

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
 held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
 7 pm on Thursday 2 November 2017

Present:

Cllr. Graham Edgcumbe Venning (Chairman), Cllr. Trevor Childs, 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

Cllr. Peter Nutting, Leader of Shropshire Council

2 members of the public

1) Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a special welcome to Cllr. Peter Nutting.

Mayoral engagements were as follows:

- The commissioning of the new fire appliance on 11 October 2017 to which he donated a sum of money to the fire charity in acknowledgement of the work they carry out for the whole of the community.
- A planning meeting with Shropshire Council concerning the library refurbishment during which the library would be closed.

Future engagements would be to attend:

- Much Wenlock cemetery with pupils from Much Wenlock Primary School.
- William Brookes Academy for the JL Edwards Memorial Trust awards.
- A gathering for Remembrance at the Corn Exchange at 11am on 11 November 2017.
- Remembrance services at Bourton Church and Holy Trinity Church Much Wenlock.

2) Apologies for absence

COUNCILLOR	REASON
Adam Davy	Family engagement
Dafydd Jenkins	Work commitment

These apologies were **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) Cllr. Peter Nutting

The Chairman invited Cllr. Nutting to speak to which he responded as follows. As the Leader, he is interested in economic development, not because there is a lot of unemployment in Shropshire, but because there is a lot of poor employment. Wages are too low, the skills base is too low, and he wants to try and change that. There is also a huge imbalance in age in Shropshire with many older people and few young people and he wants to try and keep a better balance. Many people come to Shropshire to retire and, as they get older, they begin to use health services which costs money and Shropshire Council wants to balance the situation. The more younger people there are in work the more money will go into paying for adult care services.

Cllr. Nutting also wants to change the culture of Shropshire Council by making it more reactionary. It takes too long to respond to customer complaints and people feel grumpy. He is trying to lift the atmosphere by bringing in a 'no blame' culture so that decisions can be made by officers who meet members of the public instead of them having to wait for top management approval.

Shropshire Council is spending £20m more than it has and its budget needs to be well managed, which is why economic growth is important because the more income Shropshire Council receives in business rates the more money it has for service provision. Adult social services are increasing on average by £8m each year as more people come into the system. Each adult in the social care system costs £25,000 per year. There is about £150m in reserves which is earning on average around 5% interest, so Cllr. Nutting wants to invest the money in property to try and increase interest to 8%. This will help towards having a neutral budget, estimated to take 3 years to achieve, so there will be more money to do more.

Shropshire Council is currently consulting on car parking charges, which Cllr. Nutting knows is unpopular. However, he does not think that the market towns should have increased charges because they would not be able to stand the strain as much as the larger towns could. It is hoped that an additional £1.5m will be raised through increased parking charges.

To raise further funds Shropshire Council is considering charging for green waste collection because the Council does not have a duty to collect this. Whilst it is an unpopular idea the Council needs to raise extra revenue. The Council is also looking at spending up to £20m refurbishing the Shirehall. The building in its current state is not very welcoming and it is intended to modernise it and make it more energy efficient to save hundreds of thousands of pounds each year. Ideas include converting unused areas of the building into a restaurant and perhaps a small M & S. The Council has already been in discussions with interested business partners and, if brought into fruition, these ideas could bring in additional income of circa £2m.

Shropshire Council is currently looking at the green belt and the M54 corridor heading towards Wolverhampton. Cllr. Nutting was to visit Sajed Javid MP to discuss the possibility of a new economic zone just off the M54 to help the West Midlands and the economy of Shropshire by creating more employment.

Cllr. Nutting was asked whether the Council was considering in-sourcing rather than out-sourcing to which he replied that the Council was looking at how people can be kept in their own homes rather than being put into a care home, for example by selling the freehold of council housing which would provide more money for adult care.

Cllr. Nutting was asked about the economic impact new car parking proposals would have on market towns such as Much Wenlock. Cllr. Nutting said he recognised that the proposals might have a negative impact on the local economy and emphasised that most of the money would be drawn from the larger market towns such as Bridgnorth, Shrewsbury and Ludlow.

Cllr. Nutting was also asked about future plans for Buildwas Power Station and how additional construction traffic would impact on Much Wenlock. Cllr. Nutting said that Shropshire Council would try to control HGV traffic although it might be difficult. On another matter, Cllr. Nutting said he could not promise a 20mph speed limit at the moment because it involves lots of legal work and background work and the Council cannot afford to do this in all the towns in Shropshire, but it might be looked at in the future. However, he advised that a 20mph zone could be considered if the school made a request to Shropshire Council.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Nutting for attending the meeting.

