

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
7 pm on Thursday, 9th January 2020

Present: Cllr. Herbert Harper (in the Chair), Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak, Cllr. Natalie Park, Cllr. Matthew Park, Cllr. Marcus Themans, Cllr. Daniel Thomas, Cllr. Allan Walter, Cllr. Duncan White, Cllr. Milner Whiteman OBE.

Town Clerk: Trudi Barrett

In attendance: Shropshire Councillor David Turner

1) Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Mayor reported recent events attended:

7th December 2019: the Much Wenlock Christmas Fayre, where he helped to welcome visitors, in particular those who had come by coach from the Wigan and Manchester area. The Clerk was asked to write to the Christmas Fayre committee to thank them for their hard work in organising and running the event.

10th December 2019: a concert by Much Wenlock Male Voice Choir at The Edge Arts Centre.

9th January 2020: a presentation by Harworth at the Ironbridge Power Station, where an overview of the outline Planning application was provided.

2) Apologies for absence

Cllr. Mary Hill, who was unwell and Cllr. Dafydd Jenkins, who was working.

These apologies were 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. **None.**

4) Dispensations

None requested.

5) Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Councillor, David Turner, gave a verbal report:

With regard to highways, gully emptying had been carried out on 8th December with subsequent follow-up although some issues were still outstanding. Councillor Turner was pressing Shropshire Council to address problems deeper under the road surface. There were continuing problems with potholes throughout the parish and beyond. Following persistent pressure, Councillor Turner had now received assurances from Shropshire Council that there were plans to address the problems around the town.

The outline application for the development of the Ironbridge Power Station had been submitted to Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council. Councillor Turner had asked for a hard copy of the summary document to be made available at Much Wenlock library.

Councillor Turner's next advice surgery in Much Wenlock would be held on 7th March. A Town Councillor would be welcome to join him.

The Mayor advised that the resurfacing of the road to Homer had been carried out earlier in the day.

6) Public Session

There had been no requests to speak.

7) Minutes

- a. The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 5th December 2019 were considered for approval. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2019 be APPROVED and ADOPTED as a true record.**
- b. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 5th November 2019 be ADOPTED as a true record.**

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 there were continuing problems with changing the Barclays mandate.

Councillors noted advice received from the monitoring officer at Shropshire Council with regard to the publication of Councillors' home addresses. The Clerk was asked to check whether it was necessary to publish this information on the Shropshire Council website as a landholding or whether it could be provided upon request only.

The Clerk reported that documentation relating to the purchase of the telephone kiosk in Homer had been received from BT and would be considered at a forthcoming Finance & Asset Management Committee meeting.

NOTED

9) Working Group Reports

Councillors considered reports from the following working groups:

a. Friends of the Cemetery

The 'Wild Team' would be coming to help tidy the site on 28th January. Some of the Christmas lights would be stored in the Cemetery Chapel.

b. History

A brief meeting had been held with the volunteer archivist regarding the purchase of a new fireproof cabinet.

c. Communications, Markets & Tourism

The working group had been considering how to mark VE Day. It was noted that the first May bank holiday had been moved to Friday, 8th May 2020 for the commemoration. The group was considering three possible options to mark the day: a street party, an event on the Church Green or an event on the Gaskell Ground, any of which would need community involvement. The group would consider the feasibility of each option and report back to the next meeting.

d. Housing Needs

Councillor Holyoak had received an update from Connexus on a further planned development. It was reported that Connexus was very near to forming a residents' group and had had a lot of interest from residents in the area. There had been no official announcement of the vendor of the land concerned but Connexus had appointed an architect for the project. The proposed development would be environmentally friendly but would not be built to the very high specification of Callaughtons Ash. The roads in Callaughtons Ash were due to be adopted by Shropshire Council Highways. No concerns had been expressed by Shropshire Council about access along Callaughton Lane. Councillor Holyoak agreed to check whether street lights would be provided on the estate by Shropshire Council.

Connexus had advised that they had not previously commissioned a housing needs survey. Shropshire Council had advised that the Town Council would need to commission its own survey, if required.

