

# **Much Wenlock Town Council**

## **Full Council Meeting**

**1<sup>st</sup> December 2022**

## **Supporting Papers**

25/22

# MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the  
**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock  
at 7 pm on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022

**Present:** Councillors William Benbow, Susan Crooke-Williams, David Fenwick, Wilfred Grainger, John O'Dowd, Marcus Themans, Daniel Thomas, Chris Tyler, Linda West, Duncan White (in the chair)

**In attendance:** Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk

Mrs Liz Bird, Bridgnorth Food Bank Manager

## 1. Chairman's Welcome

The Mayor presented the following report:

Since the last meeting we held the Civic Service on 16<sup>th</sup> October at Holy Trinity Church, which was attended by the High Sheriff of Shropshire and her husband, guests from local community groups and Mayors from several local towns. My wife and I also attended the Civic Service held for the Bishops Castle Mayor last Sunday.

We are progressing with our review of other CCTV systems and are going to visit Shifnal Council to see their system in the coming weeks as the previous appointment had to be cancelled due to a power cut in Shifnal.

Following recent power supply issues in High Street, I have spoken to Western Power Distribution and they assure me that the necessary work needed to permanently resolve the issue will not be done until the new year and that they will notify us in advance of the planned work.

I recently visited residents in Victoria Road to reassure them following an incident of damage and a forced entry into a motor home on the same evening, which are being dealt with by the police.

I recently volunteered with others at the Windmill Trust and did some maintenance work on Windmill Hill and will continue to work with the Trust on future projects.

In the coming days we will have several events to mark Remembrance: at the cemetery with Much Wenlock Primary School at 10.00am on Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> November, followed by the usual ceremony at 11.00am at the Corn Exchange and on the following Sunday morning at the Church. I hope you will join me to mark this very important event in the calendar.

On 24<sup>th</sup> November at 6.30pm we will be switching on the Christmas lights in the town and we look forward to seeing the new lights that have been recently purchased with grant funding as well as enjoying some local entertainment.

## 2. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Christian Toon – family illness.

## 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.
- b. Members noted the minutes of a Local Policing Charter Councillor Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

26/22

## 7. Bridgnorth Food Bank

The Mayor welcomed Mrs Liz Bird, Bridgnorth Food Bank Manager, who spoke about the Food Bank:

The Bridgnorth Food Bank was set up in 2013 and covers a 12 mile radius. It is independent and provides support not only with food, but also other necessities. Clients have to be referred and then attend on a Monday to be registered. Clients are asked to provide full details of their circumstances so that the Food Bank can tailor support accordingly. An agreement is issued, which is reviewed every four weeks, however, some clients are supported for several years due to exceptional need. Currently, four families in Much Wenlock are being supported. This week 67 adults and 27 children came into the Food Bank during two hours. The Food Bank is able to facilitate contact with specialist workers in the areas of debt, domestic abuse, mental health, etc.

Between February and September this year the Food Bank gave out 45,000 food and toiletry items. All donations are marked with a black cross so that the recipient cannot return them to a supermarket for a cash refund. Items such as toys and gifts are provided for Christmas. The Food Bank also tries to support clients moving into housing association properties with other items, as when a tenant moves out the association strips the property of everything, including carpets and curtains, so that there is nothing at all left inside for the new tenant.

The Food Bank has a fund raiser on its committee and raises funds through collections, talks and events. Some people donate money on a regular basis. Donations of food and cash are welcome, but nothing containing alcohol. Long life shopping bags are also useful for clients to carry their food parcels. The Methodist Church hold a collection in Much Wenlock on Fridays and there is also a donation box at The Simple Life Unwrapped shop.

The Mayor thanked Mrs Bird for her informative overview of the work of the Bridgnorth Food Bank and said that Councillors would see how they could support the organisation.

## 8. Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Councillor, Daniel Thomas, presented the following report:

### **Buildwas Power Station**

The Buildwas Power Station planning permission has now been posted online, and the £350,000 Much Wenlock was promised has been received by Shropshire Council. Shropshire Council is ready to start the feasibility study; at the planning committee on Tuesday, we decided to help shape the feasibility study to ensure a bypass is considered, and it will be.

### **Electric Charging points for Much Wenlock**

I'm delighted to announce that there will be 12 new off-street car charging points in Much Wenlock, with six going in at St Mary's Car Park and six at Falcons Court. The proposed locations have been carefully selected using several factors, including the availability of suitable Shropshire Council-owned car parking, traffic flows, the number of residents without access to off-street parking and the availability of existing EV charge point installations already. A grant pays for 60% of the cost, and the rest will be paid for by CIL and highways budgets.

### **Highways Improvements**

Road improvements on Harley Bank include pothole repair, drainage investigation and repair, and signage repair. Diversions will be in place from 3 to 9 November overnight between 8.00 pm-6.00 am on these days.

### **Flooding**

I organised and attended a meeting with John Bellis and the Town Council's Strategic flood group yesterday to look at the options regarding Flood Resilience Protection at Hunters Gate. I thought it was a very positive meeting that looked at various issues whilst pressing for action to protect people's homes.

### **Result at South Shropshire Planning Committee**

Cllr David Fenwick and I, representing this Council, spoke at the South Shropshire Planning Committee regarding a planning application for an eco-friendly holiday let in Stretton Westwood, and I'm delighted to say our views were heard. We had success, with the permission being granted.

### **Updates on Traffic Issues**

The WSP parking proposal map came in on Tuesday, and we can now progress to the public consultation stage, hopefully, this side of Christmas. Responding to a concern from our recent advice surgery, the mayor and I will meet the relevant officer at Shropshire Council to explore adding parts of Station Road and Sytche Close to the map. I'm awaiting the date of the meeting.

### **Shadwell Quarry**

The second Lawful Development Certificate for the use of the site for the stationing of more than 53 Holiday Chalets that fall within the definition of a caravan has been determined not lawful. As you're aware, I've passed on local concerns about the recent activity and am confident officers are responding.

### **Surgery**

The next Council surgery will be held on Saturday, 12th November, between 10.30 am and 12 noon at the museum. No appointment is necessary. I'll be joined by Cllr William Benbow and a representative from the Police.

27/22

**9. Minutes**

- a. It was **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022.
- b. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022.
- c. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the Finance & Asset Management Committee meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022.
- d. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

**10. Town Clerk's Report**

Members **NOTED** the written report from the Town Clerk on outstanding matters and action taken since the last Council meeting. It was noted that the flag and rope on the Guildhall had become damaged and would require replacement. The meeting to view the Shifnal CCTV system had been rescheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> November. The application to the Architectural Heritage Fund for a project viability grant for the Guildhall had been submitted and would be considered at a decision meeting scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> December.

**11. Residents' Survey on Planning and Traffic**

Members reviewed the results of the Residents' Survey on Planning and Traffic. This had been considered at the Planning & Environment Committee meeting earlier in the week and would be useful background information for WSP to feed into the feasibility study for the Gaskell corner.

Members considered action in relation to question one of the survey: "Do you think that the future proposals for development in Much Wenlock should be shaped by a refresh of our Neighbourhood Plan that includes further community consultation with residents?" 65% of respondents had replied yes, 28% no and 7% maybe.

It was noted that the Neighbourhood Plan took precedence until the new Shropshire Local Plan was approved. This would happen in the next 18 months, in one form or another. Once there was certainty about the Local Plan, there would be a base to work from with regard to the town's Neighbourhood Plan. Any review should be led by the Town Council, who continued to support the Neighbourhood Plan and were committed to reviewing it at the appropriate time. The natural progression would be for the Council's current Local Plan Review Working Group to move onto reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan at the conclusion of the Examination in Public of the Local Plan. There could be some merit in beginning to consider informally what changes might be required to the Neighbourhood Plan in due course.

