting closed at 21:19.

Signed.....

Town Mayor

Date.....