



Much Wenlock Town Council

Town Council Meeting

3rd October 2024

Supporting Papers

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
at 7 pm on Thursday, 5th September 2024

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

In attendance: Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, one member of the public in person, two members of the public remotely, PCSO Mal Goddard and PCSO Helen Scott.

1. Mayor's Welcome

The Deputy Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and reported the following:

“In Councillor Themans’ absence, I will be giving this report, which I have prepared in conjunction with him.

There was another successful Wenlock Olympian Games held, as usual, on the Gaskell Ground, where medals were given out by myself and the Mayor. Some Wenlock residents won medals, in particular Sydney Purchase, who won triple gold medals with wins in the 100m, 200m and 80m hurdles. The Wenlock Olympian Games is organised by volunteers, coordinated by myself, and it was great to see Councillors Tyler, Grainger and West all giving up time over the weekend to ensure the smooth running of the event.

The Town Council was grateful to receive a photo journal from the late Margaret Attwood, who was the Town’s first-ever female Mayor in 1975. Margaret died in 2021 and her children, Caroline and Stuart, decided her journal should be passed to the Much Wenlock Archives so this unique record would be preserved for the people of Much Wenlock in the future. This journal is a fabulous record of Much Wenlock parish council life in the 1970s and a snapshot of the social history of rural England almost 50 years ago. The diary will be put on display in the Guildhall.

On 17th August, we had another successful Made in Shropshire market. This was well attended and brought many new visitors to our town. The visitor numbers and sales at the Guildhall more than tripled on the day, with visitors from across the Midlands attending.

I am delighted to announce that we have received a positive response to our Expression of Interest to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for funding for the Guildhall project. We have been invited to submit a full application for funding and will be working towards this with our consultants.

It was September’s meeting last year when Much Wenlock Town Council expressed support for Councillor Grainger in his bid to set up Shropshire Roots, a men’s mental health group, and last month Councillor Toon became a director in the charity. We congratulate Councillor Toon on this appointment and wish him well.

Finally, Councillor Themans is not here today as he has had prostate surgery and, on behalf of the Council, I would like to wish him a speedy recovery. He urges all men to get checked for health issues, especially prostate cancer. Prostate cancer is often a silent killer with no symptoms in the early stages, but the earlier it is diagnosed, the easier it is to treat. The Bridgnorth Lions Club organises an annual prostate, diabetes and cholesterol testing event and this year’s event will take place on Wednesday, 2nd October from 6.00 to 10.15pm at the Castle Hall in Bridgnorth. Further details are available on the Bridgnorth Lions website.”

2. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Marcus Themans – surgery, Councillor Chris Tyler – holiday, Councillor Wilfred Grainger – family 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.

Councillor Thomas declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 30.

4. Dispensations

None requested.

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5. Public Session

There had been no requests to speak.

6. Police Matters

Members noted a written update from the local policing team. PCSO Helen Scott had recently joined the team, which now had its full complement of one police constable and two community support officers. PCSO Scott was born in Much Wenlock, grew up in Broseley and attended Barrow and William Brookes schools, so had a good knowledge of the area. Councillors warmly welcomed PCSO Scott to the team.

PCSO Goddard and PCSO Scott were thanked for attending and left the meeting.

7. Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Councillor, Daniel Thomas, presented the following report:

“New Crossing

The Puffin Pedestrian Crossing for the A458/Bridgnorth Road has gone live this week, in time for the children returning to Much Wenlock Primary School. This includes the 40 mph buffer zone, designed to slow traffic down as drivers go from 60 to 40 to 30 instead of straight to 30. I've received some fantastic feedback from residents, and it's another success for myself as Shropshire Councillor, the Transport Working Group and this Town Council, working together to achieve results for our residents.

Stretton Road Work

The vitally important Stretton Road drainage upgrade is taking place as we speak; my thanks to everyone in the Much Wenlock Division who has put up with the disruption. The new highway drainage system will divert water into the Shylte attenuation basin, which was constructed by Shropshire Council in 2017. The connection of the highway drainage system to this basin will reduce highway water flows and alleviate flooding around the town, especially Havelock Crescent, during intense rainfall events. The contractors have hit some hard digging, which has slowed progress so the work is due to finish a week later than planned, on 22nd September.

Green Bin

You can now sign up and pay if you want to continue to have your garden waste collected from 1st October. A subscription is £56 and covers the period from 1st October 2024 to 30th September 2025. To subscribe and for more information, please visit the Shropshire Council website. 80% of English councils already charge for garden waste collections, and many have done so for several years. The annual charge of £56 is in line with many neighbouring councils.

437 Bus

As Councillors, you may have been aware of last year's issues with the 436 bus being overcrowded at certain times, exacerbated by the lack of 6th form provision in Bridgnorth and now in Wenlock. To combat this, last year, Shropshire Council worked on a Government bid for more funding on this route. The new 437 service will work alongside the 436 (Bridgnorth to Shrewsbury) to provide a more frequent bus service at peak times, Monday to Saturday. Operated by Tanat Valley Coaches, the new service has been made possible following the award of £1.8m of Government funding which will see improvements to public transport across the county. There have been teething problems with the route, which I am speaking to officers about.

Neighbourhood Plan

The review of the Neighbourhood Plan continues apace, and Councillors should be aware of the next public event, taking place on Saturday, 9th November, with details to be confirmed.

Advice Surgery

My next Advice Surgery is on Saturday, 14th September, between 10:30 a.m. and 12 noon at Much Wenlock Museum. No appointment is necessary. I'll be joined by Town Councillor Christian Toon and a representative from the Police.”

Councillor Thomas was asked when the High Causeway walkway in Victoria Road would be repaired. He replied that the highways engineers were content that the wall was safe and it had been scheduled for repair early in the new year.

Councillor Thomas was thanked for his work on the introduction of the new crossing on Bridgnorth Road, which had noticeably slowed the traffic past the cemetery. It was noted that the bollards in the middle of the road by the cemetery would remain in place.

8. Minutes

- a. **It was RESOLVED to approve and adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 11th July 2024.**
- b. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 2nd July 2024**
- c. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of the Finance & Asset Management Committee meeting held on 21st May 2024**
- d. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of a HR Committee meeting held on 13th June 2024.**

9. Town Clerk's Report

Members noted the written report from the Town Clerk.

10. Date of Mayor Making 2025

- a. Members noted that the 2025 Local Council Elections would be held on Thursday, 1st May 2025.
- b. **It was RESOLVED to confirm the date of the 2025 Mayor Making ceremony as Thursday, 15th May 2025 and the date of the re-convened Annual Town Council Meeting as Thursday, 22nd May.**

11. The Guildhall Project

Members noted that an Expression of Interest for further funding had been submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). A positive response had been received and the Council had been invited to submit a full application, within the next 12 months. A meeting was being arranged with the officer from the NLHF to discuss the application.

Members agreed that this was a very positive step for the Council and congratulations were expressed to those who had been working on the project.

12. CCTV Policy and Procedure

Members considered a new CCTV Policy and Procedure and associated documentation. This was designed to ensure appropriate measures were in place for data protection and the sharing of footage with the police and other authorised agencies. It was noted that fees would be charged for solicitors, insurance companies and similar but would not be applicable for the police or for subject access requests.

