

Much Wenlock Town Council

Town Council Meeting

8th February 2024

Supporting Papers

Broseley and Much Wenlock Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT)

Update to Much Wenlock Town Council: From 04/01/2024 – 31/01/2024

Update on Police and SNT activity in the area. In addition to the Officers in the Safer Neighbourhood Team, there is a team of Response Officers based in Bridgnorth Police Station who attend incidents in the area. Currently, we only have a PC and a PCSO on the team. There are no PCSO's currently being trained and therefore no time frame can be given for the arrival of a replacement for the PCSO who left in September 2022.

Neighbourhood Matters. Neighbourhood Matters is an online messaging service operated by West Mercia Police. SNT Officers are sending Crime Alerts and other locally relevant information out to all those who join the service. Please encourage everyone to check out the service by following the link - https://www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk/

West Mercia Police has signed up to the Local Policing Community Charter. The Council has outlined its three main Policing Priorities as:

Theft (from outbuildings). There were no burglaries from outbuildings reported in the area. Officers from a specialist unit have continued to target a number of suspects and six cars linked to criminal activity in the Shropshire area have been seized from Broseley.

Drugs. SNT continue to patrol areas where there have been previous reports of incidents linked to drug related activity & submit reports when necessary.

Speeding. SNT Officers will continue to conduct speed surveys in relevant areas when other commitments allow.

Anti-social Behaviour. There have been two reports of youths knocking doors and windows and then running. There has also been another report of youths throwing stones.

There were two reports of possible hare coursing, Officers attended but there was insufficient evidence to prove any offences. Details of those at the scene were taken and have been noted.

There were two reports of suspicious circumstances, in one it was found to have been a Housing Association gaining legitimate access to a boarded up property and after an area search the other incident was closed and the caller reassured.

There were two criminal damage incidents, in one a car was damaged by being scratched and in the other a microwave was damaged beyond repair.

Domestic Incident. There was a single incident reported, which was dealt with in an appropriate manner by Officers and referrals have been made to our partner agencies.

Road Traffic Issues. There have been a number of reports regarding incidents on the roads, including:

There was a Road Traffic Collision (RTC) involving a car on the A458, Officers were deployed. Fortunately, there were no serious injuries and no motoring offences identified. There was also a broken-down car in the town and Officers had to be deployed due to the location and possible danger to other road users.

There were two reports of cars possibly being driven while the drivers were under the influence of drink or drugs. There were no Officers available to deploy to either and in one case the registration was incorrectly taken by the witness. A report regarding the other vehicle has been submitted.

There was a report of a tree blocking the B4371.

Three make off without payment offences from a garage were reported.

There were three reports of a 999 call being made in error.

There were five mental health incidents reported, paramedics and partner agencies were able to deal with two of these, but the other three required Police attendance.

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock at 7 pm on Thursday, 11th January 2024

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

In attendance: Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, one member of the public in person and one remotely.

1. Mayor's Welcome

The Mayor presented the following report:

Good evening councillors and welcome back after what I hope was a happy Christmas and New Year for you all.

Councillor Tyler and I visited Church Stretton on one of their community engagement days to see what they are doing to involve residents in the first Neighbourhood Plan for the Strettons. They are starting from scratch, unlike us where we are reviewing ours. They put on an excellent display and were asking residents their views on all of the usual subjects. A very professionally run event, and we came away with some good ideas for our community engagement event.

Regarding our Neighbourhood Plan review, the Planning Committee have met with Alison Eardley our chosen planning consultant, who came up from Kent for the meeting. More on that later in the agenda.

The public toilets in the car park at St Mary's Lane have been reconfigured and upgraded. The automatic doors have been replaced with manually operated doors and new wallgates for hand washing have been installed. A card payment facility has been added and the charge for use remains at 20p.

Work to upgrade the electrical connections in the High Street was scheduled to take place between 15th January and 7th February, with the road being closed to traffic for the duration of the work. This will cause some temporary disruption, but the essential work will ensure the future reliability of the electrical supply to residents and businesses in the town centre.

Councillors Benbow, Grainger and I met with Peter Neale, the Business Manager at William Brookes School, to discuss various school management matters, and also our concerns with regard to the condition of the swimming pool and changing facilities. He said he was aware that certain matters required attention and went on to say that improvement works were due to start early this year. Events however have overtaken us, and we now know that the pool is closed for seven weeks for urgent health and safety repairs.

2. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Grainger – work commitment.

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

Members noted with thanks the written report provided by PCSO Mal Goddard. Police officers were otherwise engaged and had sent their apologies.

7. Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Councillor, Daniel Thomas, presented the following report:

Shropshire Council's Budget Consultation: in our last meeting, I informed you all that the administration in Shropshire Council has now made £41m of the £51m savings, and a further £6M is expected by the end of this financial year, leaving a shortfall of £4m which will be met from reserves. This year's Shropshire Council budget is out for consultation now, and we face another gap of £26.5m. To help do this, there is an online budget consultation, which is currently open. I urge all of you to respond and I have sent the link out to all Councillors. The consultation closes on the 28th of January, so please do not delay.

Shropshire Council Car Park Charging Proposals: Shropshire Council's car park proposals will go to the Cabinet meeting on 17th January where they will be looking at increasing charges for the Council's car parks and on-street parking areas. The changes are being proposed to encourage people to change behaviour in the larger market towns and to raise additional income for spending on the maintenance of car parks. The report only came out late yesterday and I haven't been able to read it properly yet but I do urge all Councillors to read the report.

