

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the
ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
held at the Priory Hall, Much Wenlock
at 7 pm on Thursday, 20th May 2021

Present: Cllr. Michael Atherton, Cllr. David Fenwick, Cllr. Michael Grace, Cllr. Wilfred Grainger, Cllr. John O'Dowd, Cllr. Marcus Themans, Cllr. Robert Toft, Cllr. Daniel Thomas, Cllr. Christopher Tyler, Cllr. Duncan White.

Town Clerk: Trudi Barrett

In attendance: PC Jess Hindley, PCSO Stephen Dunn-Brown and several members of the public.

1. Election of Mayor

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Mike Grace, SECONDED by Cllr John O'Dowd and unanimously RESOLVED that Councillor Daniel Thomas be elected Mayor for the ensuing Council year.

The Mayor gave an acceptance speech:

Firstly, I'd like to extend congratulations to our new Town Councillors who have come through a tough election with a high turnout, much higher than other parts of the County. Serving on a Town Council can be at times a thankless task but giving up your own time is a noble thing to do and I'm pleased to see so many people want to do it, which forced a contested election.

I am proud and honoured to again be elected Mayor of Much Wenlock, the town I was born in, grew up in and which I love. My fellow councillors have granted me the great privilege and responsibility of leading this historic Town Council for the next twelve months, and I express my sincere appreciation for you placing your trust in me. I know it is going to be difficult trying to balance my work, home life and Town Council commitments, but with the support from my colleagues, my family, and particularly my wife Sara, we will make it through the next twelve months with smiles on our faces. Much Wenlock will continue on its journey to build a better future for all concerned. It is truly an honour to serve this wonderful community as the Mayor of Much Wenlock and I look forward to the challenge.

2. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Councillor Daniel Thomas signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Mayor.

3. Election of Deputy Mayor

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Chris Tyler, SECONDED by Cllr Robert Toft and unanimously RESOLVED that Councillor Duncan White be elected Deputy Mayor for the ensuing Council year.

4. Appointment of Mayor's Chaplain

The Mayor appointed Reverend Matthew Stafford as his Chaplain for the ensuing year.

5. Apologies for Absence

It was RESOLVED to accept the following apology: Councillor Samuel Neal – work commitment.

6. 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.

7. Dispensations

None requested.

8. Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Councillor Daniel Thomas gave a verbal report:

I'm pleased and honoured to represent Much Wenlock residents at Shropshire Council and to work with you as both a Town and Shropshire Councillor. With around two thirds of the vote share, I feel I have a clear mandate in my position and I'm keen to work hard in all parts of the division. I've met with residents across the parish, whether it be at Homer, Bourton, Stretton Westwood, Farley, Sheinton Street and Hunters Gate. I'm still coming to terms with all the issues and would like to hear residents' concerns soon. If you have any urgent concerns which require my intervention, please contact me. I am now set up with a Shropshire Council email address, dan.thomas@shropshire.gov.uk and I'm eager to help.

The newly Leader of Shropshire Council is Cllr Lezley Picton, who has announced her new cabinet today. The first meeting of Council took place today and I intend to make a significant contribution over the next four years.

9. Police Report

The Mayor welcomed PC Jess Hindley and PCSO Stephen Dunn-Brown to the meeting. PC Hindley expressed her congratulations to the newly elected Councillors. She would be in touch to arrange a joint surgery with the Shropshire Councillor and a Town Councillor if that would be acceptable. Councillors were encouraged to contact the local policing team directly on their mobile phones with local issues, although crimes should be reported on 999 or 101, as appropriate. The Clerk was asked to circulate contact details to all Councillors.

PC Hindley referenced the new Police Charter and a request to the Council to suggest local policing priorities. The local policing team was pleased to receive feedback on anything that affected residents in their day to day life. Speeding concerns were often reported and the team was able to set up a speed camera in problem locations. Patrols could be targeted to address recurring anti-social behaviour. Officers regularly visited both the secondary and primary schools. The team was trying to arrange a crime prevention session with allotment holders in the town to security label equipment. A written police report had also been provided to Councillors.

The officers were thanked for their attendance and report.

10. Public Session

No requests to speak had been received.

11. Minutes

- a. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to approve and adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 15th April 2021.**
- b. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meetings held on 2nd March and 13th April 2021.**

12. Town Clerk's Report

Members **NOTED** the written report from the Town Clerk on outstanding matters and action taken since the last Council meeting. The Clerk advised that there were sufficient new signatories for the Council's bank accounts.

