

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the re-convened
ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
at 7 pm on Thursday, 22nd May 2025

Present: Councillors Susan Crooke-Williams, David Fenwick, Paul Madeley, Marcus Themans, Daniel Thomas (in the chair), Chris Tyler, Duncan White and Daisy Whiteman.

In attendance: Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, five members of the public in person and one remotely.

1. Mayor's Welcome

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

“Welcome to our new Cllrs, Daisy Whiteman and Paul Madeley and to the five people who are standing in tonight’s co-option; as a council it’s brilliant we’ve had so much interest in the three vacancies.

I’ll start by thanking the staff for an excellent Mayor Making, which was thoroughly enjoyed by Councillors and guests. It was a special night.

Speaking of special events, we also had VE Day, which was marked by a church service on Thursday followed by a beacon built by my father and me. My thanks go to Holy Trinity and the team for an excellent service. On Sunday we had our charity football match in the morning, kindly organised by the Dyer family. In the afternoon, we had a fantastic party on the green and, again, thank you to the church and to our fellow Town Councillors for organising a great event.”

2. Apologies for Absence

None – all Councillors 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.

At the Chairman’s discretion, agenda item 18 was brought forward.

6. Review and Approval of Policies and Procedures

- a. **Members reviewed and RESOLVED to approve the revised Standing Orders.**
- b. Members reviewed the new Financial Regulations, which were based on the new NALC model.
It was RESOLVED to approve the new Financial Regulations, incorporating an approved amendment to Financial Regulation 5.15, with the relevant lines to read “A duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items up to £15,000” and “The council for all items over £15,000”.
- c. **Members reviewed and RESOLVED to approve the Complaints Procedure and Procedure for Dealing with Unreasonably Persistent and Vexatious Complainants.**
- d. **Members reviewed and RESOLVED to approve the Publication Scheme.**
- e. **Members reviewed and RESOLVED to approve the Communications and Media Policy.**
- f. **Members reviewed and RESOLVED to approve the Privacy notice.**
- g. **Members reviewed and RESOLVED to approve the Investment Strategy 2023 – 26.**

7. Co-option of Councillors

There were five candidates for co-option to fill three vacancies remaining after the uncontested election held on 1st May. Each candidate gave a short presentation to Councillors outlining why they would like to become a Councillor and what they would bring to the Town Council. Councillors were pleased to note the quality of applicants and the interest in joining the Town Council. Councillors asked questions of the candidates, following which a vote was taken.

It was RESOLVED to co-opt the following candidates to become Town Councillors: Paula Sivertsen, Jill Robinson, Cherie Whiteman.

Each of the co-opted Councillors signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office and the new Councillors took their places at the table to join the meeting.

8. Police Report

Councillors noted the written police report. Nobody from the local policing team was available to attend the meeting.

It was noted that the mess caused by 200 boxes of eggs falling off a lorry at Harley Bank had not been very well cleared, with the boxes being left on the side of the road. This was probably not the responsibility of the police. Further information was awaited on proposals for a reduction in working hours for PCSOs.

Two young men had been spotted recently climbing on top of the roof of the Spar store during daytime. Photos of the men concerned had been passed on to the police who had acknowledged receipt and said that the incident would be followed up.

9. Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Councillor, Daniel Thomas, gave the following report:

"I want to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who voted for me in the Shropshire Council elections. Representing the wonderful community of Much Wenlock and the surrounding area means so much to me, and I'm delighted to be able to continue the work I've been doing. I am committed to working hard to address the challenges facing our community and to ensure that your voices are heard. I will continue to work with you for a better future for Shropshire.

Leadership at Shropshire Council: with the local elections, the leadership of Shropshire Council has changed, with the Liberal Democrat party now holding a majority of Councillors. Chirbury and Worthen Councillor Heather Kidd is set to be the Leader, as elected by the group. I have reached out to Heather and brought her up to speed on Much Wenlock issues, including traffic, flooding and the Wenlock Leisure Centre.

Advice Surgeries: now that the election is over, my advice surgeries can continue. My next Advice Surgery, which will be my 50th surgery, is on Saturday, 14th June, between 10:30 a.m. and 12 noon at Much Wenlock Museum. No appointment is necessary. I'll be joined by a Town Councillor and a representative from the Police."

10. Minutes

- a. **It was RESOLVED to approve and adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 3rd April 2025.**
- b. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of a Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 4th March 2025.**
- c. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of a Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 1st April 2025.**
- d. **It was RESOLVED to adopt the minutes of a HR Committee meeting held on 25th March 2025.**

11. Town Clerk's Report

The Clerk would normally provide a written report but due to pressure of work a report had not been provided for this meeting.

12. Localism Act 2011 General Power of Competence

It was RESOLVED that Much Wenlock Town Council confirms that under the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 the Council meets the prescribed criteria as an eligible council for use of the General Power of Competence in that it meets the following conditions:

- a qualified clerk (the Clerk holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration)
- a minimum of two-thirds of the total number of councillors have been elected.

13. Schedule of Future Meetings

It was RESOLVED to approve proposed meeting dates for the Council year 2025-26, with the date of the Annual Town Meeting set as 16th April 2026.

14. Finance & Asset Management Committee

Members reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Finance & Asset Management Committee.

It was RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference for the Finance & Asset Management Committee.

15. Planning & Environment Committee

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.

16. HR Committee

Members reviewed the Terms of Reference for the HR Committee.

It was RESOLVED to approve the Terms of Reference for the HR Committee.

17. Discipline & Grievance Panel

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.

18. Membership of Committees and Working Groups

It was RESOLVED to defer consideration of the following items to the next meeting:

- a. Membership of Committees
- b. Review of Working Groups and Terms of Reference of Working Groups
- c. Membership of Working Groups
- d. Review and appointment of Representatives on Outside Bodies

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 7.9.**
- 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 7.10.**

20. The Guildhall Project

- a. Councillor Themans gave an update on progress with the Guildhall project.
- b. **It was RESOLVED to submit an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for Development Phase grant funding for the Guildhall Project, entitled: Much Wenlock Guildhall – the next 100 years.**

21. 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. News from Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust
- g. What's On at The Edge Arts Centre
- h. Friendly Transport Service Newsletter
- i. Marches Energy Agency May 2025 Newsletter
- j. Climate Action News for Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin May 2025
- k. The Rural Services Network Rural Funding Digest
- l. Advertisement for Armed Forces Day at Shrewsbury Castle on 14th June 2025

22. Agenda items for next Town Council meeting

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

23. Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 5th June 2025 at 7.00pm at the Guildhall, Wilmore Street, Much Wenlock.

The meeting closed at 8.18 pm.

Signed Mayor Date