

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held in Wem Senior Club, Chapel Street, Wem on Wednesday 27 January 2010 at 7.15 p.m.

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

2 members of the public.

The Mayor welcomed all present to the meeting.

10/266 Apologies

Apologies for unavoidable absence were received from Cllrs C Keane, C Shingler and E Towers (prior commitments).

10/267 Declaration of Interests

The Clerk drew the attention of Members to the list of planning applications to be considered.

Cllr Cooley declared a personal interest in item 10 as a member of the Better Welcome Committee, a personal interest in 14 as Mayor and a personal interest in item 16 as a member of the Parish Church. Cllr Cooley also declared a personal & prejudicial interest in item 15 as a member of the Wem Christmas Festival Committee.

Cllr Mrs Meakin declared a personal & prejudicial interest in item 15 as a member of the Wem Christmas Festival Committee and a personal interest in item 17 as a friend of the allotment holder. Cllr Mrs Meakin also declared a personal interest in the planning application for 42 Kynaston Drive as her son lives nearby.

Cllr Mrs Broom declared a personal & prejudicial interest in item 15 as a member of the Wem Christmas Festival Committee.

Cllr Phillips declared a personal & prejudicial interest in the planning application for 17 New Street as one of the owners of the site and also declared a personal interest in item 16 as a member of the Parish Church.

Cllr Mrs Carson declared a personal interest in item 29 as a friend to two of the applicants.

Cllr Mellings declared a personal interest in the planning application for 17 New Street as a colleague of one of the applicants, a personal interest in the planning application for 42 Kynaston Drive as a neighbour and a personal interest in the planning applications for the White Horse as having met with the developer and residents to discuss the application. Cllr Mellings also declared personal interests in items 12,13,22,25 and 28 as a Member of Shropshire Council, a personal interest in item 16 as a member of the Church congregation, a personal interest in item 23 as the Council's representative on WSSA and a personal interest in item 15 as the independent auditor of Wem Christmas Festival Committee.

Cllr Mrs Wilson declared a personal & prejudicial interest in item 15 as a member of the Wem Festival Committee, a personal interest in item 16 as a member of St Peter and St Paul Church and a personal interest in item 14 as a member of the Executive Committee of SALC. Cllr Mrs Dee declared a personal interest in item 10 as a member of the Better Welcome Committee, a personal interest in item 11 as a member of Shropshire Building Preservation Trust, personal interests in items 12 & 13 as a Member of Shropshire Council and a personal interest in item 14 as President of SALC and a member of the Executive.

Cllr Murray declared a personal interest in the planning application for 17 New Street as a colleague of Cllr Phillips.

10/268 Public Question Time

Mr Edwards wished the Town Councillors a Happy New Year and congratulated Cllr Broomhall upon his election onto the Council.

10/269 Minutes

Resolved:-that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on 16 December 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

With regard to the minutes of the meeting held on the 14 January 2010 Cllr Mellings made reference to the penultimate paragraph on the fifth page under *Wem Christmas Festival* (item 09/258) and pointed out that the phrase 'This was agreed' did not make it clear that it was not a decision of the Council and that individual Councillors had agreed not to vote upon this matter. Also Cllr Mellings pointed out that it had also been said that Councillors with only a personal interest were entitled to vote.

Resolved:-that the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Town Council held on 14 January 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor subject to the deletion of 'This was agreed' in the penultimate paragraph on page 5 and the inclusion of 'the individual Members who had declared a personal interest abstained from voting' and also the inclusion of 'It was pointed out Councillors who have a personal interest are entitled to speak and vote'.

10/270 Planning Matters

09/3956/FUL Renewal of extant permission to alter roofline from flat roof to pitched, The Old Creamery, Aston Road.

09/03959/ADV Application for advertisement consent for the display of 10 flags/banners on existing wall mounted flagpoles, Wem Town Centre Locations.

Cllr Mrs Dee did not vote upon the above application as a member of the Better Welcome Committee.

09/03955/FUL Erection of extension over existing garage, 42 Kynaston Drive.

Resolved:-to have no objections to the above mentioned applications.

10/00041/CON Demolition of all buildings, 17 New Street.

Cllr Phillips declared a personal & prejudicial interest in this application and left the room whilst it was discussed.

Resolved:-to have no objections to this application.

