

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
7 pm on Thursday 7 July 2016

PRESENT:

Cllr. Herbert Harper (Chairman), Cllr. Robin Bennett, Cllr. Graham Edgcumbe Venning, Cllr. Mike Grace, Cllr. Mary Hill, Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak, Cllr. Paul Laming, Cllr. David Turner, and Cllr. Milner Whiteman OBE.

TOWN CLERK:

Sharon Clayton

IN ATTENDANCE:

5 members of the public.

1) CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed those present of his Mayoral engagements as follows:

- 4 June: Opening night of Much Wenlock Festival.
- 5 June: Shrewsbury Abbey Shropshire Service in relation to the Queen's 90th Birthday.
- 8 June: Attended a meeting at Ludlow with a number of Mayors, Chairman and Town Clerks for a discussion on devolved services.
- 10 June: visit to Much Wenlock Primary School for a ceremonial presentation of commemorative mugs provided by the Town Council and given to the children in celebration of the Queen's 90th Birthday.
- 2 July: Much Wenlock Primary School summer fair.

2) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr. Joffrey Watson who had family commitments and Cllr. Dafydd Jenkins who had work commitments.

These apologies were **CONFIRMED** and **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.

As a Shropshire Councillor Cllr. David Turner 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. Cllr. Turner also informed Members that he would not participate in the decision concerning planning application no: 14/04254/FUL.

4) DISPENSATIONS

Dispensation granted to Cllr. David Turner - request to participate in discussions concerning devolved services.

NOTED.

5) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

6) MINUTES

- a) The minutes of the re-convened Annual Town Council meeting held on 12 May 2016 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 Town Council meeting held on 2 June 2016 were considered for approval. It was **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be signed and **ADOPTED** as a true record.
- c) The minutes of a Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 3 May 2016 were **NOTED** and **ADOPTED**.

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 10 be considered as the next item.

7) WENLOCK BOROUGH MINUTE BOOKS CONSERVATION

The Chairman invited Bob May, Volunteer Archivist, to update Members on the grant application for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to conserve, digitise, and transcribe the first two minute books of the Borough of Wenlock. Grants and donations amounting to £4,250 had already been received from the Friends of Shropshire Archives, Shropshire Family History Society, Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society, and Professor Mary Beard who had also kindly agreed to be the Patron of the project. The Town Council had earmarked £1,250 towards the project for the 2016/2017 fiscal year, and a further £5,000 was included in earmarked reserves. Mr May said that the HLF bid had been successful and the Council had been awarded £6,100. However, before the funds could be released HLF wanted assurance that the unsecured funds of £2,055 would be forthcoming and the Council was asked to release a further £1,250 from earmarked funds to make up the shortfall of £2,055 so that the project could begin.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously AGREED that:

- i. **The Town Council would allocate a further £3,305 towards the project.**
- ii. **Mr. May be thanked for all his hard work in putting the bid together.**

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 gave the following verbal report:

- Three new donation boxes had been made by A Level students at William Brookes School as part of their coursework. The work had been commissioned by the Finance & Resources Committee and arrangements were in hand for the Mayor to meet with the students to thank them formally for all their hard work.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that:

- i. **The Town Clerk's report be NOTED.**
- ii. **The Town Clerk would begin to draft a Communication Strategy to raise awareness of the role of the local councillor for consideration at the next Town Council meeting on 28 July 2016.**

9) SHARED SERVICES

- a) Members considered for approval whether the Town Council should support a Memorandum of Cooperation, drafted by the Town Clerk at Oswestry, for the re-design of Shropshire Council services. The Memorandum asked for a referendum to be called by Shropshire Council to ensure a county wide consensus on the cost of shared services under threat due to budget cuts.

Members expressed concern about the cost of a referendum which would cost in the region of £700,000 and there would be no guarantee that, should Shropshire Council decide to raise its precept, it would be spent on the best interests of the community.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the memorandum be NOTED and its contents could be used as a basis for further conversation.

