

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held in Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem on Thursday 24 June 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, H Shingler, E Towers and Mrs N R Wilson. Mrs J M Drummond (Town Clerk).

4 members of the public.

The Mayor welcomed all present to the meeting.

10/51 Apologies

Apologies for unavoidable absence were accepted from Cllrs P Glover and J Murray (prior commitments).

10/52 Declaration of Interests

Cllr Mrs Meakin declared a personal interest in the planning application 10/02270/FUL, land off Aston Road as a friend of the applicant's family.

Cllr Phillips declared a personal interest in the planning application, 10/02304/CON, Wem Conservative Club as a member of the Club and a personal & prejudicial interest in item 25 as a Director of a company which had provided a quotation for works at Wem Swimming Pool.

Cllr Broomhall declared a personal & prejudicial interest in the planning application, 10/02304/CON, Wem Conservative Club as a Trustee of the Club and a personal interest in the planning application 10/02193/FUL Mill Bank as an acquaintance of the applicant. Cllr Broomhall asked to speak on the planning application for Wem Conservative Club during Public Participation Time.

Cllr Mrs Dee declared a personal interest in item 13 as an Honorary Alderman, a personal interest in item 16 as a member of the Better Welcome group, a personal interest in item 25 as a member of the Swimming Pool Working Party as a Shropshire Councillor and personal interests in items 4,11,14,15 and 21 as a Member of Shropshire Council.

Cllr Cooley declared a personal interest in item 16 as a member of the Better Welcome Group.

Cllr Mrs Granger declared a personal interest in the planning application, 10/02304/CON, Wem Conservative Club as a member of the Club and a personal interest in item 16 as a member of the Better Welcome Group.

Cllr Mellings declared personal interests in items 11, 14, 15 and 21 as a Member of Shropshire Council and a personal interest in item 23 as the Council's representative on the Council of Wem Sports & Social Association.

Cllr Towers declared a personal interest in item 16 as a member of the Better Welcome Group.

Cllr Shingler declared a personal interest in item 24 as the planters are planted up on his premises.

10/53 Public Participation Time

Mr Edwards congratulated the Mayor and Deputy Mayor upon their appointments to office and also welcomed new Cllr Mrs Granger.

Mr Edwards then referred to the proposals for a Town Square. He said public opinion was divided upon these proposals and pointed out the need for a coach pick up point to be near to public toilets.

Finally Mr Edwards made reference to the planning application for Mill Bank in Mil Street. Mr Edwards explained that whilst he thought it a good scheme he had taken some measurements and he did have some concerns regarding the poor visibility and footpaths.

A resident from Bowensfield raised the current problem of 'boy racers' in that locality and in the Butler Sports Centre car park. The Mayor explained a meeting had been held on 8 June 2010 and letters were to be sent to residents to ask them to report any incidents immediately to the local police. There was a lengthy discussion of this issue and it was pointed out it was not a problem unique to Wem.

Cllr Broomhall explained the background to the planning application for retrospective permission by Wem Conservative Club.

10/54 Minutes

Resolved:-that the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Town Council held on 27 May 2010 be approved subject to the replacement of 'Cllr Mrs Herring' with 'Mrs Herring' in item 10/6, of the Special Meeting held on 2 June 2010 be approved subject to the replacement of 'hose' with 'house' in item 10/43 and of the Special Meeting held on 16 June 2010 be approved as correct records and signed by the Mayor.

10/55 Wem Town Hall – Flower Troughs

Cllr Mrs Meakin said she had been advised by Mr Adkins that his wife had been disappointed that the spring bedding she had planted in these troughs had not been watered. Cllr Mrs Dee queried this matter.

10/56 Town Square/Community Area

Cllr Mrs Carson said she had been told that £40k had already been spent on consultant's fees on this scheme and expressed considerable concern at the sum of money involved.

Cllr Mellings said he had checked this matter and had been advised the consultant's fees to date had been £2-£3k.

Cllr Broomhall said the recent figures had changed from those quoted originally for the scheme and Cllr Mellings promised to investigate this matter.

Cllr Mrs Meakin said the name 'Town Square' should not have been used and the area needed tidying up to provide a more attractive entrance to the car park.

