

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
 held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
 at 7 pm on Thursday, 3rd February 2022

Present: Cllr David Fenwick, Cllr Mike Grace, Cllr Wilfred Grainger, Cllr John O'Dowd, Cllr Marcus Themans, Cllr Daniel Thomas (in the chair), Cllr Chris Tyler, Cllr Duncan White

Town Clerk: Trudi Barrett

In attendance: One member of the public

1. Chairman's Welcome

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and presented the following report:

"As I'm sure you're aware, the election has been called, there are three seats on the Council, and we have four candidates. Elections are a bedrock of democracy, and I'm delighted in the interest shown by people to represent their communities. I'd like to wish good luck to all four candidates in the election, and as a Council, we look forward to working with the successful candidates.

This Town Council has agreed to three street markets with local company Made in Shropshire, Artisan Markets. These will be on Saturday 16th April, 18th June & 20th August. They will be sited along the High Street, and there will be well over 20 stalls in total. This trial offers an exciting opportunity to build on successful events like the Christmas Fayre and are a great example of this Council supporting commerce within the town.

I'm delighted to say that the Finance Committee, under guidance from our Responsible Financial Officer, has placed the order for some new Christmas lights on the Square and under the Corn Exchange. These lights will make the town look even more special at Christmas.

This Council has also worked closely with Much Wenlock Tree Forum to plant more trees at the cemetery; as we all know, trees are vitally important in helping to combat climate change, but these trees are also noteworthy as they will be planted as part of the Queen's Green Canopy, in celebration of the Platinum Jubilee. They will be marked on the official map, which will be presented to the Queen in June. Planting will take place on 19th March.

Finally, Cllr Duncan White and I were delighted to join our MP Philip Dunne in presenting three High Street businesses with awards from Surfers Against Sewage for their commitment to reducing single use plastic. These were The Simply Life Unwrapped, The Hair Gallery, and Manor House Bed & Breakfast. I'd like to express my thanks on behalf of this Council to Jacky Walter, who is Much Wenlock's local organiser for Surfers Against Sewage, for her hard work in helping businesses reduce plastic usage and reduce their carbon footprint.

After presenting the awards, Mr Dunne joined us for a meeting to discuss current issues affecting the town.

2. Apologies for Absence

None, all Councillors were present.

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, presented the following report:

"Myself and Cllr Chris Tyler had a very productive meeting with Shaun Sutton and Nick Newton of Shropshire Council last week. We looked extensively at the parking proposals and have found some minor changes that need to happen. As soon as the notes are completed, I will forward them to all Councillors for review. We hope that a public consultation will take place at the end of February.

Following requests from residents, a new wheelie bin is being introduced to help us all to recycle more - this was something I campaigned on and I'm delighted to see it happening. You can register for your free bin for recycling plastic, cans and glass online. The new bin will have a purple lid to help differentiate it from your other bins and will replace your current boxes to make it easier for you to recycle your plastic, cans and glass. It is optional and the boxes will still be emptied as normal.

We held the first advice surgery in January, where I supported as Shropshire Cllr, with Marcus Themans representing the Town Council and PCSO Mal Goddard from the police. A range of issues were discussed and we're working on them already. The next Councillor surgery is on Saturday, 12th February, 10:30 am in the Museum.

Finally, the Shropshire Council light that has been not working in Homer has now been fixed.

6. Police Report

Members noted the written report provided. Councillors raised the following issues associated with the report, which the Clerk was asked to pass on to the local policing team:

- three road traffic collisions were mentioned in the report and, if possible, Councillors would like information about the location and number of vehicles involved to be included in future reports.
- were the police patrolling any locations other than the Priory car park and bus shelter for anti-social behaviour and drug dealing, eg. the Corn Exchange?
- what had been the take-up for the online messaging service operated by West Mercia Police, Neighbourhood Matters?

7. Public Session

There had been no requests to speak.

8. By-Election

It was noted that the contested election was scheduled for 17th February and all arrangements were being made by Shropshire Council. There was some concern that not all residents had received poll cards and the Clerk was asked to check with the Elections Office whether there was a phased despatch.

9. Minutes

- a. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to approve and adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 13th January 2022.**
- b. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 30th November 2021.**
- c. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Finance & Asset Management Committee meeting held on 23rd November 2021.**

10. Town Clerk's Report

Members **NOTED** the written report from the Town Clerk on outstanding matters and action taken since the last Council meeting. It was noted that the Annual Town Meeting was scheduled for 10th March at the Priory Hall.

11. Ironbridge Power Station Planning Application (ref. 19/05560/OUT)

- a. Members considered a report from the meeting held with Shropshire Council's Assistant Director Economy and Place and a Planning Officer on 24th January, at which the Mayor and Deputy had expressed the Council's concerns about the handling of the above application. They had been advised that a liaison group would be set up in due course to discuss highways matters associated with the development and the Town Council was invited to register interest in participating. The meeting had ensured that the Town Council's stance was clear to Shropshire Council.

It was RESOLVED to note the comments made by Shropshire Council officers regarding the Power Station application but to reiterate the Council's dissatisfaction with the process and decision.