**It was RESOLVED to refer further discussion of the merits of an informal review of the Neighbourhood Plan to the Planning & Environment Committee.**

**12. Town Council Website**

**It was RESOLVED to defer consideration of this item until a supporting paper was provided.**

**13. 'Made in Shropshire' Markets 2023**

- a. It was noted that the markets held during the current year had been successful and well received. The organisation had been pleased with the outcome and could offer three dates for 2023, possibly with more stalls. **It was RESOLVED to hold 'Made in Shropshire' artisan markets in Much Wenlock on Saturdays 15<sup>th</sup> April, 17<sup>th</sup> June and 19<sup>th</sup> August 2023.**  
It was noted that Councillor Toon was setting up an email group for traders so that they could be kept informed.
- b. It was noted that road closures would need to be arranged for the markets.

**14. 'Get a Word in Edgeways', the Much Wenlock Festival of Words**

Members considered information regarding the 'Get a Word in Edgeways' Festival to be held in 2023. **It was RESOLVED to support the event in principle.**

**15. Consultation**

Members considered a response to the following consultation:

Shropshire Council's Registration Service – lessons learnt from the pandemic  
Deadline for response: 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**It was RESOLVED to make no response.**

28/22

**16. Correspondence**

Members noted the following items, which had been emailed to Members:

- 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. Information from the RSN Rural Market Town Group

**17. Agenda items for next Town Council meeting**

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

- Correspondence from Windmill Trust
- 'Flood Sax' and road closure barriers.

**18. Date of next meeting**

Members noted that the next meeting would be held at 7.00pm on Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022 at the Guildhall.

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm

Signed .....  
Town Mayor

Date .....

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19/22

# MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a **Planning & Environment Committee meeting**  
held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock

**Present:** Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick (in the chair), Daniel Thomas, Chris Tyler, and Linda West

**In attendance:** Diane Barlow – RFO, one member of the Flood Group and a one member of the public.

## 1. Apologies

Councillor Wilf Grainger – work, Councillor Toon – training course.

## 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. Public Session

There were no requests to speak.

## 5. Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022 be **APPROVED** and signed as a true record.

## 6. Planning Applications

a. Members considered a response to the following planning applications:

22/04030/FUL Proposed Dwelling To The North Of, Bridge Road, Much Wenlock	Erection of 1 no detached dwelling. Cllrs considered the plans were of high quality and noted that a dropped kerb was already in place. <b>It was RESOLVED no objection.</b>
22/04183/FUL The Stables, Victoria Road, Much Wenlock	Erection of single-storey rear and side extension following removal of existing single storey studio building and reduction in height of existing stone wall/landscape feature to facilitate the proposed extension. <b>It was RESOLVED no objection.</b>
22/04208/FUL Proposed Conversion, Bourton Westwood Farm, Bourton Westwood, Much Wenlock	Conversion of former agricultural building to 1No dwelling with associated parking and garden areas. <b>It was RESOLVED no objection.</b>
22/04209/FUL Proposed Caravan Site SW Of Bourton Westwood Farm, Bourton Westwood, Much Wenlock	Change of use of land to accommodate 9No. seasonal caravan pitches including improvements to B4378 access. <b>It was RESOLVED to object. Members were concerned that the development did not lead to overdevelopment of the location and in particular the site's access, which was a byway open to all traffic, regularly used by walkers and horse riders. Members also had concerns about the lack of screening of the proposed caravans from the main road.</b>
22/04391/FUL Cuan Wildlife Rescue, Wildlife Rescue Centre At, The Signals, Stretton Road, Much Wenlock	Erection of building for wildlife rescue charity with residential first floor flat above. It was noted that the original application had been withdrawn due to concerns that the new building would be used for residential rather than business purposes. <b>It was RESOLVED that Members had no objection to the development, notwithstanding the fact that residential development at this location was contrary to policy. Members requested that any first floor residential use be restricted to use ancillary to the wildlife centre and the residential use restricted also by a s106 agreement.</b>

20/22

22/04321/FUL 16 Barrow Street, Much Wenlock	Removal of existing conservatory roof and replace with insulated 'guardian' solid roof. Roof style to match existing. <b>It was RESOLVED no objection.</b>
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## 7. Planning Decisions

It was **RESOLVED** to note the following planning decision:

22/03945/TPO 1 Park View, Much Wenlock	Works to 1no. Walnut (T1) (see schedule) protected by the Bridgnorth District Council (Old Engineering Works, Barrow Street, Much Wenlock) TPO 2002 (Ref. BR/TPO/116) <b>Decision: Grant Permission</b>
19/05560/OUT and TWC/2019/1046 Ironbridge Power Station, Buildwas Road, Ironbridge	Outline application (access for consideration comprising formation of two vehicular accesses off A4169 road) for the development of (up to) 1,000 dwellings; retirement village; employment land comprising classes B1(A), B1(C), B2 and B8; retail and other uses comprising classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2; allotments, sports pitches, a railway link, leisure uses, primary/nursery school, a park and ride facility, walking and cycling routes, and associated landscaping, drainage and infrastructure works. <b>Decision: Grant Outline Permission</b>

## 8. Draft Shropshire Local Plan Review 2016 – 2038

Cllr Tyler advised that the second stage of the Local Plan Review had been delayed as dialogue was still taking place between Shropshire Council and the Local Plan Inspectors. The Council was awaiting the outcome of those discussions before confirming the timing of the next stage.

## 9. Flooding issues

- a. Members noted with thanks a written update from the Flood Group. Members of the Flood Group present also gave additional verbal information. The Flood Group had met the previous week under the patronage of the National Flood Forum. A report previously circulated to the Flood Group and a report on work undertaken by Shropshire Highways to provide a short-term solution to flooding from fields was discussed. Funds could be sought in the short-term to provide preventative solutions to properties most at risk at Hunters Gate with additional grants available from the Environment Agency (EA). The Flood Group had concluded that, whilst they would continue to support residents of Hunters Gate, they had now undertaken as much as was possible. Members were advised that a meeting with John Bellis and residents of Hunters Gate was being arranged to discuss flooding issues on the estate.

**It was RESOLVED that the Town Clerk should write to John Bellis to request the attendance of a Town Councillor at the meeting with the Hunters Gate residents.**

It was noted that there were some errors in the WSP report on Hunters Gate relating to flood depths with millimetres used instead of metres. Concern was expressed about the speed of follow up to implement recommendations made within the report.

With regard to Shadwell Quarry, the Flood Group were critical of the report drawn up by the EA and members of the Flood Forum believed that out of date data had been used. It was advised that the removal of trees on the site would cause issues with ground water run-off. The fragility of the old railway line and the potential effect on the Down Mill were also concerns. The Flood Group would like a survey of the quarry to be undertaken by Shropshire Council with the involvement of Severn Trent Water.

Recent works to damaged drains on Sheinton Street carried out by Shropshire Council had rectified damage caused by other contractors. The Flood Group expressed thanks to Shropshire Highways for their efforts.

- b. There was nothing to report from the Working Group.
- c. There were no other flooding matters.

## 10. Transport Working Group

Members noted a verbal report from the Transport Working Group. It was unclear whether the Tasley Gateway application would be presented to the Planning & Environment Committee for comments. The Town Council would be seeking compensation for the impact of this development on the Gaskell Corner, but it was not known whether the application would be decided at officer level or submitted to a Shropshire Council Planning Committee for decision.

**It was RESOLVED that the Planning and Environment Committee should ascertain what process was being followed with the Tasley development application.**

21/22

- 11. **Climate Change and Ecological/Nature Emergencies\***
- 12. **Consultation\***
- 13. **Street Lighting\***
- 14. **Street naming \***
- 15. **Footpath/Bridleway Creation Orders\***
- 16. **Footpath Diversion Orders\***
- 17. **Road closures\***

Members noted the following road closure:

Location: Barrow Street, Much Wenlock  
 Date/Time: 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023, Monday to Friday 09:30 – 16:00  
 Purpose: Carriageway repairs  
 Agency: Shropshire Council

Cllr Dan Thomas advised that residents would be informed that vehicles would need to be moved from the road prior to the works commencing. If a car was present when the works were due to commence then the work would need to be delayed.