09/03528/LBC Internal works, White Horse Hotel.

09/03529/FUL Conversion to one residential unit, formation of amenity areas, alterations to existing vehicular access and parking areas, The Former Chapel, Noble Street.

09/03530/LBC Internal Works, The Former Chapel, Noble Street.

Resolved:-to have no objections to the above listed applications.

09/03526/FUL Conversion of part of building to form 3 residential units, formation of amenity areas, alterations to existing vehicular access and formation of parking areas, White Horse Hotel.

Cllr Mellings said whilst he had no objection to this application a resident in Crown Street was anxious to ensure continued access to the gable wall of his house for maintenance purposes.

Cllr Mrs Carson expressed some concern about the volume of traffic on Noble Street and the numbers of parked vehicles in the vicinity and suggested the vehicular access be of sufficient width to allow two vehicles to pass.

Resolved:-to support this application subject to access being maintained to the gable wall of 3 Crown Street for maintenance purposes and the vehicular access being of sufficient width to allow two vehicles to pass.

Cllr Mrs Dee reported a local resident had offered to paint the boards on the front of the White Horse Hotel and negotiations had been taking place with the developer and Shropshire Council to enable this to take place.

Applications Determined by Shropshire Council

09/03392/COU Change of Use, 27 Aston Street.

09/03199/VAR Removal of planning condition, Wem Mill.

Resolved:-to receive this information.

10/271

Clerk's Report and List of Accounts for Payment

Training Sessions

The Clerk highlighted the information circulated at the meeting regarding forthcoming training sessions. Cllr Mellings said he had attended a recent session upon the fundamentals of chairmanship which had been very useful. It was agreed Members would advise the Clerk of sessions they wish to attend.

The Bulletin

Councillors considered the draft edition of this publication. Cllr Broomhall queried the distribution and it was explained whilst the Annual Report was distributed to every household the Bulletin was available from town centre locations such as the Town Hall.

Resolved:-to approve this edition of 'The Bulletin'.

Resolved:-to receive and approve the above mentioned Report and accounts for payment.

10/272

Action for Market Towns

Councillors considered a letter dated 8 December 2009 from this organisation (copy previously circulated).

Resolved:-to receive this letter.

10/273

West Mercia Police Authority

Councillors considered a letter dated 14 December 2009 from West Mercia Police Authority (copy previously circulated).

Resolved:-to receive this letter.

10/274

Better Welcome Project

Councillors considered a letter dated 16 December 2009 from this group (copy previously circulated) and also an A3 copy of the proposed artwork. The Clerk said she had been verbally advised that the Town Hall would take responsibility for the future maintenance of the signs.

Cllr Murray expressed some concern about possible vandalism to the proposed artwork on the toilet block and it was explained this sign had been designed by young people so hopefully would not be damaged. There was some discussion of this matter and the Mayor pointed out the mural on the Senior Club had not been vandalised. Cllr Mrs Carson said the station platforms would have been suitable locations for such signs.

Resolved:-to have no objection to the request to site a sign on the Recreation Ground subject to the Town Hall accepting responsibility for future maintenance of the sign and also to have no objections to the proposal to site similar signs on the toilet blocks owned and maintained by Shropshire Council on the Recreation Ground and on the main car park.

10/275 Shropshire Building Preservation Trust

Councillors considered a letter dated 29 December 2009 from this organisation (copy previously circulated). Cllr Mrs Dee pointed out this organisation had helped to save a building in Market Street.

Resolved:-that the Council join this organisation at a cost of £15.

10/276 Shropshire Council – Proposed Charter

Councillors considered a letter dated 22 December 2009 from Shropshire Council (copy previously circulated). Cllr Mellings highlighted the importance of this document to clarify the relationship between the principal council and the Town Council.

Resolved:-to refer this matter to the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee for consideration.

10/277 Shropshire Council – Review of Public Toilets

Councillors considered a letter dated 29 December 2009 from Shropshire Council (copy previously circulated). Cllr Mrs Carson commented upon the weight of the entrance door to the public toilets and Councillors agreed these toilets needed refurbishment. Cllr Mellings stressed the importance of this review and reminded his colleagues of the two issues relating to the toilets in Wem. Cllr Mellings said he had met with a Shropshire Council Officer and the legal situation regarding the toilets on the Recreation Ground was still unresolved. Cllr Mellings informed the Council there is a set of euro loos in Much Wenlock.

