

# MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the RE-CONVENED ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock  
at 7 pm on Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> May 2023

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

**In attendance:** Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, PCSO Mal Goddard.

### 1. Chairman's Welcome

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and presented the following report:

I finally find myself in the hot seat and must say I really enjoyed the Mayor making on 4<sup>th</sup> May. I hope councillors and guests did too. The wine and refreshment party in the Priory Hall went down well, I thought, despite a minor mishap with a few plates. My thanks go to the Town Clerk and her team in the office for making the arrangements, and indeed all the councillors who spoke on the evening as proposers and seconders.

I read the lesson at the church Vigil Service on Friday evening and I was pleased to unveil the Coronation plaque on Sunday morning with three cheers to the new King and Queen.

The highlight of the Coronation weekend was of course the Picnic on the Green on Sunday afternoon. It was a resounding success, showing what a strong community spirit we have here in Much Wenlock and my thanks go to the committee and especially its chair, Councillor White, for all their hard work. We were blessed with lovely weather and it was suggested it should be an annual event.

The National Grid's contractors have done an excellent job in digging the trench down the High Street in readiness for the new cable to be threaded through, and I was particularly impressed with the reinstatement works.

### 2. Apologies for Absence

None, all Members were present.

### 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. Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Councillor, Daniel Thomas, presented the following report:

**Gaskell Arms Junction:** the proposals to improve the Gaskell Arms Junction will be out next week and will be forwarded to all Councillors via the Town Clerk, for inclusion on the agenda in June. There will be a full communications piece coming out soon.

**Callaughtons Ash 30 mph Speed Zone:** the Callaughtons Ash speed limit consultation was a success and it has received overwhelming public support. Therefore the intention is to proceed with instruction. Once the proposal has been incorporated into the programme of works, the scheme will be delivered at the earliest opportunity, subject to any disruptions to the schedule, including adverse weather conditions, emergencies & available resource, etc. Once I have a date confirmed I will update this Council.

**High Street Works:** the works were delivered on time and completed to a good standard. I have a debrief meeting in a few weeks, where I will be accompanied by a Town Councillor, to discuss plans for the next stage of work.

**Boundary Review:** I am pleased to see that there are no proposed changes to Much Wenlock's Town Council parish boundary but I am concerned about changes regarding Brockton, Easthope, Shipton and Stanton Long, which the draft proposals separate and send to Brown Clee ward. These changes have come from the Boundary Commission for England and are against the Shropshire Council recommendations. I will be making my views known at the appropriate time and I believe the proposals will be on the Town Council agenda next month.

**Easter Activities:** I am delighted to confirm that Much Wenlock once again had holiday activities taking place after losing them due to lack of demand. The community branch of Shrewsbury Town Football Club ran an excellent week of football for a range of ages and abilities at the Leisure Centre, which was very well attended. Activities for children are important and I was pleased to work with the Portfolio Holder, Cllr Kirstie Hurst-Knight, to get this back and we're delighted with its success.

**Surgery Date Change:** my next advice surgery will be held on Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> May, between 10.30 am and 12 noon at the museum. No appointment is necessary. I'll be joined by Town Mayor, Cllr David Fenwick, and a representative from the Police. Usually, the surgeries are on the second week of the month, but I have had to move this one due to a family commitment.

**Coronation Event:** I'd also like to state how enjoyable it was being part of the organising committee that arranged the Coronation party on the Church Green. It was an excellent example of Councillors working together with people in the local community. A fantastic event was arranged and delivered, and the afternoon was enjoyed by all who attended.

**PC Andy Boardman's Funeral:** Councillor Duncan White and I attended the funeral of PC Andy Boardman today, representing the Town and County Councils and the people of Much Wenlock. Andy was our PC and was well known to many; he attended our Council meetings and advice surgeries and was a brilliant Police Officer. Our thoughts are with his wife, family and former colleagues at this time.

The Mayor also expressed the Town Council's sincere sympathy to the family and friends of PC Boardman. PC Boardman was well liked and respected in the community and was a very effective police officer. PCSO Goddard was asked to pass on the Council's condolences.

The Clerk advised that she had also sent a letter of condolence on behalf of the Council.

## 7. Policing

Members noted a written report from PCSO Mal Goddard. In addition, PCSO Goddard reported that there had been a recent theft of two bicycles from an address in the town.