Drainage work on Stretton Road, Much Wenlock, to help reduce flooding: last month, I gratefully reported that the highway drainage work is to be carried out on Stretton Road, Much Wenlock, from 22nd January to mid-April 2024. However, due to the effect on businesses along that road and the short notice period we gave them, we have delayed the work until the summer. Many Much Wenlock residents will share my disappointment at this work being delayed. It is vital that work is undertaken to ease the inconvenience of flooding for residents and local businesses. A later closure allows plenty of time for our fantastic businesses along Stretton Road to make proper plans to deal with the pressure this road closure will cause; it's crucial that we support them during any disruption. The delay will give additional opportunities to optimise detours, improve signage, and implement mitigation measures to reduce traffic congestion and noise.

Road Works: a range of road works is taking place across the Much Wenlock division, which includes vital road repairs to make our town a better place to live, work and visit. A rather important one is the National Grid upgrading the electricity across the High Street from 15th January to 7th February. Originally, this was going to be before Christmas, but after meeting with the National Grid, I represented residents and traders where it was agreed to move the work to the new year to protect Christmas trade.

Shropshire named on ABTA's 10 global holiday destinations: Shropshire has been named by travel experts as one of 10 destinations to watch for holidaymakers this year - the only UK location to be featured. The "rural gem" appears on travel trade organisation ABTA's list, alongside the Spanish region of Extremadura, Saxony in Germany, Vietnam and Zambia. This means that this Council's decision to take out Silver Membership with Visit Shropshire will have an even bigger reach than perhaps originally expected and, therefore, greater benefit to tourism and trade in the town.

Surgery: my next advice surgery will be held on Saturday, 13th January, between 10.30 a.m. and 12 noon at Much Wenlock Museum. No appointment is necessary. I'll be joined by Town Mayor, Councillor Fenwick, and a representative from the Police.

Finally, I'd like to wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year.

Councillors raised the following queries with Councillor Thomas:

Q: In relation to the Stretton Road drainage work, it had also been promised that the High Street drains would be improved; when was this going to happen?

A: Councillor Thomas would keep up the pressure and find out when the work would be carried out.

Q: Shropshire Council car parking charges had increased by 30% last year and were now proposed to go up again. This would raise little revenue from small towns such as Much Wenlock but would be detrimental to the community and its economy and would impact on residents as well as visitors to the town. Much Wenlock had a limited bus service and most visitors came by car. The Town Council should object strongly to the proposals.

A: Councillor Thomas agreed. Most of the funds would be raised from Shrewsbury, followed by Ludlow and Bridgnorth. The proposals were intended to also ease congestion in Shrewsbury town centre as well as increase revenue. The cost of residents' permits was set to increase as well. However, the proposal was going to Cabinet and Councillor Thomas would not have an opportunity to vote. Ultimately, Shropshire Council needed additional income to avoid bankruptcy.

Q: Would it be possible to obtain data to see the impact on demand from the previous increase in charges and projected impact from the latest proposals, as well as how the additional revenue would be spent?

A: Councillor Thomas would request information and pass on Councillors' comments.

8. Minutes

- a. It was RESOLVED to approve and adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 7th December 2023.
- b. It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 7th November 2023.

c. It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on 21st November 2023.

9. Town Clerk's Report

Members noted the written and verbal report from the Town Clerk. The Clerk updated Councillors on progress with the IT upgrade for the office.

10. 2024/25 Budget

Members considered the draft 2024/25 budget and precept, as recommended by the Finance & Asset Management Committee. A commentary on the proposals had been provided by the Responsible Financial Officer.

It was RESOLVED to approve the 2024/25 budget, with expenditure of £349,488 and a precept of £275,287, representing an increase of 7.5% over the previous year.

11. The Guildhall Project

Councillors noted an update on the Guildhall project. The feasibility study had been completed and submitted to the Architectural Heritage Fund along with the grant claim. Further audience development work was still to be undertaken, with the deadline for completion of this element of the work and the National Lottery Heritage Fund claim being the end of April 2024. The surveys of the Guildhall, undertaken as part of the feasibility study, would be considered by the Finance & Asset Management Committee.

12. St Mary's Public Toilets

Members noted that the reconfiguration of the facilities at St Mary's car park had been completed. Replacement manually operated doors had been installed along with new wallgates for hand washing. A card payment option had been introduced but the cash payment option, which should have been retained, had been removed. Healthmatic had advised that the coin acceptor had been incompatible with the new card payment equipment.

It was RESOLVED to request that Healthmatic install a cash payment option at no extra cost, as this facility should have been retained as part of the work that had been commissioned.

Members noted that the Council's groundsman had removed overgrown vegetation around the building but further maintenance work was required, such as replacement of missing tiles. The railings at the front of the building had also recently been damaged and removed for safe keeping. The Clerk was asked to obtain quotations for repairs, which would be considered by the Finance & Asset Management Committee.

13. Neighbourhood Plan Review

a. Members received an update on the Neighbourhood Plan review. A meeting had been held between members of the Planning & Environment Committee and the consultant, Alison Eardley on 4th January. The scope of the review had been discussed and what matters could and could not form part of the Neighbourhood Plan. The consultant had identified areas of the plan requiring revision. It had been agreed to meet with local stakeholder groups to clarify some matters and to explore in which areas different groups might help with the review. A meeting was to be arranged within the next month, which the consultant would also attend.

Concerns were raised about the potential cost of the review. There were sufficient funds within the Council's contingency budget for the following year to allow the review to keep moving forward should there be a delay with Locality funding.

b. It was RESOLVED to consider an additional matter relating to the Neighbourhood Plan in private session at the end of the meeting.

14. Stretton Road Drainage Work

Members noted that the capital drainage works on the Stretton Road scheduled for 22nd January to 12th April 2024 had been postponed. Shropshire Council had agreed to delay the work to allow the businesses situated along the Stretton Road more time to resolve operational issues arising from the road closure and long diversion route. It was expected that the work would be rescheduled for the middle of the year.

