

# MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a **Planning & Environment Committee meeting**  
held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023 at the Guildhall, Much Wenlock

**Present:** Councillors William Benbow (from minute 8b), David Fenwick (in the chair), Wilfred Grainger, Daniel Thomas, Chris Tyler, Linda West.

**In attendance:** Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, Mr P Hanafin – member of the Transport Working Group

## 1. Apologies

Councillor William Benbow for late arrival.

## 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 had been no requests to speak.

## 5. Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023 be **APPROVED** and signed as a true record.

## 6. Planning Applications

Members considered a response to the following planning applications:

23/02336/FUL Bourton Hall Farmhouse, Bourton, Much Wenlock	The installation of solar panels on the stable block. <b>It was RESOLVED no objection.</b>
23/03091/TCA 5 King Street, Much Wenlock	Remove one trunk and reduce height by 30% of 1no Bay within Much Wenlock Conservation Area. <b>It was RESOLVED no objection.</b>
23/02982/FUL 5A King Street, Much Wenlock	Alterations to the principal elevation, erection of single storey infill rear extension and internal alterations. <b>It was RESOLVED no objection.</b>

## 7. Planning Decisions

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

23/00920/FUL 12 Victoria Road, Much Wenlock	Relocation of existing stone retaining wall to form new parking provision. <b>Decision: Grant Permission</b>
23/02599/TCA Bourton Estate, Bourton, Much Wenlock	To remove 2no. Ash (T1-2), 1no. Sycamore (T3) and 1no. group of Ash and Sycamore (G1) within Bourton Conservation Area. <b>Decision: No objection</b>

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

- a. Members noted that Shropshire Council had responded to the Planning Inspectors questions posed in ID28. The documentation stated that Stage 2 of the Examination would commence in November, with further presentation to Shropshire Council Cabinet in April, for acceptance around June 2024. It was noted that the Town Council and associates would need to undertake considerable work to prepare for Stage 2, although there might be some slippage in the timetable from November to January.

Councillor William Benbow joined the meeting.

- b. Members received correspondence from the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan Refresh Group regarding designation of an Eastern Belt Strategic Corridor along the A458/A4169 in the Local Plan. They noted the concerns about increased traffic through Much Wenlock arising from housing and commercial development, both within the town and elsewhere. The Town Council had already raised concerns about the Eastern Belt Strategic Corridor with Shropshire Council, both in the Regulation 18 consultation and again in the submission for Stage 1 of the Local Plan Examination. Members noted that the Town Council's objections to housing developments at the Ironbridge Power Station and Tasley had resulted in allocations of £350,000 and £192,000 respectively from the developers for traffic management measures at the Gaskell corner.

There was some uncertainty among Councillors about whether a 'strategic corridor' would simply act as a conduit for people travelling to and from work or was intended to promote development along the route.

Members considered the need for employment land in the town and the fact that much of the 0.72 hectares on Stretton Road allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan had been used for the attenuation pond. It would therefore be necessary to find an alternative site, and this matter should be raised at Stage 2 of the Examination of the draft Local Plan.

**It was RESOLVED to respond to the correspondence from the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan Refresh Group with the information outlined above and to provide assurances that Councillors were very much aware of the concerns raised.**

#### 9. Neighbourhood Plan

- a. Members noted that the DLUHC had extended the full support programme for Neighbourhood Planners into 2023/24 and that funding applications for grants and technical support packages for Neighbourhood Plans were now open via Locality.
- b. Members considered the grant application process. **It was RESOLVED to apply for both the standard and technical support grants to fund the Council's review of the Neighbourhood Plan.**

#### 10. Flooding Issues

- a. The report from the Strategic Flood Working Group was made under 10b.
- b. Members received a report on the meeting with Shropshire Council's Drainage and Flood Risk Manager regarding flooding and the town culvert held on 12<sup>th</sup> July. The primary purpose of the meeting had been to consider the introduction of grates at the top of the High Street to channel flood water into the culvert more quickly. A plan is to be prepared.
- The meeting had been positive, but Councillors wished to continue to press for a 'best case' flood alleviation plan that could be used for funding applications to central government or other relevant bodies. Currently, progress was stymied by the lack of available funds. Councillors were critical of the minimal support from the Environment Agency, despite Much Wenlock's designation as a rapid response catchment area in the highest category. Funding obtained for flood alleviation by Shropshire Council from the Department for Transport would need to be shared with several other towns.

