

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
held remotely by video conference
at 7 pm on Thursday, 4th March 2021

Present: Cllr. Mary Hill, Cllr. Yvonne Holyoak, Cllr. Dafydd Jenkins, Cllr. Natalie Park, Cllr. Matthew 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: Shropshire Councillor David Turner, PC Hindley, CSO Dunn-Brown and several members of the public.

1. Chairman's Welcome

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting.

He reported that he had recently attended a meeting of the National Flood Forum to learn more about work being undertaken to improve flood resilience in the town. He had also spoken to John Campion, West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner, about issues of crime faced by Much Wenlock residents and the excellent work of the local policing team. The Mayor had been invited to speak on the panel of a public meeting of the National Association of Local Councils on 2nd March, a Leaders Talk: Make a Change, Become a Councillor. He had described his experiences as a local councillor and encouraged people to consider standing for election. He had drawn attention to the great volunteer work that took place in communities and praised the activities of several local groups in Much Wenlock. He noted the invaluable contribution of volunteers to the community.

Finally, the Mayor gave a reminder that Much Wenlock Mutual Aid stood ready should anyone have need of its services. He had been pleased to hear about the rate of vaccination for the people of the town and thanked the NHS for their hard work.

2. Apologies

It was RESOLVED to accept the following apologies: Councillor Herbert Harper – technical issues

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. Shropshire Council report

Shropshire Councillor David Turner gave a verbal report. He advised that Shropshire Council would be installing electric vehicle charging points in Falcon's Court car park, in June or July 2021. These were aimed at local owners of electric vehicles without off-street parking, who could charge their vehicles overnight. During the day the normal parking fee would apply in addition to the charging fee.

With regard to the Local Plan Review, it was expected that submission would be made to the Secretary of State in July 2021, with the Inspector's Report being given in May 2022 and Shropshire Council adopting the Plan in July 2022.

Councillor Turner noted that the land in front of the old Youth Club building in Station Road (now the Scout Hut) had been incorporated into Shropshire Council's general maintenance programme and the grass should be cut on a regular basis in future.

Planned changes to kerbside waste collection would take effect from 15th March and residents would be advised of the changes.

As the museum would not open until May, Councillor Turner would not be holding the advice surgery planned for March. However, he could be contacted by 'phone or email if needed.

Councillor Turner was thanked for his report.

6. Police Report

The Mayor welcomed PC Jess Hindley and PCSO Stephen Dunn-Brown to the meeting. Members noted the written report which had been submitted by the Local Policing Team and additional information provided verbally.

Officers advised that they had received a number of vehicle speed complaints and had been out in the town recently with a speed gun. If Councillors were aware of any particular problem areas, they were asked to notify the policing team so that such areas could be targeted. Any policing issues could be reported to the team.

Thanks were expressed to the police for their attendance and report.

7. Public session

- a. Mr Arthur Hill advised that he had a copy of the 1991 report on proposals for a bypass for Much Wenlock. These had been presented to Shropshire Council in around 1994 but had come to nothing due to financial constraints, the cost/benefit ratio and competition from other areas. Given the increase in traffic expected from current applications for housing developments, there could be an interest in resurrecting the bypass proposals. Funding might come as part of the Buildwas project, from the Department of Transport and in connection with flood resilience.

Mr Hill was asked whether he would share the report with the Transport Working Group and indicated that this could be possible.

- b. Mrs Jacky Walter spoke about the initiative to make Much Wenlock a Plastic Free Community. Mrs Walter noted her membership of the Environmental Group at Holy Trinity Church and Surfers against Sewage. She advised that 30-50% of litter picked up in Much Wenlock consisted of plastic drinks bottles. In order for the town to become a Plastic Free Community there were five objectives to work through and receive accreditation from Surfers against Sewage. The main activities for the Town Council would be to lead by example and raise awareness, check Council premises for avoidable single use plastics and to set up a working group to examine options to avoid these. The Council was also asked to send a representative to meetings of Holy Trinity Church's environmental steering committee. The next campaign would be Plastic Free July.

8. Minutes

- a. The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 4th February 2021 were considered for approval. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 4th February 2021 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 12th January 2021 be ADOPTED.**

9. Town Clerk's Report

Members received a written report from the Town Clerk on outstanding matters and action taken since the last Council meeting. The Clerk provided an update on progress with developing a strategic plan for the Council. Members **NOTED** the report.

10. Nominations for Mayor 2021/2022

Councillor Holyoak spoke for the nomination of Councillor Daniel Thomas. He had proved himself to be a good leader and Chairman who ran efficient meetings. It had been an unusual year due to the pandemic and it would be worthwhile for Councillor Thomas to serve a second year as Mayor. He also had the benefit of youth on his side.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to nominate Councillor Daniel Thomas as Mayor for the civic year May 2021 to May 2022.

11. Nominations for Deputy Mayor 2021/2022

Councillor Mary Hill spoke for the nomination of Councillor Duncan White. He had been a Councillor for only a short time but had proven to be enthusiastic and proactive. He would be a good support to the Mayor. Councillor Holyoak added that Councillor White had become familiar with the town quickly and would be able to deputise when the Mayor was working.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to nominate Councillor Duncan White as Deputy Mayor for the civic year May 2021 to May 2022.