15. Gaskell Recreation Ground Charity

Members received a report from the Gaskell Recreation Ground following the charity AGM held on 14th December 2023. Councillor David Fenwick had been elected Chairman of the Charity. The following Councillors had been elected to the Management Committee: Susan Crooke-Williams, David Fenwick, Marcus Themans and Duncan White.

16. HSBC 'Pop Up' Banking Service

Members noted that HSBC would be providing 'pop up' banking services in Holy Trinity Church on Fridays 12th January, 9th February and 8th March between 9.30am and 1.30pm and under the Corn Exchange on Friday, 12th April 2024.

17. Consultation

Members considered a response to the following consultation:

- a. Shropshire Council Budget Consultation, deadline 28th January 2024. Councillors were urged to respond to the consultation individually.
- b. Shropshire Council Community Governance Reviews: proposed changes to parish council boundaries in five areas of Shropshire (not Much Wenlock), deadline 25th January 2024. Noted.

18. Correspondence

Members noted the following items, which they had received by 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. Information from the RSN Rural Market Town Group
- f. VCSA newsletters
- g. News from Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust
- h. Listing of events at The Edge Arts Centre
- i. Lord Lieutenant's Christmas Newsletter
- j. Shropshire Hills National Landscape newsletter
- k. Met. Office Online Community Resilience Training Prospectus
- I. Star Housing December Bulletin
- m. West Mercia PCC Newsletter December 2023.

19. Agenda items for next Town Council meeting

Members were invited to suggest items for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting: Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan.

20. Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 8th February 2024 at 7.00pm at the Guildhall, Much Wenlock.

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

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

13b. Neighbourhood Plan – Email from Shropshire Council

Members considered a confidential email from Shropshire Council dated 4th January 2024 and agreed a response. It was **RESOLVED** that the Council had no objection to the proposal in principle but would like a restrictive condition to be put in place.

21. 10 High Street

Members received an update on progress with letting 10 High Street to a commercial tenant.

It was RESOLVED to approve the draft lease and the draft deposit deed and to proceed with arrangements to finalise the rental.

The mee	eting closed at 8.20pm			
Signed		Mayor	Date	

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a **Planning & Environment Committee meeting** held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 5th December 2023 at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock

Present: Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick (in the chair), Wilf Grainger, Dan Thomas, Chris Tyler, Linda West **In attendance:** Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk

1. Apologies

None – all Councillors were present.

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.

Councillors Fenwick and Tyler declared an interest in applications 23/05081/FUL and 23/05082/LBC due to a personal friendship with the applicant.

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 7th November 2023 be APPROVED and signed as a true record.

6. Planning Applications

Members considered a response to the following planning applications:

23/04967/TCA 7 Barrow Street, Much Wenlock	Crown reduction of 1no. Silver Birch (T1) (as per schedule) within Much Wenlock Conservation Area. It was RESOLVED no objection.
23/05061/TCA 12 Falcons Court, Much Wenlock	Reduce by 2-3m 1no Cherry within Much Wenlock Conservation Area. It was RESOLVED no objection.
23/04840/TCA The Gables, Racecourse Lane, Much Wenlock	Reduce height by approx. 30% and overhanging branches (See Correspondence) of group of Bay (T1), 1no Lime (T3), 1no Acer (T4), 3no Silver Birch (T5, T6 & T7), 1no Scotch Pine (T8) and 2no Leylandii (T9 &T10), thin Hazel cluster (T2) & reduce height by approx. third of 1no Beech (T11) within Much Wenlock Conservation Area. It was RESOLVED to highlight the discrepancy between the application description of a reduction by one third for the beech and 50% in the correspondence. No objection to 30% reduction on all of trees specified.
23/05072/LBC 3 Sheinton Street, Much Wenlock	Installation of shower room at second floor and replacement of 1no window on front elevation and 2no windows on side elevation. It was RESOLVED no objection.
23/05201/TCA 1B Chapel Close, Much Wenlock	Fell 1no Ash within Much Wenlock Conservation Area. It was RESOLVED no objection.
23/05081/FUL and 23/05082/LBC 24 Sheinton Street, Much Wenlock	Erection of single storey extension to side elevation, replacement roof, replacement doors. Works to facilitate the erection of single storey extension to side elevation, replacement roof, replacement doors. It was RESOLVED no objection. Councillors Fenwick and Tyler took no part in the discussion and voting.

7. Planning Decisions

It was RESOLVED to note the following planning decisions:

23/04134/FUL 31 Oakfield Park, Much Wenlock	Erection of single storey extension and reposition window within front elevation following removal of existing polycarb roof link structure Decision: Grant Permission
23/04141/LBC 24 Sheinton Street, Much Wenlock	Replacement of a window and the replacement of a door and casing in an outbuilding affecting a Grade II Listed Building (amended description). Decision: Grant Permission
23/04288/TPO The William Brookes School, Farley Road, Much Wenlock	Prune back crown over garage by approx. 3m and shape 1no Sycamore protected by the Bridgnorth District Council (William Brookes School/Gaskell Recreation Ground, Much Wenlock) TPO 2008 (Ref: BR/TPO/154) Decision: Grant Permission
23/04470/TCA 5 Queen Street, Much Wenlock	To reduce crowns by 20 percent of 1no. Birch (T1), 1no. Whitebeam (T2), 1no. Acer (T3) and 1no. Laburnum (T4) within Much Wenlock Conservation Area Decision: No Objection
23/04428/TCA The Lymes, 12 Barrow Street, Much Wenlock	To section fell 1no. Juniper (T1) (and replace with a suitable native tree) within Much Wenlock Conservation Area Decision: No Objection
23/04433/FUL Gleedon Hill Farm, Sheinton Road, Much Wenlock	New dormer Decision: Grant Permission
23/04267/TCA Laundry Cottage, Barrow Street, Much Wenlock	Reduce by 20% 1no Maple within Much Wenlock Conservation Area. Decision: Consent by Right
23/04067/TPO Wenlock Priory Bull Ring, Much Wenlock	Remove dangerous branch of 1no Pinus, remove various branches and add bracing (see report) of 1no Beech, add bracing to 1no Pinus & fell 4no Ash covered by the Shropshire Council (Wenlock Priory, Much Wenlock) TPO 2010 (Ref: SC/00024/10). Decision: Grant Permission
23/03858/LBC The Old Vicarage, Victoria Road, Much Wenlock	Works to facilitate removal of part of kitchen wall to restore kitchen to an appropriate footprint, installation of back door providing access and improved security to garden, installation of window in rear lounge, installation of window cills on front elevation to resolve water damage caused by historical window design, improvements to ground floor windows to align the aesthetic, repair the functionality and return levels of insulation and security to the ground floor. Decision: Grant Permission