It was RESOLVED to approve the CCTV Policy and Procedure and associated documentation.

13. Shropshire Council Future Options with Town and Parish Councils Survey

Members reviewed the Shropshire Council 'Future Options with Town and Parish Councils Survey'.

It was RESOLVED to respond: "Yes, we are willing to help but it depends on the resources required, please get in touch for a conversation."

Councillors did not wish to specify any particular services or facilities for discussion with Shropshire Council.

Members noted the Town Council's existing financial contribution to the operation of Much Wenlock library and that the current agreement would expire at the end of the financial year.

14. Much Wenlock Place Plan

Members considered correspondence from Shropshire Council on the Much Wenlock Place Plan and the projects currently included. They noted that some items were included in the wider, county Place Plan with funding coming from different sources, such as the 20mph speed limits outside schools and the Gaskell Corner improvements.

Members noted that improvements to the entrance to the footpath off the Bullring and the introduction of a 40mph buffer zone near the primary school on the Bridgnorth Road were included in the Place Plan but had already been completed. Members were surprised that the Place Plan stated there was not enough information to include road safety improvements on the A458 near the Edge Adventure Centre in the Place Plan, as they were aware that information on the risks was held by Shropshire Council.

Members considered the need for better youth provision in the town and facilities on the Gaskell Recreation Ground.

It was RESOLVED to suspend standing orders to allow a member of the public to speak.

The member of the public commented that there was outdoor gym equipment on the Birchmeadow Park in Broseley which was well used by the community.

It was RESOLVED to reinvoke standing orders.

It was RESOLVED to request that Shropshire Council make the following additions to the Much Wenlock Place Plan:

- **The introduction of public toilets on the Gaskell Recreation Ground**
- **Refurbishment of Queen Street toilets**
- **Reduction in car parking charges in the town**
- **Improvements in youth provision in the town including refurbishment of equipment on the Gaskell Recreation Ground**
- **The introduction of defibrillators for Homer and Bourton**

22/24

Members noted that the Town Council had previously been advised that safety improvements for the junction of Southfield Road with Victoria Road would be considered as part of the Gaskell Corner study. However, no proposals for this junction had been included in that study.

It was RESOLVED to refer consideration of road safety improvements for the Southfield Road/Victoria Road junction to the Town Council's Transport Working Group.

15. Neighbourhood Plan Review

Members noted that work was moving forward. It was intended to send a draft of the revised Neighbourhood Plan to Shropshire Council for review in October and to issue this for public consultation in November. A public consultation event was being arranged for Saturday, 9th November.

The Clerk informed Members that grant funding of £8,412.00 had been received from Groundwork UK to fund this stage of the review.

16. Shropshire Local Plan Review

Members noted that the Town Council was registered to speak at Stage 2 of the Hearings for the Local Plan Review. A meeting with the Town Council's Associates was scheduled for 9th September to discuss the content of the representations.

17. Christmas Lights Switch-on 2024

Members considered arrangements for the Christmas Lights Switch-on 2024.

It was RESOLVED to hold the Christmas Lights Switch-on event on the evening of Thursday, 29th November.

It was RESOLVED to delegate arrangements for the Christmas Lights Switch-on to the Tourism and Events Working Group who would involve members of the public and traders as appropriate.

Councillor White offered to chair the group.

18. Christmas Fayre 2024

Members noted public parking arrangements for the Christmas Fayre. Arrangements were already in place with William Brookes School, Wenlock Motors and Grange Fencing, with a park and ride service from Grange Fencing.

It was RESOLVED to suggest that the Christmas Fayre Committee approach businesses on Stretton Road who might have space available for parking.

19. Town Crier

- a. Members considered arrangements for the recruitment process for a Town Crier.

It was RESOLVED to advertise the vacancy for a Town Crier with a deadline for applications of 5pm on Friday, 11th October and applications to be considered by the HR Committee.

It was RESOLVED to arrange a trial 'cry' in the Square on Saturday, 26th October, the day of the next Made in Shropshire Market.

- b. Members reviewed draft documentation for the recruitment of a Town Crier. Following amendment, **it was RESOLVED to approve the documentation for the recruitment of a Town Crier.**

20. VE Day Commemoration 2025

Members noted that the national commemoration of the 80th anniversary of VE Day would be on 8th May 2025.

It was RESOLVED that the Tourism and Events Working Group should explore options for commemorating the 80th anniversary of VE Day in 2025.

21. Portrait of His Majesty The King

Members noted that the Council had received a framed portrait of His Majesty The King.

It was RESOLVED to display the portrait in the Council office in the Corn Exchange.

22. Consultation

Members considered a response to the following consultation:

- a. Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy, deadline for responses 16th October 2024.
It was RESOLVED that Councillor West should respond on behalf of the Council.
- b. Shropshire's Great Outdoors Annual Public Survey 2024, consultation period ending 16th September 2024.
It was RESOLVED that Councillors should respond individually, if desired.

23. RAF Shawbury Helicopter Liaison Group

Members noted correspondence regarding RAF Shawbury Helicopter Liaison Group.

24. 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. VCSA Shropshire newsletters
- f. The Rural Services Network Bulletins and Rural Funding Digest August 2024
- g. Future Ready Homes July newsletter
- h. Marches Energy Agency July and August newsletters
- i. Climate Action news August 2024.
- j. Selected Neighbourhood Matters alerts
- k. Plastic Free July information
- l. Notification of consultation on Oak Farm Day Opportunities
- m. 'Our News' Newsletter for Neighbourhood Watch supporters August 2024
- n. Friendly Transport Service July newsletter
- o. Mailings from The Edge Cinema
- p. Correspondence from Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust

25. Agenda items for next Town Council meeting

Members were invited to suggest items for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting: Christmas Lights Switch-on.

26. Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 3rd October at 7.00pm at the Guildhall.

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.**

27. 10 High Street

Members received an update on progress with letting the premises at 10 High Street.

It was RESOLVED to proceed with letting the premises on the terms outlined.

28. Staffing Matters

Members noted that the Council's Admin Assistant had accepted a role with another employer. However, she would continue to work for the Town Council remotely for a reduced number of hours, on specific tasks. This arrangement left the Council office unstaffed on Fridays.

It was RESOLVED that the Council office would be staffed Monday to Thursday and would be open to the public between 9 am and 12 noon on those days. The office would be closed completely on Fridays with effect from the week commencing 9th September 2024.

Arrangements could be made to staff the office on occasional Fridays if necessary.

It was RESOLVED to suspend standing orders to allow the meeting to continue past 9.00pm.

29. Intruder Alarm Response for Council Premises

Members considered arrangements for the intruder alarm response for Council premises. The Clerk was asked to check the Council's insurance policy and, with the help of Councillor Toon, to explore options for ring cameras.

Having declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 30, Councillor Thomas left the meeting.

It was RESOLVED to elect Councillor Benbow to chair the meeting.

30. Planning Matters

Members noted planning correspondence.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm.

Signed Mayor Date

07/24

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a **Planning & Environment Committee meeting**
held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 30th July 2024 at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock

Present: Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick, Daniel Thomas, Chris Tyler

In attendance: Lorna Dexter – Admin Assistant, one member of the public

1. Apologies

Cllr Linda West – unwell, Cllr Wilfred Grainger

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. Public Session

The member of the public thanked Council members for addressing the matter of his complaint about the timing of commercial refuse collections outside his house. Members noted the response from Veolia to the Town Council's communication. Veolia had made a marginal timing change and the resident was satisfied with this. No further action needed to be taken.