13. Localism Act 2011 General Power of Competence

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that Much Wenlock Town Council confirms that under the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 the Council meets the prescribed criteria as an eligible council for use of the General Power of Competence in that it meets the following conditions:

- **a qualified clerk (the Clerk holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration)**
- **a minimum of two-thirds of the total number of councillors have been elected**

14. Planning & Environment Committee

Agenda item 14b was taken first.

- a. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to appoint Councillors Fenwick, Grace, Grainger, Tyler and White to the Planning & Environment Committee, with delegated authority to respond to planning and environmental matters.**
- b. Members reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Planning & Environment Committee. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to reduce the number of members of the Planning & Environment Committee to five and to approve the amended Terms of Reference.**

15. Finance, Asset Management & HR Committee

- a. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to set up a separate HR Committee, with responsibility for personnel matters.
- b. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to approve the Terms of Reference of the HR Committee.
- c. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to appoint Cllrs O’Dowd, Thomas and Toft to the HR Committee.
- d. Members reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Finance & Asset Management Committee. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to reduce the number of members of the Finance & Asset Management Committee to six and to approve the amended Terms of Reference.
- e. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to appoint Cllrs Atherton, Neal, O’Dowd, Themans, Thomas and Toft to the Finance & Asset Management Committee.

16. Discipline & Grievance Panel

- a. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to approve the Terms of Reference of the Discipline & Grievance Panel.
- b. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to appoint Cllrs Themans, Tyler and White to the Discipline & Grievance Panel.

17. Schedule of Future Meetings

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to approve the meeting dates for the Council year 2021/22, with the addition of a full Council meeting on Thursday, 3rd June 2021.

18. Review/appointment of Working Groups

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to appoint members to working groups as follows:

- a. Friends of the Cemetery Working Group: Cllrs Atherton, O’Dowd and Thomas.
- b. History Working Group: Cllrs Atherton, Fenwick and Toft.
- c. Communications, Markets and Tourism Working Group: Cllrs Atherton, Neal, Themans, Thomas and Toft.
- d. Transport Working Group: Cllrs Grace, Themans, Toft and Tyler.
- e. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to refer the setting up of a group to review the Council’s property holdings to the Finance & Asset Management Committee. It was noted that Cllr White wished to be involved.
- f. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to disband the following working groups: 10 High Street, Housing Needs, Grounds Maintenance & Property Maintenance.

19. Review of Terms of Reference of Working Groups

- a. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to approve the Terms of Reference for the Friends of the Cemetery Working Group.
- b. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to approve the Terms of Reference for the History Working Group.
- c. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to increase membership of the Communications, Markets and Tourism Working Group from four to five members and to approve the amended Terms of Reference.
- d. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to defer consideration of the Terms of Reference for the Transport Working Group to the next meeting.

20. Review/Appointment of Representatives on Outside Bodies

- a. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Toft to the Bridgnorth and Shifnal Local Area Committee of Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC).
- b. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to make no appointment to the Local Joint Committee as the committee had not met in several years.
- c. It was **NOTED** that Cllr White had been nominated to represent the Town Council in June 2020 for a term of four years.

- d. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr White as the Town Council representative for Shropshire Council Emergency Planning.
- e. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Thomas as the Town Council representative on the John L Edwards Trust.
- f. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Atherton as the Town Council representative on the Shropshire Hills Destination Partnership.
- g. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to appoint Cllrs Grace and White to represent the Town Council to Connexus (affordable homes) if required.
- h. It was **NOTED** that Mr Mark Laws had been nominated to represent the Town Council on the Much Wenlock Forester Charitable Trust in April 2021 for a term of four years.
- i. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr White to the **Priory Hall Management Committee**. It was understood that Cllr Fenwick would be welcome to join the committee as an additional member.

21. Financial Matters

- a. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to retrospectively approve the amended payments schedule from 25th March 2021 to 14th May 2021.
- b. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to approve the use of variable Direct Debits and BACS payments in accordance with paras. 6.7 and 6.9 of the Council’s Financial Regulations.

22. Deferral of business

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED** to defer review of the Council’s policies relating to data protection to a future meeting.

23. Correspondence

Members **NOTED** the following:

- a. Letter dated 20th April 2021 regarding William Brookes School membership of the 3-18 Education Trust.

24. Agenda items for next town council meeting

Members suggested the following items for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting on 3rd June:

- Local Plan Review
- Neighbourhood Plan
- Invitations to Shropshire Councillors Lezley Picton and Claire Wild to attend a future meeting

25. Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be held at 7.00pm on Thursday, 3rd June (venue to be advised).

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed

Town Mayor

Date