- 18. **Highways matters \***
  - a. Members noted an update on outstanding highways matters:
    - parking proposals for Much Wenlock – still held up with WSP
    - repainting of road markings at the junctions around the Gaskell corner - logged as job number 1727727 and awaiting completion
  - b. There were no other highways matters arising.

- 19. **Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)\***
- 20. **Stopping Up Orders\***
- 21. **Speed Limit Orders\***
- 22. **Prohibition Orders\***

**23. Date of next meeting**

It was **NOTED** that the date of the next meeting would be Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022 at 7pm at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock.

**PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act and due to the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted it was **RESOLVED** that the public and press should not be present.

**24. WSP Flood Assessment Report for Hunters Gate**

Members considered the confidential WSP Flood Assessment Report for Hunters Gate. It was noted that the Town Council was being asked to comment on option 4c as this would offer the cheapest short-term solution available. Members considered that the matter should be referred to the Strategic Flood Working Group and discussed with specialist members of the Local Plan Working Group.

**25. Planning Enforcement**

No enforcement matters.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Signed.....(Chairman)

Date.....

10/22

# MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a  
**FINANCE & ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**  
 meeting held at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock  
 at 7.00 pm on Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022

## Present:

Cllrs. David Fenwick, John O'Dowd, Marcus Themans, Chris Tyler, Linda West, Duncan White.

## In attendance:

Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, Diane Barlow – Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

### 1. Apologies

None.

### 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

- a. It was noted that the meeting scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> October had been inquorate and that the meeting had therefore been re-scheduled to 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022.
- b. **It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Asset Management Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 be APPROVED and signed as a true record.**

### 5. Town Clerk's report

Members received a written report on action taken since the last meeting. Members considered the need for a new digital fire alarm system for the Guildhall (minute 24 from March 2022). **As the project to renovate the Guildhall was now moving forward, it was RESOLVED to leave in abeyance seeking quotations for a new digital fire alarm for the Guildhall.** It was noted that the existing fire alarm was in working order but the analogue telephone line did not communicate automatically with the monitoring station or fire service.

The Clerk reported that discussions with Healthmatic over the provisions of the maintenance and cleaning contract were still ongoing and that Healthmatic would be proposing options for the future configuration and operation of the toilets in St Mary's car park.

**It was RESOLVED that the Town Clerk's report be NOTED.**

### 6. Finance

- a. The RFO presented a written and verbal report. The written report highlighted issues to note, including the overspend on street light electricity charges. The RFO reported that the new Christmas lights for the Gaskell corner had been selected and delivered, together with the new Christmas lights for the Square, ready for installation on 20<sup>th</sup> November. Income to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 was £38,192 (excluding precept) which was 42.6% above budget for the time of year. Expenditure for the same period was £115,039, which was 16.48% below budget for the time of year. However, some large invoices were expected imminently, including those for library services and Christmas lights installation.  
**Members noted the report.**

Councillors expressed concern about street lighting energy costs and considered options for reducing these costs. **It was RESOLVED to investigate the economies and risks of a reduction in street lighting provision.**

- b. Members noted the balance sheet as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022.
- c. Members noted the income and expenditure to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022.
- d. Members reviewed the bank reconciliations to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022. **It was RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliations to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022.**
- e. **It was RESOLVED to approve payments from 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022 to date.**

## 7. 2023/24 Budget

Members considered the draft budget. Members reviewed rental rates for council-owned property and **RESOLVED to increase the rental rate for several council tenancies.**

**It was RESOLVED to increase the hire rate for stalls in the Square to £30 per day.**

It was noted that the latest version of the draft budget would be presented to the Finance & Asset Management Committee for approval at the November meeting, for subsequent consideration and approval by full Council.

Officers were asked to seek quotations for engraving the mayoral chain with the names of recent Mayors.

## 8. Grant Awards

- a. Members considered applications for grant awards and **RESOLVED to award the following grants to local organisations:**

To	For	Amount £
Holy Trinity Church	Maintenance of church green	500
Wenlock Olympian Games Live Arts Festival	Membership of the British & International Federation of Festivals and insurance costs	450
Much Wenlock First Responders	Running costs for the ambulance response vehicle	1,000
Much Wenlock Windmill Trust	Tree planting at the base of Windmill Hill	250
Walkers are Welcome	Printing of a replacement 'Walkers are Welcome' leaflet	400
Royal British Legion	Poppy wreath	50
	TOTAL	<b>2,650</b>

A reserve of £350 remained in the grant budget.

- b. **It was RESOLVED to approve a donation of £250 to the Wenlock Herald to support publication of the Town Council's regular contribution to the magazine.**

## 9. Strategic Plan

It was noted that committee members had met on 4<sup>th</sup> October and the agreed priorities for inclusion in the Town Council's Strategic Plan had been passed to the Clerk.

## 10. The Guildhall Project – Renovation and Future Use

- A date for work to the beam at the rear of the Guildhall was still awaited.
- Members noted that full Council had delegated day to day responsibility for overseeing the Guildhall Project to the Finance & Asset Management Committee.
- Members noted that an application had been submitted to the Architectural Heritage Fund for a Project Viability Grant. The application had been provisionally assigned to a decision meeting scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

## 11. Cemetery Management

- Members considered a draft Management Plan 2022-27 for the Old Cemetery. Members expressed thanks to Tim Coleshaw, author of the Plan, and other contributors.  
**It was RESOLVED to approve the Management Plan 2022-27, with the exclusion of the proposal for additional tree planting along the roadside boundary and the proposal for additional seating.** Low level shrubs might be considered for the roadside boundary and whilst Councillors considered there was already sufficient seating in the cemetery, they would be prepared to consider additional benches on an individual basis.
- With regard to memorial safety, the Clerk had sought advice from SALC and other local Councils. Those Councils which had responded carried out their own memorial testing. The RFO would be attending an online course on Cemetery & Churchyard Safety and Memorialisation the following day.

## 12. Testing of Street Light Columns for Christmas Lights Display

Members noted that Shropshire Council had advised that they required the Town Council to arrange strength testing of the street lighting columns identified for Christmas lights displays and that this would incur an additional cost. This was a new requirement, recently introduced by Shropshire Council. The Town Council's Christmas lights contractor, Potters Electrical, was arranging the testing, but the cost had not yet been confirmed.

12/22

**13. Date of next meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee would be held on Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 at 7.00pm at The Corn Exchange.

**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.

**14. Internal Audit**

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint DM Payroll Services as internal auditor for the financial year 2022/23.

**15. Reprint of Much Wenlock Leaflet**

Members considered a reprint of the Much Wenlock tourist leaflet, in association with Shropshire Council's Museum Service.

It was **RESOLVED** to arrange for the artwork to be amended at a maximum cost of £150 and for the printing of 5,000 copies at a cost of £389, with a contribution of 50% of the total cost coming from Shropshire Council.

**16. Mary Webb Room**

Councillors considered the future use of the Mary Webb Room. It was **RESOLVED** to continue to use the room as a Council meeting room and for casual hires, rather than let it on a long-term basis. It was **RESOLVED** that the hire cost should be £10 per hour, with a minimum hire period of two hours. As a general rule, the room should be hired out during working hours only.

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

**17. 2 Burgage Way**

Members reviewed progress with the sale of 2 Burgage way. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Fittings and Contents form and the Property Information form.

**18. 10 High Street**

- a. Members considered quotations for refurbishment work at 10 High Street. It was **RESOLVED** to award the contract to Prestige Property Maintenance Midlands Ltd at a cost of £3,225 plus an additional £300 per day (excluding materials) for electrical work.
- b. It was **RESOLVED** to leave in abeyance the provision of an intruder alarm at 10 High Street.
- c. Members noted information provided by Barclays Bank on the management of the cashpoint machine at 10 High Street.

