

# MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the  
**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
held remotely by video conference  
at 7 pm on Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Present:** Cllr. Mary Hill, Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak, Cllr. Dafydd Jenkins, Cllr. Matthew Park, Cllr. Natalie Park, Cllr. Marcus Themans, Cllr. Daniel Thomas (in the chair), Cllr. Allan Walter, Cllr. Duncan White, Cllr. Milner Whiteman OBE.

**Town Clerk:** Trudi Barrett

**In attendance:** Reverend Matthew Stafford, Shropshire Councillor David Turner and several members of the public.

## 1. Chairman's welcome

The Mayor welcomed everybody to the meeting.

He reminded everyone that Much Wenlock Mutual Aid was still operating and ready to help anyone in need. Unfortunately, the scheduled visit of the High Sheriff to the town had been cancelled; it was hoped that the visit would take place in the new year. The Town Council had arranged for the church to be lit up with projections for Remembrance Day and it was hoped that this would aid residents to remember safely, in their own way, this year. The Mayor had been delighted to support the Poppy appeal by volunteering on the stall under the Corn Exchange, along with other Councillors and members of the community, to help raise funds for the Royal British Legion.

## 2. Apologies

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to approve the following apology: Cllr Harper – technical reasons.**

## 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.

Councillor Whiteman declared a pecuniary interest in item 14, Shropshire County Pension Fund, as he was in receipt of a small pension from Shropshire Council.

## 4. Dispensations

None requested.

## 5. Shropshire Council report

Shropshire Councillor David Turner gave a verbal report.

Councillor Turner advised that the Shropshire Council meeting for the next stage of the Local Plan review had been postponed from 23<sup>rd</sup> November to 7<sup>th</sup> December. The Buildwas planning applications were due to be considered at the December meeting of Shropshire Council's Southern Planning Committee, but Councillor Turner doubted whether this deadline would be met. He suggested that the Town Council might consider whether to make representations at that meeting.

Councillor Turner had posed a formal question to Shropshire Council's Cabinet about its response to the consultation on the Department for Transport's Pavement Parking consultation. He expressed his concerns about the dangers for pedestrians and wheelchairs as well as the damage to pavements caused by pavement parking. However, there could be unintended consequences of enforcement including that emergency services might have difficulty in negotiating a route to an incident.

Members of Shropshire Council's community reassurance team dealing with Covid-19 had been in Much Wenlock the previous day, providing advice to retailers and cafes. The team had also provided support to organisations such as Much Wenlock Mutual Aid.

Due to the latest lockdown, Councillor Turner's Advice surgery for 14<sup>th</sup> November had been cancelled. He was, as ever, available by telephone or email.

Councillor Turner was thanked for his report.

## 6. Public session

The following contributions were received from members of the public:

- a. Mr Arthur Hill spoke about traffic problems in Sheinton Street and Wilmore Street. He expressed his concerns that Sheinton Street was becoming a through road for all traffic towards Broseley, avoiding the Gaskell corner, particularly during the morning and afternoon school run. This was dangerous for all pedestrians as vehicles often mounted the pavement to pass. Recently a large forage harvester had driven through Sheinton Street and Wilmore Street in the direction of Broseley, mounting the pavement towards the Guildhall. Mr Hill was disappointed that the Council had referred consideration of such highways matters to a working group at the last meeting as he felt this would delay resolution of the problems.

Councillor Jenkins agreed that this was a significant problem and that positive action was required. He suggested it could be helpful to introduce a width restriction, which would still allow emergency vehicles to break through.

- b. In connection with recent problems in Sheinton Street, Mr Paul Hanafin stated that Shropshire Council was the authority with responsibility for the roads in Much Wenlock and that the police were responsible for the enforcement of traffic regulations and traffic law. It was the responsibility of the police to deal with drivers who put pedestrians in danger by driving on the pavement; it was not the responsibility of the Town Council to enforce traffic regulations. At the previous month's Town Council meeting a proposal to ask Shropshire Council to trial a one-way system for the town centre and/or the closure of Wilmore Street to vehicles had been defeated in favour of setting up a transport working group for the town. This group would seek the views of as many residents and organisations in the town as possible, to find out what transport issues really concern the people of Much Wenlock. The group would hold its first meeting the following week, when actions would be agreed, and consultation would begin thereafter. He believed that this was the best way forward and was in accordance with the vote and views of the Members from the October meeting.

The speakers were thanked for their contributions.