6) Shropshire Council Report

Cllr. David Turner gave the following verbal report:

- He had attended the WW1 remembrance service at St. Chadd's church in Shrewsbury.
- He had provided a written report in response to the questions asked at the last Town Council meeting concerning the burst water main in Telford that left Much Wenlock without water. He said the Emergency Planning Unit would be more than happy to attend a Town Council meeting to respond to concerns.
- There is a masterplan for the Buildwas Power Station site but details were unknown at present. No spoil would travel through Much Wenlock during the demolition process and assurance had been given that it would all travel along the A4169, the primary route.
- About 2,000 responses had been received concerning Shropshire Council's consultation on car parking, 30 of which had been identified as originating from Much Wenlock.

- The new 436 bus service was being operated by a new company and there had been many complaints about buses being late. Passengers were urged to forward their complaints to Shropshire Council so that they could assess the situation.
- The Place Plan was due for review and community enablement officers were available to assist the Town Council with the review for Much Wenlock.
- The Local Plan Review consultation had begun and responses could be made until 21 December 2017.
- A site visit of the attenuation ponds would take place on 10 November 2017.
- Lining around Queen Street had been identified as a priority and would take place during this financial year.
- Following the Boundary Review Much Wenlock would remain in the Ludlow constituency.
- The next litter pick would take place on 10 November 2017.
- Cllr. Turner's next surgery would take place on 20 November 2017.

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

7) Police Report

Members received a written report from the local policing team which showed incidents in Much Wenlock over the last two months much of which was anti-social behaviour. Someone said that young people had nothing to do and were bored and in response, Members were informed that, following a young person asking if the Town Council would provide a skate park, a questionnaire was sent to both the primary school and William Brookes Academy asking what pupils would like the Town Council to provide. There was no response from either school.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to write to the PCC, John Campion and express disappointment about local issues and request that a detached youth worker be assigned to Much Wenlock.

Cllr. Turner and Cllr. Nutting left the meeting at this point.

8) Public session

There were no requests to speak.

9) Minutes

- a) The minutes of a Town Council meeting held on 5 October 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 5 September 2017 were **NOTED** and **ADOPTED**.
- c) The minutes of a Finance & Resources Management Committee meeting held on 26 September were **NOTED** and **ADOPTED**.

10) 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 gave the following verbal report:

- The 'helptochange' mobile clinic had been parked on the Corn Exchange car park for two weeks during October and, in spite of the car park being cordoned off to reserve space for the vehicle, some people had taken no notice and had moved the cones. Some had parked in spaces reserved for employees and tenants of the Corn Exchange. Similar problems would more than likely be encountered when the mobile library and contractor vehicles needed to park there during November and therefore temporary fencing would be erected during that period.
- There had been a Facebook conversation in response to the Town Clerk's post about the damaged poppy at the Corn Exchange and all councillors had been issued with a copy.
- Volunteers were needed to turn on this year's Christmas lights at 3:30 pm on the day of the Christmas Fayre.

It was AGREED that:

- i. **The Town Clerk's report be NOTED.**
- ii. **Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak and Cllr. Herbert Harper would help with the Christmas lights switch-on.**

11) Income and expenditure

Members received income and expenditure details from 1 April to 30 September 2017.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to NOTE.

12) Finance & Resources Management Committee Member

Nominations were sought for another Member to join the Finance & Resources Management Committee.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and unanimously AGREED that Cllr. Marcus Themans be appointed to the Finance & Resources Management Committee.

13) The Battle's Over – a Nation's Tribute – 11 November 2018

- a) Cllr. Mary Hill informed Members that the church had agreed to take part in bell ringing at 7.05 pm on 11 November 2018 and the 'Battle's Over' organisers had been notified. It was also intended to light a beacon on the day and she recommended that a small Task and Finish group be established.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the following Members be appointed to the Battle's Over Task & Finish Group: Cllr. Mary Hill, Cllr. Herbert Harper, Cllr. David Gibbon and Cllr. Trevor Childs who would work to a completion date coterminous with the July 2018 Town Council meeting.

- b) Members considered for approval Terms of Reference for the Battle's Over Task & Finish Group.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the Terms of Reference as drafted be APPROVED.

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

Members received a written update from the Charter Celebration Task & Finish Group. The Group had last met on 18 October 2017 when various ideas had been discussed. A speaker had been secured to speak on the History Day although Professor Mary Beard had declined becoming Patron due to her busy schedule.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the Task and Finish Group should provide a programme of events for consideration at the next Town Council meeting.

15) Friends of the Cemetery

Members received a verbal update from Cllr. Mary Hill on behalf of the Friends of the Cemetery. She informed Members that the 'Friends' were reaching the end of their work for the year. A commemoration was to be held at the memorial garden planted by the primary school children on 10 November 2017 and poppies would be placed on the graves of the war dead when a 2-minutes silence would be held. All Town Councillors were invited to the event.

