

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
7 pm on Thursday 6 December 2018

Present:

Cllr. Graham Edgcumbe Venning (in the chair), Cllr. Mary Hill, Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak, Cllr. Dafydd Jenkins, Cllr. Kate Southan, Cllr. Marcus Themans, Cllr. Daniel Thomas, Cllr. Allan Walter and Cllr. Milner Whiteman OBE.

Locum Town Clerk:

Trudi Barrett

In attendance:

6 members of the public

1) Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. It had been a busy month in the town and co-operation had been a common factor in the various events and celebrations that had taken place. The Chairman thanked the many organisers of recent activities such as the Commemoration events, the Charter Day and the Christmas Fayre. The Charter celebrations had been enjoyable and informative and the Chairman thanked the speakers for their contributions. The Christmas Fayre had been a magnificent event and the Chairman expressed heartfelt thanks to the organisers. There had been widespread interest and media coverage of the events. The Chairman encouraged everyone to view the Book of Remembrance housed in the Church. Town Councillors had presented prizes to pupils in year 6 at the primary school for their World War 1 posters. The achievements of secondary pupils had been recognised recently at the JL Edwards award presentation evening at William Brookes School.

The Chairman noted that Barclays Bank had installed a cash point machine in the former bank premises just in time for the Christmas Fayre, following intense negotiations between the Town Council and representatives of the Bank.

The Mayor announced that the Town Clerk, Sharon Clayton, would be formally retiring on 16th December. On behalf of the whole community of Much Wenlock the Mayor expressed thanks for her major contribution to the town and wished her every happiness in the future.

The Mayor wished everybody a very happy Christmas.

2) Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Cllr. Bert Harper, who was unwell and Cllr. Adam Davy, who had a work commitment.

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.

4) Dispensations

None requested.

5) Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Councillor David Turner reported that residents were now able to enjoy a very good broadband speed. Most premises in the Much Wenlock area now had access to superfast broadband and an excellent service. A new cell phone mast had been installed at Easthope Cross and mobile phone coverage in Much Wenlock was also much improved.

The Shropshire Council Local Plan review consultation on preferred site allocations was now underway. The 'preferred site' for Much Wenlock was on land off Hunter's Gate on Bridgnorth Road. Shropshire Council would be holding a public meeting at the Priory Hall on Thursday, 3rd January 2019 at 7.00pm.

Cllr. Turner's next advice surgery would be held on 12th January 2019 at Much Wenlock Museum and a Town Councillor and member of the police would be invited to join him.

Councillor Turner wished everybody a happy Christmas and New Year.

NOTED

6) Public Session

The Mayor had received no requests to speak on matters on the agenda.

7) Minutes

- a) The minutes of a Town Council meeting held on 1 November 2018 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 an Extraordinary Town Council meeting held on 9 November 2018 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 2 October had not been included in the agenda papers and adoption was postponed to the next meeting.
- d) The minutes of a Finance & Asset Management Committee meeting held on 23 October 2018 had not been included in the agenda papers and adoption was postponed to the next meeting.

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.

It was noted that consideration of The Pound had been left in abeyance by Finance Cttee.

Letters to businesses regarding the sponsorship of floral displays would be going out in the New Year.

NOTED

9) Retirement of Town Clerk

- a. Councillors **NOTED** that the Town Clerk had given notice that she would retire on 16th December 2018.
- b. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to set up a Recruitment Panel of Council members to manage the recruitment process for a new Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer, members to be Councillors Edgcumbe Venning, Thomas and Walter (members of HR Committee), Harper and Hill.**
It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the Panel would have delegated authority to undertake the recruitment of a Town Clerk / RFO up to and including recommending the appointment of the successful candidate to full Council.

10) Communication Policy

Councillors considered the updated Communications and Media Policy, as recommended by the Media, Marketing and Tourism Working Group. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to approve the revised policy, subject to clarification of item 10 on page 5.**

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED AND RESOLVED that Cllrs. Southan and Davy be appointed as social media administrators.

11) Installation of ATM in former Barclays Bank premises

Councillors **NOTED** that Barclays Bank had re-installed a free to use ATM in the former bank premises, 10 High Street, at the request of the Town Council.

Cllr. Edgcumbe Venning was thanked for his extraordinary efforts to ensure the ATM was put in place in time for the Christmas Fayre. Thanks were also expressed to Barclays Bank for their cooperation. It was understood that retention of the ATM would be guaranteed for 10 years at no charge to the Council. The Clerk was asked to send a formal letter of thanks to Barclays Bank.

