

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 22nd January 2026
at 7 p.m. in the Town Council Meeting Room, Wem Library, High Street, Wem

Present:- Councillors, - Cllrs B Barker (Deputy Mayor), P Broomhall, B Cotterell, L Gilchrist, D Hill, M Hudson, P Johnson, G Soul, E Towers.

Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk)

149/25-29 To receive apologies and reasons for absence.

Apologies were received from Cllrs Parry, Meakin, Gascoigne and Hoffmann.
Absent G Nash

150/25-29 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests and Interests of bias or pre-determination.

a) To receive any disclosure of pecuniary interest - Members are reminded that they must not participate in the discussion or voting on any matter in which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

| Councillor | Item | Dispensation |
|---|--|--|
| Cllr Soul | 52/25-29b, Trustee of Wem Town Hall | To participate but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Town Hall |
| Cllr Towers | 153/25-29 Director Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre 152/25-29a Attends meetings of Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery | To participate but not vote on all matters relating to WSLC |
| Cllr Broomhall | 153/25-29 Director Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre | To participate and vote on all matters relating to WSLC |
| Cllr Gilchrist | 152/25-29a Trustee of Wem Millennium Green 151/25-29 Allotment holder | To participate and vote on all matters relating to Wem Millenium Green |
| Cllr Hudson | 152/25-29a Trustee of Wem Millennium Green 151/25-29 Market Trader | |
| Cllr Cotterell | 152/25-29a Committee member of Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery | |
| Cllr Johnson | 152/25-29a Committee member of Wem Youth Club | |
| Cllrs Barker Broomhall, Cotterell, Gilchrist, Hill, Hudson, Johnson, Soul, Towers | 154/25-29 Precept Setting as Residents of Wem | |

b) To consider any applications for Dispensations under s33 of the Localism Act 2011.

Dispensation requests were received from Cllrs Barker Broomhall, Cotterell, Gilchrist, Hill, Hudson, Johnson, Gascoigne, Towers and Soul to permit them to take part in discussions and vote on any matters relating to the setting of the town precept

RESOLVED:- to award dispensations to Cllrs Barker Broomhall, Cotterell, Gilchrist, Hill, Hudson, Johnson, Gascoigne, Towers and Soul to permit them to take part in discussions and vote on any matters relating to the setting of the town precept.

151/25-29 **Fees and Charges for 2026-27** - to review the following charges
a) Love Lane Cemetery charges.

Resolved: - to set the following fees for Love Lane Cemetery.

| Plot Purchase and Interment Fees | 2026-27 |
|---|----------------|
| Children* | |
| A child under the age of 1 month at death | £20 |
| Plot purchase under age of 18 | £640 |
| Interment Fee under age of 18 | £130 |
| *the actual fee to the family will be £0 but the indicated costs will be recovered from the Children's Funeral Fund | |
| Purchase of plot for persons exceeding 18 years at death | £640 |
| Interment Fee (for each interment over 18 years of age) | £320 |
| Interment of ashes in existing grave | £190 |
| | |
| Memorial Fee for the erection of a Headstone | |
| To a height not exceeding 3 feet | £300 |
| In excess of 3 feet but not exceeding 3ft 6inches high | £800 |
| Additional Inscription | £35 |
| | |
| Transfer of Exclusive Right of Burial | £35 |
| Renewal of Exclusive Right of Burial prior to expiration | |
| For a period not exceeding 25 years from the date of expiration of existing rights | |
| | |
| Fees for interment of cremated remains in cremated remains row | |
| Plot Purchase fee over 18 | £275 |
| Plot Purchase fee under 18 | £100 |
| Plot Purchase fee under 1 month at death | £20 |
| Interment fee | £190 |
| Gravedigging fee | £60 |
| Erection of Headstone fee | £150 |

b) Love Lane Allotments – Annual rents, admin and waiting list fees.
Cllr Gilchrist left the room and took no part in discussions.

