



Much Wenlock Town Council

Full Council Meeting

9th June 2022

Supporting Papers



Local Policing Charter Councillor Meeting Recorded Minutes

Date / Time:	25 th April, 2022 at 1800 hrs
Location:	(via MS Teams)
Chair:	Superintendent Stu BILL
Minute Taker:	Julie BRANFORD, PA to Shropshire Command Team (via recording of meeting)

No	Summary	Action
1/25/04/22	Welcome and Introductions	
1.1	<p>Supt BILL advised attendees that the meeting was being recorded and that minutes will be produced and distributed after the meeting.</p> <p>Supt BILL advised that, although he has only been with West Mercia Police for approximately one year, he has been in policing for over two decades.</p> <p>Attending alongside Supt BILL was Chief Inspector Mark REILLY – the Safer Neighbourhood Team Lead for Shropshire. CI REILLY oversees a lot of the community teams in and around the Shropshire area.</p> <p>Supt BILL encouraged attendees to raise any questions in the chat bar which will hopefully answered by CI REILLY during the course of this meeting.</p> <p>Supt BILL advised that he would not be able to talk about specific cases that may well be pertinent to some attendees. The purpose of the meeting, however, was to talk more broadly about Shropshire and some of the challenges we have.</p>	

2/25/04/22	Actions from Previous Meeting(s)	
2.1	<p>ACTION:- To make sure the Safer Neighbourhood Teams' details were shared amongst attendees.</p> <p><u>25/04/22 Update:</u></p> <p>Supt BILL confirmed that this action has now been completed, although stressed that the various Safer Neighbourhood Teams constantly change re staff members - people are regularly moved around.</p>	
2.2	<p>ACTION:- The Local Policing Charter to be sent to all the Parish Clerks.</p> <p><u>25/04/22 Update:</u></p> <p>Supt BILL confirmed that this had been circulated.</p>	
2.3	<p>ACTION:- Contact details of Graham DONALDSON, Phil NOCK and Darren JUKES as the Shropshire LPA Rural and Business Crime Officers to be sent to the Parish Clerks</p> <p><u>25/04/22 Update:</u></p> <p>Supt BILL confirmed that these contact details have been distributed, following the last meeting.</p>	
3/25/04/22	Three Biggest Issues	
3.1	<p><u>Drugs / vulnerability posed by County Lines (criminal exploitation)</u></p> <p>This remains a real challenge for the country. Shropshire gets County Lines coming into Shropshire – both from the West Midlands' region and from Merseyside.</p> <p>In Summer 2021, there were 21 active County Lines that were coming into Shropshire. Lots of work - both overt and covert - goes on in terms of the intelligence world that helps us understand what is going on in the county.</p> <p>West Mercia Police is made up of Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin, North and South Worcestershire and Herefordshire. It should be noted that the 21 County Lines for Shropshire was the same amount for the rest of the Force in its entirety. It is, therefore, a real challenge for us at the moment. It links to drugs, ASB, vulnerability and a whole host of other issues.</p>	

	<p>West Mercia Police do a lot of cross-border work with other Police Forces - Merseyside Police and West Midlands' Police etc. We deploy quite a lot of overt tactics (e.g. stop searches), but we also do a lot of covert work (e.g. using plain clothed officers, working on people's phones, as well as uncover work).</p> <p>As of January 2022, we were down to 8 active County Lines coming into Shropshire. This was a huge reduction from Summer 2021. The reduction was partly down to COVID-19.</p> <p>As at today's date, the number of County Lines rose slightly to 12 active Lines. It is not something we cannot ignore and need to remain focused on it.</p> <p>West Mercia Police will continue to work hard on this priority, but all were asked to be mindful that there are things that the Police cannot divulge – e.g. when we are building warrants and packages against identified individuals. Sometimes it may feel like we are not doing anything, but Supt BILL reassured everyone that we are. It is just a balance of what we can and cannot share.</p>	
<p>3.2</p>	<p><u>Domestic Abuse</u></p> <p>As well as a challenge for West Mercia Police, this is a challenge nationally.</p> <p>It is high volume and high risk, and it is not something that we see too much in public. It tends to go on in private spaces and can cause generational damage.</p> <p>Of all the reported domestic incidents in Shropshire, we arrest around 35%. What about the remaining 65%?:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes, there is no power of arrest – West Mercia Police record incidents that are classed as 'non-crimes'. • Sometimes the offenders are not there and there are times when it is appropriate to deal with them under the Police And Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act. There has to be a necessity to arrest someone, and sometimes it does not allow itself. <p>Ideally, we need to improve on the 35%, but it is difficult. When someone telephones and reports a domestic abuse incident, it has probably already happened (on average) about 30 times previously. If we do not get to them from the point of call (within approximately 24 hours), the number of those cases that end positively (from a Criminal Justice outcome – charge, caution, conviction etc.), can drop to almost nothing.</p>	

<p>3.3</p>	<p><u>ASB (including anti-social use of vehicles)</u></p> <p>This remains a challenge. West Mercia Police have had an HMIC inspection (when people come in and look at how police forces are performing in different areas of business).</p> <p>Following the HMIC inspection, some concerns were raised over ASB – probably less in how we are dealing with it, but more in how we are ethically recording the crime.</p> <p>Under Home Office rules in terms of what we should / should not record the offences, we have not been very good at recording all of the crimes. It is a position that is improving, however, but we need to get better.</p> <p>We are quite focused on hate crime, but often ASB can actually come under hate crime. Someone could be targeted just as a result of a difference.</p> <p>Very often, it is not a single agency issue. West Mercia Police receive reports of ASB because calling ‘999’ is well known, but often the issue sits with another agency. For example:- homelessness in Shrewsbury town centre - the homelessness manifests itself into ASB and, at times, criminality. Behind that homelessness sits a vulnerability (i.e. drugs, alcohol, housing, education, health etc.) and a single agency approach is unlikely to work. Of more benefit is to offer people the support that they need – not treating the symptom, but treating the problem instead.</p> <p>ASB is a huge quality of life issue, and remains a huge problem.</p> <p><u>Community Trigger (also known as an ASB Review)</u></p> <p>At this point in the meeting, Supt BILL handed over to CI Mark REILLY.</p> <p>Up until 2020, Shropshire as a local authority had not one single Community Trigger implemented in any form. From 2020 onwards, however, we had 8 Community Triggers. In 2021, we had another 8, and so far during 2022 (during the first 4 months) we have had a total of 6.</p> <p>A Community Trigger is a member of the public who is a victim of ASB on 3 or more occasions within a six-month period that they have reported to the local authority or the Police. The Trigger has resulted from an individual who has felt that the level of service from either agency has not provided them the service that they wish for and has not resolved the ASB.</p>	
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	<p>The Chair function for Community Triggers in terms of bringing all the partners together is Sarah HOLLINSHEAD-BLAND from the local authority. As part of the formal (national) process, Sarah will make contact with the victim, take a statement from the victim and will go and visit the victim to see the impact that the ASB has on them. Sarah will then put out a scoping form which is distributed to all the agencies that have been / should be involved in the reporting process / resolving the ASB. Following this, Sarah then brings together all the agencies in order to formally look at the ASB, what agencies have done and to hold them to account.</p> <p>What was noticed through COVID-19, the pandemic and people working from home, is that it highlighted that a lot of people do not like their neighbours. They do not see them all day long normally when they are out at work, but when they are living close to them all day long, a lot of ASB and neighbour disputes came to light.</p> <p>ACTION:- CI REILLY asked everyone who had any members of public seeking advice on how they can deal with ASB (and who have reported it to the local authority or the Police on 3 or more occasions) to please signpost them to 'Effect a Community Trigger'. This will install a response from the local authority and / or Police to do something.</p> <p>If anyone wanted to discuss this in more detail, CI REILLY invited them to email him or suggested they speak to their local SNT Inspectors.</p> <p>ACTION:- CI REILLY to send details of the Community Trigger process to all.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>CI REILLY</p>
<p>4/25/04/22</p>	<p>LP Charter <i>(if you don't know what it is - Google it - only two clicks will find it)</i></p>	
<p>4.1</p>	<p>The Local Policing Charter has been in place for almost one year. It is starting to embed itself, but there is more we need to do in order to get it to where we want to be.</p> <p>Ahead of today's meeting, Supt BILL went into a spreadsheet which tracks various progress and activity. By way of an example, Supt BILL went in to look at South Shropshire and mentioned the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Op ARURA is a speed enforcement operation in South Shropshire. • Op WHITEBEAM relates to cross-border crime with Dyfed Powys. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Op ANCHORA relates to vehicles in Cleve Hill being used with no insurance. Worthy of note, there have been 500 vehicles stopped. <p>Additionally, there are operations that focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ASB and alcohol in Ludlow town centre• Op HERA - criminality at a travellers' site. This particular OCG has been significantly dismantled and disrupted <p>In North Shropshire, we have the Community Speed Watch which is recognised as 'best practice' across both Shropshire and in the Force.</p> <p>Lots goes on with the LP Charter with the initial intention of reviewing the priorities on a quarterly basis. Priorities were set to be reviewed every 3 months, but this has been reset to every 6 months. This allows sufficient time to address the priorities properly before potentially moving onto fresh ones.</p> <p>ACTION:- At the LP Charter review points, all to let the Police know what their priorities are.</p> <p>ACTION:- CI REILLY to raise with Supt Ed HANCOX the issue around timescales of new priority setting returns. Current timescales are too short; 6 weeks would be better.</p> <p>Police are not always good at sharing results, but they are now being shared by Safer Neighbourhood Teams; both through conversations (forums, emails etc.) and through 'Neighbourhood Matters'.</p> <p>If you Google 'Neighbourhood Matters', one of the first things that comes up is West Mercia Police's mechanism for speaking to people. It is an online system where messages, good news and results can be shared. More importantly, people can interact with the Police.</p> <p>As at 26th March, there are 2,562 members for Shropshire. The bigger it grows, the better it becomes. From the 1st March to the 26th March, Shropshire Police Officers sent out 271 messages via 'Neighbourhood Matters'. Once someone signs up (submitting their name and where they live), they receive information on what their SNT is doing.</p> <p>ACTION:- Supt BILL asked attendees to encourage people to use the 'Neighbourhood Matters' system. The more engagement there is, the better.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>CI REILLY</p> <p>All</p>
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5/25/04/22	NH Matters / General Performance	
5.1	<p><u>Performance</u></p> <p>Having come out of a couple of years of lockdown, West Mercia Police are finding it quite hard to benchmark what good performance looks like.</p> <p>Historically, West Mercia Police would look at the year before and then look at the current year in order to measure whether they were doing better or worse.</p> <p>With COVID, we have got two years of data that is hard to measure against. We have, therefore, gone back to the year before COVID, but it should be noted that the world has changed as a result of the pandemic. We are currently going through a cost of living crisis. There are challenges locally, nationally and internationally that have changed both policing and the public sector.</p> <p>We have got a new ‘norm’ that is coming out of COVID which is proving to be significantly busier than it was before. This will be a challenge for the Police.</p> <p>West Mercia Police will look at various measures (e.g. total recorded crime). In a month, we will capture how many total offences have happened in Shropshire. In March 2022, we recorded more offences in the month of March than we did in any month in 2021. Historically, March would be a lower volume crime month – Christmas tends to be busy and there is often a surge in demand in the Summer. We have, however, seen an unprecedented level of crime reporting and calls to service in March. It should be noted here that the Police are getting better at recording offences under ASB, so some of that rise in crime could be put down to an improvement in how crime is recorded. Some of the increase is, however, down to seeing a new world that is giving us new and different challenges.</p> <p>Overall, it will be an interesting year as we start to figure out how we sit in this ‘new world’.</p> <p>ACTION:- CI REILLY to ask SNT to make contact with Claire DICKINSON (Great Ness and Little Ness) to see why Neighbourhood Matters is not sending messages.</p>	<p>CI REILLY</p>

