

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
at 7 pm on Thursday, 7th July 2022

Present: Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick, Wilfred Grainger, John O’Dowd, Marcus Themans, Daniel Thomas, Christian Toon, Chris Tyler, Linda West, Duncan White (in the chair)

Town Clerk: Trudi Barrett

Two members of the public, PCSO Heath Amies

One member of the public attending the meeting remotely

1. Chairman’s Welcome

The Mayor presented the following report:

The second ‘Made in Shropshire’ Artisan Market was once again a success and was well attended by new visitors to the town, despite the poor weather.

The annual ‘Orchid Count’ on Windmill Hill involved 14 volunteers and showed a significant increase in growth in the last year. This site is one of only two main sites in the county where the pyramidal species of orchid is found.

I attended William Brookes School to meet the pupils preparing for the Gold Forever performances next week at The Edge arts centre, when I will officially open and welcome those attending the celebration of the legacy of London Olympics in 2012. This weekend the annual Wenlock Games take place and I shall be attending to present some of the medals and awards to the competitors.

The new artisan café in Sheinton Street, “Baker & Cook”, has opened for business and I would like to welcome them to our town and wish them every success.

Unfortunately, I have to report the resignation of Cllr Mike Grace. I would like to thank Cllr Grace for his contributions to the council during his term of office and, in particular, in connection with the town’s preparation for the Examination in Public of the Shropshire Council Local Plan. The vacancy has been posted and we will know more about the next step to fill the vacancy after the 18th July.

The Examination in Public of the Local Plan has now commenced and the Town Council and members of the community have already started to make their case. I will be attending next week on matter 7. I would like to record my thanks to everyone who has been part of this by representing the residents of the town.

Today my wife and I attended the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust tourism open day to promote local tourism links in the county for the Trust. This was attended by members of the Shropshire community with links to tourism and hospitality.

2. Apologies for Absence

None, all Councillors were present.

3. Disclosure of pecuniary interests

Members were reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the register of members’ interests maintained by the monitoring officer.

4. Dispensations

None requested.

5. Public Session

There had been no requests to speak.

6. Policing

a. Members noted with thanks the written police report provided. PCSO Heath Amies, known as Ted, introduced himself and was welcomed to the local area.

b. Members noted the response from the Local Policing Team to queries raised at the previous meeting.

7. Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Councillor, Daniel Thomas, presented the following report:

Road Repairs: Shropshire Council are continuing their work in repairing our roads, with more work outlined in Much Wenlock, including Barrow Street where they will close the road from 11th to 15th of July between 9:30 am to 2:00 pm each day.

Update on the Recycling Bin : There is a slight delay on the mixed recycling bin rollout which has affected Much Wenlock, Worfield and Bridgnorth areas. It is hoped residents will receive their bin within the next 2-3 weeks and residents are urged to mark their bin as soon as it's received, to ensure that it remains with the correct dwelling.

Update on Highways Projects: At Tuesday's Planning Committee meeting this Council discussed various projects with Shropshire Council.

Firstly, an update on the situation regarding CIL money for proposed pedestrian crossing from Oakfield Park across Bridgnorth Road. This is now with WSP to get a scheme drawn up and maybe to look at not only amending the refuge but possibly upgrading to a full, formal crossing. With this in mind, as part of the current B Road study across the county, Shropshire Council have had a Traffic Survey undertaken at this location with a view to extending the speed limit so we can have a 40mph buffer zone on the approach to the crossing, to be done all as one scheme. This will complement the work I am doing with Gemma Lawley to get the 30-mph zone extended on the Callaughton Road. Secondly the signage outside the Town Cemetery and the allotments. This is still with Kier to install. I know they are behind, but things are starting to move and I have chased this up again.

Thirdly, the Much Wenlock amended parking plan. This is with WSP to amend and should be back with us in the next two weeks. As soon as it is ready we will go to public consultation, which will probably be in September with people away for summer.

Surgery: The next Council surgery will be held this coming Saturday, 9th July, between 10.30am and 12 noon at the museum – no appointment necessary. I'll be joined by Cllr Wilf Grainger and a member of the local police.

Local Plan: The Local Plan Examination in Public is currently taking place and I've noticed the Town Council have made strong representations at the hearings. I'm looking forward to representing the Town Council myself next week, speaking with Cllr White regarding Matter 7.

In response to questions, Councillor Thomas advised that the 30mph speed limit ended the wrong side of Callaughtons Ash. It was hoped to extend the limit, which would also mean that Shropshire Council would have to sweep the road within the 30mph zone.

Concerns were raised about access for agricultural vehicles along the A458. There were already difficulties with the existing refuge and any future plans would need to take such access into account. It was noted that the Town Council would have the opportunity to scrutinise the scheme but Councillor Thomas would raise the issue in the meantime. Councillor Thomas was asked to urge a repair to the damaged refuge on the Gaskell corner and a replacement Bridgnorth Road sign at this junction.

8. Councillor Resignation

- a. Members noted that a casual vacancy had arisen following the resignation of Mike Grace and that the appropriate notice of vacancy had been posted.
- b. **It was RESOLVED to request that poll cards be issued, should an election be called.**

9. Minutes

- a. **It was RESOLVED to approve and adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 9th June 2022.**
- b. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 3rd May 2022.**
- c. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on 10th February 2022.**

10. Town Clerk's Report

Members **NOTED** the written and verbal report from the Town Clerk on outstanding matters and action taken since the last Council meeting.

