

# MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the  
**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
 held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock  
 7 pm on Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019

**Present:** Cllr. Herbert Harper (in the Chair), Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak, Cllr. Marcus Themans, Cllr. Daniel Thomas, Cllr. Allan Walter and Cllr. Milner Whiteman OBE.

**Town Clerk:** Trudi Barrett

**In attendance:** Shropshire Councillor David Turner and two members of the public

## 1) Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

He reported that he had attended several events recently including the Civic Service on 7<sup>th</sup> July, the Environment Agency Flood Awareness event on 10<sup>th</sup> July and, with Councillor Edgcumbe Venning, the Road Safety Focus organised by the Police & Crime Commissioner in Bridgnorth on 11<sup>th</sup> July. Councillor Holyoak had attended a similar event in Ludlow. On 14<sup>th</sup> July, along with several other Councillors, the Mayor had attended the Wenlock Olympian Games, which had been an outstanding event. On 2<sup>nd</sup> August, accompanied by Councillor Edgcumbe Venning, the Mayor had attended a memorial service for the late Mayor of Bridgnorth, Jean Onions, who had passed away during her year of office. The Mayor wished Councillor Hill a speedy recovery from her recent accident and broken elbow. The Mayor noted that Councillor Thomas had been nominated, and reached the final three, for the NALC Young Councillor of the Year award; the result would be announced in October.

## 2) Apologies for absence

Councillor Davy – family commitment

Councillor Hill – unwell

Councillor Jenkins - work

Councillor Southan – appointment

**These apologies were ACCEPTED and AGREED as APPROVED absence.**

## 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.

None.

## 4) Dispensations

None requested.

## 5) Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Councillor, David Turner, gave a verbal report:

- He referenced the High Street economy and repeated his offer of assistance from Shropshire Council's Economic Growth team. He would be interested to hear about the activities of the new traders' group and the Council's Communications, Markets and Tourism Group.
- He had raised concerns about various outstanding highways issues in the town and was hopeful that some of these might be addressed during the Cadent gas works and road closures. He noted that the relationship between Shropshire Council and Kier was strained and that it was only due to pressure from Shropshire Councillors that anything other than emergency highways work was being undertaken. Councillor Turner issued a reminder about the availability of off-street parking in the town, which was particularly relevant during the current road closures.
- Councillor Turner noted that there were now three defibrillators in the town and requested that the Town Council consider the provision of defibrillators in Bourton and Homer.

- He referred to the police “We don’t buy crime” and Smartwater initiatives and offered his help with these locally.
- Councillor Turner was pleased to note that the Town Council had given detailed attention to Shropshire Council’s Local Plan Strategic Sites proposals and encouraged members of the public to also respond to the consultation.
- Councillor Turner enquired whether the Town Council could support local residents prepared to undertake guerrilla gardening in the town, as he would like an indication from the Town Council before engaging with Shropshire Council on proposals.
- The next advice surgery would be held on 21<sup>st</sup> September and Councillor Turner hoped that a Town Councillor would be able to join him.

Councillor Themans asked Councillor Turner to request that the Shropshire Council road sweeper go along Bourton Road to sweep up the large amount of straw which was dropped along the sides of the road at this time of year and could block drains if there were a flash flood.

#### 6) Public Session

None.

#### 7) Minutes

- a. The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2019 were considered for approval. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the minutes be signed and APPROVED as a true record.**
- b. The minutes of the extraordinary Town Council meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2019 were considered for approval. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the minutes be signed and APPROVED as a true record.**

#### 8) Town Clerk’s Report

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

It was noted that it was hoped to arrange the ceremony to unveil the plaque to Alderman Davies in Back Lane for the afternoon of Remembrance Sunday, after the church service.

With regard to a town centre site for coach parking, it was suggested that the layby next to the Gaskell Arms might be suitable if a safe crossing point could be arranged.