Cllr. David Gibbon and Cllr. Trevor Childs informed the meeting that they had both visited the chapel together to look at the blistered plaster on the inner walls and advised Members that it be left in its present condition as it was not a priority in the Town Council's work calendar.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that:

- i. **The 'Friends of the Cemetery' be congratulated on all they had achieved at the cemetery.**
- ii. **No further work should be carried out on the chapel for the time being.**

16) Emergency planning

Members had been concerned about Shropshire Council's response to the loss of water in Much Wenlock caused by a burst pipe in Telford during October. Cllr. Harper informed Members that town and parish councils are not first or second responders to emergencies and are therefore not involved in emergency planning. He advised that there was an emergency Flood Plan for Much Wenlock which was in the process of being updated.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that:

- i. **Representatives from the Emergency Planning Unit should be invited to attend a future Town Council meeting.**
- ii. **Broseley Town Council should also be kept informed of the Town Council's endeavours to find out more about emergency plans for the locality.**

17) Buildwas Power Station

- a) Members received information from Uniper outlining the traffic routes that HGVs would take during the demolition of Buildwas Power Station.

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

- b) Members received a written report from Cllr. Marcus Themans in which he asked the Town Council to consider the impact that future development at the Buildwas Power Station site might have on Much Wenlock in terms of increased pressure on parking, education, health provision, housing needs and other local services. He proposed that the Town Council should react early and request that appropriate service provision is put into Much Wenlock.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the Town Council's concerns should be included in the Place Plan for Much Wenlock.

18) Place Plan Review

Members received information concerning the Place Plan Review 2017 and considered for approval the establishment of a Task & Finish Group to work with Shropshire Council to review the Place Plan for Much Wenlock.

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

- i. **Not to establish a Task & Finish Group.**
- ii. **The Town Council's community enablement office, Kerry Rogers should be invited to meet with Town Councillors to discuss how the Place Plan for Much Wenlock might be updated.**

19) Public Art Trail

Members considered for approval a proposal to take ownership and responsibility of the public art trail. The Windmill Trust had agreed that the two situated on their land could be re-sited and Shropshire Council had agreed that the one at Station Road and the two along the railway walk could be re-sited.

It was **PROPOSED** that the art trail be re-sited. An amendment to this proposal was **PROPOSED** thus: that the Town Council should agree to take ownership of the art trail and then determine where each feature should be re-sited. A further amendment was **PROPOSED** that, having taken ownership, one art feature be sited in the Square and one sited at Sheinton Corner, and agreement of re-locating the remaining three features be deferred. After being **SECONDED** it was therefore **AGREED** that:

- i. **Having sought appropriate consent from the landowners to re-site them, the Town Council should take ownership of five features of the public art trail.**
- ii. **One feature to be sited in the Square and one to be sited on Sheinton corner.**
- iii. **Suitable locations of the remaining three features would be considered at a future meeting along with new signage for the art trail.**

20) Road Safety Policy

Members considered for approval that the Town Council's concerns about traffic in Much Wenlock should be included in Shropshire Council's Road Safety Policy.

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

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

21) Gaskell Recreation Ground

- a) Members received a letter from William Brookes School expressing concern about use of the Gaskell Recreation Ground.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that this was a matter for the Gaskell Recreation Ground Management Committee to resolve and that the Town Council should NOTE the letter.

- b) The Chairman of the Gaskell Recreation Ground Management Committee informed Members that a meeting with the school had been arranged at which use of the Gaskell Recreation Ground would be discussed.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to NOTE.

22) Consultation

The following consultation was considered:

- a) Shrewsbury North West Relief Road – 2017 consultation

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the proposals be NOTED.

- b) Local Plan Review – 'Preferred Scale and Distribution of Development' consultation

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that this be considered at the next meeting.

23) Correspondence

The following correspondence was received:

- a) SALC information bulletin and other information sent to Members via email.
- b) Notes from a Market Town Clerks meeting held on 4 October 2017.

NOTED.

24) Planning

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

NOTED.

- b) The Chairman of the Planning & Environment Committee, Cllr. Mary Hill informed Members that there had only been one planning application for discussion at the last Committee meeting but the Committee had given considerable thought to flooding and other issues. She recommended that the Town Council should write to Richard Beaman and thank him for starting work at 15 High Street and wish him well with the project's future and ask if he would level the front of the site in readiness for this year's Christmas Fayre.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the Chairman, Cllr. Graham Edgcumbe Venning should write to Mr Beaman and ask if he would level the site and tidy it in time for the Christmas Fayre.

25) 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.

26) Date of next meeting

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Thursday 7 December 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.

27) Complaint

Members considered a complaint from a member of the public who had made an FOI request to the Town Council and was not happy with the outcome.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED:

- i. **That the Town Council had considered the complaint and there was no justification for it.**
- ii. **To write to the complainant and inform him that the Town Council was not aware of any plans for development adjacent to Hunters Gate and therefore not able to discuss development proposals until the Council was formally notified of such plans.**

The meeting closed at 21:09.

Signed.....
Town Mayor

Date.....