<p>5.2</p>	<p><u>Sickness</u></p> <p>Supt BILL stated that West Mercia Police’s sickness has been quite positive, looking at the challenges that COVID presented.</p> <p>Although there have been spikes, considering Police Officers have been on the frontline for two years (going into homes and communities), Supt BILL was both astounded and really proud at the level of sickness that we have maintained and the resilience kept during this period.</p>	
<p>6/25/04/22</p>	<p>Challenges as a service?</p>	
<p>6.1</p>	<p><u>Number of Police Officers</u></p> <p>Policing saw a significant reduction in numbers through 2010s that the current government has committed to giving an uplift of 20,000 Police Officers to replace some of those who were lost. This has left us with an incredibly young workforce.</p> <p>We have got a high proportion of frontline staff that less than 3 years’ service. On a positive note, they do bring some wonderful enthusiasm and energy with them, but they do not necessarily have the experience that is built up over years.</p> <p>Our numbers are the highest they have been since 2015. At times it does not feel like this is the case – partly because of the inexperience, but partly because the national programme on how we recruit officers has changed.</p> <p>When Student Police Officers arrive, they often spend significant periods away at university, doing some of the other requirements that is required of them as part of the degree. It therefore takes a bit longer to realise the benefit of that officer.</p> <p>Realistically, it will probably take another year or two to work itself through, to get to a position of where we want to be.</p>	
<p>6.2</p>	<p><u>Cost of Living Crisis</u></p> <p>It is early days in terms of the challenges ahead around food and fuel poverty, but it will have an impact - both as a county and internally as a Force.</p> <p>There are some Student Police Officers who may be supporting families that are not on a lot of money.</p> <p>It is going to present itself as a challenge to policing – in crime, ASB, in calls to service etc.</p>	

<p>6.3</p>	<p><u>Inclusivity</u></p> <p>At the time of the last meeting (November 2021), West Mercia Police had just had a new Chief Constable.</p> <p>Our Vision and Values as a Force has not largely changed, but the new Chief Constable, Pippa MILLS, has moulded them.</p> <p>We are not very representative of the community. There is, therefore, lots of work to do (both internally and externally).</p> <p>We have seen some of the challenges that come out locally through Dalian ATKINSON and the conviction of Ben MONK for Manslaughter. We also see incidents in The Met; what feels like weekly – but they also impact on us in terms of trust and confidence.</p> <p>Making us an inclusive workforce and to our communities is really important for our legitimacy.</p> <p>We have got an independent advisory group. It is getting better in terms of its diversity, but we are not there yet. There is lots more work to do to make West Mercia Police an inclusive place.</p>	
<p>6.4</p>	<p><u>Confidence and Satisfaction</u></p> <p>‘Confidence’ is the general public’s view on whether West Mercia Police will do a good job for them.</p> <p>‘Satisfaction’ is when the general public have had an interaction with us and how they felt with it.</p> <p>Confidence-wise, when you look nationally, West Mercia Police are not in a bad position. We actually perform really well. Our confidence levels sit around 80% - where people think West Mercia Police do a good / very good job. Unfortunately, the trend nationally is that this figure is going downwards.</p> <p>Satisfaction-wise, it varies by crime type. The biggest challenge that we have as a Force is keeping people updated. West Mercia Police need to be better, and a lot of work is going on internally.</p>	

7/25/04/22	Q&A	
7.1	<p><u>Death of Sarah EVERARD and what West Mercia Police have done to improve women's safety</u></p> <p>CI Mark REILLY advised that a question had come in via the 'online chat' regarding the above.</p> <p>CI REILLY responded, detailing what West Mercia Police have done around Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), open spaces and the safer streets' funding.</p> <p>VAWG has become a prevalent issue which has highlighted some significant challenges and concerns. There is so much for West Mercia Police to do – we can never do enough.</p> <p>This is not just about policing. It is about society.</p> <p>Part of the funding bids we put in is just to make certain places safer and do more work. It will take a long time to deal with the masochistic behaviour.</p>	
7.2	<p><u>River Deaths</u></p> <p>Unfortunately, there have been a number of river deaths recently. The question was asked as to what the Police can do to help prevent these incidents happening.</p> <p>Supt BILL stated that the river creates huge challenges through the town. There have been 3 tragic events have happened in quick succession.</p> <p>Supt BILL did not feel that this is a situation we can police ourselves. If West Mercia Police lined the river with Police Officers, it would be to the detriment of everything else. This is about education, the night-time economy taking responsibility for how much alcohol it serves young people, about the appropriate provision of taxis to get people home, and Street Pastors to look after people who have had too much to drink etc.</p> <p>The recovery and the safety of people going into the river becomes a Fire and Rescue Service challenge. West Mercia Police do not have the right equipment to get people out.</p>	

