

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held in Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem on Thursday 26 August 2010 at 7.15 p.m.

Present:-Councillor Mrs M Meakin (Town Mayor), Councillors Mrs T Broom, P Broomhall, D Cooley, Mrs M J Carson, Mrs P A Dee, Mrs C Granger, C J Mellings, L E Phillips, C H Shingler and Mrs N R Wilson. Mrs J M Drummond (Town Clerk).

2 members of the public.

The Mayor welcomed all present to the meeting.

10/117 Apologies

Apologies for unavoidable absence were received from Cllrs Glover, Murray and Towers (prior commitments).

10/118 Declaration of Interests

The Mayor highlighted the list of planning matters to be considered later in the meeting.

Cllr Phillips declared personal & prejudicial interests in the planning applications for 51 Bowensfield and 6 Hazlitt Place as a director of a company which has tendered for work at these properties.

Cllr Mrs Dee declared a personal interest in item 8, Extra Care Housing as a Shropshire Councillor, a personal interest in item 10 as her attendance at this meeting was as a Member of Shropshire Council and personal interests in items 12, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23,24 and 25 as a Member of Shropshire Council.

Cllr Shingler declared a personal interest in item 20 as Chairman of North Shropshire Tourism.

Cllr Cooley declared a personal interest in item 10 as Chairman of the Swimming Pool Working Party.

Cllr Mellings declared a personal interest in item 8, Extra Care Housing as a Member of Shropshire Council and personal interests in items 12, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27 and 29 as a Member of Shropshire Council.

Cllr Mrs Carson declared a personal interest in item 10/136 as her daughter works for a health Trust in Telford and attends meetings of the Shropshire County NHS Trust.

10/119 Police Attendance

The Mayor reported that due to unforeseen circumstances Sgt Julian Hinds was unable to attend this meeting but hoped to attend the meeting of the Council in September.

10/120 Wem Chamber of Commerce

The Mayor welcomed Mr W Nevitt, Chairman of Wem Chamber of Commerce to the meeting. Mr Nevitt thanked Councillors for this opportunity to speak to them and went on to explain the purpose of a Chamber of Commerce was to provide information & support for its members and to give them the opportunity to network with each other and with other local organisations and Chambers of Commerce. Mr Nevitt said that for such an organisation to be effective it needed a full membership and whilst the majority of members of Wem Chamber of Commerce were prepared to pay their subscriptions they did not wish to participate in the meetings. Mr Nevitt said he had become involved with Wem Chamber of Commerce approximately eighteen months ago and intended to continue to try & encourage attendance at meetings. Mr Nevitt said he had found sponsorship for a website but at the present time it was not worthwhile to pursue this matter. There was a lengthy discussion of the issue of lack of interest raised by Mr Nevitt. Mr Nevitt said there were many well established businesses in the area but their owners did not wish to interact on a social basis. Mention was made of the forthcoming Public Meeting regarding car parking charges and Councillors made several suggestions to try and promote attendance at the Chamber meetings. The discussion was closed by the Mayor thanking Mr Nevitt for his attendance and assistance to the Council in this matter.

10/121 Public Participation Time

Mr Edwards made reference to the forthcoming Civic Service and suggested the Council give consideration to having the Civic Service the first Sunday in October every year.

10/122 Minutes

Resolved:-that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on 29 July 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

10/123 Fire on Wem Industrial Estate

Cllr Mrs Carson said there continued to be a great deal of public concern about the operation of these premises and inquired when the Public Meeting would be organised. Cllr Mellings said progress was being made and it was hoped to organise a Public Meeting in early October.

10/124 Land off Soulton Road

Cllr Cooley asked if he should declare a personal interest in this matter as a resident living off Soulton Road. Other Councillors and the Clerk said he lived a sufficient distance away not to have to declare an interest.

Councillors considered a letter dated 13 August 2010 from Peter Richards (previously circulated).

Resolved:-to arrange for Mr Richards to meet with the Planning Committee.