5. Minutes

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 2nd July 2024 be APPROVED and signed as a true record.

6. Planning Applications

Members considered the following application and resolved to respond as noted:

24/02214/TCA 12 Victoria Road, Much Wenlock	Reduce back branches so trees are in line with stone wall (See Photo) of line of Yew within Much Wenlock Conservation Area. It was RESOLVED no objection.
24/02430/TPO Larch House, Southfield Road, Much Wenlock	Crown reduce and thin by up to 30% and crown lift up to 20% 1no Larch protected by The Bridgnorth District Council (Southfield Road, Much Wenlock) TPO 1985 (Ref: BR/TPO/53). It was RESOLVED no objection.
24/02520/LBC 3 St Marys Lane, Much Wenlock	Replacement of all four timber casement windows on the road-facing elevation. It was RESOLVED no objection providing the new windows were in keeping with the building.
24/02764/FUL Meadowbrook House, Sytche Lane, Much Wenlock	Two storey rear extension. It was RESOLVED no objection.
24/02365/FUL Barn 4, The Carriage House, Bourton, Much Wenlock	Change of use of agricultural land to residential It was RESOLVED to object to the application on the basis that the proposal was to reclassify the land use as residential, which could lead to further development. The reason for the change is unclear in the application.

Councillor William Benbow joined the meeting

7. Planning Decisions

No planning decisions had been notified.

08/24

8. Planning Appeal: Wheatland Garage, Bridgnorth Road and 17 St Mary's Road, Much Wenlock

Members noted that the Wheatland Garage appeal had been dismissed and the application for an award of costs had been refused.

9. Draft Shropshire Local Plan Review 2016 - 2038

Members noted that the hearing sessions forming Stage 2 of the Examination of the Draft Local Plan would commence on 15th October 2024. The Town Council would need to notify the Programme Officer if they wished to participate in the hearings by 16th August 2024. Consideration of Matter 19 – Much Wenlock Place Plan Area (policy S13) would take place on 26th November 2024. It was agreed that a response would be made by Much Wenlock Town Council and Associates, as per the previous submission.

10. Neighbourhood Plan Review

- a. Members noted that the Town Council had been awarded a grant of £8,412 through the Neighbourhood Planning Programme funded by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. The Clerk had accepted the offer and received confirmation that the grant payment had been approved.
- b. The public drop-in event on 12th July had been well attended. Comments had been collated and were being analysed.

11. Noise from Veolia Commercial Waste Collections

See minute 4 above. Members considered the response from Veolia to concerns passed on by the Town Council regarding noise generated by Veolia commercial waste collections in the town centre before 7.00 am. **It was RESOLVED to acknowledge receipt of the letter.**

12. Flooding Matters

- a. Members received a report from the Strategic Flood Working Group: a meeting had been arranged with Shropshire Wildlife Trust on 7th August.
- b. Preparation of a report to the Health & Safety Executive about risks from the potential collapse of the boundary wall at Shadwell Quarry was still in progress.
- c. Members noted that drains at the Bull Ring were being surveyed and the Gaskell corner drains had been cleared. Severn Trent had produced a capital expenditure plan which did not feature Much Wenlock. Councillor Tyler had arranged a meeting with a Severn Trent representative on 22nd August to discuss the plan.

13. Slow the Flow Natural Flood Management – Much Wenlock

Members noted that a meeting had been arranged with Shropshire Wildlife Trust regarding natural flood management in the town on Wednesday, 7th August.

14. Transport and Highways Matters

- a. Members received a report from the Transport Working Group. SC had been asked to release the proposals for the Gaskell corner into the public domain but no response had been received to date. Members were pleased that the primary school crossing on the Bridgnorth Road had been completed along with the introduction of a 40 mile an hour zone on the approach from Bridgnorth.
- b. Members noted that the drainage upgrade works in the High Street had been scheduled for September although notification had not yet appeared on One Network. This led to the assumption that the work would not go ahead as scheduled – Councillor Thomas would follow this up.

Councillor Thomas had attended a meeting on site about the Stretton Road diversion. Members of the public were deliberately driving the wrong way through the diversion and causing problems. It was hoped that the problems would be alleviated through word of mouth and better signage. Publicity would be issued via Google, Apple and Wave to better warn motorists of the diversion and clearer signage had been ordered.

15. Streetscene, Grass Cutting

Members received and noted a briefing paper from Shropshire Council on Streetscene, grass cutting.

16. Climate Change and Ecological/Nature Emergencies*

Members noted that Nick Tart Estate Agent had become a Business Champion for Plastic Free Much Wenlock.

17. Street Lighting**18. Street Naming *****19. Footpath/Bridleway Creation Orders***

09/24

20. Footpath Diversion Orders*

21. Road Closures*

- a. Members noted that the 24-hour road closure of the Stretton Road was due to commence on 22nd July and to continue until 15th September for major drainage installation works.
- b. Members noted the following road closure:
 - Location: High Street, Much Wenlock
 - Date/Time: Saturday, 17th August 2024, 06.30 – 16.00
 - Purpose: ‘Made in Shropshire’ street market
 - Agency: Much Wenlock Town Council

22. Tree Preservation Orders*

23. Stopping Up Orders*

24. Speed Limit Orders*

25. Prohibition Orders*

26. Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 3rd September at 7.00pm at the Guildhall.

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.

28. Planning Enforcement

Members noted enforcement cases.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm

Signed.....(Chairperson)

Date.....

04/24

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, 23rd July 2024

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

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

1. Election of Chairperson

It was RESOLVED to elect Councillor Marcus Themans as Chairperson of the committee.

2. Election of Deputy Chairperson

It was RESOLVED to elect Councillor Susan Crooke-Williams as Deputy Chairperson of the committee.

3. Apologies

Councillor Christian Toon – holiday, David Fenwick – unwell.

4. 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.

5. Dispensations

None requested.

6. Minutes

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Asset Management Committee held on 21st May 2024 be APPROVED and signed as a true record.

7. Town Clerk's report

Members noted the Clerk's written and verbal report on action taken since the last meeting. It was noted that the extension of the cemetery should be considered within the next few months.

8. Finance

- a. The RFO presented a written and verbal report. The AGAR had been submitted and receipt acknowledged; there had been no queries so far. DM Payroll Services were withdrawing from internal audit work so the Council would need to seek a new internal auditor in the autumn. Arrangements were being made with Unity Trust Bank to permit the new RFO administrative access to the bank accounts.
The RFO was asked to highlight positive and negative positions in terms of expenditure/income to date in future written reports.
- b. Members noted the balance sheet as at 30th June 2024.
- c. Members noted the income and expenditure to 30th June 2024.
- d. Members reviewed the bank reconciliations to 30th June 2024. **It was RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliations to 30th June 2024.**
- e. **It was RESOLVED to approve payments from 22nd May 2024 to date.**

9. Financial Documents for Disposal

It was RESOLVED to approve the disposal of selected financial documents, in accordance with the Council's Document Retention Policy.