8. Application 22/05214/EIA: Farley Quarry, Farley, Much Wenlock

Restoration of part of Farley Quarry by means of the recycling of construction, demolition and excavation wastes and the engineered placement of the rejects from the recycling process to raise levels in the Quarry to create a restoration landform, together with ancillary activities and improvements to the site access.

Members were pleased to note that the above application had been refused at the Shropshire Council Southern Planning Committee meeting held on 14th November 2023. Councillor Benbow had objected in person at the meeting on behalf of the Town Council and Councillor Thomas had sent in a written objection. Both were thanked for their contribution.

9. Draft Shropshire Local Plan Review 2016 - 2038

a. Shropshire Council had sought clarification from the Inspectors on sustainability and meeting the unmet development needs of the Black Country, i.e. 1500 homes and 30 hectares of employment land. The scale of Much Wenlock meant that it was likely to be considered inappropriate to contribute to the unmet housing need.

There had been no further announcements from the Inspectors.

- b. Members noted a report from the meeting held with the Town Council's Associates on 30th November. The meeting had been called to consider preparations for Stage 2 of the Local Plan examination. The Town Council and Associates would aim to work together on Stage 2, as for Stage 1.
- c. The timescale for Stage 2 of the examination was still awaited.

10. Neighbourhood Plan

- a. Members considered the initial desk-based review document prepared by the consultant, Alison Eardley, including recommendations for areas where changes were required and next steps.
 - The Clerk was asked to seek clarity on the meaning of 'open space' and 'green space'.
 - Councillor Benbow offered to prepare and circulate his comments on the report, following which a response to the consultant would be prepared.
- b. Members confirmed the date for a face-to-face meeting with Alison Eardley of Thursday, 4th January, commencing 5pm at the earliest.
- c. Members reviewed correspondence sent by the Civic Society to Alison Eardley. Members were concerned that the Civic Society had approached the consultant directly. It was RESOLVED to write to the Civic Society requesting that any comments regarding the Neighbourhood Plan be addressed to the Town Council; community involvement was not being sought at this stage of the review process and the Civic Society should be asked not to contact the consultant directly.
- d. Members considered the draft of the Neighbourhood Area Design Guidelines prepared by AECOM. Councillor Tyler had provided his comments to the Clerk. Other Councillors were asked to review the document and pass on any observations to the Clerk. The collated comments would then be passed to the Council's consultant, Alison Eardley, for further input.

11. Housing Need Data

Members considered housing need data for Much Wenlock provided by Shropshire Council. The data had been extracted from Homepoint, as at 20th November 2023, and provided information on the type of household, age and band priority. This information would be very useful for the Neighbourhood Plan review and Housing Needs assessment.

12. Wah Lai Chinese Takeaway

Members considered the future of the Chinese takeaway premises in the High Street, which had been out of use since the death of the former proprietor. It was understood that the lease for the premises had now expired.

It was RESOLVED to write to the owner to encourage and support progress with re-letting the property. The Mayor offered to draft a letter.

13. Flooding Issues

- a. Members of the Strategic Flood Working Group reported that a video and photos of recent flood events were being compiled in the Town Council office to send to Shropshire Council, the Environment Agency, Severn Trent and Philip Dunne. Councillors were pleased to note that work to connect Stretton Road to the attenuation pond had now been scheduled for early next year. The work would involve a complete road closure for the duration of the work.
- b. The Clerk had requested help from Councillor Benbow with drafting letters to the Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water and Shropshire Council regarding flood risk from a possible breach at Shadwell Quarry and contingency plans for Quality Liquid Feeds. Any response received would be considered at the next meeting.
- c. Councillor Thomas had contacted Severn Trent regarding the escape of sewage into the street and gardens during flood events. Contact was awaited from the Flood Resilience Manager to discuss the matter further. It was noted that a representative from Severn Trent had attended the most recent meeting of the Flood Group and been taken to task. Councillor Thomas would follow up this matter.
 A combined sewer overflow had been installed on the parkland behind the Abbey but this had not alleviated the problems experienced in the town centre. Clarity was needed on what measures were planned and a timescale. If there was no progress in addressing the problem, the Council would consider reporting the matter to OFWAT.

14. Transport and Highways Matters

a. Members considered a report from the Transport Working Group. WSP were hopeful that Shropshire Council would approve the design for the primary school crossing by 10th December, but nothing had been heard so far. It had been estimated that the development proposals in the Telford & Wrekin draft Local Plan would result in an extra 40 vehicles passing through Much Wenlock in the morning and an extra 50 in the evening. Shropshire Council had announced the introduction of 20mph speed limits outside some schools in the county. William Brookes School would be included in the first wave of the new speed limits, but not the primary school.

b. A final version of the report on the Gaskell corner was still awaited.