10/125 Planning Matters

Applications approved during month (by circulation to Planning Committee)

10/03338/TCA Prune and cut back overhanging bough and branches of 1 silver birch tree within Wem Conservation area, 88 High Street, Wem.

10/03106/FUL Erection of single story side extension to dwelling, 14 Meadow Close, Wem.

Applications to be considered

Cllr Phillips declared personal & prejudicial interests in the following applications and left the room whilst they were discussed.

Cllr Mrs Dee asked for it to be recorded that she did not vote on any planning applications being a Member of Shropshire Council's Northern Planning Committee.

10/03229/FUL Erection of 3 single storey extensions to rear and replacing flat roof of existing garage with a pitched roof, 51 Bowensfield.

10/03462/FUL Erection of single storey extension to rear, 6 Hazlitt Place.

10/03516/FUL Renewal of extant planning permission for proposed conversion of first and second floors to provide 5 flats, 39-41 High Street.

Resolved:-to have no objections to the above mentioned applications providing the materials used match the existing dwellings.

Applications Determined by Shropshire Council

Application Approved

09/01443/CON Alterations to buildings at rear of property, Land at rear of 31 High Street.

Application Refused

09/70194/FUL proposed Alterations, etc. 31 High Street.

Applications considered by Shropshire Council Planning Committee

10/02491/CON Demolition of existing workshop buildings, Land to rear of 10 High Street.

10/02270/FUL Renewal of extant permission to demolish and erect new building, Land at Aston Road.

Resolved:-to receive this information.

10/126

Proposals for Extra Care Housing Development on Land off Wemsbrook

Councillors considered a letter dated 10 August 2010 from Shropshire Council (previously circulated).
Cllr Mellings reported the outline Business Plan was in the process of preparation at the present time.

Resolved:-to receive this letter.

Councillors also considered two emails dated 30 July 2010 from Mr Cobbold (previously circulated). Cllr Cooley asked if the proposed site was outside the permitted development boundary.
Cllr Mellings explained this site was outside the development boundary but had been mentioned for housing in the past. Cllr Mellings went on to say a planning application would have to be submitted if the scheme obtained the necessary financial approvals.
Cllr Mellings also referred to information he had circulated to his colleagues and explained there were strict guidelines regarding the protection of the newts and none had been removed from the site. Cllr Mellings said if the development was to proceed a mitigation plan would have to be approved to protect the habitat. Cllr Mellings also said if residents had concerns about the proposals they needed to raise them with Shropshire Council.
Cllr Cooley expressed concern about the wording of Ms Rowley's letter and Cllr Mrs Dee said this land had been originally purchased for the building of a new school.
Cllr Mrs Carson said such a development for older people should be sited nearer to the town centre on land off Aston Street. Cllr Mellings agreed this would be a good site but was not available at the present time and the difficulty was the timescale for the potential funding.

Resolved:-to receive these emails.

10/127

Exclusion of Public and Press

Resolved:-that as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the meeting in accordance with Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

10/128 Appointment of Honorary Townsman Awards

Councillors took part in a secret ballot.

Resolved:-not to appoint any Honorary Townsman this year.

10/129 Minutes of a meeting of the Swimming Pool Working Party held on 16 August 2010

Cllr Cooley presented these minutes which had been circulated previously. Cllr Cooley said the opening had been very successful although the pool had to be closed on Sunday because the water had been cloudy.

Cllr Cooley reported there had been a very positive response to the swimming lessons and he was very pleased with Teme Leisure and the current situation.

There was some discussion and Cllr Cooley raised the need to organise an official opening.

Resolved:-to receive and approve the above mentioned minutes.

Cllr Mellings informed the Council of a coffee morning in aid of the 'Friends' group on 11 September and on behalf of the Town Council went on to thank the Clerk for all her work in ensuring the pool was re-opened.

The Clerk thanked the Council for this appreciation and explained the lease was in the course of preparation at the present time.