Resolved: - to set the following rents for Love Lane Allotments.

| Plot Size | 2026-27 |
|------------------|----------------|
| ¼ plot | £17 |
| ½ plot | £34 |
| ¾ plot | £51 |
| Full plot | £68 |

c) Market Rents.

Cllr Hudson left the room and took no part in discussions.

Resolved: - to maintain weekly pitches fees at £8 per pitch for a casual pitch.

d) Market Licences.

Resolved: - to maintain licence fees at 2025-26 rates.

| Market Licence Fees | 2026-27 |
|--|----------------|
| Farmers Market held in Wem Town | £60 |
| New Commercial Market | £60 |
| Previously established Commercial held market outside of Wem Town centre | £30 |
| Charity / Community Markets | £20 |
| Town Hall Weekly Market | £30 |

Cllrs Hudson and Gilchrist returned to the room.

152/25-29

Contributions Requests and service support

a) To consider contribution requests received from larger organisations running services or facilities within the Town

Cllr Johnson left the room and took no part in discussions.

- Wem Youth Club

Resolved: - to award Wem Youth Club £2,500 towards the running of the Youth Club for the financial year 2026/27.

Cllr Johnson returned to the room.

Cllr Hudson left the room and took no part in discussions

- Wem Millennium Green

Resolved: - to award Wem Millenium Green a financial contribution of £2000 towards maintenance and upkeep of the Whitchurch Road Cemetery for the financial year 2026/27.

Cllr Hudson returned to the room.

Cllr Cotterell and Towers left the room and took no part in discussions.

- Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery.

Resolved: - to award Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery a financial contribution of £2000 towards maintenance and upkeep of the Whitchurch Road Cemetery for the financial year 2026/27.

Cllr Cotterell and Towers returned to the room.

b) Town Hall Trust to discuss correspondence and report about future funding (deferred from December meeting)

Resolved: - to retain the current approach of funding services at Wem Town Hall under a funding agreement with set objectives and that an allocation of £12,000 is made in the 2026-27 contributions budget on the understanding that

- **this does not create an automatic entitlement to funding.**
- **any release of funds would be subject to a further specific Council decision, appropriate conditions and satisfactory reporting.**
- **council may vary, reduce or withhold funding depending on priorities, performance, or the availability of funds.**
- **a working party will be established to consider terms and conditions relating to the funding agreement.**

c) To set small grants budget (deferred from October meeting).

Resolved: -to set a small grants budget of £3500.

d) Service Support Budget – to consider report on establishment of a service support budget.

Resolved: - to

- **establish a service support budget line and incorporate the 2026/27 contribution allocations made under minute point 152/25-29 within it.**
- **to defer any decision regarding the establishment of a working party to discuss the remit of this budget code to the next meeting.**

153/25-29

2026-27 Budget

a) To consider the Town Council budget for 2026-2027

Contributions

Resolved: - to approve a contributions budget of £52,000 to include the already agreed allocation of £30,000 from the transformation earmarked reserve towards service support

Events / Projects

Resolved: - to approve an events and projects budget of £14,600 to include an allocation of £2,500 from general reserves towards Christmas Lights infrastructure.

Swimming Pool

Resolved: - to approve the Swimming Pool budget of £94,032.

Markets

Resolved: - to approve the Market budget of £1000.

Resolved: - to allocate £2500 to the Town Improvement budget.

Resolved: - to set a 2026-27 overall expenditure budget of £545,744.

The Clerk outlined the income budget and it was

Resolved: - to set an income budget (excluding precept) of £87,820 inclusive of an allocation of £42,500 from earmarked, Neighbourhood Fund and general reserves.

b) To consider the 3 year forward budget report.

Resolved: - to note the 3 year forward budget report.

154/25-29 **Town Council Precept** - To agree the Town Council precept for 2026-2027.

Resolved: - to set a Town Council precept for 2026-27 of £457,924.

Meeting ended 20.30

Mayor.....