**19. Street Lighting Maintenance and Replacement**

- a. Members considered quotations for a new three year street lighting maintenance contract from May 2023. It was **RESOLVED** to award a three year contract for street lighting maintenance to E.ON Highways Lighting at a cost of £1,595.00 p.a.
- b. Members considered quotations for the replacement of the Council's SON street lamps and replacement of those with asbestos seals.  
It was **RESOLVED** to award the contract for the replacement of the Town Council's SON lamps with LED lamps to E.ON Highways Lighting at a cost of £9,007.60, to be spread over a two year period.  
It was **RESOLVED** to award the contract to replace the SOX lights containing asbestos seals with LED lamps to E.ON Highways Lighting at a cost of £5,302.41.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm

Signed.....  
Chairman

Date.....

01/22

# MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a  
**HR COMMITTEE MEETING**  
 held at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock  
 at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022

**Present:** Councillors John O’Dowd, Marcus Themans, Daniel Thomas and Duncan White

**In attendance:** Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk

**1. Election of Chairman**

**It was RESOLVED to elect Councillor Duncan White as Chairman of the Committee.**

**2. Election of Deputy Chairman**

**It was RESOLVED to elect Councillor Daniel Thomas as Deputy Chairman of the Committee.**

**3. Apologies**

All committee members were present.

**4. 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.

None declared.

**5. Dispensations**

None requested.

**6. Minutes**

**It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022.**

**7. Staff Training**

- a. Members noted the attendance of the RFO at a SALC training course on VAT for unregistered councils on 14<sup>th</sup> June. It had been recommended that the Council should arrange for a VAT audit.
- b. **It was RESOLVED to approve the Clerk’s attendance at a SALC training course on Managing Projects and Major Programmes of Work on 8<sup>th</sup> September.**

**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.

**8. Guildhall Staffing**

**It was RESOLVED to approve the arrangements for Guildhall cover outlined in the confidential report.**

Councillor Thomas left the meeting.

**9. Complaint**

Councillors considered a complaint about past Council procedures relating to a confidential matter. **It was RESOLVED to refuse the complainant’s first request and to confirm that there would be no further review of the matter. It was RESOLVED to provide information on the Council’s current operational procedures and policies.**

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

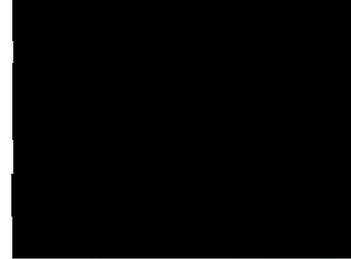
Chairman

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 <sup>th</sup> May. Other policies to follow.
Sept 2021	15	Invite community activists to an introductory workshop in order to explore a Council and community-wide approach to climate change.	Pending	
Dec 2021	20a.iv	To check the Council's VAT position with regard to the Guildhall project.	Pending	Advice obtained from NALC – clarity on proposals for Guildhall needed to determine VAT implications.
June 2022	13	Continue to check the EiP website for updates	Ongoing	
July 2022	15	Support the 20's Plenty campaign in principle and invite a speaker to a forthcoming Council meeting.	In progress	Councillor Tyler in contact with speaker.
October 2022	6b	Mayor and Clerk to draft a procedure for making CCTV footage available to the police.	In progress	
	6c	Carry out further research and explore options for upgrading or replacing the Council's current CCTV system.	In progress	Visit made to view Shifnal CCTV and meeting arranged with ORP Surveillance Ltd.
	13	Contributions towards strategic plan from committees to be collated by the Clerk for further consideration by Councillors.	In progress	
	17	Document Retention Policy – the schedule should be updated to reflect the responsibilities set out in the Disposal and Destruction Procedure.	In progress	
	24	Accept the offer from HSBC to hold pop-up sessions and to make arrangements.	In progress	HSBC advised, arrangements with Much Wenlock library in progress.
November	11	Refer further discussion of the merits of an informal review of the Neighbourhood Plan to the Planning & Environment Committee.	Yes	On Planning & Environment Committee agenda for 29 <sup>th</sup> November.
	14	Support the 2023 'Get a Wod in Edgeways' Festival in principle.	Yes	Organiser notified.

## Other activities:

- Attendance at Remembrance Day service at Holy Trinity Church
- Work in connection with 2 Burgage Way and 10 High Street
- Response made to FOI request
- Attendance at Christmas Lights switch-on

28 OCT 2022

**MUCH WENLOCK WINDMILL TRUST****Registered Charity Number 1109806****ANTHONY JONES**

27 October 2022

THE MAYOR Mr DUNCAN WHITE  
MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL  
THE CORN EXCHANGE, HIGH STREET,  
MUCH WENLOCK

Dear Mr Mayor,

It was a pleasure to meet you on Monday (24 October) when you joined our work party on Windmill Field, thank you for your help.

It also gave me the opportunity on behalf of the Windmill Trust to outline our aspiration to formally get the Windmill Field designated as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). In order for this to happen it is necessary an agreement is made between the Much Wenlock Town Council, the Landowner Wenlock Estates and the Windmill Trust as the leaseholder. We also have to get agreement to proceed from Natural England (DEFRA).

The Windmill Trust sub-committee have a meeting with our contact at Natural England at my house on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November at 11 o'clock, when we will advise Natural England of our proposal.

I have spoken to Mr Tim Motley of Wenlock Estates and he is fully supportive of this proposal and willing to enter an agreement with the Town Council and the Trust. John Box one of our trustees has already established LNRs in Church Stretton and Ellesmere and believes Windmill field is well suited to being regarded as an LNR.

There is no formal commitment of the Town Council to support the LNR financially but it would show intention if the Town Council were to agree to support us for £500 for the first year and review each year. Presently our costs in maintaining the field are almost double our income.

One benefit to the Town is that as an LNR, Windmill field will be open to a wider population as it would be listed as an LNR and every opportunity to bring even more tourism to our town. The Trust hopes the Town Council will be supportive of this and if a financial contribution can be provided as an initial commitment that would be great. Please contact me if you feel we can proceed.

AR JONES, CHAIR.

# Constituency boundaries are changing – help shape the new map

Constituency boundaries are changing, and it's your final chance to help shape the new map.

The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) is required by Parliament to undertake an independent and impartial review of all constituencies in England, to rebalance the number of electors in each constituency.

Constituency sizes currently vary widely due to population changes since the last boundary review. The new map proposed by the Commission will make sure each constituency has between 69,724 and 77,062 electors, so that each MP represents roughly the same number of electors. The 2023 Boundary Review also requires that the number of constituencies in England increases from 533 to 543.

The Commission has listened to the feedback sent in from the public, and have changed nearly half of the initial proposals published in 2021. The new revised proposals are now available to view via an interactive map on the consultation website [bcereviews.org.uk](https://bcereviews.org.uk).

A final public consultation is open now until Monday 5 December 2022, and is the last chance to provide your views on new constituency boundaries. The Boundary Commission for England has invited the public to visit [bcereviews.org.uk](https://bcereviews.org.uk) and comment on the proposals via the website, email or letter. Hard copies of the proposals are available to view at public places of deposit listed on the Boundary Commission for England website. You can give your feedback on anything from where the proposed electoral boundaries are, to the suggestions for new constituency names.

To tell the Commission whether the new proposals for constituencies best represent your local community, visit [bcereviews.org.uk](https://bcereviews.org.uk) and have your say before Monday 5 December.

Follow @BCEReviews on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) to keep up-to-date with 2023 Boundary Review news.

Further information and resources:

- [Boundary Commission for England website](#)
- [Guide to the 2023 Review](#)

# Have your say on a new political map for Shropshire Council

## News from our partners: The Local Government Boundary Commission

A new pattern of electoral divisions is being developed for Shropshire Council.

The Local Government Boundary Commission has decided that the number of councillors in Shropshire should be 74, the same as now.

The council has formally asked the Commission to carry out a single member division review. This means that the Commission will aim to draw up a pattern of electoral divisions where each division is represented by one county councillor.

