

Minutes of a Meeting of the Amenities and Services Committee held on Tuesday 19th July 2016 at 10.00 a.m. in the Eckford Suite, Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem.

Present:-Councillor C J Mellings (Chairman), Councillors, R Dodd, P Broomhall, M Meakin, Ms P. O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

1 **Chairman** – to elect a committee chairman.

Resolved:-to appoint Cllr Mellings as chairman of the committee for the year 2016-17.

2 **Apologies** - To receive any apologies for absence.

Resolved:-to receive the following apologies for absence;
Cllrs Towers, Dee and Shingler.

3 Declaration of pecuniary interests

Councillor	Item	Dispensation
Shropshire Councillor Cllr Mellings	Twin-hatted member declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council	Dispensation previously granted to allow participation and voting on all matters relating to Shropshire Council

4 **Minutes** To approve as a correct record the minutes of a Meeting of the Environment Committee held on 8th March 2016.

Resolved:-to approve the minutes of 8th March 2016 and they were duly signed as a true record.

5 **Progress Report on items raised at previous meeting** (copy enclosed) – for consideration.

Clerk was asked to write to the Chief Executive of Persimmon to complain about lack of response from the company.

Resolved:-to note the report.

6 **Streetlights**

a) To discuss funding of the possible conversion of the Town Council's lights to dimmable LED lights.

It was reported that the Town Council had been advised that for a project of this nature and size it would be necessary to seek tenders for the works as per the Town Council's financial regulations. This would require a detailed specification for the replacement lights.

A discussion took place on the financing of the lighting scheme which could be taken from the Town Council's reserves or financed through a PWLB loan. An approximate cost of the scheme was estimated at £60,000 although the savings in energy costs would be recouped within 10 years. A discussion took place on this issue.

Resolved:-to recommend that the Clerk be instructed to draft a tender document for the replacement of the Town Council's remaining non LED streetlights to LED dimmable lights for consideration at the next meeting.

Further Resolved:- to defer a final decision on funding of the lights until after the tenders have been received.

b) To consider options for replacement lights along the footway between Lowe Hill Road and Somerset Way following removal of existing lights in resident's gardens.

It was reported that the old lights are due to be removed in the next week. However as previously reported, due to the location of the services and the width of the path it would be very difficult to install new lights along the path as it would require the length of the path being excavated in order to lay a new cable to supply the lights. It was explained that the Clerk had asked for a quote for the supply and installation of solar lights along the path but no quote had been received in time for the meeting. It was reported that the path was currently very overgrown and not well used. The service to the lights was disconnected on 4th April 2016.

Resolved:-to defer a decision on the installation of new lights along the footpath until Spring 2017 to monitor whether any complaints are received about the lack of lighting in this area.

7 Wem Sports and Social Association – to receive a report from the AGM and consider options for the future of the WSSA.

Cllr Mellings updated on the situation with the governance of WSSA which was struggling due to a reducing number of people volunteering to help manage the charity. It was reported that a solicitor had been helping to advise the association about the best way forward with regard to the future governance of the charity and one of the preferred options being considered was for the Town Council to be asked run the charity as a Sole Trustee. The Management Committee would be meeting to discuss the situation in August and it was anticipated that they would be in a position to make the Town Council aware of their preferred future management option in the next few months.

Resolved:-to note the report.

8 Toilets

a) To receive a report on recent damage caused to toilet doors.

It was reported that recent damage to the door of the ladies toilet had resulted in damage to the door and locking mechanism totalling £600, however the person committing the offence had been caught on CCTV and discussions were being held with the police to recoup this expenditure from the offender. Two other incidents of damage were identified from CCTV footage and as the people committing these offences were all

under 16 and the damage had been minor the Town Council would not be pursuing the offenders for damages but the police had talked to all involved to make sure they did not repeat the offence.

The Clerk reported that the doors were in poor condition and due to the fact that they were often kicked they no longer closed properly. A quote of £3000 had been received for replacement doors that are specially designed to withstand abuse, however a contractor had been asked to see if there was any work that could be done to strengthen the bottom of the door and this quote was awaited.

The Clerk also reported that she had received a quote for painting the woodwork and guttering and down pipes on the building which came to £1150.