It was RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders to allow the meeting to continue beyond 9.00 pm.

15. Clee Hills Motor Trial - 21st January 2024

Members noted information regarding the Clee Hills Motor Trial, to be held on 21st January 2024.

16. Climate Change and Ecological/Nature Emergencies*

17. Consultation*

18. Street Lighting

The Clerk was asked to check progress with the street light in Southfield Road that had been uncovered following the cutting back of trees.

19. Street Naming *

20. Footpath Issues*

Councillor Thomas was asked to check progress with the Bull Ring kissing gate.

21. Footpath/Bridleway Creation Orders*

22. Footpath Diversion Orders*

Members considered the proposed diversion of footpath 177 in Barrow parish. Councillors were familiar with this footpath, which connected to provide a circular route from Much Wenlock. A view down the Corvedale towards Acton Round could be seen from the current route that could not be seen from any other location. The diversion would take the footpath into a dip, with the view being lost to walkers.

It was RESOLVED to object to the diversion based on the grounds outlined above.

23. Road Closures*

Members noted the following road closures:

a. Location: Callaughton Lane, Much Wenlock

Date/Time: 15th – 17th January 2024, 08.00 – 17.00

Purpose: To enable highways works

Agency: Shropshire Council

b. Location: B4378 Bourton to Brockton

Date/Time: 31st January to 1st February 2024, 09.30 – 16.00

Purpose: Reactive defects and lining works

Agency: Shropshire Council

c. Location: High Street, Much Wenlock

Date/Time: 15th January to 7th February 2024, all the time

Purpose: National Grid – 16 joint holes in modular footway and tarmac road and 21m trenching in

modular footway and tarmac road for cable overlay

Agency: National Grid

d. Location: B4371 Stretton Road Industrial Estate junction to Grange Fencing, Much Wenlock

Date/Time: 22nd January to 12th April 2024, all the time

Purpose: Capital drainage works Agency: Shropshire Council

e. Location: Homer Road, Much Wenlock
Date/Time: 3rd January 2024, 09.00 – 15.30

Purpose: Replace decayed BT pole

Agency: Openreach

f. Location: High Street, Wilmore Street, Barrow Street, Much Wenlock

Date/Time: 7th January 2024, all the time Purpose: Removal of Christmas lights Agency: Much Wenlock Town Council

24. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)*

25. Stopping Up Orders*

- 26. Speed Limit Orders*
- 27. Prohibition Orders*

25. Date of next meeting

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 9th January 2024 at 7pm at the Guildhall or Corn Exchange (tbc), 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.

27. Planning Enforcement

The Mayor reported that he had recently attended a SALC Area Committee meeting, where concern had been expressed about general lack of enforcement from Shropshire Council.

Members noted an update on enforcement issues 23/09961/ENF, 23/09619/ENF, 23/09704/ENF, 22/09018/ENF and 22/08783/ENF.

It was noted that enforcement issue 23/09811/ENF had been resolved and closed.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm		
	(5)	
Signed	(Chairperson)	Date

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a

FINANCE & ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

meeting held at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 21st November 2023

Present: Cllrs. Susan Crooke-Williams, David Fenwick, John O'Dowd, Marcus Themans and Duncan White.

In attendance: Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, Diane Barlow – Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

1. Apologies

None at the time of the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillor Toon subsequent to the meeting.

2. Disclosure of pecuniary interests

Members were reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the Register of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

3. Dispensations

None requested.

4. Minutes

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Asset Management Committee held on 24th October 2023 be APPROVED and signed as a true record.

5. Town Clerk's report

Members noted the Clerk's written and verbal report on action taken since the last meeting.

It was RESOLVED to ask a pest control company to inspect the Guildhall posts and give advice on treatment of the infestation.

Members noted that measures should also be taken in due course to divert water away from the base of the posts.

6. Finance

- a. The RFO presented a written and verbal report. She advised that all agreed grant awards had been paid at the beginning of November and the Town Council had received several thank you letters. In addition to those received by post, thanks had been received by email from The Friendly Transport Service, Much Wenlock First Responders, Northgate Swimming Club, Shropshire Roots Brotherhood and Much Wenlock Festival.
 - Income to 31st October was £56,993 (excluding precept, income from grant awards and proceeds from property sales), which was 70.2% above budget for the time of year. This income figure also included the refund from SSE Swalec for street light electricity charges. Expenditure to 31st October was £158,709, which was 11.36% below budget for the time of year, although there were large invoices for the Christmas light installation and Library Service expected soon.
- b. Members noted the balance sheet as at 31st October 2023.
- c. Members noted the income and expenditure to 31st October 2023.
- d. Members reviewed the bank reconciliations to 31st October 2023. **It was RESOLVED to approve the bank** reconciliations to 31st October 2023.
- e. It was RESOLVED to approve payments from 25th October 2023 to date.

7. 2024/25 Budget

Members reviewed the second draft of the 2024/25 budget and considered amendments. Having taken advice, the RFO reported that staff time spent on work for the Gaskell Charity would be best shown as a note to the accounts. The RFO was asked to incorporate agreed changes in the budget. Members agreed to hold an additional meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee on 7th December to review the amended draft.

8. Town Council Insurance

a. Members noted the updated reinstatement values for the Town Council's properties, provided by Alpha Chartered Surveyors.

b. Members considered the revised insurance premium from Zurich which was based on the updated reinstatement values. It was RESOLVED to accept the additional charge of £2,402.88 from Zurich for the 2023/24 insurance policy to take into account the revised reinstatement values for the Town Council's properties.