10. Property Maintenance

The Clerk was asked to address weeds growing in the gutter and a slipped tile on the Guildhall as well as weeds on the flat roof of 10 High Street.

05/24

11. The Guildhall Project

Members noted that advice had been sought from the Council's contact at the National Lottery Heritage Fund and that the draft Expression of Interest was almost ready for submission.

12. Library Performance

Members considered the performance summary 2023/24 for Much Wenlock Library, including comparisons with other Shropshire libraries. Members were content that the performance was fair given the limited opening hours and size of population. They noted the Town Council's financial contribution to the running of the library and the resulting benefit to Shropshire Council's budget and per user costs.

13. Roundel Art Features

- a. Members noted that two roundels were still awaiting relocation from the rear of the library.
- b. **It was RESOLVED to leave one roundel at the rear of the library ('Each brain has a hunger to be fed') and to move the other to the end of Sheinton Street.** The Mayor undertook to urge progress with the removal.

14. Correspondence from Allotment Society

Members considered correspondence from the Allotment Society regarding the introduction of greenhouses and polytunnels on the allotment site behind the cemetery on Bridgnorth Road.

It was RESOLVED to respond to the Allotment Society that the allotment land was allocated for the extension of the cemetery, which would be necessary in the next few years. The Council was agreeable to permitting the introduction of polytunnels and greenhouses up to a maximum size of 10 feet by 15 feet on the understanding that these would have to be removed when the land was needed for the cemetery extension. However, no glass structures would be permitted, and the permission would be reviewed every two years.

15. War Memorial Board

Members considered restoring and displaying the War Memorial Board, currently in storage in the Cemetery Chapel, in a visible location in the town.

It was RESOLVED to prepare the War Memorial Board and to install it on the side wall of the Corn Exchange, facing towards the Square.

The Clerk was asked to call for volunteers to help repair, treat and seal the board as necessary and to install it before November.

16. Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 24th September 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 **PROPOSED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press should not be present.

17. 10 High Street

Members considered an approach from a potential tenant for 10 High Street and expressed concerns about the terms requested. **It was RESOLVED to decline the offer.**

18. Fixed Wiring Inspections

Members noted arrangements for fixed wiring inspections of the Guildhall and Corn Exchange.

19. Insurance

Members considered arrangements for the annual insurance renewal and noted that officers were liaising with insurance companies.

20. Car Park at the rear of the Corn Exchange

Members considered a proposal from National Parking Management for the management of car parking at the rear of the Corn Exchange.

It was RESOLVED to recommend to full Council that NPM be contracted to manage the car parking at the rear of the Corn Exchange with the provision of 2 hours of free, public parking and the introduction of charges for longer periods, 24 hours per day. Charges would not apply to permit holders, whose vehicles would be registered with NPM.

06/24

21. Decorating under Corn Exchange

Members considered quotations for decorating the ceiling and beams under the Corn Exchange. Members agreed that the beams did not need decorating at present. The Clerk had taken advice from the Conservation Officer about suitable materials. **It was RESOLVED to accept the quotation from Norry Decorators for decorating the ceiling under the Corn Exchange.**

22. Alarm Response for Guildhall

Members considered arrangements for the intruder alarm response at the Guildhall. **It was RESOLVED to refer the matter to full Council.**

23. Mayor’s Chain

Members received an update on progress with new plates for the Mayor’s chain. It was noted that the cost would be less than expected.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

Signed.....
Chairperson

Date.....

03/24

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of an extraordinary
HR COMMITTEE MEETING
 held at the Guildhall, Much Wenlock
 at 6.15 pm on Thursday, 11th July 2024

Present: Councillors David Fenwick, John O’Dowd, Marcus Themans (in the Chair) and Daniel Thomas (from minute 6)

In attendance: Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk

1. Apologies

Councillor Thomas for late arrival.

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 to approve the minutes of the extraordinary HR Committee meeting held on 13th June 2024.

5. Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be called as required.

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.

6. Guildhall Custodian

- a. Members received a report on the interview process for the Guildhall Custodian.

It was RESOLVED to approve and confirm the appointment of Jacqueline Allen as Guildhall Custodian, with effect from 1st August 2024.

- b. Members reviewed the draft contract of employment for the Guildhall Custodian.

It was RESOLVED to approve the contract of employment for the new Guildhall Custodian.

- c. Members noted that some induction sessions had been arranged for the new Custodian during July, prior to her taking up the role in August. The current Custodian would be leaving at the end of July. The Clerk was asked to schedule an end of season review for the new employee and, in due course, to also seek her views on improvements that could be made to the Guildhall exhibitions.

7. Documents for Disposal

It was RESOLVED to dispose of personnel documents relating to a former employee in accordance with the Council’s Document Retention Policy.

Councillor Thomas joined the meeting.

6. Town Crier

Members considered arrangements for the recruitment of a Town Crier and the conditions for the role. The Clerk had obtained sample documents from another local council.

It was RESOLVED to follow the format of the sample documents with regard to the recruitment process and conditions for the role of Town Crier, adapting the content as necessary to suit the situation in Much Wenlock, and to seek approval for this from full Council.

04/24

Following approval by full Council, applications for the role would be invited and it was suggested that a 'Cry Off' for candidates be arranged in the town centre. The successful applicant would be appointed for one year, with an opportunity for renewal of the appointment.

The Clerk was asked to discuss an appropriate costume for the successful Town Crier with Croft Design.

7. Staffing Matters

None.

The meeting closed at 6.45 pm.

Signed:Chairperson

Date:

MONTH	MINUTE NUMBER	RESOLUTION / ACTION	TASK COMPLETE	COMMENT
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.
2024				
May	18	Revised Financial Regs would be presented to Council for consideration at the June full Council meeting.	In progress	Review not completed by June, regs to be presented at a future meeting.
September	10	Confirm the date of the 2025 Mayor Making ceremony as Thursday, 15 th May 2025 and the date of the re-convened Annual Town Council Meeting as Thursday, 22 nd May.	Yes	Priory Hall booking confirmed.
	13	Respond to SC Future Options with Town and Parish Councils Survey: 'yes, we are willing to help but it depends on the resources required, please get in touch for a conversation'.	Yes	Response made, acknowledgement received, further contact awaited.
	14	Request that SC make additions to the Much Wenlock Place Plan	In progress	
	18	Suggest that the Christmas Fayre Committee approach businesses on Stretton Road who might have space available for parking.	Yes	
	19	Advertise the vacancy for a Town Crier with a deadline for applications of 5pm on Friday, 11 th October and applications to be considered by the HR Committee. Arrange a trial 'cry' in the Square on Saturday, 26 th October.	In progress Pending	Role advertised on website, social media, noticeboards and BBC Radio Shropshire.
	21	Display the portrait on King Charles in the Council office in the Corn Exchange.	Yes	
	27	Proceed with letting 10 High Street on the terms outlined.	In progress	Agent advised
	28	The Council office would be staffed Monday to Thursday, open to the public between 9am and 12 noon, and be closed completely on Fridays with effect from w/c 9 th September 2024.	Yes	Notified in October Wenlock Herald, on noticeboard and website.
	29	Check the Councils insurance policy and, with the help of Councillor Toon, explore options for ring cameras.	Yes	On agenda for 3 rd October.