Resolved;-to defer a decision on the painting of the woodwork and downpipes the building until after the Town Council has had the opportunity to consider its options with regard to the repair or replacement of the doors.

b) To receive an update on charging income.

It was reported that since charging had begun a total of £143 had been received in income in 3 weeks.

Resolved;-to note the income report.

9 Planters –

a) To consider winter planting / bulb planting.

Councillors felt the new planters looked excellent on the Town Square, however there was a need to obtain quotes for winter planting and it was;

Resolved;-to defer a decision on this until the September meeting.

10 Play Areas/ Open Spaces

a) Wheatfields – to consider quote for repair of decking on wooden walkway.

It was reported that a quote had been received for tarmacking and replacing the area with new decking. However as the budget for repairs was limited it was;

Resolved;-to defer a decision on the repair of the decking until it was known what repairs were needed to existing play equipment following the play equipment inspection report.

b) Dog Fouling – to discuss dog fouling concerns.

It was reported that The Clerk had spoken to the headmistress at St Peters Primary School and she had indicated that the school would be willing to work with the Town Council on a joint campaign in the Autumn. It was agreed that a competition could be held for students to design a banner to advise people to clear up after their dogs.

Resolved;-that Cllr Mellings and Cllr Dodd would progress this with St Peters Primary School.

c) Trees - to receive report on tree survey.

It was reported that the quote for tree surgery work as identified in the tree survey would cost an additional £972. Included in this quote was some additional work required to the Silver Birch Tree on the Recreation Ground near the closed toilets which was recommended by the tree surgeon for removal due to the identification of 2 large cavities within it.

It was reported that since the tree survey had been carried out in March a large hawthorn tree had fallen near the Wheatfields Play Area that required complete removal which was an unbudgeted emergency expense.

Resolved:-to recommend that the Town Council undertakes the tree works identified in the tree survey along with the additional works outlined as part of the quote.

d) Play area inspection report – for consideration. It was reported that the inspection had been carried out but that it was not available at the time of meeting.

Resolved:-to defer to the September meeting.

11 Service Transfer

a) To receive an update on progress on the transfer of services/facilities from Shropshire Council to the Town Council and funding options.

The Clerk presented a report on the transfer of services and recent changes and a discussion took place on the need to properly engage with the local community to ensure that the library was a facility that they wanted to continue to run in the town.

Resolved:-to recommend that;

- **A community engagement exercise is undertaken during the Autumn prior to the setting of the 2017-18 budget. The consultation to be funded using the transfer of services budget and its purpose would be to seek the views of residents on the continuation of a library service in Wem.**
- **Discussions take place with neighbouring parishes who have over 50 registered users of the library to ascertain whether there would be any commitment to helping to support the library service in Wem financially for a 3 year period.**

12 Love Lane Cemetery –

a) To discuss any maintenance requirements – none raised.

b) Regulations - to discuss recent breaches of cemetery regulations.

It was reported that there had been a few problems recently with small areas of surfacing with decorative chippings adjacent to graves. All of the breaches of regulations had been dealt with quickly but the addition of a noticeboard clearly displaying the regulations would be useful.

Resolved:-to note the report.

13 Love Lane Allotments

a) To consider any maintenance issues.

It was reported that there had been a complaint about one of the paving slabs on a dividing lifting and causing a trip hazard. The Clerk reported that she had queried liability for the dividing paths with the insurance company as some of the paths previously been laid by plot holders not the Town Council, however Zurich had not yet issued any formal guidance on this. It was also reported that a complaint had been received about the noise from the radio of a tenant which was considered excessive by neighbouring tenants and that the noise complaint was being monitored by Town Council staff and that any future letters sent to tenants would remind them of the need to keep noise to a minimum.

Cllr Mellings reported that an allotment inspection was due for October.

Resolved:to note the report.

14 Date and time of meetings – to set date and time of meetings for the year 2016-17.

Resolved:to set the following committee meeting dates and times

Tuesday 20th September 2016 at 14.00

Thursday 10th November 2016 at 10.00

Tuesday 17th January 2017 at 14.00

Tuesday 7th March 2017 at 14.00

Meeting ended 11.40

Chairman.....