9. Grant Award Acknowledgements

Members noted thank you letters for Town Council grant awards from Wenlock Olympian Games Arts Sub-Committee, Holy Trinity Bell Restoration Appeal and Much Wenlock Windmill Trust.

10. The Guildhall Project

Members noted that there had been a pop-up Guildhall consultation event in the Square on Saturday, 18th November. It was disappointing that the consultant from Focus had been unable to attend due to an injury and nobody else from the consultancy had been available. Councillor White had provided a gazebo and Councillors Fenwick, Crooke-Williams and Benbow had staffed the stall, engaging with the public and distributing flyers.

A meeting with the consultancies Greenwoods and Lathams was scheduled for 23rd November.

11. Corn Exchange Decoration

Members considered the condition of the ground floor of the Corn Exchange and maintenance required. The Town Handyman had washed down the walls and ceiling which had improved the walls somewhat but had little effect on the ceiling. The Clerk was asked to obtain quotations for repainting the ceiling, deep cleaning the floor tiles and cleaning the walls.

12. Public Toilets

- a. Members noted that reconfiguration work to the public toilets in St Mary's car park was scheduled to commence on Monday, 27th November. It was hoped that the work would be completed during that week but this was dependent on supply of parts. The Christmas Fayre Committee had been advised. A notice would be displayed on the building with directions to alternative toilet provision at Queen Street. An official opening of the refurbished facilities would be considered when the work was completed.
- b. Members considered improvements required to the public toilets at Queen Street. It was RESOLVED to seek sponsorship for some improvements. It was RESOLVED to engage EW Humphries to carry out electrical work to upgrade the consumer units and repair the supply to the hand driers at a cost of £1,336.19 including VAT. It was noted that this price would not cover any other repairs found to be necessary during testing.

13. Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee would be an extraordinary meeting on 7th December at 6.00pm, followed by a scheduled meeting on Tuesday, 23rd January 2024 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 <u>PROPOSED</u>, <u>SECONDED</u> and <u>RESOLVED</u> that, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press should not be present.

14. Rental of 10 High Street

Members noted an update on the marketing of 10 High Street for rental. It was RESOLVED to proceed with the prospective tenant on the terms proposed.

15. Gaskell Recreation Ground

There had been no response from Shropshire Council to the Town Council's most recent communication.

16. Much Wenlock Museum

There had been no response from Shropshire Council to the Town Council's most recent communication.

The meeting	closed	at	8.35p	m.

Signed	Date
Chairnerson	

MONTH	JTI IINIM	RESOLUTION	TASK	COMMENT
(NUMBER		COMPLETE	
June 2022	13	Continue to check the Local Plan EiP website for updates.	Ongoing	Councillors and associates also requested to check EIP website themselves, in case of delay with Clerk checking.
Oct 2022	6b	Mayor and Clerk to draft a procedure for making CCTV footage available to the police.	Pending	
Oct 2023	21	Delegate authority to a working group comprising Cllrs Fenwick and Grainger and admin. staff to identify the best options for office IT and file	In progress	Appropriate hardware identified, file storage and email options still under review.
		storage and to purchase the agreed equipment within the available budget.		
Dec 2023	14b	To make the necessary arrangements for the formal declaration of the Windmill Hill Local Nature Reserve in early 2024	In progress	For March agenda.
	15	Provide funds of £2.000 from the S106 reserve towards the refurbishment	In progress	Bowling Club advised of decision. Work in progress.
		of the matchroom at the Bowling Club on completion of satisfactory work		invoice awaited.
		and provision of relevant invoices.		
	19	Take out silver membership of Visit Shropshire for the next financial year at	Pending	To be arranged for next financial year.
		a cost of £1,500.		
Jan 2024	12	Request that Healthmatic install a cash payment option at St Mary's Public	In progress	Request submitted to Healthmatic who are considering
		Toilets at no extra cost as this facility should have been retained as part of		options.
		the work that had been commissioned.		
	12	Obtain quotations for repairs to the railings at the front of St Mary's toilets and for maintenance work to the building.	In progress	
	21	Approve the draft lease and draft deposit deed for 10 High Street and	In progress	
		proceed with arrangements to finalise the rental.		

Other activities:

- Meeting with Greenwood Projects on 25th January
- Review of Focus Draft Audience Development Plan
- Liaison with relevant parties regarding lease of 10 High Street
- Communication with Healthmatic relating to public toilets
- Liaison regarding Neighbourhood Plan review
- FOI request
- Liaison re rental of 10 High Street

DM PAYROLL SERVICES LTD

INTERIM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Date of Report: 22 January 2024

I have undertaken an interim internal audit review for Much Wenlock Town Council. I have carried out tests on the systems in place and have reviewed the internal controls. I confirm I have acted independently; the basis of the internal audit is by selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls.

A. Appropriate books of account

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

B. Financial Regulations

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

Financial regulations were reviewed in May 2023. There is evidence of quotations being sought for purchases in excess of £3,000 as per the financial regulations in most samples examined. The contractor for the ground care has been appointed for several years without quotations being sought, however, I understand the fee is compared to contractors who undertake work for the Gaskell Recreation Grounds charity and that the Town Council is happy with the standard of work.

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

There is limited usage of a debit card, there are controls in place to cover the usage of the debit card.

C. Risk Assessments

The generic risk assessment is due to be reviewed and this will be examined after the year end.

There have been separate risk assessments evidenced in the minutes for legionella testing in the Guildhall during the year.

The council's insurance policy is adequate for the Town Council's needs, the Town Council has revalued assets for insurance purposes during the year and the insurance schedule was updated.

D. Precept

The budget and precept requirements for the 2024/25 will be reviewed at the end of the year.

Financial monitoring reports of actual income and expenditure compared against the budget

are provided to the Finance & Asset Management Committee at each meeting. There are supplementary reports provided by the RFO highlighting significant variances to income and expenditure.