12) Gaskell Ground Drainage

- a. Councillors **NOTED** that tenders for the Gaskell Ground drainage project had been received and reviewed by a consultant and members of the Gaskell Ground Management Committee. Thanks were expressed to Cllr. Southan for her work.
- b. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to approve the recommendation from the Committee that negotiations proceed with the preferred contractor, DW Shotton.**
- c. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to delegate authority to the Management Committee to negotiate with the contractor to finalise a project price within the Council's allocated budget, for approval by the Town Council.**

13) Internal Audit Report

Councillors **NOTED** that the internal auditor had completed an interim review. Councillors considered recommendations arising from the review. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to adopt the recommendations.**

14) Forward Planning Documents

Councillors **NOTED** the following documents, which would be updated further by the Finance & Asset Management Committee:

- a) Critical Commitments Strategy 2018 – 2021
- b) Updated Asset Management Plan 2019 – 2021
- c) Updated Forward Plan 2019 – 2021
- d) Updated Action Plan November 2018.

15) Budget 2019/2020

- a) Councillors **NOTED** that members of the Finance & Asset Management Committee had been asked to submit items for inclusion in the budget 2019/20. Councillors not serving on that committee were also encouraged to submit proposals.
- b) Councillors **NOTED** that a draft budget would be presented for consideration at the January full Council meeting.

16) Shropshire Community Fund Launch

Councillors **NOTED** a report prepared by Cllr. Harper on the launch of the Shropshire Community Fund on 6 November 2018. The Fund had been set up to support smaller charities and community groups and there was currently around £800,000 available, made up from a number of smaller grant schemes, managed by the Shropshire Rural Communities Charity (RCC). In the absence of Cllr. Harper, Cllr. Holyoak reported that funding from one of the schemes was only available to organisations based within 15 miles of Prees.

17) Shropshire Local Plan Review – Consultation on Preferred Sites

- a) Councillors **NOTED** that the consultation period for the Shropshire Local Plan Review – Consultation on Preferred Sites would run from Thursday, 29 November 2018 until Thursday, 31 January 2019.
- b) Councillors noted that the Planning & Environment Committee would consider the review at their next meeting on 8 January 2019. On the recommendation of members of the Planning & Environment Committee **it was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to hold an extraordinary full Council meeting on Thursday, 17 January 2019 to review the consultation documents, time and venue to be confirmed.** Members of the public giving prior notice of their wish to speak would be able to express their views on the preferred sites for housing and commercial development; the meeting would follow the normal conventions of a Council meeting.

18) Consultation

None to hand.

19) West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner

- a) Councillors **NOTED** the summary report of the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner's Annual Town and Parish Council Survey 2018.
- b) Councillors **NOTED** the PCC Newsletter, which had been emailed to Members.

20) Shropshire Council Community Enablement Team

Councillors **NOTED** the announcement from Shropshire Council that redundancy consultation had begun for the community enablement team. It was proposed to recruit a new team of six officers focussed upon Place Plan Development.

21) Shropshire Museums Service Strategy 2018 – 2023

Councillors **NOTED** the new Shropshire Museums Service Strategy 2018 – 2023.

22) Appointment of new Lord Lieutenant

Councillors **NOTED** that the Queen had appointed Mrs Anna Turner DL as Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the County of Shropshire to succeed Sir Algernon Heber-Percy KCVO upon his retirement on 2 January 2019.

23) Christmas Closure

Councillors **NOTED** that the Council office would be closed for the period 24 December 2018 to 1 January 2019 and would re-open on Wednesday, 2 January 2019.

24) Correspondence

Councillors received and **NOTED** the following:

- a) SALC information bulletin and other information – emailed to Members.
- b) Leaflet providing an overview of the Shropshire Drug & Alcohol Action Team and the Shropshire Recovery Partnership.

25) Agenda items for next town council meeting

Members were invited to suggest items for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting. It was **NOTED** that representatives of Connexus had been invited to attend to speak on affordable housing.

26) Date of next meeting

Councillors **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on **10 January 2019**. Cllr Edgcumbe Venning gave his apologies for that meeting, which would be chaired by Cllr Harper.

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) Barclays Bank

Councillors **NOTED** a verbal report on the Town Council’s negotiations with Barclays Bank.

28) Recruitment of new Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

- a) **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to approve the retention of the Locum Town Clerk on the current terms until the recruitment of a new Town Clerk is completed.**
- b) Councillors considered the urgent appointment of a temporary RFO until a permanent RFO is appointed. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to delegate this matter to the Recruitment Panel.**

The meeting closed at 20.12pm

Signed.....
Town Mayor

Date.....