Cllr Mrs Dee pointed out Councillors could return the questionnaires on an individual basis.

Councillors then considered the questionnaire question by question.

Resolved:-to respond with the following points –

- a) The existing toilets require refurbishment and the existing doors are too heavy for users.
- b) No objection to fee paying toilets (if refurbished).
- c) Provision of toilets essential and two sets of good quality accessible toilets needed in Wem for people using the Recreation Ground and also for rail passengers (as no toilets on station).
- d) Existing opening hours satisfactory.
- e) It be pointed out that this Council is already supporting a swimming pool and town hall and cannot afford to maintain public toilets in addition.
- f) Toilets not just used by townspeople but also visitors and shoppers.
- g) If contracted out would expect a clean and satisfactory service.
- h) Both sets of toilets are covered by CCTV.

In reply to an inquiry by Cllr Broomhall the Mayor said the 'Better Welcome' group had not included signage to the toilets in its project and in reply to an inquiry by Cllr Mrs Broom the Mayor said members of the public could use the toilets in the Town Hall.

10/278 SALC – Buckingham Palace Garden Parties

Councillors considered a letter received on 18 January 2010 from SALC (copy previously circulated).

Resolved:-to nominate the Mayor.

10/279 Emails from Mr J Cobbold re Declaration of Interests

Councillors considered two emails dated 16 and 17 January 2010 from Mr Cobbold (copies previously circulated).

Cllr Mrs Meakin expressed some concern about these emails and said she was saddened by Mr Cobbold's attitude. It was pointed out Mr Cobbold planted up and looked after the planters before their erection in the town centre. Cllr Mrs Meakin acknowledged this voluntary contribution by Mr Cobbold and apologised for her previous comments. The Mayor pointed out Councillors tried to act in the best interests of the town and did declare their interests at the start of every meeting. Cllr Cooley went on to say this highlighted the need for more training on the code of conduct.

Resolved:-to receive these emails.

10/280 Wem PCC

Councillors considered a letter dated 18 January 2010 from Wem PCC (previously circulated).
The Mayor explained the background to this request.

Resolved:-to have no objection to this request.

10/281

Wem Allotments – Letter from Mr Blower

Councillors considered a letter received on 20 January 2010 (letter previously circulated). The Clerk read the relevant section of the tenancy agreement to the meeting and there was a lengthy discussion of this request. Councillors, whilst welcoming this initiative expressed concern about the close proximity to houses and also the possibility of the hens attracting rats to the allotments.

Resolved:-to decline this request because of the close proximity of houses and the possibility of attracting vermin to the allotments.

Cllr Mrs Carson left the meeting at 8.40 p.m.

10/282

Cleaning of Bus Shelters

Councillors considered a quotation of £270 plus VAT dated 21 January 2010 for the cleaning of the bus shelters owned by the Council. There was some discussion of this matter.

Resolved:-to accept this quotation of £270 plus VAT for the cleaning of the bus shelters.

10/283

Insurance Cover for CCTV Cameras and Equipment

The Clerk read an email dated 11 December 2010 from the Council's insurance company giving a quotation of £420 for the annual premium. Councillors discussed this matter at some length.

Resolved:-not to insure the CCTV equipment at the present time and to review this matter at the renewal of the Council's insurance policy.

10/284

Office Electricity Supply

Councillors considered a letter dated 5 January 2010 from SWALEC giving a quotation for the renewal of the energy supply for the office. The Clerk read the proposed charges and the current charges to the meeting.

Resolved:-to approve the acceptance of this quotation dated 5 January 2010 for a two year period.

10/285

December Edition of Parish Pump

Resolved:-to receive this edition of the Parish Pump.

10/286 Request by Cllr Mrs Broom re Enforcement Officer

Cllr Mrs Broom expressed some concern that enforcement action in respect of the conditions relating to planning applications is not always carried out and suggested the Enforcement Officer be invited to attend a meeting of the Town Council to explain procedures.

Resolved:-that the Enforcement Officer be invited to attend a meeting of the Town Council to explain how conditions relating to planning permissions are enforced.

10/287 Use of Rebated Fuel

Cllr Mrs Dee expressed concerned that the use of rebated fuel for grass cutting is not permitted by the government and suggested a letter be sent to SALC regarding this matter.