**It was RESOLVED to write expressing the Council's concerns about flood alleviation to Lezley Picton, Leader of Shropshire Council, with a copy to Philip Dunne MP, the Environment Agency and Shropshire Councillor Dan Thomas.**

As Chair of the Council's Strategic Flood Group, Councillor Benbow offered to draft the letter and to maintain contact with Shropshire Council's Drainage & Flood Risk Manager in relation to ongoing matters.

- c. There were no other flooding issues arising.

#### 11. Transport and Highways Matters

- a. There was no separate report from the Transport Working Group.
- b. Members considered the detailed response from WSP regarding the Gaskell corner feasibility study and noted initial comments from members of the Transport Working Group. Members reiterated the importance of safety for pedestrians crossing Smithfield Road and the implications for traffic management measures.
- The study had shown that the numbers of vehicles regularly rat-running through St Mary's Lane and King Street were relatively low: for St Mary's Lane, four in the morning and six in the afternoon; for King Street, six in the morning and 14 in the afternoon.
- Councillors considered it would be beneficial to undertake a trial of the preferred scheme for the junction before implementation, if practicable.

It was **RESOLVED** that Shropshire Councillor Dan Thomas should contact the relevant officer in Shropshire Council's highways department to request their views on the WSP report. The Transport Working Group would prepare a detailed response to the WSP comments for consideration at the next Planning & Environment Committee meeting.

Mr Hanafin was thanked for attending and left the meeting.

## 12. Climate Change and Ecological/Nature Emergencies

- a. Members considered information obtained from the Restoring Shropshire's Verges Project and the Climate and Carbon Project Officer at Shropshire Council regarding roadside verge management and suggested actions. It was noted that the current contract with Kier would end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

**It was RESOLVED to write to Shropshire Council to request that a policy, proposal and contract be devised to manage roadside verges better and in a more wildlife friendly way.**

- b. Councillors noted measures taken by the Council to improve biodiversity in the town, which included tree planting, managing the old cemetery to enhance biodiversity, the installation of swift boxes, a wildflower area on the Gaskell Recreation Ground and progress towards the designation of Windmill Hill as a Local Nature Reserve.

**It was RESOLVED to include enhancement of biodiversity in the forthcoming review of the Neighbourhood Plan in order to make most impact and develop relevant policies.**

The consultation process would help to identify what local people wished to see and would inform what could be done moving forward.

- c. Members noted information from 'Save our Shropshire' regarding carbon literacy training. Councillor Grainger agreed to check his availability on the training dates. Information on grant funding available from the organisation would be passed to the Gaskell Management Committee.

## 13. Consultation\*

### 14. Street Lighting\*

### 15. Street Naming \*

## 16. Footpath Issues

- a. Footpath off the Bull Ring: Members noted that measurements for a new gate had been submitted to Shropshire Council's Rights of Way department along with a request for 10m of stone surfacing for the path.
- b. There was nothing to report on discussions regarding the Atterley footpath.

## 17. Footpath/Bridleway Creation Orders\*

## 18. Footpath Diversion Orders\*

## 19. Road Closures\*

Members noted the following road closures:

- a. Location: A4169 from Homer junction to start Much Wenlock Road  
Date/Time: 6<sup>th</sup> August 2023 / all the time  
Purpose: Openreach – replace frame and cover in carriageway  
Agency: Openreach
- b. Location: Barrow Street, Much Wenlock  
Date/Time: 20<sup>th</sup> August 2023 / all the time  
Purpose: Laying a new gas service to 40 Barrow Street 7m from the main  
Agency: Cadent
- c. Location: Back Lane, Much Wenlock  
Date/Time: 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023 / all the time  
Purpose: Replace frame and cover in carriageway  
Agency: Openreach

## 20. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)\*

## 21. Stopping Up Orders\*

## 22. Speed Limit Orders\*

## 23. Prohibition Orders\*

**24. Date of next meeting**

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 7pm at the Guildhall, Much Wenlock.

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**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.**

**25. Consultants for Neighbourhood Plan Review**

Members considered a report from the remote meetings held with three shortlisted consultants.

**On the basis of costings provided and clarity of approach, it was RESOLVED to appoint Alison Eardley to support the review of the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan.**

The Clerk was instructed to notify the consultants accordingly and move forward with Alison Eardley.

**26. Planning Enforcement**

Members noted an update on current enforcement issues and that an additional matter had been submitted and logged as 23/09773/HRR.

The Clerk was asked to refer correspondence received to the Conservation Officer at Shropshire Council.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

Signed.....(Chairperson)

Date.....