The Commission wants to hear what residents and organisations think about their local area. A 10-week consultation inviting proposals will run from today (Tuesday 22 November 2022) until 30 January 2023.



*Current divisions in Shropshire Credit: contains Ordnance Survey data (c) Crown copyright and database rights 2022*

A high resolution map is available at: [Shropshire existing – white mask.jpg \(1430×993\)](#)

The Commission is the independent body that draws these boundaries. It is reviewing Shropshire to make sure councillors represent about the same number of electors, and that division arrangements help the council work effectively. It wants to be sure that its proposals reflect community ties and identities.

The Commission is interested in views on which communities should be part of the same division. What facilities do people share, such as parks, leisure centres or schools and shopping areas? What issues do neighbouring communities face that they have in common, such as high numbers of visitors or heavy traffic? Have there been new housing or commercial developments that have changed the focus of communities? And are there roads, rivers, railways or other features that people believe form strong boundaries between neighbourhoods?

The Commission will use local views to help it draw up proposals for new electoral division boundaries. There will be a further round of consultation once the Commission has drawn up those proposals.

Launching the consultation Professor Colin Mellors, Chair of the Commission, said:

**“We want people in Shropshire to help us. “We are starting to draw up new electoral divisions for Shropshire. We want our proposals for new electoral arrangements to reflect communities. We also want them to be easy to understand and convenient for local people.  
“Residents and local organisations can help us understand community ties and identities at this early stage of the process.  
“It’s easy to get involved. Go to our website. Or you can e-mail or write to us.  
“Just tell us what you think and give us some details why you think that. It’s really simple, so do get involved.”**

The Commission has a dedicated section on its website where people can give their views: [www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/38217](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/38217). People can also give their views by e-mail at [reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk), and by post:

Review Officer (Shropshire)  
LGBCE  
PO Box 133  
Blyth  
NE24 9FE

More information about the review can be found on the Shropshire webpage here: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/west-midlands/shropshire/shropshire-unitary-authority-ua>

### **Further information**

This consultation relates to the arrangements for local government elections. It is separate from consultations that are currently taking place across England on arrangements for parliamentary elections. For further information contact the Commission’s press office on 0330 500 1525 / 1250 or email [press@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:press@lgbce.org.uk). An interactive map is available at [www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/38217](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/38217)

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body accountable to Parliament. It recommends fair electoral and boundary arrangements for local authorities in England. In doing so, it aims to:

- Make sure that, within an authority, each councillor represents a similar number of electors.
- Create boundaries that are appropriate, and reflect community ties and identities.
- Deliver reviews informed by local needs, views and circumstances • Reflect the Council’s request for single-member divisions.
- Reflect the Council’s request for single-member divisions.

Monday, November 7, 2022 at 2:26:30 PM Greenwich Mean Time

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**Subject:** Shropshire Council's draft Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy  
**Date:** Thursday, 3 November 2022 at 09:53:50 Greenwich Mean Time  
**From:** Melanie Holland  
**CC:** ALC  
**Attachments:** Draft Tenancy Strategy.docx

Dear sir or madam

The Localism Act 2011 requires all local housing authorities in England to prepare and produce a tenancy strategy which sets out the matters to which the registered providers of social housing for its district are to have regard in formulating policies relating to:

- The kinds of tenancies they grant;
- The circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind;
- Where they grant tenancies for a certain term, the lengths of the terms; and
- The circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy on the coming to an end of an existing tenancy.

The Act requires the local housing authority, in preparing or modifying a tenancy strategy, to have regard to its current allocation scheme and homelessness strategy. In order to support the aims and aspirations of these documents, Shropshire Council's draft revised Tenancy Strategy seeks to ensure sustainable communities where social housing tenants have security of tenure and affordable housing is genuinely affordable to local people in housing need.

Where a local authority wishes to use Flexible Tenancies for its own housing stock it must produce a Tenancy Policy; in 2015 the Council adopted a Tenancy Policy which introduced such tenancies. The draft revised Tenancy Policy, contained at Appendix IV of the draft Tenancy Strategy, seeks to phase out the use of Flexible Tenancies on the basis that there is no evidence that Flexible Tenancies solve housing need or result in substantial additional void dwellings for let.

Please find attached the Council's draft Tenancy Strategy which we kindly invite your parish or town council to comment on. As referred to above, please can I also ask that your council consider the draft Tenancy Policy, contained at Appendix IV of the draft Strategy, which proposes Flexible Tenancies are phased out for Council owned housing stock.

Please can all feedback be received by **Friday 6 January 2023**.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

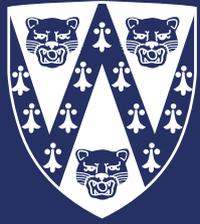
Thanking you in advance.

Best wishes

Mel

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

01743 256818  
07977 188589



# Draft Tenancy Strategy

## Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Local and policy context</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The Shropshire housing market</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Registered Provider stock in Shropshire</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Types of tenancy offered</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Types of rent offered</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Shropshire Council's aims and aspirations</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Appendix I:</b>	<b>Register Provider stock at April 2022</b>
<b>Appendix II:</b>	<b>Types of tenancies offered by Private Registered Providers</b>
<b>Appendix III:</b>	<b>Types of rents offered by Registered Providers</b>
<b>Appendix IV:</b>	<b>Shropshire Council's Tenancy Policy</b>

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Tenancy Strategy sets out Shropshire Council's expectations to Private Registered Providers<sup>1</sup> when formulating their own housing policies in relation to tenancies and rents. The Strategy seeks to ensure sustainable communities and that affordable housing is genuinely affordable to local people in housing need.
- 1.2. A Registered Provider is defined under the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. As a stock holding authority, whose housing stock is managed by Shropshire Towns and Rural (STAR) Housing, the Council is a Local Authority Registered Provider. In addition, there are 32 Private Registered Providers operating in the Shropshire Council area, these being housing associations who are registered with the Regulator of Social Housing.
- 1.3. The vision of the Housing Strategy 2020-25 is:

*All homes are well designed decent homes of high quality, which will protect Shropshire's unique urban and rural environments and ensure it is a great place to live. That all Shropshire residents have access to the 'right home in the right place' to support and promote their health and wellbeing throughout their lives.*

- 1.4. The Housing Strategy has a key objective: *To ensure people whose housing needs are not met through the local open market housing can access housing that meets their needs.*

## 2. Legal and policy context

- 2.1. Section 150 of the Localism Act 2011 requires a local housing authority in England to prepare and produce a tenancy strategy which sets out the matters to which the registered providers of social housing for its district are to have regard in formulating policies relating to:
  - a) The kinds of tenancies they grant;
  - b) The circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind;
  - c) Where they grant tenancies for a certain term, the lengths of the terms; and
  - d) The circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy on the coming to an end of an existing tenancy.
- 2.2. The tenancy strategy must summarise those policies or explain where they may be found.

### ***Allocations and nominations***

- 2.3. The Housing Act 1996 and statutory guidance on the allocation of accommodation set out how the Council is to frame its Allocation Policy and

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<sup>1</sup> The Council's own Tenancy Policy is contained at Appendix IV

Scheme for allocations to council owned dwellings and nominations to housing association dwellings.

- 2.4. The Council has recently revised its Allocation Policy and Scheme. The revised policy, which has local connection and financial qualifications and formal nominations to all forms of affordable housing, seeks to ensure that those in the greatest housing need are able to access general needs, supported and low-cost home ownership housing.
- 2.5. The Regulator of Social Housing's [Tenancy Standard](#) applies to Registered Providers of social housing. The Tenancy Standard states, "*Registered providers shall co-operate with local authorities' strategic housing function, and their duties to meet identified local housing needs. This includes assistance with local authorities' homelessness duties, and through meeting obligations in nominations agreements*".