Resolved:-that a letter of concern be sent to SALC regarding this matter.

10/288 Robert Hill Trust

Cllr Broomhall informed the Council of recent contributions made by this Trust.

10/289 Report upon Shropshire Council

Appearance of Town Centre

Shropshire Cllr Mrs Dee reported action was being undertaken to try and improve the appearance of the town centre and in particular the former newsagents shop and the White Horse.

Scrutiny Meeting

Shropshire Cllr Mrs Dee reported upon a recent meeting of this Committee at which conservation issues, enforcement of traffic regulations and the recent disruption caused to the refuse service by the bad weather conditions were discussed.

Civic Society – Project re Handrail at War Memorial

Shropshire Cllr Mellings reported the Civic Society was to hold a coffee morning to raise funds for this project.

Severe Weather Conditions

Shropshire Cllr Mellings reported the refuse collection service was back to normal in Wem and it was intended to purchase grit spreaders for the pavements.

Local Economy

Shropshire Cllr Mellings reported he had organised a meeting the following week of interested parties (including the Mayor and Clerk from the Town Council) to discuss local issues. Shropshire Cllr Mellings said hopefully the Chief Executive of Shropshire Council would attend the meeting.

Town Square

Shropshire Cllr Mellings reported a planned meeting had been postponed and a plan prepared by the Chamber of Commerce had been forwarded to Shropshire Council for consideration.

Opening Hours of Business at 62 High Street

Shropshire Cllr Mellings reported he had spoken to the Enforcement Officer and no monitoring of these premises had been undertaken. Shropshire Cllr Mellings said he had been advised a considerable amount of information was required for enforcement action to be undertaken.

Local Development Framework

Shropshire Cllr Mellings reported the consultation period for this Framework would commence in mid February and needed to be given very serious consideration by the Town Council.

Traffic Issues – New Street

Shropshire Cllr Mellings referred to a recent incident involving a child in New Street. Shropshire Cllr Mellings said he had been pressing for a crossing near the New Street/Pyms Road junction for some time and there had been no manned crossing near Park Road since 2005 because of the difficulty of recruitment. Shropshire Cllr Mellings said a survey had been carried out and as the crossing point still meets the criteria for a manned crossing the vacancy is to be re-advertised. Shropshire Cllr Mellings also said a pedestrian safety initiative was being undertaken in St Peters School.

Skip Service

Shropshire Cllr Mellings reported this service is to be reviewed and said he would press for its retention as it is well used and reduces the carbon footprint for users of the service.

Wem Children's Centre

Shropshire Cllr Mellings reported this Centre is to open the next day.

Introduction of 20 mph Speed Zone

Shropshire Cllr Mellings reported upon a meeting with a Senior Officer regarding this scheme who had said Shropshire Council wished to install the scheme as existing before the end of March and to consider any extensions afterwards.

Paypoint

Shropshire Cllr Mellings said this facility would be available from Glovers newsagents shortly.

Mill Chimney

Shropshire Cllr Mellings referred to a letter circulated to his colleagues regarding this matter and reported three metres of the chimney is to be dismantled and then rebuilt.

10/290 Information/Agenda Items

In reply to an inquiry by Cllr Mrs Wilson her colleagues expressed an interest in going out for an evening meal.

10/291 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.

10/292 Berrymans Lace Mawer

Councillors considered a letter dated 9 December 2009 from Berrymans Lace Mawer (previously circulated).

Resolved:-to receive this letter.

10/293 Minutes of a Meeting of the Swimming Pool Working Party held on 20 January 2010

Councillors considered the minutes of this meeting together with a copy of a letter from Mr Corbett and the notes of a meeting held on 22 January 2010 (all previously circulated).
There was some discussion.

Resolved:-to receive the above mentioned minutes, letter & report and the Working Party meet with Mr Corbett (with Mrs James from the 'Friends' group).

10/294 Co-option onto the Council

A secret ballot was held to decide who should be co-opted onto the Council from the four applicants.

Resolved:-that Mr Philip Glover of Foxley Villa, Love Lane be co-opted onto the Town Council.

10/295 Open Council

Resolved:-to confirm the resolutions contained in items 10/292, 10/293, 10/294 made during closed meeting.

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Town Mayor