Cllr Mrs Carson said alternative lorry parking ought to be provided if the scheme was approved to avoid the parking of lorries on residential streets and there was some discussion of this matter.

10/57 Planning Applications

Cllr Broomhall left the room whilst this application was discussed.

10/02304/CON Application for demolition of unsafe garage building within Wem Conservation Area, Wem Conservative Club, Noble Street (Retrospective)

Resolved:-to have no objections to this application.

10/02270/FUL Renewal of extant permission for the demolition of existing industrial building and erection of new building/extension to form 3 light industrial units, Land at Aston Road.

Resolved:-to have no objections to this application.

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

Councillors expressed concern about the dangerous vehicular access across a footpath, lack of parking provision and the need to retain industrial units.

Resolved:-to strongly object to this application as these light industrial units are needed to provide employment opportunities in the town.

10/02272/FUL Erection of two semi detached three bedroom dwellings, Land to rear of 10 High Street.

Resolved:-to strongly object to this application because it is considered the proposed development will result in overdevelopment of the site with insufficient parking provision, the vehicular access is extremely poor being over busy public right of way and issues could arise due to deliveries to the adjacent public house being over the same access.

10/02193/FUL Erection of 14 dwellings including formation of new accesses and new internal estate road following demolition of existing garages and part boundary wall to include removal of trees, Mill Bank, Mill Street.

Resolved:-to have no objections to this application providing -

- 1) Two car parking spaces are provided for each dwelling as it is the norm for most households to have two cars and Shropshire Council be advised that the nearby public car park is already very well used and has little spare capacity for additional vehicles from this site.
- 2) In view of concerns about the visibility to the north of the site with particular reference to the boundary with Sunningdale Shropshire Council be requested to give particular attention to this issue.
- 3) The footpath to the south of the site on Mill Street is widened to improve safety for pedestrians and to facilitate the installation of a long requested pedestrian crossing opposite Roden Lodge.
- 4) The existing sandstone wall is rebuilt with railings to preserve the historic character of the area.

10/58

Report of a Meeting of the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee held on 17 May 2010 and the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2010

Cllr Mellings presented a report of this Committee (which had been previously circulated) and highlighted the recommendations to his colleagues. Cllr Mellings made reference to a recent article in the press regarding a Shropshire Town Council which he said demonstrated the need for good corporate governance.

Resolved:-to receive and approve the above mentioned report and the recommendations contained therein.

Resolved:-to receive and approve the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2010.

On behalf of the Town Council Cllr Mellings thanked the Clerk for her sterling work in the preparation of the accounts during an extremely busy period of time.

10/59 Report of a meeting of the Working Party re Butler Sports Centre Car Park held on 8 June 2010

Councillors considered this report (which had been previously circulated) and in response to an inquiry by Cllr Mrs Dee the Clerk said she hoped the letter to residents would be circulated during the next few weeks. The need for residents to report incidents to the police was highlighted.

Resolved:-to receive and approve this Report.

10/60 Clerk's Report and List of Accounts for Payment

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

Mayor and Consorts Chains of Office

The Clerk explained it was hoped to send the Mayor's Chain of Office to Fattorini in August for the necessary repair work and fitting to a velvet pad. Mrs Drummond went on to say the Mayor had said the Consorts Chain needed updating and possibly a second chain adding to the original.

Resolved:-that the necessary works be undertaken to the Consort's Chain of Office at the same time as for the Mayor's Chain of Office.

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

10/61 Street Lighting in Lowe Hill Road and Ellesmere Road

The Clerk reported there had been a problem with this lighting being on continuously following some work to the supply by Scottish Power. Mrs Drummond explained the Council's contractors had been able to resolve the problem by the fitting of photocells to the individual eleven lighting columns at a cost of £30 each.

Mrs Drummond went on to say Shropshire Council intended to undertake similar remedial action to its lighting columns in Lowe Hill Gardens.

Resolved:- to approve the actions of the Clerk in this matter.

10/62 Shropshire Council – Winter Service Review

Councillors considered a letter dated 21 May 2010 from Shropshire Council re Winter Service Review (previously circulated).