## 7. Minutes

- a. The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020 were considered for approval. **With the addition of Councillor Harper as present, it was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2020 be APPROVED and ADOPTED as a true record.**
- b. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 be ADOPTED.**
- c. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance, Asset Management & HR Committee meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020 be ADOPTED.**

## 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 the short remembrance ceremony at the cemetery on 11<sup>th</sup> November had been cancelled. It was still planned to switch on the Christmas lights on 19<sup>th</sup> November, although there would be no late night shopping due to the coronavirus restrictions in place. Traders might offer late night shopping in December once the restrictions were relaxed. If this were the case, free parking in the local car parks would be requested from Shropshire Council. The Clerk advised that while the current restrictions were in place, administrative staff would be working at home and in the office on a rota basis to reduce contact.

**NOTED.**

## 9. Reinvigoration of Much Wenlock Town Centre

It was reported that the wording for the new signage to encourage passers-by into the town had been agreed. All three business coaching sessions had taken place with good attendance and positive feedback. Filming for the video clips had been completed and the films were now being edited. Thanks were expressed to Mike Rust and Paul Hutchinson for their work on this project. It was hoped that videos would help to pull people in from the county and further afield when it was safe to do so.

**NOTED**

## 10. Town Centre Highways

It was reported that the forthcoming meeting of the working group would be held via Zoom due to the current restrictions. The working group would involve members of the community and those with relevant experience. They intended to gather information and opinion, learn from experiences elsewhere and engage in dialogue with Shropshire Council. It was important to note that any changes in the town centre would affect other areas of the town. A view was expressed that the introduction of bollards on the edge of pavements could be helpful in preventing vehicles from mounting the footway.

**NOTED**

### 11. 10 High Street

Members noted a report on 10 High Street from the working group. Barclays had provided clarification regarding the electricity supply to the ATM and further advice was awaited on other electrical matters. Members of the community had submitted a variety of suggestions regarding the future use of the premises and the working group would be assessing the feasibility of the ideas put forward before progressing to electrical work and decoration.

**NOTED**

### 12. BT Consultation on removal of payphone in The Square

- a. Councillors noted that BT was consulting on the removal of 56 payphones in the county, including the payphone in The Square, Much Wenlock.
- b. Councillors considered information provided by Shropshire Council regarding the use of the payphone: an average of 19 phone calls per month were made from the phone, which was the only remaining payphone in the town. It was noted that Councillors would prefer a traditional, red kiosk to the existing, later design.  
**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to request the retention of the payphone on the basis of the high call level, the number of visitors to the town and the need for an alternative should the mobile phone network drop out.**

### 13. Consultation

Councillors considered a response to the following consultation:

- a. Shropshire Council's Draft Community and Rural Strategy 2020, open until 6<sup>th</sup> December 2020.  
**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that Councillors should consider the document prior to the next meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> December and to agree a response at that meeting.**
- b. Shropshire Council's Vibrant Cultural Strategy 2021-2031, open until 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021.  
It was noted that this was an important but lengthy document.  
**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to consider the document at the next meeting.**

Having declared a pecuniary interest in the following item, Councillor Whiteman left the meeting.

### 14. Shropshire County Pension Fund

Councillors considered whether to support the motion passed by Shropshire Council on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020 to call on the Shropshire County Pension Fund to divest from fossil fuels within three years.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to fully support the motion to ask Shropshire County Pension Fund to divest from fossil fuels within three years and to ask for this to be implemented as soon as possible.**

Councillor Whiteman returned to the meeting.

### 15. What3words

Councillors considered promotion of the free what3words scheme for identifying a precise location in an emergency. Everywhere in the world had been mapped into 3 metre squares by using 3 different words and an app could be downloaded onto mobile devices to use the mapping system. This enabled someone in a remote area to be located very precisely by the emergency services and was used locally by West Mercia Police and Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to promote the use of What3words across the Town Council's information channels.**

### 16. Correspondence

Members received and noted the following, which had been emailed to Members:

- a. SALC information bulletin and other information
- b. Shropshire Council Press Releases
- c. Rural Bulletins
- d. Community Hills AONB Partnerships Annual Review 2019-20

### 17. Agenda items for next town council meeting

Members suggested the following items for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting:

- 2 deferred items
- A report from the traffic working group

**18. Date of next meeting**

Members noted that the next meeting was scheduled to take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020.

**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.

**19. Anti-Pigeon Measures for the Guildhall**

Members noted that measures approved at the Finance, Asset Management & HR Committee meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> October had not included the gable end of the Guildhall. Councillors considered quotations to hand.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to obtain further quotations for relevant measures and to consider options at the next Finance, Asset Management & HR Committee meeting.**

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

Signed .....  
Town Mayor

Date .....