**NOTED**

#### 9) Working Group Reports

Councillors considered reports from the following working groups:

- a. **Friends of the Cemetery**  
No report due to the absence of Councillor Hill.
- b. **History**  
Nothing to report.
- c. **Communications, Markets & Tourism**  
The Group was hoping to arrange a Charter Day Fair next year, possibly to be held on the Church Green, to coincide with the Festival of Spoken Word at Stokes Barn.  
Members had noted the difficulty of producing risk assessments and making arrangements for health and safety management for events and suggested that the Town Council might support groups in the town by helping them with necessary documentation. This could involve engaging a specialist to produce a generic plan that could be used as a basis for groups to select elements relevant to their events. It was noted that there could be considerable cost involved in engaging a consultant for this purpose.

The group had worked with the Church to organise a successful Family Fun Day on 30<sup>th</sup> August.

It was noted that the traders action group were looking into production of a new town map.

The group was considering what level of commemoration would be appropriate for this year’s Remembrance Day and would make a recommendation to the Council. It was noted that May 2020 would be the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day.

d. **Housing Needs**

A further advertisement had been issued to attract residents interested in discussing affordable housing needs and options. Six residents had expressed an interest and one had attended a meeting with Councillors. It was noted that Prof. Mark Barrow was leading on the Shropshire Council initiative and had offered to come to a Council meeting. When a date was agreed, those interested would be advised so that they could address relevant issues with him.

Councillor Holyoak had contacted Connexus and reported that they were exploring the availability of land and finance in the town. Connexus were hoping to set up group of local people interested in housing, including members of the original group and two Town Councillors. They envisaged building a similar number of houses as before. The Town Council would be advised once there was any definite news.

**10) Christmas Lights Switch-on**

The Christmas lights switch-on was planned for the evening of Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> November. Entertainment was being arranged as well as a local celebrity to switch on the lights. Shopkeepers would be encouraged to set up stalls outside their shops. The Communications, Markets & Tourism Group were working on the necessary health & safety arrangements. The need for a good sound system was noted.

**11) Gaskell Recreation Ground**

The drainage project was progressing well and was being monitored by the consultant.

A replacement Samaranch tree had been purchased and planting was to be arranged.

A response had now been received from the Local Action Group (LAG) regarding the LEADER funding application to create a new access between William Brookes School car park and the Gaskell Ground as well as an all-weather perimeter trail around the Gaskell Ground. The total cost of the project was quoted at £72,430 and a funding application had been submitted for 80% of the cost. The LAG had offered 50%, £36,215, leaving a shortfall of £21,729 after the agreed contribution from the Town Council and William Brookes School. A response to the offer had been requested by 10<sup>th</sup> September.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to arrange an extraordinary Council meeting for 11<sup>th</sup> September to discuss the funding offer.** The Clerk and Councillor Turner were asked to request an extension to the deadline for response.

**12) Barclays Bank Premises**

- a. Councillors noted that the Town Council's purchase of 10 High Street was completed on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2019.
- b. Councillors were invited to meet at 6.30pm on 12<sup>th</sup> September to view the interior of the former banking premises.

**13) Climate Change**

Councillors noted global concerns about climate change and that many local authorities were setting the aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. It was noted that Holy Trinity Church had made good progress with initiatives to address this issue. Councillors noted the need to take practical steps, whilst being mindful of costs. A working group might be set up involving local people who were interested in and knowledgeable about climate change.

The Clerk was asked to add the matter to the agenda of the next meeting for discussion of how to move forward.

**14) Ironbridge Power Station Re-development**

- a. Councillors considered a draft response, prepared by Councillors Harper, Jenkins and Thomas, to the Shropshire Council Strategic Sites Consultation relating to proposals for the former Ironbridge Power Station.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to approve the draft response to the consultation.**

- b. Councillors noted the response received from Much Wenlock Civic Society to the Council's letter regarding comments made in the Wenlock Herald regarding the above.

