

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
at 7 pm on Thursday, 8th July 2021

Present: Cllr. Michael Atherton, Cllr. David Fenwick, Cllr Mike Grace, Cllr Wilfred Grainger, Cllr. John O'Dowd, Cllr. Sam Neal (from minute 5), Cllr. Marcus Themans, Cllr. Daniel Thomas (in the chair), Cllr Robert Toft, Cllr Chris Tyler, Cllr. Duncan White.

Town Clerk: Trudi Barrett.

In attendance: Several members of the public.

1. Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He drew attention to the July exhibition in the Guildhall, artwork by Clare Wasserman, inspired, in part, by work with the 'Get a Word in Edgeways', Festival of the Spoken Word. The Mayor had been extremely pleased to present Milner Whiteman with the Freedom of the Town on 3rd July. The award had been made in recognition of Milner's exceptional service to Much Wenlock. Milner had first become a Borough Councillor in 1965 and had served as a Councillor on various Councils continuously since 1970, having been awarded an OBE for Services to Local Government in 2001.

On the same day the launch of 'Wenlock's Covid Chronicles' had taken place in the town centre. The book contained personal accounts of the experiences of members of the community during the year March 2020 to March 2021. Former Councillor Mary Hill had presented the Mayor with a special edition of the book for retention in the town's archives. The book was now on sale and available from the Guildhall.

The Mayor noted that 'Plastic Free July' was underway and was being promoted in Much Wenlock. As part of this initiative, primary school children created posters and the Mayor had been invited to select the winners. The posters were on display on the Town Council noticeboard and around the town.

2. Apologies for Absence

It was RESOLVED to accept the following apology: Councillor Sam Neal, who would be late to the meeting.

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.

4. Dispensations

None requested.

5. Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Councillor Daniel Thomas advised that due to the short time that had elapsed since the previous meeting he had nothing further to report. He noted that the Draft Local Plan was to be considered by Shropshire Council Members on 15th July and a decision taken on whether to submit the Plan to the Secretary of State for independent examination by the Planning Inspectorate.

Councillor Neal joined the meeting.

6. Police Report

Members of the local policing team had sent their apologies. They had nothing further to add to their most recent report.

7. Public Session

There had been no requests to speak.

8. Minutes

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to approve and adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 24th June 2021.

9. 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 provided a brief summary of the recent Clerks' meeting with the new Police Superintendent for Shropshire, Stuart Bill. It was noted that Cllrs White and Fenwick had completed the survey for the Police & Crime Commissioner, which had been submitted. It was important to make the point to the local policing team that pavements should be kept accessible.

10. Strategic Plan

Councillors noted the need to update the Action Plan and work towards developing a Strategic Plan for the Council. The Clerk was asked to circulate sample strategic plans from other authorities.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to arrange a workshop of all Councillors to brainstorm ideas and start the process before the summer break.

It was noted that committees and other groups might feed into the Plan, e.g. the Planning & Environment Committee with regard to issues of sustainability and climate change.

11. Ironbridge Power Station Planning Application

Councillors considered the response received from Philip Dunne MP to the Council's request to 'call in' the planning application for the Ironbridge Power Station. Phillip Dunne had advised that as the planning application had not been determined at the meeting of Shropshire Council's Southern Planning Committee, there was no scope to call in an application at this stage. As the site was within the parliamentary constituency of Daniel Kawczynski MP, any request for a call in, at the appropriate stage, which generally would be considered only after any appeal process had run its course, should be made to him.

Cllr Tyler had written to Philip Dunne to ask if a neighbouring MP could request a call in if the application was pertinent to his constituency. A reply was awaited.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to send a copy of both the Town Council's letter to Philip Dunne and his reply to Daniel Kawczynski MP.

12. Boundary Commission for England – Review of Parliamentary Constituencies

- a. Members noted that the Boundary Commission for England was reviewing parliamentary constituencies and that consultation was taking place between 16th June and 2nd August 2021
- b. Members considered a response from the Town Council. It was noted that Much Wenlock would remain in the Ludlow constituency.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to support the change to the Ludlow constituency boundary and to support the name of South Shropshire for the new constituency, rather than the name Ludlow and Bridgnorth.

13. Fibre Broadband Shropshire Update

Councillors noted correspondence from Shropshire Council regarding the rollout of essential broadband infrastructure.

14. Flying the Union Flag

Members noted new guidance on flying the Union flag from government buildings and considered the guidance with regard to Town Council buildings.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to adopt the principle of flying a flag at the Guildhall and for the Finance & Asset Management Committee to consider refurbishment of the pole, funding and practicalities.

15. SALC Area Committee Meeting 14th June 2021

Councillor Toft gave a verbal report on the meeting of the Bridgnorth & Shifnal Area Committee of SALC, held on 14th June. The committee met quarterly to inform Town & Parish Councils of matters of interest locally and nationally and to provide a forum for mutual support. There had been three presentations at the meeting:

1. Steve Brown (Head of Transport & Environment) on Shropshire Council's Local Transport Plan, which was being updated in the context of recovering after Covid and the need to address climate change.
2. Sam Kirby-Brown, Sustainability officer, on Shropshire Council's response to climate change, including the Sustainable Procurement Strategy, support for solar power generation and working with partners on the building environment, recycling and re-use. Extensive online resources were available on the Shropshire Council website.

3. The Queen’s Green Canopy. It was noted that trees needed to be planted by March 2022 to be recorded as part of project.

The Clerk was asked to circulate the presentations to all Members.

16. Correspondence

Members **NOTED** the following:

- a. SALC information bulletin and other information.
- b. Friendly Bus Newsletter July/August 2021.
- c. Rural Bulletins from the Rural Services Network.

17. Agenda Items for Next Town Council Meeting

Members suggest the following items for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting:

- Reports and recommendations from working groups
- Local Plan Review

18. Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be held at 7.00pm on Thursday, 2nd September 2021 at 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. Recruitment of Guildhall and Corn Exchange Cleaner

Members were advised that interviews had been held and the successful candidate selected. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to approve the appointment of the successful candidate.**

20. Town Clerk’s Annual Leave

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to approve the Clerk’s annual leave during the summer.

21. GDPR consultation and audit

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to arrange a GDPR audit and training with DM Payroll Services Ltd.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

Signed
Town Mayor

Date