E. Income

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

F. Petty Cash

Petty cash is used appropriately, all samples tested were supported by receipts and are included in the accounts. The Town council has now implemented internal checks on the petty cash carried out by a named councillor, the checks are evidence by a signature.

G. PAYE

PAYE is carried out using HMRC Basic Tools. Sample checks were made and concluded the salaries were calculated correctly and in accordance with the correct SCP points. PAYE & NIC deductions were made and pension contributions calculated on the correct basis.

H. Asset Register

I will review the asset register at the year end.

I. Bank reconciliations

Bank reconciliations are carried out monthly and are regularly presented to the Finance & Asset Management Committee for review. I have agreed the bank reconciliation statements to the cashbook and bank statements for April, September and December 2023.

J. Accounting Statements

This will be reviewed at the year end.

K. Exemption

The council did not declare itself exempt from limited assurance audit during 2022/23.

L. Transparency Code

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

M. Public Rights

The notice for the public rights for the 2022/23 year was correctly displayed.

N. Publication Requirements

The council has complied with the publication requirements for the 2022/23 AGAR, these documents can be found on the council website.

Reserves

Reserves will be reviewed at year end.

General

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

Yours sincerely

Diane Malley

Diane Malley M.A.A.T.

19/01/2024

Shropshire Council

Cabinet agrees changes to parking charges

Shropshire Council's Cabinet has approved changes to parking charges in the council's car parks and onstreet parking areas.

The increased charges are being introduced to encourage people to change behaviour, and to raise additional income for spending on the maintenance of car parks.

The changes will come into effect on Monday 1 April 2024 (Easter Monday).

In Shrewsbury, the increase in charges will help redistribute vehicles by encouraging motorists to park outside of the river loop, or to use Park and Ride or other bus services, or – if possible – to walk, cycle or use other forms of active travel. The increase varies by car park.

Improvements to the reliability and frequency of the park and ride service is needed, and initially research will take place into the feasibility of a late bus for people unable to catch the current last bus at 6.30pm.

Additionally, a half-price park and ride promotion is set to begin in April, offering people a return journey into the town centre for just £1.

Outside Shrewsbury parking charges are set to rise by a set 20p per hour, though many car parks will remain free.

Across the county the increase in tariffs will help the council to improve the operation and maintenance of its car parks.

Other changes will see charging for parking until 8pm (rather than 6pm as at present) in Shrewsbury, and the introduction of/increase in Sunday and Bank Holiday charges across the county. See notes.

Permit/season ticket charges will also increase in proportion with the hourly tariff changes, but – for example – an annual permit:

- for Abbey Foregate in Shrewsbury will cost less than £16 a week (£800/year).
- for St Julian's Friars in Shrewsbury will cost £13 a week (£681/year).
- for Oswestry, Ludlow and Market Drayton will cost less than £10 a week (£480/year).

It is estimated that an additional income of £1.76m per year will be achieved after implementation costs have been taken out.

By law, any surplus money Shropshire Council receives from car parking over and above the cost of providing and administering it must be used for the benefit of road users.

Any surplus generated from these changes would therefore be put towards improvements to car parks; and any further surplus money would be used to fund public transport services, road improvements projects and environmental improvement.

Cabinet also agreed the preparation of a Parking Asset Improvement Plan for the repair and maintenance of car parks throughout Shropshire; to review the parking service's roles and structure; and to review and rewrite the council's parking strategy.

Dan Morris, Shropshire Council's Cabinet member for highways and transport, said:

"In Shrewsbury the primary objective is to encourage motorists to park outside the river loop, or use other forms of transport; reducing the number of vehicles entering the town centre, helping to increase the number of spaces available for those who need them, and minimising emissions.

"And across the county, our 83 car parks have not kept pace with maintenance requirements such as surfacing, lining, signing, drainage, boundaries, green assets and cleaning. To address the car park maintenance needs in Shropshire, an increase in charges is required throughout the county.

"We continue to encourage people to visit Shrewsbury and support its local businesses, but we hope these proposals will encourage people to park outside Shrewsbury's river loop – or use alternative modes of travel. They will also enable the council to better maintain our car parks and bring them up to the standard that people require and expect."

The existing parking strategy was written in 2017 and adopted by Cabinet in 2018, and needs revision to take account of changing circumstances and lessons.

A new, more flexible parking strategy will be written, within the next six to 12 months, which would entail a countywide non-statutory consultation.

Further information

Sunday and Bank Holidays charges:

- Where charges are currently half price they will be charged at full price.
- Where parking is currently free, it will be charged at half price.

Shrewsbury contributes 71% of the overall increase in parking income, whilst Shropshire (excluding Shrewsbury) contributes 29%. This significant imbalance illustrates the need to influence the behaviour of motorists in Shrewsbury.



Committee and Date

Item

Public









Parking Tariffs, Operations & Development

Responsible Officer:		Andy Wilde	
email: andy.wilde@shropshire.gov.u		k Tel	
Cabine	et Member (Portfolio Holder):	Dan Morris	

1. Synopsis

1.1. This report requests approval to introduce new and additional tariffs in Shropshire (but mainly in Shrewsbury), preparation of a new Council Parking Strategy, a review of Parking Services' structure and preparation of a car park Maintenance and Improvement Plan

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report proposes the increase in parking tariffs throughout the Council area to come into effect for the financial year 2024/25, though it focusses primarily on Shrewsbury town in order to manage capacity and reduce the level of traffic within the Severn River loop. In summary it proposes to:
 - a) Increase tariffs in Shrewsbury to re-distribute vehicles by encouraging motorists to switch their parking activity out of the centre, over the river, or to transfer to Park and Ride or other forms of transport such as active travel. A variable amount is to be applied to each car park.
 - b) Increase tariffs in Shropshire (excluding Shrewsbury) in order to provide better operation of the car parks particularly in terms of repairs and maintenance. A fixed amount is to be applied to all tariffs.
 - c) Increase permit/season ticket charges in proportion with the hourly tariff changes.