10/130 Open Council

Resolved:-to approve the resolutions contained within items 10/128 and 10/129 made during closed session.

10/131 Clerk's Report and List of Accounts for Payment

The Clerk presented this report and highlighted the various items on the report.

Accounts

Cllr Shingler pointed out the same account for Taylors for £327.00 was shown twice on the list of accounts for payment. The Clerk explained this was an error and one payment had been made for this amount.

ALC Meeting

Resolved:-to approve the attendance of the Clerk at this meeting.

Wem Recreation Ground

Resolved:-to refer the issue of the overhanging trees to the Environment Committee

Cllr Cooley queried if the climbing frame had been repaired. The Clerk explained it had not been repaired but the frame was not dangerous.

Trimming of Cemetery Hedge

Resolved:-to accept the quotation of £435 plus VAT for this work.

Resolved:-to receive and approve the Clerk's Report and the accounts for payment.

10/132 Shropshire Council – 'Spotlight on Shropshire Economy'

Councillors considered a letter dated 1 July 2010 from Shropshire Council (previously circulated) and the consultation document which had been circulated to Councillors.

Resolved:- to receive this letter.

10/133 Shropshire Council – Mobile Libraries

Councillors considered an email from Cllr Bennett (previously circulated). Cllr Mrs Carson pointed out there is a library service to Westlands and there was some discussion.

Resolved:- to reply to explain whilst there is not a mobile library service in Wem the home delivery service to Westlands, Prince William Court and Roden Lodge is greatly valued and should be improved if at all possible.

10/134 Shropshire Homelessness Strategy Action Plan

Councillors considered an email dated 26 July 2010 from Shropshire Council (previously circulated).

Resolved:-to receive this email.

10/135 West Mercia Police

Councillors considered a letter dated July 2010 from West Mercia Police (copy previously circulated).

Resolved:-to receive this letter.

10/136 Shropshire County Primary Care Trust

Cllr Mrs Carson declared a personal interest in this item as her daughter works for a health Trust in Telford and attends meetings of this Trust. Councillors considered a letter dated 30 July 2010 from this organisation (copy previously circulated).

Resolved:-to receive this letter.

10/137 Shropshire Council 'World Cafe'

Councillors considered an email dated 30 July 2010 from Shropshire Council (copy previously circulated). The Mayor said this was a good idea.

Resolved:-to receive this email.

10/138 Local Referendums

Councillors considered information received from Communities and Local Government and LAIS re this matter (information previously circulated). An email dated 25 August 2010 from ALC was also circulated to Members at the meeting.

Cllr Mellings expressed considerable concern about these proposals and there was some discussion of them and of the fact that parish & town Councils do not receive any external funding.

Resolved:-that this Council does not support this initiative as it considers these proposals to be excessive and that there is no justification for them. If such a proposal was adopted then the threshold be set at £500k as for the former Best Value Regime.

It was agreed copies of the Council's letter should be sent to ALC and Owen Paterson, MP.

10/139 Shropshire Council – Community Tree Scheme

Councillors considered an email dated 5 August 2010 from Shropshire Council (copy previously circulated). There was some discussion of this scheme and Cllr Mrs Carson expressed some concern about the costs of such a scheme.

Resolved:-to receive this email.

10/140 North Shropshire Tourism – Essential Shropshire Brochure

Councillors considered a letter dated 30 July 2010 from this organisation (previously circulated).

It was suggested the Town Hall could be used as a contact point for information.

Resolved:-to accept this quotation and to suggest the Manager of the Town Hall be asked to give consideration to the provision of an information point in the Hall.

10/141 Shropshire Council – Flood Forum

Councillors considered a letter dated 30 July 2010 and an email dated 12 August 2010 from Shropshire Council (copies previously circulated). Cllr Mellings said Wem was shown as at medium flooding risk.

Resolved:-that Cllrs Mrs Broom, Dee and Wilson attend this Forum.