Councillors White, Fenwick and O'Dowd would be available to attend an initial meeting with Greenwood Projects regarding the Guildhall project.

The Clerk advised that there had been technical issues with the Town Council website and that it had been necessary to purchase an upgrade to remedy the problems. It was noted that Councillor Toon was investigating other options for improving the website.

11. Committee and Working Group Membership

Following the Councillor resignation, Members considered the appointment of a new member to the following committee and working groups:

- a. Planning & Environment Committee
- b. Transport Working Group
- c. Shropshire Local Plan Review Working Group
- d. Strategic Flood Working Group

It was RESOLVED to continue with the current membership, without the addition of replacement members.

12. Code of Conduct – Other Registrable Interests

Following the adoption of the new Code of Conduct, it was noted that Councillors are required to advise the Monitoring Officer at Shropshire Council of any ‘Other Registrable Interests’. Councillors were asked to complete and return the relevant form to the Clerk by 15th July 2022 for forwarding to the Monitoring Officer.

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

Members noted a report from members of the Shropshire Local Plan Review Working Group on the Examination in Public:

For Matter 1 David Turner had stood in for the Council and conveyed the relevant points, including lack of consultation, which had been covered in the press by the Shropshire Star.

For Matter 2 Councillor Will Benbow and Mr Howard Horsley had attended. This had been a very technical session about the duty to cooperate, including how Shropshire Council had cooperated on strategic matters with adjoining local authorities, Black Country overspill, etc., which had taken up about 90% of the day. Strategic matters had also been covered and Mr Horsley had spoken very well about water matters affecting Much Wenlock, with an attentive response from the Inspector.

For Matter 3 today, strategic matters relating to housing, employment, etc., Councillor Tyler and Mrs Lesley Durbin had attended as representatives. Mrs Durbin had spoken and outlined how the Neighbourhood Plan had been ignored with regard to the number of properties. It had not been possible to address all of the questions relating to Matter 3, and these would be finalised on the following Friday.

Matter 4 would be covered on 12th July, when Councillor Tyler and Mrs Durbin would again be speaking.

Matter 8 would be covered by Mr J Orves. Following his resignation from the Council, Mr Mike Grace had offered to appear as an associate of the Town Council, representing the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan Refresh Group. **It was RESOLVED to accept with thanks the offer from Mr Grace to speak on Matter 8 as an associate of the Town Council.**

14. Gaskell Recreation Ground Charity

- a. Members noted a report on the Gaskell Recreation Ground, following the Charity meeting held on 16th June. Thanks were expressed to members of the Management Committee.
- b. Members were reminded that all Town Councillors are Trustees of the Gaskell Recreation Ground Charity and are expected to attend the two scheduled meetings of the Charity each year.

15. ‘20’s Plenty’

Councillor Tyler introduced the ‘20’s Plenty’ campaign for a speed limit of 20mph on residential streets and in town centres. Ellesmere had already taken up the campaign and Shrewsbury town was running a pilot scheme. Councillors were broadly supportive of the initiative. However, it was noted that, when previously approached, Shropshire Council would not consider a 20mph speed limit in the town centre. It was noted that a 20mph speed limit could not be enforced as it was not a legal requirement. However, signage and an awareness campaign could be possible.

It was RESOLVED to support the campaign in principle and to invite a speaker on ‘20’s Plenty’ to a forthcoming Council meeting.

16. Consultation

- a. Members considered a response to the following consultation:
 - i. Shropshire Council Review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2023 to 2027 – response deadline 4th September 2022. **It was RESOLVED to make no response.**

- ii. Shropshire Council Review of the Street Trading Policy 2023 to 2028 – response deadline 21st August 2022.

It was noted that this was of relevance to the town with regard to the Christmas Fayre and other markets and that the Town Council had met the Shropshire Council Head of Licensing in 2019.

It was RESOLVED that the Communications, Markets and Tourism Working Group should review the policy and respond on behalf of the Council.

- iii. Police & Crime Commissioner’s Estate Strategy - response deadline 11th July 2022.

It was RESOLVED to make no response.

- iv. Police & Crime Commissioner’s Town and Parish Council Survey - response deadline 8th August 2022.

It was RESOLVED that the Mayor should respond on behalf of the Town Council.

It was noted that the Broseley & Much Wenlock local policing team were responsive and worked well with the Town Council.

- b. Members noted that arrangements had been made for a meeting with the Shropshire Council Library Service Manager and responsible Portfolio Holder to discuss the Shropshire Library Strategy 2022 – 2027, prior to agreeing a response to the consultation by the closing date of 3rd August 2022.

It was RESOLVED that Councillors White and West should attend the meeting and report back to the Finance & Asset Management Committee to agree a response to the consultation.

The Councillors were also asked to seek information on the forthcoming review of Shropshire museums from the portfolio holder, Councillor Cecilia Motley.

17. Correspondence

Members noted the following items, which had been sent 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. Visit Shropshire Hills newsletter June 2022
- f. Healthwatch press release 14th June 2022: Healthwatch are calling for people’s experiences of calling for an ambulance in an emergency
- g. West Mercia Police Fraud and Scam Bulletin June 2022
- h. Zero Carbon Shropshire June 2022 Green News
- i. Shropshire Seniors Magazine

18. Agenda items for next Town Council meeting

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

A speaker on the Food Bank had agreed to attend

Review of website proposal

Possible letter to Andy Begley of Shropshire Council (referred from Planning & Environment Committee)

19. Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 8th September 2022 at the Guildhall.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm

Signed

Town Mayor

Date