- b. Members noted a verbal report from the meeting held with Philip Dunne MP on 28th January to discuss the development at the Ironbridge Power Station and other local matters. It had been a useful, positive meeting and Mr Dunne had indicated that he would return at a later date to discuss matters further with all Councillors. Matters covered during the discussions had included concerns about traffic and the Gaskell corner and the view that traffic lights would not solve the problems. Flooding concerns had been raised and the possibilities for further flood alleviation measures. It was noted that Buildwas would likely be incorporated into Mr Dunne's constituency as a result of the current boundary review. The issue of finance coming from the power station had been discussed as well as the impact and funding for William Brookes School and how the extra capacity could be created. Mr Dunne had appeared well-informed about local issues and development.

The Clerk was asked to arrange a date for Mr Dunne's return visit.

It was noted that he had not offered any specific help or financial support in addressing flooding problems and that this should be explored during the next visit.

12. Shropshire Draft Local Plan (2016 - 2038) – Examination in Public (EIP)

- a. Members considered a report on the Examination in Public - Draft Shropshire Local Plan: Community Survey, Strategic Flood Management. It was noted that the date of the meeting should read 3rd February and that the document included as Appendix 1 contained notes from a meeting to introduce members of the Planning & Environment Committee to external experts, rather than a meeting of the Strategic Flood Working Group.

Members noted verbal comments on the Strategic Flood Group report. They considered the varying geology of Much Wenlock and noted that tree planting would contribute to flood alleviation but was not a quick solution. A catchment-based approach was required to deal with flooding issues, which would include discussion with other parishes. Drain clearing and attenuation ponds would form part of the measures needed.

It was noted that 100 bore holes had been drilled when a bypass for Much Wenlock had been proposed and that the records from these investigations could be helpful in considering flood alleviation measures. If available, the results should be forwarded to the representatives from Shropshire Wildlife Trust and Harper Adams University.

Members considered the proposed survey questions for residents to inform the EIP of the Draft Local Plan. The response rate and findings would need to be reported clearly when presented to the EIP.

- b. **It was RESOLVED to approve the following recommendations contained within the report:**

- **To meet with Shropshire Council, the Environment Agency, the National Flood Forum and representatives of the Local Flood Group to discuss the development of a catchment-wide approach to flooding.**
- **To ask the Environment Agency and Shropshire Council to consider extending work in Corvedale to include the Much Wenlock catchment.**

It was RESOLVED to approve the Local Plan questions proposed for the survey.

It was RESOLVED to include questions about traffic and transport in the survey, subject to circulation of the proposed questions and approval by all Councillors.

It was RESOLVED that the Planning & Environment Committee should meet with other organisations and people who will be represented at the EIP to discuss collaborative approaches in respect of Much Wenlock.

The paper version of the questionnaire should be printed in the office and options explored for offering an online version. Councillors noted the potential difficulties with holding email addresses for residents and considered instead setting up a dedicated webpage for the Local Plan and EIP that might allow two-way communication.

It was RESOLVED to set a maximum budget of £500 for distribution of the questionnaire, with the preferred method being by means of the Wenlock Herald's distribution network.

13. New Recycling Bins

Members noted Shropshire Council's introduction of optional new recycling bins for plastic, cans and glass. Distribution of the new bins would start in the south of the county. It was noted that Shropshire Council would not be recovering the black boxes no longer needed for recycling and that residents could retain these for their own use.

14. Consultation

Members noted Shropshire Council consultation between 14th January and 28th February on The Shropshire Plan 2022 to 2025 – Strategic Plan.

Councillors welcomed the engagement but noted that 16 of the 26 pages of the Plan covered Shropshire Council achievements, rather than forward plans. Councillors questioned the meaning of terms such as 'appropriate levels', 'place based' and 'supporting growth corridors' and felt there was no clear analysis of the issues or plan for addressing them. There was no reference to the role of town and parish councils in the Plan. The growing population was illustrated without any indication of how the implications of this would be addressed.

It was RESOLVED to respond as follows:

Much Wenlock Town Council is disappointed with The Shropshire Plan 2022-25 – Strategic Plan. If Shropshire Council truly wants to engage and work with people as residents and customers with opinions that officers understand, and the Council really believes in delivering a place-based approach, then we would like them to frame this plan in terms of how it will specifically address key centres such as Much Wenlock, which is identified as being important to the future of Shropshire. How does Shropshire Council propose to integrate the economic, environmental and social themes that they have identified in ways that create better governance and a better environment? Much Wenlock Town Councillors would be pleased to engage with Shropshire Council to explore these issues.

15. Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust

It was RESOLVED to defer consideration of correspondence from the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust concerning community engagement to the next meeting.

16. Correspondence

Members noted the following items, which had been distributed via email between meetings:

- a. SALC information bulletins and other information
- b. NALC newsletters and other information
- c. Press releases from Shropshire Council
- d. Rural Bulletins from the Rural Services Network
- e. Invitation to South Shropshire Youth Network workshop held on 20.01.22
- f. Information regarding a potential service change to the Princess Royal Hospital renal dialysis services dated 11.01.22
- g. Invitation from Shropshire Climate Action Partnership to attend an online event on 27.01.22 to review the Zero Carbon Shropshire Plan
- h. Information from the Helicopter Noise Liaison Group regarding a video about No. 1 Flying Training School, RAF Shawbury
- i. Invitation to join the Telford & Wrekin online Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration and Remembrance on 27th January
- j. Friendly Bus newsletter

17. Agenda Items for Next Town Council Meeting

Members were invited to submit agenda items for the next Town Council meeting.

18. Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be held at 7.00pm on 3rd March 2022 at the Guildhall.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed
Town Mayor

Date