### **Tenancy agreements**

- 2.6. The main forms of tenancy agreements offered by Local Authority Registered Providers are:
- Lifetime Secure Tenancies - these agreements allow a tenant to live in the dwelling for the rest of their life, providing they do not break the conditions of the tenancy;
  - Introductory Tenancies - these may be offered to new tenants, after twelve months tenants either become Secure or Flexible Tenants (unless eviction action is being undertaken or the introductory tenancy has been extended by a further six months); and
  - Flexible Secure Tenancies - introduced by the Localism Act 2011 these are for a fixed period, usually for at least five years, but for a statutory minimum of two years.
- 2.7. Private Registered Providers offer a range of tenancy and occupancy agreements, the main ones are:
- Assured Tenancies - these agreements allow a tenant to live in the dwelling for the rest of their life, providing they do not break the conditions of the tenancy;
  - Starter Tenancies - these may be offered to new tenants, after twelve months tenants either become Assured or Fixed Term Tenants (unless eviction action is being undertaken or the introductory tenancy has been extended by a further six months); and
  - Fixed Term Tenancies - these are for a fixed period, usually for at least five years.
- 2.8. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requires Local Authority and Private Registered Providers of social housing to ensure that victims of domestic abuse who have a lifetime tenancy, and have fled the social home to escape

domestic abuse, retain their lifetime security of tenure if the landlord grants them a new tenancy for reasons connected with the abuse.

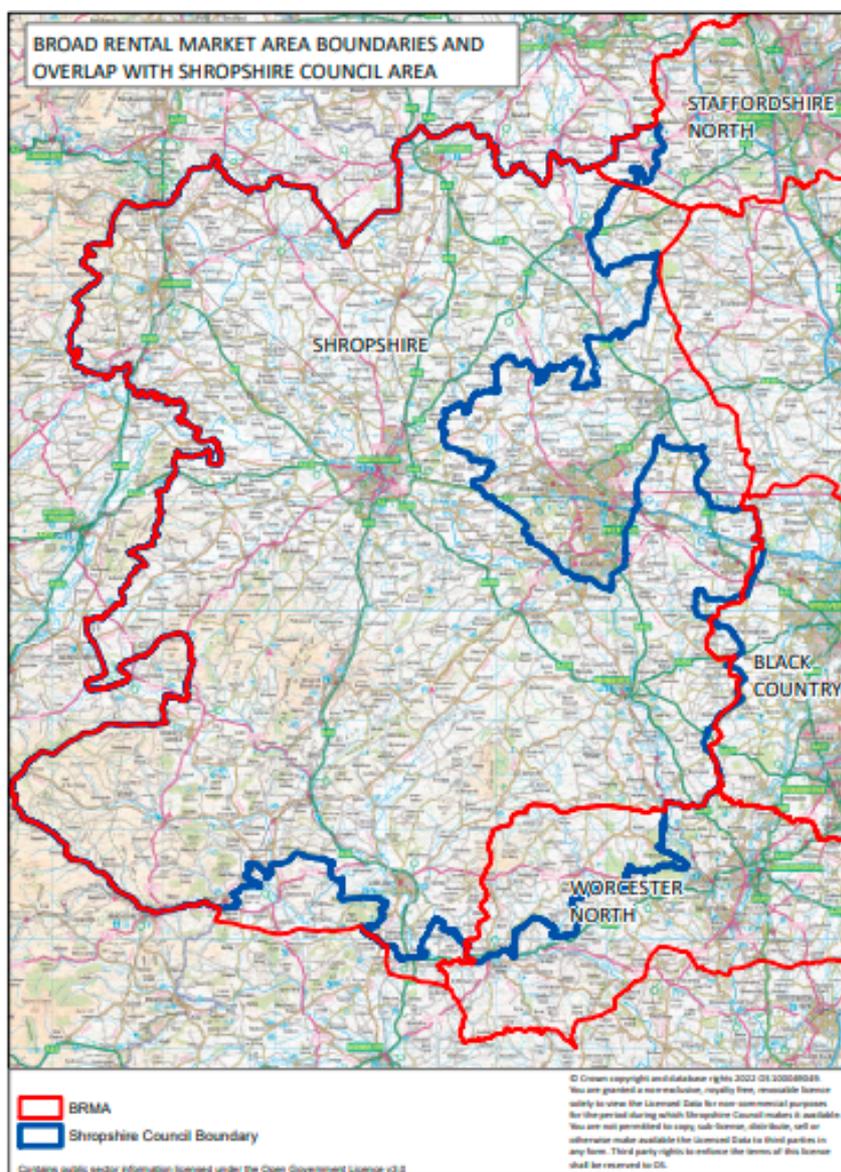
## **Rents**

- 2.9. In 2002 in order to bring local authority and housing association rents into alignment the national rent regime established a Social Rent Formula which considered the national average social housing rent, regional average earnings, national average earnings, the number of bedrooms in a dwelling, and the dwelling's value in January 1999. Stock holding local authorities and housing associations were required to undertake rent restructuring using this rent regime in order for rents for the same size dwellings in local areas to have comparable rents, known as rent convergence. Rent convergence ended in April 2015, however, where the Formula Rent has not been reached on a dwelling which becomes void, subject to a locally agreed policy, the Formula Rent can be charged to the new tenant.
- 2.10. The Affordable Homes Programme 2011-15 introduced the concept of Affordable Rents. Affordable Rent is up to 80% of the gross local open market rent for a comparable dwelling, including service charges, or the Formula Rent, whichever is the higher. The introduction of Affordable Rents had the aim of allowing for increased borrowing on higher rental incomes, thus reduced levels of capital subsidy (grant funding). The Programme also encouraged Registered Providers to introduce a pipeline of conversions from Social to Affordable Rent when a dwelling became void and re-let to a new or transferring tenant. This allowed for additional rental income which could increase the borrowing capacity, and thus assist in reducing grant funding asks. Conversion programmes were subject to agreement with the Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes England).
- 2.11. A tenancy where a Registered Provider is the landlord is excluded from mainstream Local Housing Allowance rules. However, the Government's [Policy statement on rents for social housing 2019](#) states that Registered Providers should consider the local market context when setting rents, including the relevant Local Housing Allowance for the Broad Rental Market Area in which the property is located.
- 2.12. Since 2020 the Regulator of Social Housing's [Rent Standard](#) applies to Private Registered Providers and Local Authority Registered Providers.
- 2.13. Social and Affordable Rent increases remain subject to central Government rent setting policy: the Government sets out limits on annual rent increases, this being CPI plus 1%, with rent caps applying a maximum ceiling on the Formula Rent. At the end of August 2022, the Government launched a consultation on the rent cap – proposing that the ceiling be 5% for 2023-24 and for this to apply to all Social and Affordable Rents.

### 3. The Shropshire housing market

- 3.1. At 70%, the majority of dwellings in Shropshire are owner-occupied. Social housing stock comprises approximately 13% of all dwelling stock and 17% of stock is private rented<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.2. In 2021, the ratio of median house price to median gross workplace-based earnings was 9.05 and ratio of lower quartile housing price to lower quartile workplace-based earnings was 8.4<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, owner-occupation is not affordable to many households living in Shropshire. This was evidenced by the 2020 Strategic Housing Market Assessment which identified a need for 799 affordable dwellings per annum.

**Figure 1**



<sup>2</sup> Office for National Statistics – Subnational estimates of dwellings by tenure, England  
<sup>3</sup> Office for National Statistics – House price to workplace-based earnings ratio

**Figure 2**

BRMA	Local Housing Allowance rate <sup>4</sup>				
	Shared accommodation	One bedroom	Two bedroom	Three bedroom	Four bedroom
Shropshire	£75.00	£92.05	£120.82	£143.84	£182.96
Black Country	£60.18	£91.82	£117.37	£136.93	£172.60
Staffordshire North	£60.95	£86.30	£97.81	£126.58	£171.45
Worcestershire North	£66.50	£101.26	£126.72	£149.59	£195.62

- 3.3. At April 2022, there were 6,096 applicants on the local authority’s housing register, of whom 3,420 were in a reasonable preference group (therefore, considered under the Housing Act 1996 to be in priority need).
- 3.4. During 2021-22, 472 households were found to be statutory homeless (eligible for assistance, homeless but not intentionally so, in priority need and with a local connection), therefore owed the main homeless duty of suitable settled accommodation.
- 3.5. Therefore, given the high level of housing need found in Shropshire, social housing is a very scarce resource.
- 3.6. As shown by Figure 1, Shropshire is covered by four Broad Rental Market Areas (BRMAs): Shropshire; the Black Country; Staffordshire North; and Worcester North. The corresponding Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates are shown in Figure 2.