- b) Members received notes from a meeting of chairmen and clerks held on 8 June 2016 concerning Shropshire Council services. Those councils in attendance had explained how they each were dealing with the prospect of taking on devolved services and asset transfer and the impact this would have on their resources.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to NOTE.

- c) Members received a copy letter from Marcus Jones MP concerning the referendum principles which apply to council tax rises. The letter made it quite clear that, unless councils could prove that any rise in council tax was supported by the local community, the government had the power to impose a cap.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that a copy of the letter should be forwarded to NALC with a request that NALC discusses the threat of capping with government.

- d) Members received notes of agreed actions following a meeting held on 14 June 2016 with Clive Wright, Chief Executive of Shropshire Council and town and parish councils. Actions included the development of clustering arrangements for town and parish councils to enable shared responsibilities and fundraising for the future of local services and assets.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to NOTE.

10) WORKING GROUP

Members considered for approval the establishment of a working group whose remit would be to explore the advantages of joint working arrangements to deliver local services with neighbouring parishes. Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak and Cllr. Herbert Harper had already met with Broseley Town Council and Bridgnorth Town Council to share their experiences and suggest ideas for future service provision as a joint initiative.

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED:**

- i. **To establish a working group to discuss joint working with neighbouring councils.**
- ii. **The Terms of Reference of the working group would be to explore the advantages of joint working arrangements to deliver local services with neighbouring parishes and report back to the Town Council.**
- iii. **Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak and Cllr. Herbert Harper would represent the Town Council on the working group.**

11) DEVOLVED SERVICES

No response had been received from Shropshire Council concerning the Town Council's principles for taking on devolved services. However, at the last meeting of the working group Shropshire Council had said that they could not guarantee financial support after the first year and Members were concerned that Shropshire Council was moving the goal posts at each meeting. Shropshire Council had suggested that a small working group be established to discuss the financial implications for the Town Council to take on devolved services.

Several proposals were put forward for membership and it was finally

PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the working group would consist of Cllr. Graham Edgcumbe Venning, Cllr. Robin Bennett, and the Responsible Financial Officer.

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 16 be considered as the next item.

12) BRIDGNORTH AREA COMMITTEE

As the Town Council's representative Cllr. Mary Hill informed Members about the last Bridgnorth Area Committee she attended. The meeting had discussed setting up clusters of parish and town council who could work together to consider how local services could be delivered through joint working. Cllr. Hill could not see the benefit of joining a group because of the autonomy of each local council and therefore did not volunteer to be part of this initiative.

NOTED.

13) REPORT FROM SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

Cllr. David Turner gave the following report:

- "WW1 remembrance: I attended St Chads church in Shrewsbury this week in honour of Private Harry Lister 22 Royal Warwickshire Regiment Killed in action 1 July 1916. Remembered at Bourton, Much Wenlock.
- Highways: The recent consultation about parking restrictions, and loading and Blue Badge bays, attracted several comments. Some were supportive and a number provided constructive comments about how the proposals might be improved. With that in mind, some of the proposals are to be amended and further consultation will take place – probably during August. Look out for further information in the library, at the Town Council and on Shropshire Council's website. I will again deliver a letter to properties and businesses directly affected in these streets when the consultation period starts.
- Pinefield - 40 High Street: Shropshire Council has now served a "Section 215" notice on the owners. This sets out the minimum works required to bring the property back to a reasonable standard and which will rectify the "adverse effects the property is having on the amenity of the neighbourhood". The specified works include removing vegetation from the building, repairing windows, doors, gutters and roof tiles and dealing with pointing and with the cracks in the render. I believe that there is a copy of the notice fixed to the building. The notice requires the works be completed within six months. Hopefully, serving the notice will result in a positive transformation in the property's integrity and appearance. Ideally, bringing it back into habitation will secure its future.
- Keep Much Wenlock tidy: The next litter-pick session will be on 9th September. If there's a part of the town, or any of the outlying communities, that you think would benefit from a couple of hours collecting bottles, cans, packaging and a variety of other rubbish, please let me know and join in.
- Local Joint Committee: The next meeting will be on Wednesday 20th July at Shipton Village Hall. Doctor Stanford from the medical practice will be talking about current health matters. The police and the highways engineers will also be in attendance to talk about highways and traffic matters. The last LJC meeting in Priory Hall was particularly poorly attended and I do hope that Much Wenlock Town Councillors will make the effort to get to this one and to encourage local folk to come along too. In an effort to make it as easy as possible we have laid on the Friendly Bus to take people to Shipton and return them to Wenlock.