Other activities:

- Monthly piece for the Wenlock Herald
- Plastering and redecoration of damaged wall area in Council office completed
- Repairs to Chapel porch at cemetery completed and plaque for Queen's Green Canopy installed
- Meeting with Mike Rust of 'Get a Word in Edgeways'
- Attendance at 'Market Town Collective' meeting at Shirehall on 25th September re challenges facing market towns, priorities, revitalization opportunities
- Market Town Clerks meeting on Teams on 26th September
- Meeting re legionella testing at Guildhall scheduled for 30th September

Section 3 – External Auditor’s Report and Certificate 2023/24

In respect of **Much Wenlock Town Council - SH0123**

1 Respective responsibilities of the auditor and the authority

Our responsibility as auditors to complete a **limited assurance review** is set out by the National Audit Office (NAO). A limited assurance review is **not a full statutory audit**, it does not constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and hence it **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would. The UK Government has determined that a lower level of assurance than that provided by a full statutory audit is appropriate for those local public bodies with the lowest levels of spending.

Under a limited assurance review, the auditor is responsible for reviewing Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with NAO Auditor Guidance Note 02 (AGN 02) as issued by the NAO on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General. AGN 02 is available from the NAO website – <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2024; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

2 External auditor’s limited assurance opinion 2023/24

On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

None

3 External auditor certificate 2023/24

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

PKF Littlejohn LLP

Date

15/09/2024

<p>TITLE OF REPORT:</p>	<p>Management of Car Park at the Rear of the Corn Exchange</p>
<p>PROPOSER:</p>	<p>Finance & Asset Management Committee</p>
<p>SUPPORTED BY:(if applicable)</p>	<p>Town Clerk</p>
<p>BACKGROUND: Please describe the reasons for this paper. Is it on behalf of a Working Group? Please provide relevant details, e.g. previous decisions by the Town Council or any external advice. Who is likely to benefit from this decision?</p>	<p>The Town Council owns the small car park at the rear of the Corn Exchange, which has 14 spaces in total. Two of the spaces are marked for disabled use. The spaces on one side of the car park are reserved for permit holders only between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Saturday, who are the occupants of the Corn Exchange: Town Council, TBC and library staff. The remaining spaces are for public use with a one-hour parking restriction in place between 8am and 3pm, Monday to Saturday. There are no restrictions outside of these times.</p> <p>The public parking spaces are intended for those wishing to ‘pop and shop’ in the town centre, not for long stay parking during the day. The one-hour restriction means that more shoppers can make use of this facility and support the High Street. There is no charge for parking.</p> <p>Market stall holders who have paid for pitches under the Corn Exchange are permitted to park in the public area all day for their convenience with unloading/loading and ready access to their vehicles. The stallholders usually attend on Saturdays. There are specific arrangements for special events such as the Christmas Fayre.</p>
<p>ISSUES: Summarise the key issues arising from the Background (above). Are there any key dates that are relevant?</p>	<p>There have been long-standing problems with misuse of the car park by some people employed in the town. Certain individuals regularly park their cars in the car park during their working hours, making the spaces unavailable for shoppers or other visitors. There are other, chargeable car parks in the town and on-street parking is also available.</p> <p>On several occasions over the past 18 months the Clerk has reminded the vehicle owners concerned of the parking conditions, both verbally and in writing. Two of the individuals attended a Finance & Asset Management Committee meeting in July 2023 and, following discussion, Councillors agreed in September 2023 to reduce the hours that the one-hour restriction was in place. This followed the suggestion from the vehicle owners that they would park elsewhere during the restricted hours. However, the unauthorised parking continued, with the vehicle owners knowingly disregarding the parking conditions.</p> <p>In response to continuing abuse of the parking conditions, other options for management of the car park were considered. In May 2024 contact was made with a parking management company to discuss the services they offer. The company could install an automatic number plate recognition camera and manage use of the car park on behalf of the Town Council.</p> <p>On 23rd July 2024 the Finance & Asset Management Committee resolved to recommend to full Council that NPM be contracted to manage the car parking at the rear of the Corn Exchange. The proposed arrangement would be 2 hours of free, public parking and the introduction of charges for longer periods, 24 hours per day. Fines would be issued to vehicle owners for non-compliance with the parking conditions. Charges would not apply to permit holders, whose vehicles would be registered with NPM.</p>
<p>LEGAL OBLIGATIONS:</p>	<p>The car park is owned by the Town Council, which has a duty to maintain a safe facility.</p>
<p>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: Please state the costs if known-capital costs as well as on-going revenue costs. State whether funding will be from external sources or from the Town Council.</p>	<p>NPM would not charge for the installation of their equipment and signage and there would be no ongoing maintenance charge. The system would be offered free of cost on a 24-month service level agreement.</p> <p>The Council could choose to provide the option of paid-for parking after an initial free period, via an app-based payment system, PopPay. This would provide a small income from the car park. NPM would take a percentage of the revenue: 5% of any transaction up to £9.99 and 10% of any transaction over £9.99 to cover the, PopPay charges, etc.</p> <p>Fines would be issued for non-compliance with the parking conditions, £100, reduced to £60 if paid within the first two weeks of issue. NPM would retain any income from fines.</p>

Management of Car Park at the Rear of the Corn Exchange

Page 2

<p>COMMUNITY BENEFIT: Please state what benefit this proposal will bring to the community (mandatory)</p>	<p>The public car parking spaces are provided to allow members of the public to park for up to one hour to shop or access other services within the town. This helps to promote the High Street and benefits businesses and services in the town centre. This benefit is reduced when up to half of the spaces available are regularly taken up by those working in the town and using the car park for free, long-stay parking.</p> <p>Any income from parking charges could be put towards maintenance of the car park.</p>			
<p>COMMUNICATIONS: Who else should be informed if the proposal is approved?</p>	<p>Occupants of the Corn Exchange General public</p>			
<p>MEDIA AND PROMOTIONS:</p>	<p><i>Does this need media coverage?</i></p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>TOWN CLERK'S COMMENTS: Including any implications on Town Council staff requirements.</p>	<p>The unauthorised use of the car park at the rear of the Corn Exchange has been continuing for several years. Efforts have been made to address this matter by improving signage, changing the restricted hours, issuing written requests and in-person conversations, however, nothing so far has prompted the vehicle owners to park elsewhere. The introduction of a managed parking system could resolve this situation and improve access for other members of the community.</p>			
<p>PROPOSAL: What specifically do you want the Town Council to decide on?</p>	<p>Whether to proceed with the introduction of a managed parking system for the car park at the rear of the Corn Exchange and, if so, under what parking conditions.</p>			

Date of Town Council meeting at which this will be considered: 3rd October 2024

Draft Shropshire Local Plan, Examination in Public Stage 2

Statement from Much Wenlock Town Council, A0028 B-A223

Matter 19

Much Wenlock Town Council makes the following comments in respect to Stage 2 Matter 19:

MUW012VAR

This will be the largest development Much Wenlock will ever have seen. As highlighted by others, the Town is a Rapid Response Catchment and as a result extremely vulnerable to flooding. This site has flooded on numerous occasions, with overland flows from this site also flooding the existing Hunters Gate development. With extreme weather events increasing in frequency and severity the development of this land has the potential to exacerbate the situation. We understand that some flood mitigation measures are proposed and that the Place Plan Development Guidelines requires any planning application for development to demonstrate how properties will be protected from flooding.