8/25/04/22	Any Other Business	
8.1	<p><u>Community Commissioner Funding (CCF)</u> (previously known as LPCAF – Local Policing Community Ambassador Fund)</p> <p>Every year, John CAMPION (the Police Crime Commissioner) gives Supt Stu BILL two pots of money – one for roads and one for general crime / ASB. They are not to be spent on things that we should be spending as a Force ourselves. For example, it cannot be spent on uniform, cars or equipment. They are there for community initiatives.</p> <p>There is £25,000 in each pot. Although this sounds like a lot of money, it does not go very far.</p> <p>Although the general roads’ pot of money is untouched at the moment, the general initiatives’ pot has already had approximately £10,000 spent on some very worthy causes.</p> <p>We tend to want something that is sustainable and also a bit of match-funding often helps, rather than just using that pot of money on its own.</p> <p>It was pointed out that these two pots of money will run until the end of the financial year (end of March 2023).</p> <p>ACTION:- If anyone has any worthy bids / causes, they are to approach their Safer Neighbourhood Teams.</p> <p>Examples of successful CCF initiatives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crucial Crew. This relates to educating young people about certain dangers and involves multi-agency work. It can involve going into schools to try and ‘steal children away’ from the Criminal Justice System, as well as providing essential life skills. • Shrewsbury Town Football Club. This has a big impact on our area because every time there is a game, officers are drawn from other areas to police it. As we felt we needed to be a bit more intervention-focused, we have funded a post in conjunction with the Football Club to do more targeted work with young people – in the hope of diverting them away from crime. • Roadside Speeding Signs. These are the signs that flash, telling drivers what speed they are doing – giving the driver a smiley face or an unhappy face. The data shows that these do have a positive impact on driving speeds. 	All

<p>8.2</p>	<p>Supt BILL stated how proud he was to be the Shropshire Commander, and was pleased to have such great people around him.</p> <p>We have a wonderful workforce that, despite all the challenges they go through, they deliver some exceptional service in some very difficult circumstances.</p> <p>Supt BILL wanted to reassure everyone that West Mercia Police, the SNTs etc. all care passionately about Shropshire. Most of them live in this geography – it is their home and where they are raising their families. The crimes that happen here are personal to them.</p> <p>At times, we are hampered by money / budget or by other challenges that are beyond policing.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the media tend to concentrate / highlight the bad things that happen. But, for every one of these occurrences, there are so many more good examples of bravery, courage and compassion that takes place.</p> <p>ACTION:- Supt BILL asked everyone to engage with West Mercia Police and to work with them. Hopefully, anything and everything can be worked through together and a solution found.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>8.3</p>	<p><u>Bank Holiday Jubilee Weekend</u></p> <p>ACTION:- CI REILLY to confirm if PCSOs are working the Bank Holiday Jubilee weekend.</p>	<p>CI REILLY</p>
<p>9/25/04/22</p>	<p>Date, Time and Location of Next Meeting:</p>	
<p>9.1</p>	<p>Thursday, 13th October, 2022 at 1800 hours (via MS Teams – link to be distributed nearer the time)</p>	<p>All</p>

03/22

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the re-convened
ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
 held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
 at 7 pm on Thursday, 12th May 2022

Present: Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick, Mike Grace, Wilfred Grainger, Marcus Themans, Daniel Thomas, Chris Tyler, Linda West, Duncan White (in the chair)

Town Clerk: Trudi Barrett

There were no members of the public present

1. Chairman's Welcome

The Mayor presented the following report:

Welcome Councillors and members of the community to this full Town Council meeting, my first as the newly elected Mayor. I have been on the Council since 2019 and look forward to my opportunity to make a difference and guide us through the next 12 months. Post Covid restrictions, it was great to continue the long-held tradition of Mayor Making for the town and on 16th October we will be holding our annual Civic Service at Holy Trinity Church.

Since the last full Council meeting several meetings have been held in preparation for our representation at the Examination in Public of the Shropshire Local Plan. I would like to thank all who have contributed, including some residents, with a special thanks to Councillor Mike Grace for co-ordinating this and guiding us through the process.

We recently arranged for the first of three 'Made in Shropshire' artisan markets to be held in the town this year. The event was very successful and brought people to the town who had not visited before, some from far and wide. The number of visitors to the Guildhall trebled on the day and some of the stalls sold out early. There was a lovely town atmosphere with an oompah band playing in The Square to entertain the crowds. The next market will be on 18th June. I will be holding a drop-in feedback surgery at the Guildhall on Monday, 23rd May, between 5.30 and 7.00pm. Traders and residents are welcome to come and discuss their experiences and views of the first market.

2. Apologies for Absence

It was RESOLVED to accept the following apologies: Councillor John O'Dowd – unwell, Councillor Christian Toon – work, Councillor Wilfred Grainger – work.

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. Public Session

There were no members of the public present.

6. Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Councillor, Daniel Thomas, presented the following report:

FixMyStreet: as part of Shropshire Council's 'Improving Your Roads' programme, the Highways and Infrastructure leadership team were asked to improve how customers can make reports online. The council has become a FixMyStreet Pro user of this service, which allows us to deploy improved functionality, including Shropshire Council's own asset maps, to improve the accuracy of reports we receive, as well as introducing new reporting categories to give people a wider option of services in one place. FixMyStreet also allows people to upload photos when making a report, improving the accuracy of reports, and reducing the need for officers to attend to inspect, which reduces our carbon footprint. FixMyStreet also integrates to 'Confirm', our system for managing highways and street scene services, so all reports will go direct to the right officer or team.

Matters such as potholes ultimately fall under my remit but, as Town Councillors, you and the Town Clerk can make accounts using your Councillor or Clerk email and, when reporting, everyone can see that you have done it and the status. Please don't judge FixMyStreet based on years ago when we were using My Shropshire instead.

04/22

Council Tax Rebate: earlier this year the government announced that all Council taxpayers living in properties Band A to D will be eligible for a £150.00 council tax rebate. If you already pay for your council tax via direct debit there's no need to do anything - the £150.00 will be credited to your bank. If you do not pay by direct debit, you will receive written instructions on how to claim the rebate.

Surgery: the next council surgery will be held this coming Saturday, 14th May between 10.30 am and 12 noon at the museum – no appointment necessary. I'll be joined by Cllr Mike Grace and our new PCSO Heath "Ted" Amies, as Steven Breese has been transferred to another area.

Councillor Thomas took questions regarding FixMyStreet: he was asked about the outstanding repairs required to pavements and responded that these could also be reported on FixMyStreet. Shropshire Council was investing further in highways repairs and the results should soon be seen.

There was a facility on FixMyStreet to view issues reported by geographical area. Issues reported could be viewed by the public, which had not been the case with the My Shropshire portal. A link could be added to the Town Council website.

In response to a question about the white marks painted around potholes nearly a year ago, Councillor Thomas replied that the marks indicated that the holes were on the Shropshire Council work log to be repaired. However, Shropshire Councillors did not see the work plan.

The FixMystreet system indicated that updates provided by members of the public were not passed on to Shropshire Council; Councillor Thomas undertook to check this.

7. Police Report

Members noted the written police report provided.

8. Minutes

- a. **It was RESOLVED to approve and adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 7th April 2022.**
- b. **It was RESOLVED to approve and adopt the minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting held on 5th May 2022.**
- c. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 1st March 2022.**
- d. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 5th April 2022.**
- e. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 26th April 2022.**

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.

Members noted the response received from the Shropshire Council Place Plan officer responsible Much Wenlock regarding the rationale behind the Place Plan boundaries and the review of Place Plans planned for the autumn. It was intended to gather information from town and parish councils by means of a form - Councillors felt that this would not be appropriate and that they would like greater involvement in the process.

Development of a strategic plan for the Council had been pending for some time. Members discussed how to move forward with this and agreed to ask each of the committees and working groups to provide suggestions for items to feed into the strategic plan, with short-, medium- and long-term goals for the Town Council and the town generally. The Clerk was asked to include this as an agenda item for the September meeting to check progress, with October as the target date for responses.

10. Finance & Asset Management Committee

- a. **It was RESOLVED to appoint six members to the Finance & Asset Management Committee: Councillors David Fenwick, John O'Dowd, Marcus Themans, Chris Tyler, Linda West and Duncan White.**
- b. **It was RESOLVED to approve the amended Terms of Reference for the Finance & Asset Management Committee with the addition of the aim "To contribute to the development of the Town Council's Strategic Plan."**

It was noted that for next year's Annual Town Council meeting 'at least six' members should be appointed to the committee.

05/22

11. Planning & Environment Committee

- a. It was RESOLVED to appoint eight members to the Planning & Environment Committee: Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick, Mike Grace, Wilf Grainger, Daniel Thomas, Christian Toon, Chris Tyler and Linda West.
- b. It was RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference for the Planning & Environment Committee, with the following amendments:
 - membership of "at least" five members of the Town Council.
 - to add the responsibility "To contribute to the development of the Town Council's Strategic Plan."
 - under responsibilities 1 and 2 include "other regulatory bodies such as the Environment Agency"
 - under responsibility 11, add ... monitor "and consult on" the Neighbourhood Plan...