**4. Register Provider housing stock in Shropshire**

- 4.1. As a stock owning council, Shropshire Council is a Local Authority Registered Provider. Our housing stock, of just over 4,000 dwellings, is managed by our arms-length management organisation (ALMO) Shropshire Towns and Rural (STAR) Housing.
- 4.2. In addition to STAR Housing, as shown in Appendix I, there are over 30 Private Registered Providers with stock in Shropshire which own and lease over 15,000 dwellings for rent and low-cost home ownership.
- 4.3. The Regulator of Social Housing considers 24 of the Private Registered Providers to be “large” as nationally they own over 1,000 dwellings. Seven Registered Providers are “small” organisations who only hold stock in Shropshire. In addition, four Registered Providers only provide low cost home ownership stock.

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<sup>4</sup> Valuation Office Agency August 2022

## **5. Types of tenancies offered**

- 5.1. Local Authority Registered Providers have to a duty to meet the Tenancy Standard, however, they must also comply with all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements and terms of occupation.
- 5.2. In April 2015, Shropshire Council adopted a Tenancy Policy whereby following new tenants<sup>5</sup> being given Introductory Tenancies, with the exception of older and vulnerable tenants who would continue to receive a Lifetime Secure Tenancy, they would then be given a five-year Flexible Secure Tenancy.
- 5.3. STAR Housing is responsible for publishing, implementing and reviewing policies relating to tenancy management. A review of the Tenancy Policy has established that there is no evidence that Flexible Tenancies solve housing need or result in substantial additional lettings, therefore, as set out in Appendix IV, Flexible Secure Tenancies are to be phased out in favour of Lifetime Secure Tenancies.
- 5.4. Where temporary accommodation is provided to homeless households by the local authority under the Interim Duty the Council will use licenses and non-secure tenancies.
- 5.5. Private Registered Providers operating in Shropshire offer a range of tenancy types, these are set out in Appendix II.

## **6. Types of rent offered**

- 6.1. The majority of Council owned housing is let on social rents, however, social housing delivered or acquired since 2012, where the Council has received social housing grant from Homes England<sup>6</sup>, has spent useable Right to Buy receipts or acquired dwellings on private sites provided as planning gain, will have Affordable Rents. There are also a small number of dwellings that on re-let were converted from Social to Affordable Rents as agreed with the Homes and Communities Agency under the 2011-16 Affordable Homes Programme. Irrespective as to whether a development is subject to a Section 106, the Council ensures that Affordable Rents are initially set and rebased at re-let at no higher than the relevant Local Housing Allowance.
- 6.2. Of the Private Registered Providers who provide rented accommodation in Shropshire, depending on the nature of the Provider and the products offered, different rents are charged (Appendix III).

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<sup>5</sup> Transferring Council and Private Registered Provider tenants on secure or assured tenancies would not receive introductory tenancies and be given Lifetime Secure Tenancies.

<sup>6</sup> Or Homes England's predecessor, the Homes and Communities Agency

## 7. Shropshire Council's aims and aspirations

- 7.1. The Council requests that Private Registered Providers use Lifetime Tenancies as their default offer and provide them for the majority of tenants at the end of their Starter Tenancy. In any event, the Council expects Lifetime Tenancies to be issued to vulnerable tenants, including older persons, people with learning disabilities and people with mental ill health. In addition, where a tenant with a Lifetime Secure or Assured Tenancy chooses to move to another rented dwelling on a Social or Affordable Rent, they should retain a Lifetime Tenancy.
- 7.2. Council's Section 106 agreements relating to the provision of affordable housing on open market and exception sites require that the general needs rental accommodation is let at Affordable Rent or the relevant Local Housing Allowance (LHA), whichever is the lower. Therefore, the Affordable Rent cannot exceed the LHA.
- 7.3. Social Rent homes can be funded within [areas of high affordability pressure](#), as defined by the Government for Homes England's Affordable Homes Programme 2021-26, or elsewhere provided that the grant requested is not higher than it would be for Affordable Rent. For a local authority area to be considered by the Government as an area of high affordability pressure the difference between the average social rents and private rents is required to be £50 per week or more.
- 7.4. Although Shropshire Council is not currently considered by the Government to be an area of affordability pressure, therefore, additional grant to support the provision of Social Rent homes cannot be attracted, it is requested that Registered Providers endeavour to provide Social Rent homes wherever this is financially viable.
- 7.5. Where Registered Providers charge Affordable Rents for all other new build housing and acquisitions, in order for social housing to be truly affordable for local people, it is requested that wherever possible rents should be initially set below or in line with the relevant LHA. On re-let when Affordable Rents are re-based it is requested that Registered Providers consider the relevant LHA and look to re-based below or in-line with this figure.

**Appendix I: Register Provider stock at April 2022**

<b>Registered Provider</b>	<b>Low cost rental stock</b>	<b>Low Cost Home Ownership stock</b>	<b>Total stock</b>
Shropshire Council (STAR Housing)	4,005	42	4,047
Alpha (R.S.L.) Limited	11	-	11
Anchor Hanover	155	-	155
Birnbeck Housing Association Ltd	15	-	15
Bromford*	1,158	125	1,283
Citizen Housing Group Limited	12	19	31
Clarion Housing Association	27	-	27
Connexus Housing	4,571	279	4,850
Golden Lane Housing	2	-	2
Great Places	1	94	95
GreenSquareAccord	29	22	51
Habinteg Housing Association	31	-	31
Heylo Housing Registered Provider Limited	-	65	65
Home	2	-	2
Housing 21	114	-	114
Housing Plus	5,583	243	5,826
Metropolitan Housing Trust	-	1	1
Midland Heart Limited	-	7	7
Reside Housing Association Limited	14	-	14
Rooftop Housing Association Limited	161	-	161
Sanctuary*	562	34	596
Shrewsbury Drapers Company Charity	50	-	50
Shropshire Association for Supported Housing	6	-	6
Shropshire Rural Housing Association	297	-	297
Sir Job Charlton's Hospital Charity	6	-	6
Stonewater	266	58	324
The Abbeyfield Bishop's Castle and District Society Ltd	11	-	11
The Community Housing Group Limited	8	-	8
The Hosyer-Foxe Charity	22	-	22
The Wrekin Housing Group Ltd	1,686	108	1,794
Trident Housing Association Ltd	15	-	15
Trinity Hospital at Clun	12	-	12
Walsall Housing Group Limited	-	17	17
<b>Totals</b>	<b>18,834</b>	<b>1,085</b>	<b>19,946</b>

\* To be confirmed by organisation

## Appendix II: Types of tenancies offered by Private Registered Providers

Private Registered Provider	Starter Tenancy	Fixed Term Tenancy	Assured Tenancy	Assured Shorthold Tenancy	Licence to occupy
Alpha (R.S.L.) Limited*					
Anchor Hanover	✓		✓		✓
Birnbeck Housing Association Ltd			✓		
Bromford	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Citizen Housing Group Limited	✓		✓		
Clarion Housing Association	✓	✓	✓		
Connexus Housing	✓		✓	✓	✓
Golden Lane Housing				✓	
Great Places*					
GreenSquareAccord	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Habinteg Housing Association*					
Home*					
Housing 21	✓		✓		
Housing Plus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reside Housing Association Limited*					
Rooftop Housing Association Limited	✓		✓	✓	
Sanctuary*	✓		✓	✓	✓
Shrewsbury Drapers Company Charity					✓
Shropshire Association for Supported Housing					✓
Shropshire Rural Housing Association	✓		✓		
Sir Job Charlton's Hospital Charity					✓
Stonewater	✓		✓	✓	✓
The Abbeyfield Bishop's Castle and District Society Ltd			✓		
The Community Housing Group Limited	✓		✓	✓	✓
The Hosyer-Foxe Charity					✓
The Wrekin Housing Group Ltd	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Trident Housing Association Ltd	✓		✓		✓
Trinity Hospital at Clun*					✓