There has been no opportunity for consultation with the Town Council or other groups to engage on this matter and the Town Council contends that consultation and valuable local insight should have been taken onboard ahead of the site obtaining an Allocation. Furthermore, there has been no consultation in respect to the Site Allocation being enlarged from 80 units (Site MUW012) to 120 units, which appears to be entirely arbitrary and takes the development boundary from beyond existing, natural features into open countryside.

The Place Plan also states that a roundabout access will be provided from the A458. It has been claimed that a new roundabout on the A458 Bridgnorth road is *“needed for gateway and calming purposes.”* It is also proposed that this new roundabout will provide access and egress to the MUW0012VAR residential development. It should be noted that a new roundabout in this location is not mentioned anywhere in Shropshire Council’s *Much Wenlock and Surrounding Area Place Plan 2019-2020*.

For the avoidance of doubt, the introduction of a brand-new roundabout is never actually a requirement, or *needed*, for gateway or calming schemes; in fact, a roundabout in this location on the A458 would introduce additional noise, be detrimental to air quality, require street lighting and generate its own significant environmental impact whilst attempting to introduce an improved one in Much Wenlock.

Sensible, well-designed gateway and/or calming schemes are not uncommon in Shropshire (designed by Shropshire Council Highways) and in many other places in the UK and the rest of Europe. Numerous case-studies and technical reports exist and are easily referenced. For example, speed reduction and gateway measures can be as simple as moving a 30mph sign; this can be reinforced with additional signing (eg countdown signing), slight road narrowing (with road markings) and landscaping that clearly confirms a change to the driving environment. Calming of this type has already begun on the A458 in Much Wenlock.

Importantly, the Town Council has carried out a technical assessment that clearly demonstrates that a roundabout is certainly not needed to accommodate 80 peak-hour car trips. It is clearly an overdesign and is only being proposed to allow future continuous development along the A458.

We have further concerns about the level of traffic that might arise from development proposed in the Local Plan and in particular in relation to the notorious Gaskell Arms junction. Extensive technical work has been undertaken to evidence the issue and further details can be provided if required. The Development Plan Strategy for the Much Wenlock Place Plan Area should therefore make specific reference to road infrastructure improvements over the Plan period.

The Town Council has a Neighbourhood Plan that is currently under review. We are therefore in a position to review any Site Allocations as part of this process and would welcome any devolution of decision making to the Local Community that could arise from any changes to the relevant Local Plan policies under examination.

From: Alison Kay <Alison.Kay@shropshire.gov.uk> on behalf of shropshirehills-nl <shropshirehills-nl@Shropshire.gov.uk>

Date: Thursday, 22 August 2024

To: Trudi Barrett <townclerk@muchwenlock-tc.gov.uk>

Subject: Letter from the Shropshire Hills Landscape Trust

Dear Much Wenlock Town Council,

Your town is on the outskirts of the newly named Shropshire Hills National Landscape. The change of name from Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is part of a government drive to accelerate nature recovery in protected landscapes.

Working alongside the statutory Shropshire Hills National Landscape Partnership is the newly renamed Shropshire Hills Landscape Trust, a charitable trust which every year funds local community nature recovery projects directly.

The Trust would like to work with your Town Council in one or more of the following ways:

1. To become a Town Council Supporter of the Shropshire Hills Landscape Trust.

As a Supporter you receive regular news of the Trust's work, are invited to events and can use our Shropshire Hills Supporter logo whenever and wherever you want in your communications, website, stationery and premises.

Your Supporter subscription goes direct to fund projects within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape: our Trustees are volunteers who draw no expenses, and staff from the Shropshire Hills National Landscape team provide the Trust's administrative services.

Becoming a Town Council Supporter costs £250 p.a. Your support will complement income we get from our Friends of the Shropshire Hills scheme, Business Supporters and charitable trusts.

You can sign up online at [Help worthwhile community projects across the Shropshire Hills \(shropshirehills-nl.org.uk\)](https://shropshirehills-nl.org.uk).

2. To invite us to come and give a brief talk at, or before, one of your meetings. You would find out more and be able to ask questions about our work.

Town and parish councils now have responsibilities under the 2021 Environment Act to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Working with the Shropshire Hills Landscape Trust could help you to do this.

You and other Shropshire parish and town councils already have representatives on the Shropshire Hills National Landscape Partnership and we believe all of us can work even more closely together to look after our beautiful landscape for future generations.

Please reply to this email if you would like to explore becoming a Supporter or inviting us to talk with your town council.

Below are some useful web links to find out more. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Janet Cobb & Charles Edwards
Shropshire Hills Landscape Trust Trustees

To contact Janet and Charles, please email: info@shropshirehillslandscapetrust.org.uk

For a list of projects recently funded by the Shropshire Hills Landscape Trust: [read project summaries \(shropshirehills-nl.org.uk\)](https://shropshirehills-nl.org.uk)

For more information on the Shropshire Hills National Landscape generally: <https://www.shropshirehills-nl.org.uk/>

For details of Government plans to accelerate nature recovery in protected landscapes: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nature-recovery-to-be-accelerated-in-englands-protected-landscapes>

For more information on the 2021 Environment Act: <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/climate-change#biodiversity>



SERVING LOCAL COUNCILS IN SHROPSHIRE AND TELFORD & WREKIN
Affiliated to the National Association of Local Councils

10th September 2024

Dear Clerk

As we are approaching the Association's Annual General Meeting, it is a pleasure for me to invite you, and Members of your Council to attend. This year we are combining this with a Celebration.

Every Parish & Town Council has something to celebrate and we want to give you all an opportunity to share your success by forwarding details to be considered by a panel.

As you will see on the Agenda, attached, we will be able to hear from last year's Jan Snell Award Winners – they are going to share details of their projects with us.

We also want to hear from Long Standing Clerks – if you have served as a Clerk for more than 20 years, please let us know. There are awards for 20, 25, 30 and 45 years service.

As you may have noticed, the Jan Snell Trophy was full of successful Councils and it was decided that 2024 is the year to have a new Trophy. We will never forget the enormous support that Jan gave to SALC and the Parish & Town Councils, but not too many of us can remember that far back now, so this year we are inviting nominations to be considered for the New President's Award. We want to hear about your outstanding project – the nomination form is attached.

This year, too, we are grateful to Save Our Shropshire who has created a new award. This monetary Award celebrates successful ways in which local communities are tackling the Climate Change Agenda in their communities. There are three award categories based on population sizes and the deadline for submissions is the 25th September 2024.

The award criteria, application forms and the category prizes can be found at;
<https://saveourshropshire.org/climate-action-award> .

We are very grateful to Anna Turner, Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire, who has kindly agreed to attend and present the Awards.

Towards the end of the meeting, we will be hearing about Going Wild in Bishop's Castle - what a project this is! On 6th December, SALC is hosting a very special conference – The BIG Idea. It will be free to attend and all our councils will be able to send a representative. When you receive the invitation and the Itinerary for the event, you will be amazed by the Guest Speakers that will be there. It will be well worth attending – we are really looking forward to it – a highlight of our year and setting the scene for the future where we can all benefit.