- d) Introduce evening charges in Shrewsbury
 - i) Charges will apply until 8pm instead of 6pm to reflect higher levels of use at this time.
 - ii) On-Street parking, Bridge St, St Austins St, The Quarry & Frankwell will be affected.
- e) Increase Sunday and Bank Holiday charges throughout the County.
 - i) Where charges are currently half price they will be charged at full price
 - ii) Where parking is currently free, they will be charged at half price.
- f) Introduce a Parking Asset Improvement Plan for the repair and maintenance of car parks throughout the Shropshire.
- g) Review the Parking Services' roles and structure.
- h) Review and re-write the Parking Strategy which was previously updated in 2017/18

3. Recommendations

Recommendation 1 (In twelve parts)

3.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the increases set out for each of the twelve tariffs set out in Table A below, to be introduced by notice under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ("RTRA").

3.2 Table A

Recommendation	CURRENT	CURRENT	NEW	LOCATION	SUNDAY
	BAND	TARIFF	TARIFF		TARIFF
		(Per Hour)	(Per		
			Hour)		
1a	1	£2.80	£3.60	Shrewsbury On-Street	Full
1b	2	£2.00		Bridge St, St. Austins St, The Quarry	Full
1c	2	£2.00	£2.00	Raven Meadows	£2.00 flat
					fee
1d	3	£1.20	£1.60	St. Julians Friars	Full
1e	4	80p	£1.20	Frankwell – Main,	Half
				Riverside and Quay	
1f	5/4	60p/80p	£1.00	Abbey Foregate,	Half
				Bridgnorth, Ludlow	
				On-Street (Blue),	
				Much Wenlock	
1g	2	£2.00	£2.20	Ludlow On-Street	Full
				(Red)	
1h	3	£1.20	£1.40	Ellesmere Mereside	Full
1i	3	£1.20	£1.40	Bridgnorth, Ludlow,	Half
				Oswestry, Ellesmere	

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1j	5	60p	80p	Whitchurch, Ludlow,	Half
				Market Drayton, Much	
				Wenlock, Church	
				Stretton	
1k	6	40p	60p	All the above plus	Half
				Wem and Prees	
				Heath	
11	7	Free	Free	All other car parks	-

Recommendation 2 (In five parts)

3.3 Cabinet is recommended to approve the associated increases set out for each of the five season ticket tariffs set out in Table B below, to be introduced by notice under the RTRA 1984.

3.4 Table B

Recommendation	CURRENT	CURRENT	NEW	LOCATION EXAMPLES
	BAND	TARIFF	TARIFF	
		(Per Annum)	(Per	
			Annum)	
2a	3	£512	£681	St Julians Friars
2b	4	£640	£960	Frankwell
2c	5	£480/£640	£800	Abbey Foregate,
				Bridgnorth
2d	5	£480	£640	Whitchurch, Church
				Stretton
2e	6	£320	£480	Ludlow, Oswestry, Market
				Drayton

Recommendation 3 (In nine parts)

3.5 Cabinet is recommended to approve the associated increases set out for each of the nine resident permit tariffs set out in Table C below, to be introduced by notice under the RTRA 1984.

3.6 Table C

Recommendation	CURRENT BAND	TARIFF (Per Annum)	TARIFF	LOCATION EXAMPLES
Shrewsbury Car Parks			/ (midin)	
3a	3/4	£512	£768	Frankwell (Band 4), St Julians Friars though Band 3 has been linked to Band 4 for permits only
3b	5	£384	£640	Abbey Foregate, Shire Hall Overflow

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Shropshire Car Parks				
3c		£100	£110	Ludlow On-Street
3d		£50	£58	Bridgnorth On-Street
3e	4	£512	£640	Back Lane, Much Wenlock
3f	5	£384	£512	All other locations
3g	6	£256	£384	
3h	Special	£448	£560	Riverside Bridgnorth
3i	Special	£192	£288	Prees Heath

Recommendation 4 – (In 4 parts)

3.7 Cabinet is requested to approve advertisement of Traffic Regulation Orders for consultation on each of the four additional items for Shrewsbury town shown in Table D and the subsequent consideration of objections and making of the Orders if appropriate in accordance with the delegation to the Assistant Director for Highways set out in Part 8 of the Council's Constitution.

3.8 Table D

Recommendation Number	Description	Detail
4a	Remove all capped rates in Shrewsbury i.e. Abbey Foregate, Frankwell and Raven Meadows	From maximum fee of 8 hours to hourly charge for all hours
4b	Introduce evening tariffs to Shrewsbury on-street parking places	From 8.00am/6.00pm to 8.00am/8.00pm.
4c	Introduce evening tariffs to Bridge Street, St Austins Street and The Quarry car parks	From 8.00am/6.00pm to 8.00am/8.00pm.
4d	Introduce evening tariffs to Frankwell car parks	From 8.00am/6.00pm to 8.00am/8.00pm.

Recommendation 5 – Parking Asset Improvement Plan (P.A.I.P)

3.9 Cabinet is requested to approve that a Parking Asset Improvement Plan be prepared immediately.

Recommendation 6 – Parking Service Review

3.10 Cabinet is requested to approve a review of the role, structure and staff in the Parking Services operation.

Recommendation 7 – Parking Strategy

3.11 Cabinet is requested to approve that a new Parking Strategy be developed for Member approval in principle, prior to non-statutory public consultation.