\* To be confirmed / advised by organisation

### Appendix III: Types of rents offered by Registered Providers

Private Registered Provider	Social Rent	Affordable Rent	Weekly Maintenance Contribution	Other sub-market rent
Alpha (R.S.L.) Limited*				
Anchor Hanover	✓	✓		
Birnbeck Housing Association Ltd	✓			
Bromford	✓	✓		
Citizen Housing Group Limited	✓	✓		
Clarion Housing Association	✓	✓		
Connexus Housing	✓	✓		
Golden Lane Housing*				
Great Places*				
GreenSquareAccord	✓	✓		
Habinteg Housing Association*				
Home*				
Housing 21	✓	✓		
Housing Plus	✓	✓		
Reside Housing Association Limited*				
Rooftop Housing Association Limited	✓	✓		
Sanctuary*	✓	✓		
Shrewsbury Drapers Company Charity			✓	
Shropshire Association for Supported Housing				✓
Shropshire Rural Housing Association	✓	✓		
Sir Job Charlton's Hospital Charity			✓	
Stonewater	✓	✓		
The Abbeyfield Bishop's Castle and District Society Ltd			✓	
The Community Housing Group Limited	✓	✓		
The Hosyer-Foxe Charity			✓	
The Wrekin Housing Group Ltd	✓	✓		
Trident Housing Association Ltd	✓	✓		
Trinity Hospital at Clun*			✓	

\* To be confirmed / advised by organisation

## **Appendix IV: Shropshire Council's Tenancy Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This policy refers to the Council's dwelling stock managed by Shropshire Towns and Rural (STAR) Housing.

### **2. Tenancy types**

- 2.1. As a Registered Provider, Shropshire Council and STAR Housing have to meet the [Tenancy Standard](#). We must also meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements or terms of occupation.
- 2.2. All new tenants will be given a twelve-month Introductory Tenancy. This is a weekly periodic introductory tenancy which lasts twelve months. Should the tenant/tenancy be identified as at risk prior to or during the introductory tenancy, STAR Housing will make a referral for housing support.
- 2.3. Introductory tenancies automatically become Lifetime Secure Tenancies at the end of the introductory term if all tenancy conditions are being adhered to.
- 2.4. Where a tenant does not satisfactorily conduct their introductory tenancy, STAR Housing will provide support and clear information during each stage of the breach. STAR Housing will make a decision whether to seek possession through the courts or extend the introductory tenancy for a further six months depending upon the merits of each case. Each tenant has a right for the decision to be reviewed if notice is given to end the tenancy.
- 2.5. The review will be heard by an independent panel of Shropshire Council Members to ensure that the decision has been fairly and rightly made in accordance with the Shropshire Introductory Tenancy policy.
- 2.6. Transferring Registered Provider tenants on Lifetime Secure or Assured Tenancies will be given Lifetime Tenancies.
- 2.7. Tenants who have Flexible Tenancies issued under the April 2015 Tenancy Policy will automatically become Lifetime Tenants at the end of the five-year term (unless unresolved breaches of tenancy or possession proceedings have commenced).

### **3. Succession**

#### ***Tenancies prior to 1st April 2012***

- 3.1. Secure tenants whose tenancy began prior to 1st April 2012 will usually have the right for their spouse, civil partner or another family member to succeed to their tenancy upon their death. A person is qualified to succeed a tenant if he/she occupies the property as his/her only or principal home at the time of the tenant's death and is either the tenant's spouse or civil partner or is another member of the tenant's family and has lived with the tenant for at least twelve months prior to their death. This does not need to have been in the same property. For the purposes of the law a cohabiting partner is regarded as a

family member. Family member also includes a parent, grandparent, child, brother or sister, aunt/uncle and nephew or niece.

- 3.2. Where there is more than one person who may have a right to succeed, then if the tenant was married, their spouse takes precedence. If the tenant was not married, then the family members must decide who succeeds. If they cannot decide, then STAR Housing can choose. There is only one right in law to succeed.

### ***Tenancies from 1 April 2012***

- 3.3. In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, from 1st April 2012 new secure tenants will continue to be limited to one succession to a spouse or partner only. Children and other members of the tenant's family will no longer have an automatic legal right to succeed.

## **4. Assignment**

- 4.1. By law the Council can only assign properties on mutual exchange, as part of matrimonial or civil partnership proceedings, or to a person who would be qualified to succeed the tenant if the tenant died immediately before the assignment. A secure tenancy cannot be assigned in any other circumstance.
- 4.2. In situations where a tenancy is held by joint tenants, and where both joint tenants confirm in writing that one of them wishes to transfer their interest in the joint tenancy to the other party, then STAR Housing will agree to the transfer so long as there are no outstanding tenancy breaches, and there are no current tenancy enforcement proceedings in the County Court. A transfer of tenancy in these particular circumstances will take effect as the grant of a new tenancy agreement, it will not be an assignment.
- 4.3. Where a sole tenant requests that an additional name be added to their tenancy this can only be achieved through the surrender of the original tenancy and grant of a new tenancy in joint names. STAR Housing may agree to this so long as there are no outstanding tenancy breaches, and there are no current tenancy enforcement proceedings in the County Court. The request is unlikely to be granted if there has already been a succession on the tenancy. Both parties will need to confirm their wishes in writing and each case will be viewed on its own merits.
- 4.4. In the case of a mutual exchange, it is important that, in line with the Localism Act 2011, all Registered Providers ensure that a tenant who wishes to transfer and has a secure or assured tenancy which began before 1 April 2012 will retain similar security of tenure to that of their original tenancy. For example, a tenant with a lifetime secure or assured tenancy which began before 1 April 2012 retains a similar level of security even if they exchange with a tenant with a fixed term or flexible tenancy.

## **5. Rent setting policy**

- 5.1. Council rents are set in line with the Regulator of Social Housing's [Rent Standard](#).

- 5.2. The majority of Council owned housing is let on social rents, however, social housing delivered or acquired since 2012, where the Council has received social housing grant from Homes England (or its predecessor the Homes and Communities Agency), has spent useable Right to Buy receipts or acquired dwellings on private sites provided as planning gain, will have Affordable Rents. In addition, under the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) 2011-15 the Council agreed to convert 241 dwellings from social to Affordable Rent on re-let, the additional borrowing to be used to subsidy the Council's AHP 2011-15 development programme.
- 5.3. Irrespective as to whether a development is subject to a Section 106, the Council ensures that Affordable Rents are initially set at no higher than the relevant Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and will be capped at the LHA at the annual rent increase. On re-let the Affordable Rent, may be re-based at 80% of the local open market rent level but will be capped by the relevant LHA.
- 5.4. Social and Affordable Rent increases remain subject to central Government rent setting policy - the Government sets out limits on annual rent increases, this being CPI plus 1%, with rent caps applying a maximum ceiling on the Formula Rent. At the end of August 2022, the Government launched a consultation on the rent cap – proposing that the ceiling be 5% for 2023-24 and for this to apply to all Social and Affordable Rents.

## **6. Tenancy Fraud**

- 6.1. Tenancy fraud is taken very seriously, and residents are actively encouraged to report suspected tenancy fraud. STAR Housing will use the tenancy audit process to proactively identify any fraudulent activity. When tenancy fraud is identified Shropshire Council and STAR Housing will take appropriate and necessary action.

## **7. Policy Review**

- 7.1. This policy will be reviewed following relevant changes in legislation and in any case no longer than every five years.