I very much look forward to welcoming representatives of your council to both events. Please ensure that your booking forms and nominations are returned by 11th October 2024, with the exception of the Honorary Officers nomination form which must be returned by 23rd October 2024.

Kind regards.

Katrina Baker
President

SHROPSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

The Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY2 6ND
Telephone:01743 252744 e-mail: alc@shropshire.gov.uk Website:www.alcshropshire.co.uk

SALC AGM & Conference

4pm on 30 October 2024

Shirehall, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND

Registration, tea and coffee from 3pm and opportunity to visit Trade Stands

A G E N D A

1. President's welcome
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of interest
4. To Elect Honorary Officers
 - Election of President
 - Election of Vice Presidents
5. Minutes of the 74th AGM held on 3 November 2023
6. Presentation of Awards
 - Presentations from last year's Jan Snell Award Winners:
Childs Ercall
Rodington
Welshampton & Lyneal

The meeting will welcome Anna Turner, Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire to present this year's Awards

 - Long Standing Clerks
 - President's Award
 - New Climate Action Award
 (Sponsored by Save our Shropshire, Charitable Incorporated Organisation)
7. **Care Leavers Covenant**—Chairman will sign the Covenant
8. To Appoint the Auditor for 2025-26
9. To Adopt the Annual Report and Audited Accounts (*To follow*)
10. To Set the Subscription Fee for 2025-26 as recommended by the Executive
 - An increase of 5p per elector from 45p to 50p up to 3500 elector
 - Additional electors—an increase of 1p per elector, from 2.5p to 3.5 per additional elector
 - Administration Fee
 Up to 1000 electors—an increase from £60 to £70
 Over 1000 electors—an increase from £70 to £80

NOTE: This does not include NALC fee of 8.43 pence per elector with a cap of £2139 for larger councils.
11. Motions for Debate
12. Going Wild in Bishops Castle and introduction to 'The Big Idea'
 Guest Speakers:
Lynn Parker, Local Nature Recovery Strategy Coordinator
Pete Carty, retired Parkland Manager, National Trust
Janet Cobb, Parish Clerk, Edgton and Middle Marches Community Land Trust Board Member

President will close the AGM and invite all to refreshments/visit Trade Stands



NATURE RECOVERY TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

Friday 6 December, 10am-4pm

Sylvester Horne Institute, Church Stretton SY6 6BY

9.15 am Registration, tea/coffee/croissants and opportunity to visit Exhibitor Stands

SALC'S President, Katrina Baker MBE will open and chair the Conference

Conference programme overleaf

BOOKING ESSENTIAL!

Email: conference@middlemarchescommunitylandtrust.org.uk

NATURE RECOVERY: TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS: CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

10.00 SALC'S President, Katrina Baker MBE will open and chair the Conference

10.05 Baroness Natalie Bennett, Vice Chair, National Association of Local Councils (NALC):

Nature Recovery in Town & Parish Councils

10.25 Defra speaker TBC: Implementation of Local Nature Recovery Plans

10.45 Chris Borg, Policy Manager, NALC:

The importance and potential of Town & Parish Councils to support the Shropshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy

11.05 Dr Jack Reed, University of Exeter: Nature Recovery and Regional Development

11.25 Mandy Thorn, Shropshire Community Foundation: Philanthropic giving and strategic grant funding

11.40 Lynn Parker, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy, County

Co-ordinator: Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy the role of Town & Parish Councils.

12 noon Lunch & networking

13.00 Peter Carty, Retired countryside manager for South Shropshire and Kinver Edge:

Going Wild in Bishop's Castle

13.10 Janet Cobb Parish Clerk Edgton /Middle Marches CLT:

Nature Recovery Town & Parish Councils across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin

13.20 Allan Wilson Vice Chair SALC / climate change portfolio holder:

How Parish Councils can support local groups

13.30 Susan Crichton, chairman Wheathill Parish Council: Pine Martin project

13.40 Richard Lewis, Cambrian Heritage Railways CROP Orchard: Oswestry CROP - Community Orchard

13.50 David Morgan, Lyth Hill Residents: Local verge restoration and Exford's Green Hay Meadow

14.00 Charles Green, CPRE Shropshire: CPRE Shropshire "Hedgerow Heroes"

14.10 Dr Richard Keymer, Middle Marches Community Land Trust: Community led land acquisition for Nature

14.20 Tea & Coffee break

14.50 Charles Edwards, Shropshire Hills National Landscape Trust:

How the Trust financially supports community Nature Recovery projects

15.00 Harriet Carty, Caring for Gods Acre: Churchyards and cemeteries, where nature recovery starts

15.10 Cllr Karen Thompson Bland, Welshampton & Lyneal Parish Council:

Restoring Shropshire's Verges Project

15.20 Dr Charlie Bell, Stepping Stones Project: Species Action Plans

15.30 Chris Howse, Chairman & Julie Burroughs, Vice Chair/Secretary, Friends of Apley Woods:

Apley Woods LNR, Telford & Wrekin

15.40 Helen Ball, Shrewsbury Town Council: Our Nature Recovery journey so far

15.50 Katrina Baker MBE: President's closing remarks

16.00 Close main conference

16.00-16.30 Small working group, next steps facilitated by Lynn Parker – Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin LNRS lead

The delivery of gigabit-capable broadband infrastructure: A guide for councillors, September 2024

This guidance gives an overview of the delivery of gigabit-capable broadband infrastructure in Shropshire and outlines how councillors can use their unique local role to support its deployment.

Introduction

There is a national aspiration to deliver fast and reliable broadband to hard-to-reach places across the UK. Currently over 84% of UK premises have access to a gigabit-capable broadband network (source: [Thinkbroadband](#), August 2024). Since April 2022, the coverage in the Shropshire Council area has tripled from 22% to 67%. Most of this improvement has come from commercial deployments, funded by the broadband infrastructure suppliers themselves.

In future, a major enabler of additional gigabit-capable broadband coverage will be the UK Government's [Project Gigabit](#) because 'harder-to-reach' areas aren't commercially viable. Project Gigabit is being delivered by Building Digital UK ([BDUK](#)), which works closely with Shropshire Council to ensure that new broadband networks meet Shropshire's needs. BDUK is an executive agency, sponsored by the UK government's Department for Science, Innovation & Technology (DSIT).

What is gigabit-capable broadband?

Gigabit-capable broadband provides a download speed of at least one gigabit per second (or 1,000 megabits per second). There are a range of different infrastructure types that can deliver broadband at this speed. These include: full-fibre and fixed wireless access broadband, with further information available in the glossary section of this BDUK [webpage](#).

What are the benefits of gigabit-capable broadband?

Gigabit-capable broadband speeds provide the capacity a household needs to connect multiple devices simultaneously, whilst supporting future advances in technology. Faster, more reliable, broadband connectivity can also help support businesses to increase their productivity.

Gigabit-capable broadband is usually delivered by fibre optic technology that is connected directly into customers' premises. Fibre optic cables have fewer faults than old copper-based networks, ensuring a better service for residents & businesses, and less time spent on infrastructure repairs that can create local disruption like street works.