12. HR Committee

- a. It was RESOLVED to appoint four members to the HR Committee: Councillors John O'Dowd, Marcus Themans, Daniel Thomas and Duncan White.
- b. It was RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference for the HR Committee.

13. Discipline & Grievance Panel

- a. It was RESOLVED to appoint three members to the Discipline & Grievance Panel: Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick and Chris Tyler.
- b. It was RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference for the Discipline & Grievance Panel.

14. Schedule of Future Meetings

It was RESOLVED to approve the proposed meeting dates for the Council year 2022-23.

15. Review/appointment of Working Groups

- a. It was RESOLVED to appoint Councillors John O'Dowd, Daniel Thomas and Linda West, plus community volunteers, to the Friends of the Cemetery Working Group.
- b. It was RESOLVED to appoint Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick and Christian Toon, plus Councillor West, the volunteer archivist, to the History Working Group.
- c. It was RESOLVED to appoint Councillors Wilfred Grainger, Marcus Themans, Daniel Thomas, Christian Toon and Linda West to the Communications, Markets and Tourism Working Group.
- d. It was RESOLVED to appoint Councillors William Benbow, Mike Grace, Daniel Thomas and Chris Tyler to the Transport Working Group.
- e. It was RESOLVED to appoint Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick, John O'Dowd, Marcus Themans, Christian Toon and Duncan White to the Property Working Group.
- f. It was RESOLVED to appoint all members of the Planning & Environment Committee, plus invited members of the community, to the Shropshire Local Plan Review Working Group.
- g. It was RESOLVED to appoint Councillors William Benbow, Mike Grace and Chris Tyler plus external experts, a member of the Flood Action Group and invited members of the community to the Strategic Flood Working Group.

16. Review of Terms of Reference for Working Groups

It was RESOLVED to add the following responsibility to the Terms of Reference of all working groups: "To contribute to the development of the Town Council's Strategic Plan."

With the above amendment, it was RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference for the following working groups:

- a. Friends of the Cemetery Working Group
- b. History Working Group
- c. Communications, Markets and Tourism Working Group
- d. Transport Working Group
- e. Property Working Group
- f. Shropshire Local Plan Review Working Group

06/22

- g. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Terms of Reference for the Strategic Flood Working Group, amended as follows: item 3 - to specifically name the Flood Action Group; item 6 - “to work with stakeholders” to propose options for flood alleviation...

17. Review/Appointment of Representatives on Outside Bodies

- a. **Bridgnorth and Shifnal Local Area Committee of Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC): it was RESOLVED to appoint Councillors Linda West and Duncan White.**
- b. **Much Wenlock Almshouses:** it was noted that Cllr Duncan White had been nominated to represent the Town Council in June 2020 for a term of four years.
- c. **Shropshire Council Emergency Planning: it was RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Duncan White.**
- d. **John L Edwards Trust: it was RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Daniel Thomas.**
- e. **Shropshire Hills Destination Partnership: it was RESOLVED to appoint Councillors Christian Toon and Wilfred Grainger.** It was noted that Councillor Grace had been in contact with the organisation and the Clerk was asked to forward copies of the email exchanges.
- f. **Much Wenlock Forester Charitable Trust:** it was noted that Mr Mark Laws had been nominated to represent the Town Council in April 2021 for a term of four years.
- g. **Priory Hall Management Committee: it was RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Duncan White.**

18. Review and Approval of the following Policies and Procedures:

- a. **It was RESOLVED to approve the revised Standing Orders, incorporating a reference to working groups: “The Council or its committees may set up informal working groups and determine the terms of reference for those groups”.**
- b. **It was RESOLVED to approve the revised Financial Regulations.**
- c. **It was RESOLVED to approve the revised Complaints Procedure and Procedure for Dealing with Unreasonable and Persistent Complainants.**
- d. **It was RESOLVED to approve the revised Publication Scheme, with the inclusion of information on charges for photocopying in connection with Freedom of Information requests.**
- e. **It was RESOLVED to approve the revised Communications and Media Policy.** The Communications, Markets and Tourism Group was tasked with reviewing the policy and making any recommendations for changes to full Council. Members noted the need to keep Council and private emails separate and to use Council email addresses for Council business.
- f. **It was RESOLVED to approve the new Privacy notice.**

19. Internal Audit

Members noted that the Finance & Asset Management Committee had reviewed the internal audit report dated 18th January 2022 and that the recommendation regarding insurance cover had been implemented.

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

Members noted that the Local Plan Review Working Group was continuing with preparations for the EIP. Submissions on matters raised by the Inspectors were due in by 1st June. The Programme Officer had written to the Town Council stating that it appeared the Council could only submit comments regarding Matter 8, Infrastructure and delivery, monitoring and viability. The Clerk would be writing to the Programme Officer the following day to outline the advice given by Shropshire Council’s Planning Policy & Strategy Manager last summer and make the case for allowing the Town Council to submit additional information and speak at the EIP. Shropshire Councillor Daniel Thomas had also written to the Planning Policy & Strategy Manager to seek support for the Town Council to submit statements and speak at the hearings. If there was no change to the Programme Officer’s current position, it was hoped that there would be sufficient representatives from other groups and individuals Much Wenlock at all sessions to make a collective case.

It was RESOLVED that the final statements to the EIP should be circulated to all Councillors for information before submission.

07/22

21. Jubilee Beacon Working Group

Members received a report from the Jubilee Beacon Working Group. The beacon would be located in the parkland next to the Priory and had been registered as an official beacon. Following a service at Holy Trinity Church at 8.30 pm, the beacon would be lit at 9.15 pm on Thursday, 2nd June.

22. 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. Friendly Bus Newsletter May 2022
- f. Information regarding Shropshire Council processing of energy rebates for households in Shropshire
- g. Invitation to Zero Carbon Shropshire AGM on 7th May
- h. Confirmation that the Council's Jubilee tree planting has been added to the Queen's Green Canopy Map
- i. Shropshire Lieutenancy Town and Community Newsletter Issue 3
- j. West Midlands Community Flood Resilience Calendar of Free Training
- k. April 2022 Zero Carbon Shropshire Green News
- l. St John Ambulance 'Ask us about mental health' awareness week, 9th – 15th May training and resources.

23. 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 a review of the website and '20s Plenty' had been previously requested as agenda items for the June agenda.

24. Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 9th June 2022 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.

25. Condition Survey of Chapel and Lychgate

Members considered quotations for the provision of a building survey of the cemetery chapel and lychgate. **It was RESOLVED to commission Thomas Consulting to undertake the survey at a cost of £850 + VAT + disbursements.**

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm

Signed

Town Mayor

Date

15/21

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a
FINANCE & ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
 meeting held at the Guildhall, Much Wenlock
 at 7.00 pm on Thursday, 22nd March 2022

Present:

Cllrs. David Fenwick, Wilf Grainger, John O’Dowd, Daniel Thomas, Duncan White.

In attendance:

Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, Diane Barlow –Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), Cllr William Benbow.

1) Apologies

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following apology: Councillor Marcus Themans – unwell

2) 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.

3) Dispensations

None requested.

4) Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Asset Management Committee meeting held on 20th January 2022 be **APPROVED** and signed as a true record.

5) Town Clerk’s report

Members received a written report from the Town Clerk on action taken since the last meeting.

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED** that the Town Clerk’s report be **NOTED**.

6) Finance

- a. The RFO presented a written and verbal report. She advised that items to be financed by the Welcome Back Fund had been ordered and the planter was already in place. The payment of £5,776.68 had been received from Shropshire Council on 1st March. The RFO was preparing for the financial year-end and the closedown would be undertaken remotely by Rialtas on 5th May. The end of year internal audit was scheduled for 10th May. Income to 28th February was £272,574, 12.37% above budget for the time of year. Expenditure for the same period was £221,414, 15.1% below budget for the time of year. Large invoices from Shropshire Council for the library and RMW for the Christmas lights removal had now been received and paid. The RFO was forecasting a small underspend for the 21/22 financial year as a whole. Members **NOTED** the report.
- b. Members **NOTED** the balance sheet as at 28th February 2022.
- c. Members **NOTED** the income and expenditure to 28th February.
- d. Members reviewed the bank reconciliations to 28th February 2022. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the bank reconciliations to 28th February 2022.
- e. It was **RESOLVED** to approve payments from 21st January 2022 to date.