Cllr Mrs Dee asked if any more grit boxes were required in the town and made reference to the £3k grant from Shropshire Council to Town & Parish councils for minor highway works.

There was some discussion of the clearance of pavements during the last winter and Shropshire Cllr Mellings pointed out Shropshire Council had responded to complaints at the time.

Resolved:-to receive this letter and to inquire about the Grant funding.

10/63

Shropshire County NHS

Councillors considered a letter dated 27 May 2010 from Shropshire County NHS (previously circulated).

Cllr Mrs Carson asked if she should declare a personal interest as her daughter attends meetings of this organisation and the consensus of her colleagues was that this interest was not sufficient to declare.

Cllr Mellings explained the changes were about management arrangements and went on to make reference to the possible relocation of the doctors surgery in Wem. Cllr Mellings said a decision should be made by October of this year.

Resolved:-to receive this letter.

10/64

Shropshire Council - Honorary Aldermen

Councillors considered a letter dated 28 May 2010 from Shropshire Council regarding Honorary Aldermen (copy previously circulated).

Resolved:-to receive this letter.

10/65

Shropshire Council - Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2011

Councillors considered a letter dated 24 May 2010 from Shropshire Council re Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2011 (copy previously circulated).

In reply to an inquiry by Cllr Cooley Cllr Mellings explained the current situation regarding the capacity of the local schools and formation of academies.

Resolved:-to receive this letter.

10/66

Shropshire Council – Consultation on Site Allocations and Management of Development Document

Councillors considered a letter dated 3 June 2010 from Shropshire Council re Consultation on Site Allocations and Management of Development Document (copy previously circulated).

Resolved:-to receive this letter.

10/67

Better Welcome Group - Use of street lighting columns on Wem Recreation Ground for the erection of banners.

The Clerk explained the letter circulated to Councillors at this meeting had been received in the office that day. Mrs Drummond said she had been unable to speak to the Shropshire Council's Street Lighting Engineer at such short notice but had been advised by his assistant that Shropshire Council would only permit banners on structurally sound columns 10 metres high and the columns on Wem Recreation Ground were 5 metres high. The Clerk also pointed out the Town Council was not the accountable body for this project.

Cllr Mrs Carson said the banners would look better on boards in the town centre and there was some discussion with Cllr Mrs Meakin saying they would be more appropriate located on the approach roads into the town. Cllr Towers said there had been no mention of the Recreation Ground as a possible location at a recent meeting of the Better Welcome Group and Cllr Mrs Carson expressed some concern at potential noise from the banners for adjoining residents.

Resolved:-that a reply be sent to explain that whilst the Town Council supports this initiative the 5 metre high street lighting columns on Wem Recreation Ground would not be suitable and to suggest the banners be erected on the approach roads into the town on 10 metre columns subject to the approval of Shropshire Council.

Cllr Towers made reference to an email he had received regarding the formal appointment of representatives onto this group and Cllr Mellings pointed out such a request would need to be made in writing to the Town Council.

10/68

Food Festival

Cllr Shingler explained two beer festivals a year were held at the caravan park and it would be good initiative for the town if a food festival was organised to take place in the town at the same time as the beer festival in October. Cllr Shingler said he had contacted the Wem Chamber of Commerce and the Town Hall and an organisation covering North Shropshire was keen to co-ordinate and promote such events. Cllr Shingler said he was asking the Town Council for its support and some financial assistance with the cost of leaflets and advertising boards. In response to an inquiry by the Clerk Cllr Shingler said no administrative burden would fall on the Council.

There was some discussion with Cllr Mrs Carson suggesting a French market be held.

Resolved:-that the Council support this initiative with a budget of £500 to assist with advertising the event.

10/69

Presentation of Quality Status Certificate

Councillors discussed the presentation of the Re-Accreditation Certificate for Quality Status and the Mayor suggested a similar evening event be held as for the first presentation of Quality Status. Councillors welcomed this suggestion and it was agreed Councillors would contribute food for the occasion.

Resolved:-that the presentation be organised to take place at an evening social event at Wem Senior Club.