Project Gigabit procurements

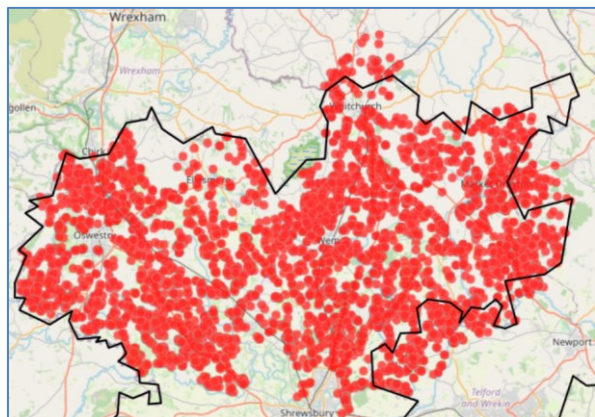
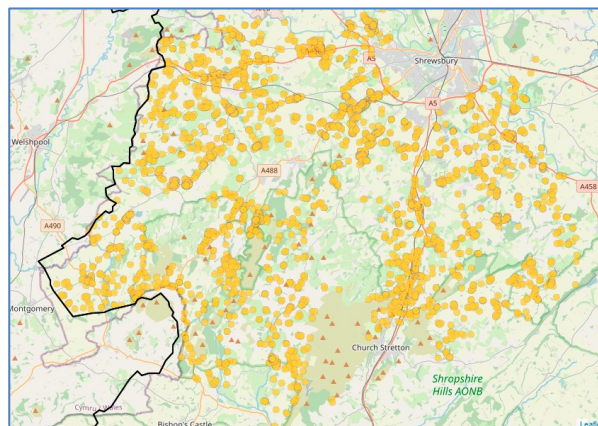
Most Project Gigabit broadband infrastructure improvements will be delivered through local, regional, and cross-regional contracts with broadband suppliers to deliver gigabit-capable infrastructure to an agreed set of premises. Premises included in the contract scope are those without current/planned access to gigabit-capable broadband speeds.

The current position in Shropshire is that BDUK has awarded two contracts, and the rest of the area is due to go out to procurement later in 2024, please see more detail on the next page.

The current position in Shropshire

Lot 25.01 Mid-West Shropshire

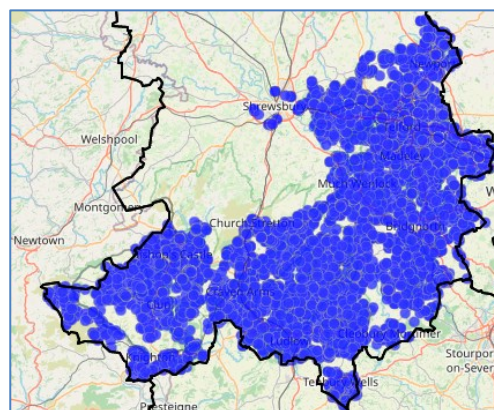
- Contract awarded to [Voneus](#) in April 2024
- 6,089 premises (all in the Shropshire Council area)
- Subsidy available £12m
- First premises to have network access expected autumn 2024.
- To contact Voneus, email: broadband@voneus.com



Lot 25.02 North Shropshire

- contract awarded to [Freedom Fibre](#) in April 2023
- 12,277 premises (10,752 in Shropshire Council area)
- Subsidy available £24m
- First premises to have network access expected autumn 2024.
- To contact Freedom Fibre, please email: careline@freedomfibre.com

The current expectation is that around 8,000 eligible premises in **south & east Shropshire** (including Telford & Wrekin) will be included in a larger cross-regional procurement (Type C) to be launched later in 2024.



What impact will installing gigabit-capable broadband infrastructure have on my area?

Like any infrastructure project, the installation of new broadband networks will cause short-term disruption for communities. This may include deployment activity such as streetworks, which the supplier will have coordinated with the Shropshire Council highways team.

Before installing new infrastructure, broadband infrastructure suppliers try to minimise disruption by using existing infrastructure such as telegraph poles and underground ducts. However, Project Gigabit contracts must operate within strict value-for-money constraints, which means it's not viable to deliver all new digital infrastructure without the installation of some new telegraph poles.

When new telegraph poles are installed by BDUK-appointed suppliers, there is an obligation that they are made available to other users, which reduces the need for more new poles in the future. Ofcom grants '[code powers](#)' to accredited telecommunication network suppliers providing them with a statutory entitlement to install, maintain, and repair apparatus on public and private land. The legislation means that providers can put in new telecommunications infrastructure, such as cabinets and telegraph poles, without the need to apply for planning permission.



Why install new fibre optic broadband network using telegraph poles?

- **Geographic reach:** Premises in rural Shropshire are spread out; using new and existing telegraph poles to deploy broadband networks makes it easier to reach every premise.
- **Cost-effective:** The cost of underground cabling can be prohibitively high, especially in rural areas where the distance between premises can be significant. Using existing/new telegraph poles can significantly reduce these costs.
- **Speed of deployment:** Installing fibre optic cables on telegraph poles is faster than underground installation. This means that residents and businesses in Shropshire can benefit from improved broadband speeds sooner.
- **Minimizing disruption:** Laying cables underground can cause significant disruption due to the need for digging and road closures. Using telegraph poles avoids this issue, minimising disruption to the local community.
It's also less disruptive to connect a premise to the fibre cable network from overhead (giving more flexibility of ingress point into the property), rather than having to dig under people's front gardens, driveways, etc.
- **Accessibility:** Once fibre optic cables have been installed on telegraph poles, they are easy to access for maintenance.
- **Environmental considerations:** Putting fibre optic cables on new telegraph poles when compared with laying cable in new underground ducts in the pavement/road can reduce carbon emissions by 50:1 (source: Freedom Fibre CEO Neil McArthur MBE, see: video on the following webpage: <https://www.freedomfibre.com/poles> from 4 minutes 13 seconds).

What happens if my area misses out due to objections to new telegraph poles?

Local opposition may result in premises being removed from the Project Gigabit funded roll-out. These premises will get left behind without access to a gigabit-capable broadband connection, which may adversely impact house prices and local economic development. Future broadband infrastructure improvements will usually still use new telegraph poles and may be dependent on a financial contribution from residents to make them commercially viable.

How can Shropshire Councillors represent their area in supporting the broadband infrastructure roll-out?

Councillors have a unique position at the heart of their local communities and can support the delivery of broadband infrastructure appropriately in their area. For example:

Reducing local barriers to deployment

- If the roll-out of broadband infrastructure is causing friction in the community, e.g., the proposed location of new poles, councillors can support discussions between infrastructure delivery teams and residents to help resolve issues and facilitate solutions.
- BDUK will collaborate with the contracted supplier, Shropshire Council, and local councillors to ensure that new broadband infrastructure is only installed where necessary, following an assessment of alternative options.
- Councillors can assist council officers and broadband infrastructure suppliers to identify landowners and help secure wayleaves for new broadband infrastructure on private land.

Championing the roll-out of improved broadband infrastructure

- Councillors can advocate for improved broadband infrastructure, helping to mitigate local concerns about deployment activity and explaining the longer-term benefit of faster, more dependable, broadband connectivity.
- More information around the leading role that Councillors can play in supporting broadband deployment can be found in the Local Government Association publication: [A councillor's guide to digital connectivity.](#)