7) Interim Internal Audit Report

Councillors reviewed the report from the interim internal audit carried out on 18th January 2022. It was noted that the reinstatement value insured for the Memorial Hall had been increased as specified by the internal auditor. There had been no additional charge from the insurer for this increase. It was **RESOLVED** to note the interim internal audit report and action taken and to refer the report to full Council for approval.

8) Reserves and Virements

Councillors considered virements between budget headings as recommended by the RFO.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the virements between budget headings within the financial year 2021/22 as recommended by the RFO in her report.

16/21

Councillors reviewed the Council's earmarked reserves and considered recommendations by the RFO.

It was RESOLVED to approve the transfers to reserves recommended by the RFO in her report.

9) Financial Risk and Health & Safety Evaluation

Members reviewed and **RESOLVED to approve the updated internal Financial Risk and Health & Safety Evaluation.**

10) Asset Register

Members reviewed and **RESOLVED to approve the asset register as at 31st March 2022.**

11) Cemetery Fees

Members reviewed current cemetery fees and considered amendments to the fees for 2022/23. It was proposed that non-residents of the parish should be charged double the fees for residents for all interment costs. **It was RESOLVED to approve the Cemetery fees proposed by the Town Clerk and RFO with effect from 1st April 2022.**

12) Analysis of Residents' Survey Forms

Members considered arrangements for the analysis of the paper versions of the residents' survey forms. It was noted that the electronic forms had already been analysed. **It was RESOLVED to arrange for the Administrative Assistant to undertake the analysis of the paper survey forms as paid overtime.**

It was RESOLVED to approve an amount of £250, to be taken from the contingency budget, for any other expenses associated with preparations for the Examination in Public of the Draft Local Plan. Any expenditure was to be agreed with the Mayor and RFO prior to being incurred.

13) Guildhall Cupola and Window Repairs

Members noted that the work on the cupola was scheduled to finish during the current week.

14) New Strategy for Shropshire Council Libraries

Members considered information regarding the new strategy for Shropshire Council Libraries. It was noted that this was expected to have little impact on Much Wenlock Library.

15) Welcome to Shropshire Kingfisher Visitor Guide

Members considered advertising to promote Much Wenlock in the Shropshire Kingfisher Visitor Guide, combined hard copy and online versions. **It was RESOLVED to commission a half-page advertisement and to approach the publisher with a budget of £250.**

16) Mayor's Evensong

Members noted that a Mayor's Evensong had been arranged at Holy Trinity Church for Sunday, 1st May. **It was RESOLVED to allocate a budget of £300 for the event.**

17) Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee would be held on Tuesday, 24th May 2022 at 7.00pm 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.

18) Future Use of 10 High Street

Members noted that a proposal for the future use of the Guildhall had been withdrawn.

19) Structural Engineer's Report for Guildhall

- a. Members considered the structural engineer's report on the support beam at the rear of the Guildhall and noted recommendations for work required to the beam and yew hedge.
- b. **It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should make arrangements for the work with an appropriate contractor within a budget of £5,303.**
- c. **It was RESOLVED to reduce the height of the yew hedge at the rear of the Guildhall to the level of the lead ledge for the length of the building, removing the sections of hedge above the ground floor windows completely and leaving columns of hedge, within a budget of £300.**

17/21

20) Property Working Group

Members considered a report from the Property Working Group. The situation with regard to the tenancy of 2 Burgage Way and preparations for sale were noted.

21) Electrical Report for 10 High Street

Members considered proposals for electrical work to 10 High Street. **It was RESOLVED to approve the quotation provided by DLM Electrical Contractors in the amount of £1,620 + VAT.**

It was RESOLVED to suspend standing orders to allow the meeting to continue past 9pm.

22) Interim Visit Report for 2 Burgage Way

Members considered the interim visit report for 2 Burgage Way, dated 28th January 2022. Members noted that a repair had already been commissioned to the French door. **It was RESOLVED to arrange a repair to the velux window in the living room but to undertake no work to the brickwork along the entrance path for the time being.**

23) Guildhall Fire Alarm

Members considered information regarding the Guildhall fire alarm. **It was RESOLVED to commission RMW Electrical Services to undertake remedial works required to the alarm system and emergency lighting at a cost of £288.04 +VAT. It was RESOLVED to seek quotations for a new digital alarm system.**

24) Legionella Risk Assessment

Members considered the need for a legionella risk assessment for the Guildhall and quotations to hand. **It was RESOLVED to accept the quotation from Clira Water Hygiene in the amount of £180 + VAT for a legionella risk assessment of the Guildhall.**

25) Cemetery Grounds Maintenance

It was RESOLVED to approve an increase in the cost of cemetery grounds maintenance in the amount of £40 per month due to the increase in fuel costs.

26) Christmas Lighting

Members considered a proposal regarding a donation towards Christmas lighting in the town and provision of the Christmas tree at the end of Sheinton Street for the festive season.

It was RESOLVED that the Town Council accept with thanks a donation of around £1,000 from the Much Wenlock Christmas Lights Fund towards the town’s festive lights display and take on responsibility for the ongoing provision, installation and dressing of the Christmas tree located at the corner of Sheinton Street, making use of lights to be provided with the donation.

27. HR Support Service

Members noted that the Council’s current contract for HR support and employment law advice was due to expire on 26th April 2022 and considered quotations for the future provision of HR support.

It was RESOLVED to accept the proposal from Telford & Wrekin HR and to take out a three-year contract for HR advisory services, at a year one cost of £1,600 + VAT.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm

Signed.....
Chairman

Date.....

MONTH	MINUTE NUMBER	RESOLUTION	TASK COMPLETE	COMMENT
May 2021	22	Defer consideration of the Council's policies relating to data protection to a future meeting.	In progress	Privacy notice approved 12 th May. Other policies to follow.
July 2021	14	Finance & Asset Management Committee to consider the practicalities of flying the Union flag at the Guildhall.	In progress	Advice obtained from Holy Trinity Church team. New flag to be purchased.
Sept 2021	10	Approve the Document Retention Policy, subject to the production of and agreement to operational guidelines.	In progress	Input provided by Cllr Toon. Further discussion required before presentation to Council.
	15	Invite community activists to an introductory workshop in order to explore a Council and community-wide approach to climate change.	Pending	
Dec 2021	20	Resolved to approve recommendations from the Property Working Group: a.iii. To engage a professional fund raiser to obtain funding for the renovation of the Guildhall. a.iv. To check the Council's VAT position. c. To commission a condition report for the Cemetery Chapel.	In progress Pending Yes	On agenda for 9 th June. Advice obtained from NALC – clarity on proposals for Guildhall needed to determine VAT implications.
May 2022	9	Include development of a strategic plan on the September agenda for progress check with October as the target date for responses.	Pending	Committees and working groups asked to consider priorities for strategic plan.
	25	Commission Thomas Consulting to undertake a survey of the Chapel and Lychgate	Yes	To be carried out w/c 6 th June

Other Activities

- Introductory meeting held with representative from Telford & Wrekin HR on 25th May
- Attendance at SLCC Clerks Training Day on 27th May – focus on climate change and sustainability

DM PAYROLL SERVICES LTD
INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT MUCH
WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Date of Report: 13 May 2022

I have completed the internal audit review for Much Wenlock Town Council. I have carried out tests on the systems in place and have reviewed the internal controls. I confirm I have acted independently; the basis of the internal audit is by selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls. Please present this report to the council.

A. Appropriate books of account

Appropriate books of account have been kept during the year. The council has used RBS Omega software to record the accounting transactions, the accounts are kept up to date and there is evidence they are balanced monthly.

B. Financial Regulations

There is an audit trail of payment samples picked, payments were supported by receipts or invoices and payment schedules were reported to meetings.

Financial regulations were reviewed in April 2021. There is evidence of quotations being sought for purchases in excess of £3,000 as per the financial regulations.

VAT was accounted for in the accounting records and quarterly VAT reclaims submitted.

C. Risk Assessments

The risk assessment has been carried out and reviewed by the Finance and Asset Committee in March 2022.

The council's insurance policy has been updated to increase the cover for the memorial hall.

The computer data is backed up electronically.

D. Precept

The council considered its budget requirements for the year and set the precept at a full council meeting.

Financial monitoring reports of actual income and expenditure compared against the budget are provided to the Finance & Asset Management Committee at each meeting.

E. Income

Sample testing took place of income received and all receipts could be traced back into the bank. There was no unusual income received during the year.

F. Petty Cash

Petty cash is used appropriately, all samples tested were supported by receipts and are included in the accounts.