It was noted that subsequently a copy of the Civic Society's submission to Shropshire Council regarding the Strategic Sites Consultation had been provided, along with a positive covering letter.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to send a copy of the Council's submission to the Strategic Sites Consultation to the Civic Society and to Shropshire Councillor Turner.** The Clerk was asked to point out that Council meetings were open to the public and all were welcome to attend.

**15) Preferred Sites Consultation Response**

Councillors considered the recommendation from the Planning & Environment Committee with regard to the request received from a member of the public that the Council review its response to the Shropshire Council Preferred Sites consultation in the light of proposals for the former Ironbridge Power Station.

As several Councillors were absent, it was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to defer consideration of this matter to the next meeting.**

#### **16) Boundary Review**

Councillors discussed whether to request that Shropshire Council undertake a Community Governance Review of the area covered by Much Wenlock Town Council, to consider the inclusion of further, neighbouring parishes into the area covered by the Town Council. It was noted that Bridgnorth Town Council had submitted a request to include Tasley and Stanmore within their area of responsibility.

Councillors were concerned that parishes surrounding market towns were benefiting from services and facilities provided in those towns but were not contributing to the cost. Several parishes around Much Wenlock might be incorporated into the Much Wenlock area such as Bourton, Stanton Long, Church Preen, Hughley, Buildwas, etc.

There were indications that Shropshire Council would be looking at Place Plan areas and reviewing the boundaries.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to arrange an informal meeting with a representative from Bridgnorth Town Council to talk about their situation and what was involved in seeking a boundary review.**

#### **17) SALC AGM and 70<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration**

- a. Councillors noted that SALC would be holding its AGM and 70<sup>th</sup> year celebration on Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> November. The invitation had contained an error: Little Wenlock was a past holder of the Jan Snell Award (2013), not Much Wenlock.
- b. No Councillor would be available to attend the event and the Clerk was asked to respond accordingly.
- c. The Council did not have any suitable memorabilia to contribute to the planned display and Councillors did not wish to submit any nomination or motion for debate.

#### **18) Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Community Engagement Event**

Councillors noted correspondence received from the PCC regarding a forthcoming community engagement event in Much Wenlock.

#### **19) Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority - Fire Governance Judicial Review**

Councillors noted correspondence regarding the above.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to write to the Home Secretary as requested, supporting the Fire Authority in making the case for a Shropshire based Fire Authority, as outlined in the correspondence.**

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to suspend standing orders to allow the meeting to continue past 9.00pm.**

#### **20) Consultation**

There was no consultation to hand.

#### **21) Defibrillator**

It was noted that the Council had purchased a defibrillator, which had been installed at the Corn Exchange, adjacent to the library. Training in the use of the defibrillator was being arranged.

The provision of defibrillators for other parishes would be discussed as part of the Council's consideration of strategic priorities.

#### **22) Correspondence**

Members received and **NOTED** the following:

- a. SALC information bulletin and other information.
- b. Editions of The Rural Bulletin.
- c. Early Help Update July 2019.
- d. Star Housing update July 2019.
- e. Much Wenlock Care and Share Group information.
- f. "On the Beat in Shropshire" – July police newsletter.
- g. Environment Agency information on fly tipping forwarded by SALC on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2019.
- h. Notification of community engagement events to be held by Shrewsbury and Telford Hospitals on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

**23) Agenda items for next Town Council meeting**

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

**24) Date of next meeting**

Members **NOTED** that an extraordinary meeting would take place on Wednesday, **11<sup>th</sup> September** 2019. The next meeting would take place on Thursday, **3<sup>rd</sup> October** 2019 at 7.00pm at The Guildhall.

**Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960**

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

**25) Management of 2 Burgage Way, Much Wenlock**

Councillors considered arrangements for the management of the residential property at 2 Burgage Way, Much Wenlock. Following consideration of proposals to hand, **it was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to appoint Nick Tart to manage 2 Burgage Way, Much Wenlock on behalf of the Town Council.** The Clerk was asked to make the necessary arrangements.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm

Signed.....  
Town Mayor

Date.....