The Mayor asked whether incidences of crime were increasing in the town. PCSO Goddard replied that it could be that the new reporting system was more detailed, although there had been an increase in crime in the past month, likely to have been the work of a single team of criminals. PCSO Goddard advised that it was difficult to ascertain the clear-up rate as the data was stored on two separate systems, but he could say that the rate was not good. There were no suspects or vehicles for eight thefts, six of which were in the Much Wenlock area.

It was noted that the incident with a dog at the livestock market was included in the report as Tasley fell into the Much Wenlock area.

There had been no success so far with tracking down the rider of an electric BMX bike in the town.

PCSO Goddard was thanked for his report and left the meeting.

## 8. Commemorative Coronation Plaque

Members noted that the commemorative Coronation Plaque, made by The British Ironwork Centre and provided for the town by the Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire, had been installed on the front of the Corn Exchange and was unveiled by the Mayor on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

## 9. Minutes

- a. **It was RESOLVED to approve and adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2023.**
- b. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023.**
- c. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023.**
- d. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023.**

## 10. Town Clerk's Report

- a. Members noted the written and verbal report from the Town Clerk on outstanding matters and action taken since the last Council meeting.
- b. Members acknowledged a request from the Town Clerk that Councillors make appointments with officers for discussions requiring more than a brief visit to the office.

**11. Finance & Asset Management Committee**

- a. Members reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Finance & Asset Management Committee. **It was RESOLVED to approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Finance & Asset Management Committee.**
- b. **It was RESOLVED to appoint the following members to the Finance & Asset Management Committee: Councillors Susan Crooke-Williams, David Fenwick, John O'Dowd, Marcus Themans, Duncan White and Christian Toon.**

**12. Planning & Environment Committee**

- a. Members reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Planning & Environment Committee. **It was RESOLVED to approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Planning & Environment Committee.**
- b. **It was RESOLVED to appoint the following members to the Planning & Environment Committee: Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick, Wilfred Grainger, Daniel Thomas, Chris Tyler and Linda West.**

**13. HR Committee**

- a. Members reviewed the Terms of Reference for the HR Committee. **It was RESOLVED to approve the revised Terms of Reference for the HR Committee.**
- b. **It was RESOLVED to appoint the following members to the HR Committee: Councillors David Fenwick, John O'Dowd, Marcus Themans and Daniel Thomas.**

**14. Discipline & Grievance Panel**

- a. Members reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Discipline & Grievance Panel. **It was RESOLVED to approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Discipline & Grievance Panel.**
- b. **It was RESOLVED to appoint the following members to the Discipline & Grievance Panel: Councillors William Benbow, Chris Tyler and Duncan White.**

**15. Schedule of future meetings**

**It was RESOLVED to approve proposed meeting dates for the Council year 2023-24, with the date of the Annual Town Meeting set as 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024.**

**16. Working Groups**

- a. **Friends of the Cemetery Working Group**  
**It was RESOLVED to approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Friends of the Cemetery Working Group.**  
It was noted that practical work was encouraged to maintain the old part of the cemetery and that many Councillors would be willing to help out occasionally.  
**It was RESOLVED to appoint Councillors John O'Dowd, Chris Tyler and Linda West to the Friends of the Cemetery Working Group.**
- b. **History Working Group**  
**It was RESOLVED to change the name of the working group to the 'History and Archives Working Group' and to approve the revised Terms of Reference with the amendment that membership be 'at least three members of the Town Council, the volunteer archivist and interested members of the community'.**  
**It was RESOLVED to appoint Councillors Will Benbow, Marcus Themans, Daniel Thomas and Christian Toon to the History and Archives Working Group.**
- c. **Communications, Markets and Tourism Working Group**  
**It was RESOLVED to change the name of the working group to the 'Tourism and Events Working Group' and to approve the amended Terms of Reference.**  
**It was RESOLVED to appoint Councillors Susan Crooke-Williams, David Fenwick, Wilfred Grainger, Marcus Themans, Daniel Thomas, Linda West and Duncan White to the Tourism and Events Working Group.**
- d. **Transport Working Group**  
**It was RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference for the Transport Working Group.**  
**It was RESOLVED to appoint Councillors William Benbow, Daniel Thomas and Chris Tyler to the Transport Working Group.**