G. PAYE

PAYE is carried out using HMRC Basic Tools. The NJC pay award and back pay had been implemented in March 2022.

H. Asset Register

The council maintains an asset register, there had been no purchases or disposals of assets during the year.

I. Bank reconciliations

Bank reconciliations are carried out monthly and are regularly presented to the Finance & Asset Management Committee for review. I have agreed the bank reconciliation statements to the cashbook and bank statements as at 31 March 2022.

J. Accounting Statements

The council prepares the accounting statements on an Income and Expenditure basis. I have been able to follow the year end adjustments back to the actual receipts and payments.

K. Exemption

The council did not declare itself exempt from limited assurance audit during 2020/21.

L. Transparency Code

The council's turnover exceeds £25,000 and therefore this was not tested.

M. Public Rights

The notice for the public rights for the 2020/21 year was correctly displayed.

N. Publication Requirements

The council has complied with the publication requirements for the 2020/21 AGAR, these documents can be found on the council website.

Reserves

The general reserves do remain low, the guidance in accordance with the Practitioners' Guide states the general reserve should be maintained at between three and twelve months net revenue expenditure. Consideration needs to be given to this when planning any future projects and also when considering the budget requirements for forthcoming year.

General

In general, the accounting records are well kept and organised. I would like to thank your clerk, Trudi Barrett, and RFO, Diane Barlow, for their assistance in the internal audit review.

Yours sincerely

Diane Malley

Diane Malley M.A.A.T.

Much Wenlock Town Council

Income and Expenditure Account for Year Ended 31 March 2022

31 March 2021		31 March 2022
	Operating Income	
283,092	Administration	225,558
11,714	Corn Exchange	12,322
8,348	Guildhall	12,729
4,000	Museum	4,000
8,700	2 Burgage Way	8,700
0	The Square	759
7,396	Linden Lodge	7,500
12,190	Cemetery	10,449
450	Cemetery Field	450
335,888	Total Income	282,467
	Running Costs	
111,430	Administration	122,099
10,639	Grants & Donations	21,371
970	Civic Events	870
761	King Street public toilets	153
2,302	St Mary's Lane public toilets	465
13,065	Public Toilets	13,722
12,303	Environmental Services	15,305
9,463	Town Promotion	9,473
8,873	Corn Exchange	9,503
14,754	Guildhall	48,102
3,790	Barclays Bank	1,125
2,186	2 Burgage Way	7,708
155	Cooke Clock	155
90	The Square	0
450	Bus Shelters	695
2,369	Linden Lodge	1,222
320	Gaskell Recreation Ground Much	0
108,689	Gaskell Rec Ground/Joint Use	15,400
9,427	Cemetery	9,973
0	Cemetery Field	111
312,035	Total Expenditure	277,451
	General Fund Analysis	
19,408	Opening Balance	52,215
335,888	Plus : Income for Year	282,467
355,297		334,682
312,035	Less : Expenditure for Year	277,451
43,262		57,232
(8,953)	Transfers TO / FROM Reserves	(18,067)
52,215	Closing Balance	75,298

05/05/2022

Much Wenlock Town Council

11:42

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2022

31 March 2021

31 March 2022

Current Assets

543	Debtors	792
2,241	VAT Refunds	4,571
3,229	Prepayments	2,962
1,362	Bank Current Account	1,339
77,462	Bank Deposit Account	76,470
22,305	Unity Trust	24,237
49,416	Unity Trust Deposit Account	86,526
25,000	Public Sector Deposit Fund	25,000
28	Petty Cash	32

181,587**221,926****181,587 Total Assets****221,926****Current Liabilities**

421	Creditors	1,255
6,032	Accruals	40,521

6,453**41,776****175,134 Total Assets Less Current Liabilities****180,151****Represented By**

52,215	General Fund	75,298
12,369	S106 reserve	12,369
10,500	EMR Heritage	10,500
1,100	EMR - Pandemic Project	0
5,000	EMR - Public Toilets	6,278
0	EMR - Christmas Lights	2,523
8,000	EM Res -Election Expenses	8,000
50,000	EM Res - Property	21,157
12,843	EMR - Neighbourhood Fund	18,589
1,705	EMR - Charities	1,705
791	Grants Reserve	0
0	Civic Events Reserve	500
0	EMR - Guildhall	6,950
641	EMR - Archives	641
50	EMR - Bus Shelter	0
19,920	EMR - Lib	15,640

175,134**180,151**

05/05/2022

Much Wenlock Town Council

11:42

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2022

31 March 2021

31 March 2022

The above statement represents fairly the financial position of the authority as at 31 March 2022 and reflects its Income and Expenditure during the year.

Signed :
Chairman

_____ Date : _____

Signed :
Responsible
Financial
Officer

_____ Date : _____

Bank reconciliation – pro forma

This reconciliation should include **all** bank and building society accounts, including short term investment accounts. It **must** agree column headed “Year ending 31 March 2022” in Section 2 of the AGAR – and will also agree to Box 7 where the accounts are prepared on accruals and payments basis. Please complete the highlighted boxes, remembering that unpresented cheques should be entered as negative.

Name of smaller authority: Much Wenlock Town Council

County area (local councils and parish meetings only): Shropshire

Financial year ending 31 March 2022

Prepared by (Name and Role): Diane Maxwell-Barlow RFO

Date: 26/05/2022

	£	£
Balance per bank statements as at 31/3/22:		
Barclays Current Account	1338.83	
Barclays Deposit Account	76469.51	
Unity Current Account	24236.75	
Unity Deposit Account	86525.61	
Public Sector Deposit Fund	25000.00	
	213570.70	213570.70
Petty cash float		31.84
Less: any unpresented cheques as at 31/3/22		
item 1	0.00	
item 2		
item 3		
item 4		
item 5		
item 6		
item 7		
item 8		
Add: any un-banked cash as at 31/3/22	-	-
	-	-
Net balances as at 31/3/22 (Box 8)		213602.54

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22 Form 3

To be completed by Local Councils, Internal Drainage Boards and other Smaller Authorities*:

- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure exceeded £25,000 but did not exceed £6.5 million; or
- where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less but that:
 - are unable to certify themselves as exempt (fee payable); or
 - have requested a limited assurance review (fee payable)

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22

1. Every smaller authority in England that either received gross income or incurred gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 **must** complete Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return at the end of each financial year in accordance with *Proper Practices*.
2. **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return is made up of three parts, pages 3 to 6:**
 - The **Annual Internal Audit Report** **must** be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - **Sections 1 and 2** **must** be completed and approved by the authority.
 - **Section 3** is completed by the external auditor and will be returned to the authority.
3. The authority **must** approve Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, before approving Section 2, Accounting Statements, and both **must** be approved and published on the authority website/webpage **before 1 July 2022**.
4. An authority with either gross income or gross expenditure exceeding £25,000 or an authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000, but which is unable to certify itself as exempt, or is requesting a limited assurance review, **must** return to the external auditor by email or post (not both) **no later than 30 June 2022**. Reminder letters will incur a charge of £40 +VAT:
 - the Annual Governance and Accountability Return Sections 1 and 2, together with
 - a bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2022
 - an explanation of any significant year on year variances in the accounting statements
 - notification of the commencement date of the period for the exercise of public rights
 - Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22

Unless requested, do not send any additional documents to your external auditor. Your external auditor will ask for any additional documents needed.

Once the external auditor has completed the limited assurance review and is able to give an opinion, the Annual Governance and Accountability **Section 1, Section 2 and Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate** will be returned to the authority by email or post.

Publication Requirements

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, authorities must publish the following information on the authority website/webpage:

Before 1 July 2022 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and a declaration that the accounting statements are as yet unaudited;
- **Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement 2021/22**, approved and signed, page 4
- **Section 2 - Accounting Statements 2021/22**, approved and signed, page 5

Not later than 30 September 2022 authorities **must** publish:

- Notice of conclusion of audit
- **Section 3 - External Auditor Report and Certificate**
- **Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR** including any amendments as a result of the limited assurance review.