- Advice surgery: My next advice surgery is at Brockton C of E Primary School on Saturday 30th July. It runs from 10:30am until 12:00, and I expect to be joined by an Easthope, Shipton & Stanton Long Parish Councillor and a representative of the police. Of course, if any local resident has a problem that they think I can help with, they can contact me at any time by telephone or email.”

It was agreed that:

- i. **The report be NOTED.**
- ii. **Cllr. Mary Hill would join Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak to represent the Town Council on the LJC.**

14) CONSULTATION

There was no consultation for consideration.

15) CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was received:

- a) Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC) information bulletins and other information sent to Members via email.
- b) Email from the Leader of Telford & Wrekin Council asking for support for the services currently provided at the Princess Royal Hospital.

It was AGREED that:

- i. **The correspondence be NOTED.**
- ii. **The Leader of Telford & Wrekin Council be thanked for his letter but the Town Council had no comment.**

16) PLANNING

- a) Members considered for approval a recommendation from the Planning & Environment Committee to object to planning application no: 14/04254/FUL for the refurbishment, extension and change of use to provide A4 (pub/bar), A5 (hot food takeaway) and residential use and associated works (amended description) at 15 High Street.

Objections had been received by the Town Council outlining a number of concerns about the proposals including noise from late night customers, additional traffic and parking issues, and the height of the proposed new building. The Civic Society had also expressed concern.

Cllr. David Turner abstained from the vote.

Whilst the Town Council would welcome a more sympathetic design within its setting;

it was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to object on the following grounds:

- i. **The applicant should be asked for a better quality Design and Access Statement.**
 - ii. **The proposals are not in keeping with Objective GQD 2 in the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Much Wenlock.**
 - iii. **The applicant needs Flood Defence Consent in accordance with the Water Resources Act 1991 and associated byelaws because the site is within 8 metres of a main river, and attenuation proposals must conform with Objective 3 in the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Much Wenlock.**
 - iv. **The Town Council supports the conclusion of the refusal of planning permission in July 2008 which states that the proposed development, by reason of unsatisfactory design, excessive size, and close proximity to the listed buildings adjacent to the site, would adversely affect the setting of each listed building, and is contrary to policies within the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Much Wenlock, (application no: 08/0338 refers).**
 - v. **The Town Council notes and endorses the comments of the Public Protection Specialist dated 15 June 2016.**
- b) The Chairman of the Planning & Environment Committee informed Members that there were two planning applications that the Committee had objected to although Shropshire Council had granted permission even though proposals were contrary to the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Much Wenlock. The Chairman had therefore conveyed the Committee’s disappointment to the Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring Working Group.

NOTED.

17) FLOOD REPORT

There was no report from the Community Flood Action Group.

NOTED.

18) COMMUNITY LED AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT

Cllr. Mike Grace updated Members on the recent Project Group Board meeting concerning the proposed development of affordable homes at Callaughton Lane. The planning application had been submitted to Shropshire Council and would hopefully be available for discussion at the Town Council meeting on 28 July 2016. The Local Lettings Plan was still under discussion and the Town Council's comments had been taken on board.

PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to NOTE.

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

19) AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

It was **AGREED** that the Communication Strategy should be included on the next agenda.

20) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Thursday 28 July 2016.

The meeting closed at 20:56.

Signed.....

Date.....

Cllr. Herbert Harper
Town Mayor