12. Ironbridge Power Station

- a. Members noted that additional comments had been submitted to Shropshire Council, Telford & Wrekin Council and Highways England with regard to proposals for the Gaskell corner associated with the Power Station development.

- b. Members considered whether to submit an additional 'spoken' representation to Shropshire Council for consideration at the special Planning Committee meeting to be held on 23rd March 2021. Members discussed whether to press for a bypass for the town in their submission and indicated support for doing so. It was noted that there was insufficient time to consult with the community on this issue prior to the meeting.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to ask the Transport Working Group, with the input of other Councillors, to draft a submission to be read out at Shropshire Council Planning Committee meeting on 23rd March 2021.

The Clerk was asked to liaise with Shropshire Councillor Turner.

13. Transport Matters

- a. Members noted a report from the Transport Working Group:
- The Group hoped that the additional comments submitted regarding the Ironbridge Power Station would encourage the developer to contribute to a proper solution to the problems caused by their traffic at the Gaskell corner.
 - With regard to measures for Sheinton Street, members of the Group were of the opinion that any proposals, including the installation of bollards, should be preceded by a full survey, including video, to determine the issues more precisely.
 - The Group had undertaken some preliminary work on compiling a transport survey for residents and would be able to move forward with this as soon as required.
- b. It was noted that a meeting was being arranged with Shropshire Council officers to consider transport issues at the Gaskell corner. This could be another opportunity to raise the matter of a bypass.
- c. Members noted the response from Shropshire Council regarding a contribution towards mitigation of the effects of increased traffic from the proposed Shadwell Quarry development: it was not possible to secure contributions from lawful development certificate applications. It would only be in the event of a planning application being needed and made that the issue as to whether the development would generate a requirement for off-site works could be considered.

14. Community Governance Reviews

Members considered information received from Shropshire Council regarding community governance reviews in Shropshire.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to leave consideration of this matter to the new Council.

15. Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan Refresh Group

Members considered correspondence from the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan Refresh Group, asking for recognition of the group by the Town Council. Members concurred that dialogue with all groups was important to support informed decision making.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to formally recognise the Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan Refresh Group and to commit to reading correspondence submitted to the Council from the Group.

16. Plastic Free Town

Members considered a recommendation from the Planning & Environment Committee that the Town Council support the initiative to make Much Wenlock a plastic free community.

It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to support the initiative to make Much Wenlock a plastic free community and for Planning Committee to take this forward.

17. Electric vehicle charging points

Members noted that Shropshire Council would be installing up to four electric vehicle charging points in Falcons Court car park during the summer, making a total of five in the town, including the one at the Fire Station. Councillors welcomed the additional charging points and noted that whilst there could be a need for more in future, this would give good provision for the time being. Councillor Themans advised that the Fire Station appeared to actively discourage public use of their charging point.

18. William Brookes School – Conversion to a Multi Academy Trust

Members noted a verbal report from Cllr White on the seminar held on 3rd February regarding William Brookes School becoming part of the 3-18 Multi Academy Trust.

At the meeting the overall benefits to Williams Brookes School had been outlined. These included widening of the curriculum, allowing for additional subjects to be offered, sharing of teachers and facilities and greater buying power for the group of schools. Becoming part of a multi academy trust was the way forward nationally and it was believed that this would be a positive move for William Brookes School and the town.

19. NALC Leaders Talk: Why Representation in Local Councils Matters

Members noted a verbal report from Cllr Holyoak on the above seminar, which she had attended on 23rd February 2021. The speakers had stressed the need for people of all backgrounds and ethnicity to become Councillors, particularly younger people. Many people were unaware of the work of local councils and how they operated. It was important to raise awareness and communicate well with the community. The speakers highlighted the benefits of teamwork in enabling Councillors to make progress and achieve their goals.

20. Consultation

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that Councillor Hill and the Clerk should respond on behalf of the Council to the SALC consultation to gather views about responses to the coronavirus pandemic.**

21. Lord-Lieutenant’s Garden Party Postponed

Members noted that Her Majesty’s Lord-Lieutenant of Shropshire had postponed her Shropshire Garden Party planned for June 2021 and that the nomination of Sara and Daniel Thomas to attend would be carried forward to the June 2022 garden party.

22. Correspondence

Members 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. Broseley & Much Wenlock Safer Neighbourhood Team Newsletter February 2021
- e. Shropshire Council Community Reassurance Update 18.02.21
- f. Notification of a phlebotomy survey being undertaken by the Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin CCGs
- g. Homer and Wigwig Community Group Newsletter February 2021
- h. Invitation to a meeting of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership on 9th March 2021
- i. Invitation to the next meeting of the Helicopter Noise Liaison Group on 16th March 2021
- j. Friendly Bus Newsletter March 2021
- k. March 2021 Broseley & Much Wenlock Safer Neighbourhood Team Newsletter

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 the next meeting was scheduled to take place on 15th April 2021.

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. Staffing Matters, including Recruitment of Guildhall Custodian

- a. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to pay the full salary of the RFO during a forthcoming period of jury service.**
- b. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and RESOLVED that Councillors Thomas, White and the Clerk should form the panel for the recruitment of a new Guildhall Custodian.**

The meeting closed at 8.25 pm

Signed
Town Mayor

Date