It is recommended as best practice, to avoid any potential confusion by local electors and interested parties, that you also publish the Annual Internal Audit Report, page 3.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return constitutes the annual return referred to in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. Throughout, the words 'external auditor' have the same meaning as the words 'local auditor' in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

*for a complete list of bodies that may be smaller authorities refer to schedule 2 to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Guidance notes on completing Form 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2021/22

- The authority **must** comply with *Proper Practices* in completing Sections 1 and 2 of this AGAR. *Proper Practices* are found in the *Practitioners' Guide** which is updated from time to time and contains everything needed to prepare successfully for the financial year-end and the subsequent work by the external auditor.
- Make sure that the AGAR is complete (no highlighted boxes left empty), and is properly signed and dated. If the AGAR contains unapproved or unexplained amendments, it may be returned and additional costs will be incurred.
- The authority **should** receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report before approving the Annual Governance Statement and the accounts.
- Use the checklist provided below to review the AGAR for completeness before returning it to the external auditor by email or post (not both) no later than 30 June 2022.
- The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) must be approved on the same day or before the Accounting Statements (Section 2) and evidenced by the agenda or minute references.
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must certify the accounts (Section 2) before they are presented to the authority for approval. The authority must in this order; consider, approve and sign the accounts.
- The RFO is required to commence the public rights period as soon as practical after the date of the AGAR approval.
- Do not send the external auditor any information not specifically requested. However, **you must inform your external auditor about any change of Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer or Chairman, and provide relevant authority owned generic email addresses and telephone numbers.**
- Make sure that the copy of the bank reconciliation to be sent to your external auditor with the AGAR covers all the bank accounts. If the authority holds any short-term investments, note their value on the bank reconciliation. The external auditor must be able to agree the bank reconciliation to Box 8 on the accounting statements (**Section 2, page 5**). An explanation **must** be provided of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8. More help on bank reconciliation is available in the *Practitioners' Guide**.
- Explain fully significant variances in the accounting statements on **page 5**. Do not just send a copy of the detailed accounting records instead of this explanation. The external auditor wants to know that you understand the reasons for all variances. Include complete numerical and narrative analysis to support the full variance.
- If the external auditor has to review unsolicited information, or receives an incomplete bank reconciliation, or variances are not fully explained, additional costs may be incurred.
- Make sure that the accounting statements add up and that the balance carried forward from the previous year (Box 7 of 2021) equals the balance brought forward in the current year (Box 1 of 2022).
- The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), on behalf of the authority, **must** set the commencement date for the exercise of public rights of 30 consecutive working days which **must** include the first ten working days of July.
- The authority **must** publish on the authority website/webpage the information required by Regulation 15 (2), Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, including the period for the exercise of public rights and the name and address of the external auditor **before 1 July 2022**.

Completion checklist – 'No' answers mean you may not have met requirements		Yes	No
All sections	Have all highlighted boxes have been completed?		
	Has all additional information requested, including the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights , been provided for the external auditor?		
Internal Audit Report	Have all highlighted boxes been completed by the internal auditor and explanations provided?		
Section 1	For any statement to which the response is 'no', has an explanation been published?		
Section 2	Has the authority's approval of the accounting statements been confirmed by the signature of the Chairman of the approval meeting?		
	Has an explanation of significant variations been published where required?		
	Has the bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2022 been reconciled to Box 8?		
	Has an explanation of any difference between Box 7 and Box 8 been provided?		
Sections 1 and 2	Trust funds – have all disclosures been made if the authority as a body corporate is a sole managing trustee? NB: do not send trust accounting statements unless requested.		

***Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices**, can be downloaded from www.nalc.gov.uk or from www.ada.org.uk

Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/22

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

www.muchwenlock-tc.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2022, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2021/22 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2020/21, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2020/21 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority publishes information on a free to access website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with any relevant transparency code requirements	✓		
M. The authority, during the previous year (2020-21) correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (evidenced by the notice published on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2020/21 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		

O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken: 13/01/22, 10/05/22
 Name of person who carried out the internal audit: DIANE MALLEY

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit: Diane Malley
 Date: 10/05/22

*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).
 **Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned; or, if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2021/22

We acknowledge as the members of:

Much Wenlock Town Council

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.			<i>prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.</i>
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.			<i>made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.</i>
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.			<i>has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.</i>
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.			<i>during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.</i>
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			<i>considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.</i>
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.			<i>arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.</i>
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.			<i>responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.</i>
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.			<i>disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.</i>
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A

*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

and recorded as minute reference:

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

Clerk

Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2021/22 for

MUCH WESLOK TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance	
	31 March 2021 £	31 March 2022 £		
1. Balances brought forward	151,280	175,134	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.	
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	204,432	208,203	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.	
3. (+) Total other receipts	131,456	74,264	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.	
4. (-) Staff costs	85,680	95,311	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.	
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).	
6. (-) All other payments	226,354	182,139	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).	
7. (=) Balances carried forward	175,134	180,151	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).	
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	175,574	213,603	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.	
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	281,941	281,941	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.	
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).	
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	N/A	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
			✓	N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2022 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

D Macqueen-Balaw

Date

26/05/2022

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

as recorded in minute reference:

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2021/22

In respect of

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/> .

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2022; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2021/22

(Except for the matters reported below)* on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. (*delete as appropriate).

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

(continue on a separate sheet if required)

3 External auditor certificate 2021/22

We certify/do not certify* that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2022.

*We do not certify completion because:

External Auditor Name

External Auditor Signature

Date

Explanation of variances – pro forma

Name of smaller authority: **Much Wenlock Town Council**
 County area (local councils and parish meetings only): **Shropshire**

Insert figures from Section 2 of the AGAR in all **Blue** highlighted boxes

Next, please provide full explanations, including numerical values, for the following that will be flagged in the green boxes where relevant:

- variances of more than 15% between totals for individual boxes (except variances of less than £200);
- **New from 2020/21 onwards:** variances of £100,000 or more require explanation regardless of the % variation year on year;
- a breakdown of approved reserves on the next tab if the total reserves (Box 7) figure is more than twice the annual precept/rates & levies value (Box 2).

	2020/21 £	2021/22 £	Variance £	Variance %	Explanation Required?	Automatic responses trigger below based on figures input, DO NOT OVERWRITE THESE BOXES	Explanation from smaller authority (must include narrative and supporting figures)
1 Balances Brought Forward	151,280	175,134				Explanation of % variance from PY opening balance not required - Balance brought forward agrees	
2 Precept or Rates and Levies	204,432	208,203	3,771	1.84%	NO		
3 Total Other Receipts	131,456	74,264	-57,192	43.51%	YES		Project undertaken and completed in 2020/21 to install a perimeter path on the Gaskell Recreation Ground and gates between the ground and William Brookes School. Project contribution costs received in 2021/22 from LEADER of £36,215, Lady Forester Trust of £15,000 and £7,000 from William Brookes School. This was a one off project which was not repeated in 2021/22.
4 Staff Costs	85,680	95,311	9,631	11.24%	NO		
5 Loan Interest/Capital Repayment	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		
6 All Other Payments	226,354	182,139	-44,215	19.53%	YES		In 2020/21 the council spent £94,145 on the Gaskell Recreation Ground perimeter path and Access project, which was a one off project. This expenditure was not repeated in 2022/23.
7 Balances Carried Forward	175,134	180,151			NO	VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
8 Total Cash and Short Term Investments	175,574	213,603				VARIANCE EXPLANATION NOT REQUIRED	
9 Total Fixed Assets plus Other Long Term Investments and	281,941	281,941	0	0.00%	NO		
10 Total Borrowings	0	0	0	0.00%	NO		

Rounding errors of up to £2 are tolerable

Variances of £200 or less are tolerable

Reconciliation between Box 7 and Box 8 in Section 2 - pro forma

(applies to Accounting Statements prepared on an income and expenditure basis only)

Please complete the highlighted boxes.

Name of smaller authority:

Much Wenlock Town Council

County area (local councils and parish meetings only):

Shropshire

There should only be a difference between Box 7 and Box 8 where the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the AGAR) have been prepared on an income and expenditure basis and there have been adjustments for debtors/prepayments and creditors/receipts in advance at the year end. Please provide details of the year end adjustments, showing how the net difference between them is equal to the difference between Boxes 7 and 8.

	£	£
Box 7: Balances carried forward		180,151.00
Deduct: Debtors		
Debtors	(792.00)	
HMRC (VAT)	(4,571.00)	
	(5,363.00)	
Deduct: Payments made in advance		
Prepayments	(2,962.00)	
	(2,962.00)	
Total deductions		(8,325.00)
Add:		
Creditors	1,255.00	
Accruals	40,522.00	
	41,777.00	
Add:		
Receipts in advance (must not include deferred grants/loans received)		
	-	
Total additions		41,777.00
Box 8: Total cash and short term investments		<u>213,603.00</u>

CONFIRMATION OF THE DATES OF THE PERIOD FOR THE EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS

Name of smaller authority: **Much Wenlock Town Council**

County Area (local councils and parish meetings only): **Shropshire**

On behalf of the smaller authority, I confirm that the dates set for the period for the exercise of public rights are as follows:

Commencing on: 13 June 2022

and ending on: 22 July 2022

(Please enter the dates set by the smaller authority as appropriate which must be 30 working days (i.e. Monday – Friday only, and not Bank Holidays) inclusive and must include the first 10 working days of July 2022 (i.e. Friday 1 July – Thursday 14 July).