It was noted that there had been no contact from Shropshire Council regarding affordable housing after Mark Barrow's visit and the Clerk was asked to follow this up.

e. Barclays Bank – 10 High Street

There had been no further contact from Barclays regarding alteration of the entrance way at 10 High Street. It was noted that the access needed to be resolved before further progress could be made with refurbishment. Options for the building might include providing a base for some kind of financial services, letting to a tenant or a community use. It was noted that certain service providers, such as Citizens Advice, would require payment from the Council to visit. It was desirable to have some income from the former banking premises. It was noted that Councillor Themans had links with banking and building society associations which might prove useful. No business rates were currently due on the empty premises and the Clerk was asked to check whether there was a time limit on this concession.

The Clerk would contact Barclays for an update on modifications to the front access. Another visit to the premises would be arranged for Councillors, particularly those who had not yet seen inside the building. A meeting of the working group should be arranged.

10) Almshouses

Members noted a report on maintenance of the Almshouses and the recent letting of one of the houses.

11) Local Government Pension Scheme Actuarial Valuation 2019

Members noted correspondence regarding the above. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to agree to the proposed employer contribution rate for the Shropshire County Pension Scheme for the next three years of 19.9% of pensionable pay plus a lump sum (deficit contribution) of £1,300 for 2020/21, £1,400 for 2021/22 and £1,400 for 2022/23.** It was noted that the additional payment estimated for the potential McCloud impact was zero in the case of Much Wenlock Town Council.

12) Ironbridge Power Station

It was noted that the outline application for development of the former Ironbridge Power Station site had been submitted to Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council and was awaiting validation. Once the application was published there would be a consultation period of 56 days.

It was noted that the traffic modelling information was still incomplete and did not cover a wide area. The main vehicular access points onto the site would both be along the A1469 Much Wenlock to Buildwas road, one with a roundabout and one with traffic lights. There would also be additional traffic lights at the bottom of Buildwas bank. Three particular problem points had been identified: the Gaskell corner, the A4169 Buildwas bank/Much Wenlock Road/Buildwas Road T junction and the Castlefields Way/Majestic Drive roundabout. All of these would require mitigation in due course. The initial suggested mitigation for the Gaskell corner was better road markings, a pedestrian crossing and clearer sightlines as well as consideration of making the length of the High Street one way. There was little room to introduce additional traffic management options in this location. There had been no apparent consideration of a bypass for Much Wenlock.

Councillors did not believe that their concerns regarding the impact on traffic in Much Wenlock were being taken seriously. Councillor Whiteman offered to raise these concerns with Philip Dunne MP at his surgery on the following day. It was noted that the development would be very close to the Much Wenlock parish boundary.

Park and ride car parking was to be provided under the retained power lines on site to serve Ironbridge visitors and possibly rail passengers. Harworth were in discussions with Network Rail regarding renovation of the Edward Albert bridge, which would allow removal of pulverised ash and gravel by rail.

Those who had attended the meeting at the Power Station earlier in the day had been given a non-technical summary of the application. The Clerk would provide copies for all Councillors.

13) Climate Change

It was noted that there were no firm plans in place for the climate change event proposed by a local resident. Councillor Walter had arranged to meet the organiser and would report back to Council. Councillors felt that February was perhaps too early in the year for the meeting and that the event might be better held in March/April. It was noted that £1,000 had been included in the Council's 2020/21 budget for issues associated with Climate Change.

14) Summer Garden Party at Buckingham Palace

- a. It was noted that SALC was entitled to nominate 4 people (2 Chairmen/Town Mayors with accompanying guests) to attend the Summer Garden Party at Buckingham Palace on 27th May 2020.
- b. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to nominate the Deputy Mayor to be entered into the SALC nomination draw.**

15) Consultation

There was no consultation to hand.

16) Correspondence

Members **NOTED** the following, which had been emailed to Members:

- a. SALC information bulletins and other information.
- b. Editions of The Rural Bulletin.
- c. Media Release: Trust works to improve care of patients with mental health concerns.

17) Agenda items for next Town Council meeting

Members were invited to suggest items for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting.

18) Date of next meeting

Members **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Thursday, **6th February 2020** at 7.00pm in 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.

19) Personnel Matters

Councillors noted a report from the Discipline and Grievance Panel regarding a matter they had recently dealt with. The Panel had taken advice from Ellis Whittam and the matter had been resolved.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Signed.....
Town Mayor

Date.....