- e. **Property Working Group**  
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Property Working Group.  
It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick, John O'Dowd, Marcus Themans and Duncan White to the Property Working Group.
- f. **Shropshire Local Plan Review Working Group**  
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Terms of Reference for the Shropshire Local Plan Review Working Group.  
It was **RESOLVED** to appoint all members of the Planning & Environment Committee to the Shropshire Local Plan Review Working Group: Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick, Wilfred Grainger, Daniel Thomas, Chris Tyler and Linda West.
- g. **Strategic Flood Working Group**  
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Terms of Reference for the Strategic Flood Working Group.  
It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillors William Benbow, Wilfred Grainger, Daniel Thomas and Chris Tyler to the Strategic Flood Working Group.
- h. **Strategic Plan Working Group**  
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Terms of Reference for the Strategic Plan Working Group.  
It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillors David Fenwick, Marcus Themans, Chris Tyler, Duncan White and the Town Clerk to the Strategic Plan Working Group.

**17. Review/appointment of Representatives on Outside Bodies**

- a. **Bridgnorth and Shifnal Local Area Committee of Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC)**  
It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillors Susan Crooke-Williams and David Fenwick to represent the Council on the Bridgnorth and Shifnal Local Area Committee of SALC.
- b. **Much Wenlock Almshouses**  
Members noted that Cllr Duncan White had been nominated to represent the Town Council in June 2020 for a term of four years.
- c. **Shropshire Council Emergency Planning**  
It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Duncan White to represent the Council for Shropshire Council Emergency Planning.
- d. **John L Edwards Trust**  
It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Daniel Thomas to represent the Council for the John L Edwards Trust.
- e. **Shropshire Hills Destination Partnership**  
It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillors Christian Toon and Wilf Grainger to represent the Council on the Shropshire Hills Destination Partnership.
- f. **Much Wenlock Forester Charitable Trust**  
Members noted that Mr Mark Laws had been nominated to represent the Town Council in April 2021 for a term of four years.
- g. **Priory Hall Management Committee**  
It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor Duncan White to the Priory Hall Management Committee.
- h. **Much Wenlock Windmill Trust**  
It was **RESOLVED** to appoint Councillors Wilfred Grainger, Linda West and Duncan White to the Much Wenlock Windmill Trust Committee.

**18. Review and Approval of the Following Policies and Procedures**

- a. **Members reviewed and RESOLVED to approve the revised Standing Orders.**
- b. **Members reviewed and RESOLVED to approve the revised Financial Regulations.**
- c. **Members reviewed and RESOLVED to approve the revised Complaints Procedure and Procedure for Dealing with Unreasonable and Persistent Complainants.**
- d. **Members reviewed and RESOLVED to approve the revised Publication Scheme, as amended.**

- e. **Members reviewed and RESOLVED to approve the revised Communications and Media Policy.**
- f. **Members reviewed and RESOLVED to approve the revised Privacy notice.**
- g. Members considered the draft Privacy Policy for Councillors and Employees. **It was RESOLVED that a separate privacy notice for Councillors and Employees was not needed as this was covered by the general Privacy Notice.**

**19. Approval of Direct Debits and Electronic Bank Payments**

- a. **It was RESOLVED to approve the use of variable direct debits for the payment of utility bills and non-domestic rates in accordance with the Town Council's Financial Regulation 6.7.**
- b. **It was RESOLVED to approve payment for items by means of electronic bank payments, including BACS and CHAPS, in accordance with the Town Council's Financial Regulation 6.9.**

**20. Approval of Transfer of Funds**

**It was RESOLVED to approve the transfer of £60,000 of Council funds to the Public Sector Deposit Fund, £30,000 from Barclays Bank and £30,000 from Unity Trust Bank, as agreed by the Finance & Asset Management Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023.**

**21. Correspondence**

Members noted the following items, which had been emailed to Members:

- 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. Friendly Bus Newsletter May 2023
- f. Zero Carbon Shropshire May 2023 Green News
- g. VCSA Shropshire newsletters
- h. South Shropshire Climate Action Group May Newsletter
- i. The Rural Services Network Rural Funding Digest May 2023

**22. Agenda items for next Town Council meeting**

Members were invited to suggest items for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting: CCTV

**23. Date of next meeting**

Members noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 7.00pm at the Guildhall. Councillor White offered his apologies in advance.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

Signed ..... Town Mayor      Date .....