We have suggested the following dates: Monday 13 June – Friday 22 July 2022. The latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements are Friday 1 July – Thursday 11 August 2022.)

Signed: Diane Maxwell-Barlow

Role: Responsible Financial Officer

This form is only for use by smaller authorities subject to a review:

Please submit this form to PKF Littlejohn LLP with the AGAR Form 3 and other requested documentation – this form is not for publication on your website.

Friends of the Old Cemetery Report to Council April 2022

1. The Caring for God's Acre Seminar – March 2022

The Caring for God's Acre Team held a daylong seminar on Zoom which was attended by both the Town Clerk and myself, (Lesley Durbin), not all lectures were attended but most were covered by either myself or Trudi. We were informed that there were well over 120 participants. There were some main points to take away from the day.

1.1 Cemeteries are landscapes which have remained largely unchanged for centuries, other than burials, soil structure, trees, stone walls, ivy, stone grave monuments have remained sanctuaries for plants, insects, birds and mammals. They have been spared the upheavals that have beset the agricultural environment in recent decades.

1.2 They have a timelessness and peaceful setting which is not available in public parks, recreation grounds and public gardens. This remains a valuable asset for peace of mind and mental wellbeing. In rural areas they are often surrounded by a desert of industrial farming

1.3 These important environments need champions to support and preserve this natural settings.

1.4 Grass cutting – mowers were people before the mid 20th century, not machines. Good habitats need to provide areas of short, medium and long grass which can provide shelter for small mammals, insects and give a good variety of wildflowers for pollinating insects. Much Wenlock Cemetery can provide all of these: short grass in the new part, medium and long grass in the Old Cemetery part.

1.5 Insects – the insect lifecycle must be provided for throughout the year, especially over winter. Plants which provide egg laying, food for caterpillars and nectar feeding. Ivy will do all of these things and is an important plant to retain, it is a myth that it will damage stone walls (apparently).

1.6 A moderate amount of dead plant life must be left over winter to provide food and shelter.

1.7 Lichen and moss on gravestones is a hugely important habitat and cleaning gravestones should be discouraged. Some graveyards have teams which clean the inscription areas but leave the remainder of the stones un-touched.

2. Tree Planting

2.1 The Friends of the Old Cemetery, with the assistance of the Town Clerk's office, held a successful morning of planting on March 19th. There were somewhere near thirty people who attended, some to form the planting team and some had made donations to the cost. The mayor was in attendance. Over £300 was raised to contribute to the cost.

Ten trees were planted, seven Sorbus of two different varieties and three Crataegus prunifolia; they were planted in honour of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and it is hoped the Town Council will fund a small plaque to mark the occasion. The Town Council planted six trees and shrubs for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee but the occasion was not marked and is now largely forgotten.

2.2 There is room for more trees as commemorative trees for lost loved ones funded by donors, or more trees to assist in climate change and flood alleviation.

3. Wildflowers

With the help of the Shropshire Wild Team and volunteers from CfGA we have created two new wildflower beds which will be sown with seed a little later in the year. The seeds will be collected, natural seeds so may take more than one season to come to fruition.

4. Slow Worms

The group and the Town Clerk have sought local expert advice on how to manage the very important issue of providing protected habitat for slow worms (a species protected by law).

The Town Clerk will report directly on the advice given. The same local expert, formerly of Natural England, has volunteered to write a management plan.

5. Links with the Community

The Friends of the Old Cemetery enjoy links with the Primary School every year on 11th November, when school children and the Reverend Matthew Stafford hold a short ceremony at the Remembrance Garden in the Old Cemetery. We also promote the work of sustainable management through our regular column in the Wenlock Herald.

Recommendations to Council:

That the Town Council commissions a management plan for the Cemetery, which will advise on ecological and habitat management.

That the Town Council sets out an annual budget which will enable the management plan to be put into practice.



Shropshire Council
 Shirehall
 Abbey Foregate
 Shrewsbury
 Shropshire SY2 6ND

Date: 17 May 2022

My Ref:

Your Ref

Dear Colleague,

Shropshire Council's library strategy public consultation has been launched so key stakeholders, library users the wider community can help identify local priorities and reflect their community's needs.

The consultation will be available to complete online from 12/05/2022 and will run until 3/08/2022 with paper copies supplied on request at your local library.

The strategy looks to enhance the way libraries deliver services to ensure every location provides an efficient and cost-effective service that meets people's needs.

A six-point plan has been proposed to transform services over a three-year period. The plan will see libraries:

- Improving opportunities for reading, literacy, culture and creativity
- Improving health and wellbeing of communities
- Promoting economic recovery and growth
- Supporting communities that are resilient and inclusive
- Offering more innovative and sustainable services
- Enabling discovery of the digital world

Shropshire Council's library service currently operates through a network of 21 static libraries, a prison library, and three mobile libraries and while the mix of provision will continue, each location will be reviewed individually to maximise their potential.

Opportunities for co-location, where libraries will share space within other community locations, will also be considered to allow them to meet community need.

Changes to the current library service structure will also be explored, supported by a clear workforce strategy, to enable staff to enhance their roles to become more pro-actively involved in wider community engagement.

In support of these proposals, it is intended self-service kiosks will be installed in all libraries, along with contactless card-payments, with library opening hours tailored to reach people with the greatest needs.

We want you to have your say on the future of Shropshire Libraries and welcome your insights into how we can develop libraries for communities.

Michael Lewis
 Library Service Manager
 Place Directorate



www.shropshire.gov.uk
 General Enquiries: 0345 678 9000

Link to SC website and consultation: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/shropshire-library-strategy-2022-to-2027/>

Monday, May 9, 2022 at 11:16:54 AM British Summer Time

Subject: Shropshire Council's draft housing allocation policy for consultation
Date: Monday, 9 May 2022 at 10:34:32 British Summer Time
From: Melanie Holland
Attachments: Draft Shropshire Council housing allocations policy for consultation May 2022.pdf

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing to you in your capacity as a Town or Parish Council Clerk as I wish to seek your Council's comments on the Council's draft revised housing allocations policy and scheme (please find attached).

Shropshire Council's housing allocations policy has been reviewed to ensure that those applicants in the greatest need are allocated social and affordable housing. In addition, the policy review has sought to prevent and tackle homelessness; promote independent living and reduce admissions to residential care; and enable key workers on low incomes to access affordable housing.

In order for the Council to ensure that those most in need are allocated social housing and that the policy also supports the delivery of strategic priorities, it is proposed to introduce a policy for the allocation of council housing (which is managed by STAR Housing) and nominations to housing associations for all tenures of affordable housing - social and affordable rented and low-cost home ownership properties - including supported housing.

To ensure the Council is meeting local housing needs of those who are unable to meet their needs through the market, the draft revised policy contains qualification criteria relating to local connection, a financial assessment and unacceptable behaviour.

With statutory exceptions relating to the Armed Forces, ex-service personnel, existing social tenants moving to employment in Shropshire, and persons who need to move from another local authority area to escape domestic abuse or other forms of violence or harm, the proposed local connection is either residency (living in Shropshire for the last year), close family living in Shropshire, or being employed in Shropshire.

It is proposed that applicants who would be able to purchase or rent market priced housing within Shropshire which is suitable for their needs would not qualify to be on the housing register. Therefore, the draft policy proposes that households with an income of £50,000 gross per annum or savings and assets (including equity in a property) of more than £200,000 or both would not qualify to be on the housing register.

The draft policy also increases the number of bands from four to seven. Thus, allowing for greater differentiation in prioritising categories of applicants who are required to be given priority under housing legislation and also recognising the needs of those applicants who may not be in a priority group recognised by legislation, but are still in housing need, for example, key workers in low-paid employment.

The consultation period is from **9 May 2022 to 3 July 2022**.

If you have any comments on the draft housing allocations policy please email:
HousingStrategy@shropshire.gov.uk.

Thank you in anticipation.

Best wishes

Mel

Melanie Holland
Housing Strategy and Development Manager
Homes and Communities
Place Directorate

01743 256818
07977 188589
melanie.holland@shropshire.gov.uk

If this is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act, or similar legislation, please submit your request using our online form, at www.shropshire.gov.uk/access-to-information/request-general-information/

Shropshire Council logo

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