10/142 Shropshire Council – Tourism Partnerships

Councillors considered an email dated 20 August 2010 from Shropshire Council (previously circulated).

Resolved:-that Cllr Shingler respond to this document on behalf of the Town Council.

10/143 Shropshire Council – Core Strategy Development Plan

Councillors considered a letter dated 12 August 2010 from Shropshire Council (copy previously circulated).

Resolved:-to receive this letter.

10/144 Shropshire Council – Statement of Community Involvement

Councillors considered a letter dated 12 August 2010 from Shropshire Council (copy previously circulated). Cllr Mrs Dee explained there was a copy of this document at Wem Library.

Resolved:-to receive this letter.

Cllr Mellings expressed some concern at the length of some consultation documents and the difficulties caused for people without computers.

10/145 Shropshire Council – Working with Communities

Councillors considered two letters dated 13 August 2010 from Shropshire Council (copies previously circulated).

Cllr Mellings suggested it would be worthwhile to pursue this matter in order to secure funding in the future.

Resolved:-a reply be sent to request the toolkit and to invite Ms Dale to the meeting of the Council in September.

Resolved:-that Cllrs Broomhall, Cooley, Meakin and Wilson attend the event on 20 September 2010.

Cllrs Phillips and Shingler left the meeting at 9 p.m.

10/146 NALC Legal Topic Notes on S137 Expenditure and Power to Cap Parish Councils Precept Levels

Councillors considered these legal notes (previously circulated). Cllr Mellings referred to the 'Power of Well Being' which he said is to be discussed by the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee. Cllr Mellings explained that if the Council was to adopt this power it would be unable to utilise S137 expenditure and it would also have to meet strict criteria.

Resolved:-to receive these notes.

10/147 Morgan Building

Cllr Cooley said he was concerned about the deteriorating condition of this building. Cllr Mellings explained this matter was being dealt with by Shropshire Council's Property Services as there had been some confusion as to whom was responsible for maintenance of the building.

10/148 Wem Sports & Social Association

The Clerk informed the meeting Mrs Hinton had suddenly retired as secretary to the Association. Mrs Drummond went on to say she had agreed to provide secretarial cover for the Association in the interim period whilst the Association Members decided upon its long term arrangements if this was agreeable to the Town Council.

Cllr Mrs Carson suggested a letter of thanks be sent to Mrs Hinton for her many years of service.

Resolved:-that a letter of thanks be sent to Mrs Hinton.

Resolved:-to approve the Clerk providing secretarial assistance to Wem Sports & Social Association during the interim period whilst it reviews its long term arrangements.

10/149 Report upon Shropshire Council

Task & Finish Group – Meals on Wheels

Shropshire Cllr Mrs Dee explained this Group had considered a report upon this issue which would now be taken to the Scrutiny Committee.

Highway Maintenance Works

Shropshire Cllr Mellings reported some resurfacing works would be carried out in the High Street and Drawwell Lane during the next few months and care had been taken to avoid special events in the town.

Wem Motors

Shropshire Cllr Mellings reported the remedial pumping work had commenced and the work could take four to five months. Cllr Mellings said all involved had been very co-operative.

Shropshire Cllr Mellings made reference to another site elsewhere in the town.

Street Cleaning

Shropshire Cllr Mellings said a community litter pick had been organised to take place the following week. Cllr Mrs Carson asked if Drawwell Walk could be given attention.

Cllr Mrs Wilson queried an unusual smell and there was some discussion.

10/150

Information/Agenda Items

Cllr Mrs Carson said she had received a complaint from a local resident about the number of placards on the pavements in High Street.

Cllr Mrs Meakin informed her colleagues a Charity Quiz Night had been arranged for 9 October 2010.

Cllr Cooley made reference to a recent article in the press regarding the level crossing.

Cllr Mrs Carson expressed considerable concern about the behaviour of the 'boy racers' on the main car park on Sunday evenings. There was some discussion of this matter.

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Town Mayor