10/70

Annual Report for Year ending 31 March 2010

Councillors considered the draft Annual Report (copy circulated at meeting). The Clerk apologised for the late arrival of this draft report and asked Councillors to read the Report carefully over the next few days and to report any errors to the office.

Resolved:-to receive and approve this Report.

10/71

Wem Youth Centre

A written report from former Cllr Mrs Herring was circulated at the meeting and the Clerk reported that Mrs Herring was a member of the Wem Youth Centre Management Committee in her own right and therefore the Town Council needed to appoint its own representative. It was agreed this matter should be discussed at the next meeting of the Town Council.

Resolved:-to receive this report with thanks.

10/72 TARCA

In response to an inquiry by Cllr Mrs Broom the Clerk reported a letter had been received from this organisation and would be considered at the next meeting of the Council.

10/73 Local Joint Committee

Cllr Towers reported upon the agenda of the next meeting of this group.

10/74 Report upon Shropshire Council

Development off Whitchurch Road

Shropshire Cllr Mellings referred to some information he had circulated regarding this development.

Extra Care Housing Site

Shropshire Cllr Mellings referred to the consultation event the previous week and thanked his colleagues for their attendance. Cllr Mellings said a number of comments had been received regarding the access to the site and suggested the Council may wish to comment upon these plans. It was agreed to discuss the proposals at the next meeting of the Council.

Report upon Fire on Wem Industrial Estate

Shropshire Cllr Mellings referred to a report he had previously circulated to Councillors and commented upon the size of the stacks at the site. Cllr Mellings said an event would be held locally to discuss the future of this operation. There was some discussion and Shropshire Cllr Mrs Dee said the central communications had been assessed as poor and that no assessment upon the impact upon wildlife had been undertaken. Cllr Broomhall said the Manager of the Estate had not been notified of a meeting.

Draft Parking Strategy

Shropshire Cllr Mellings circulated copies of this Strategy to his colleagues and highlighted the need to monitor the situation regarding the introduction of parking charges.

Pool – Coffee Morning

Shropshire Cllr Mellings said the next coffee morning would be held on 10 July 2010.

Street Cleaning - Weed Removal

Shropshire Cllr Mellings reported attention would be given to weed removal prior to the Sweet Pea Show and also the road signs would be cleaned.

10/75 Information/Agenda Items

Cllr Cooley reported the new Chairman of Wem Chamber of Commerce would like to attend a meeting of the Town Council if possible. This was agreed.

10/76 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.

10/77 Report of a meeting with the Principal Officers of WSSA held on 9 June 2010

Councillors considered a report of this meeting (copy previously circulated). The Mayor presented this report to her colleagues.

Resolved:-to receive this report.

10/78 Floral Planters

Councillors considered an email dated 26 May 2010 from Mr Cobbold re the floral planters (copy previously circulated).

Cllr Shingler declared a personal interest in this item as the planters are planted up on his premises.

The Mayor said she had spoken to Mr Cobbold and had resolved this issue. There was some discussion.

Resolved:-to receive this email.

10/79 Report of a Meeting of the Swimming Pool Working Party held on 18 June 2010

Councillors considered the report of the above mentioned meeting (copies previously circulated)

The Mayor explained this report and Cllr Mellings said he was awaiting advice from Shropshire Council.

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

Cllr Phillips left the room whilst the next matter was discussed.

The Clerk read a quotation from Welch & Phillips for repairs and redecoration at the pool.

Resolved:- to suspend Standing Orders in view of the limited timescale and accept this quotation of £1,260 plus VAT from Welch & Phillips for this work.

The Clerk thanked the Shropshire Council Officers for their support and on behalf of the Council Cllr Cooley thanked the Clerk for her additional work following the closure of the pool.

10/80 Appointment of Honorary Townsman Awards

There was some discussion of the various people nominated and it was pointed out the Council did not have to make any nominations if it so wished. In view of the time it was agreed to defer this matter until the next meeting of the Council and to hold a secret ballot.

Resolved:-to exclude the first nomination on the list and to defer discussion of this matter until the next meeting of the Committee and a secret ballot be held.

10/81

Open Council

Resolved:-to confirm the resolutions contained in items 10/77, 10/78. 10/79 and 10/80 made during closed meeting.

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Town Mayor