

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 26th February 2026
at 7 p.m. in the Town Council Meeting Room, Wem Library, High Street, Wem

Present:- Councillor, Cllrs, D Parry (Mayor), B Barker (Deputy Mayor), P Broomhall, B Cotterell, L Gilchrist, D Hill, M Hoffmann, M Hudson, P Johnson, G Soul, E Towers.
Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

11 members of the public present.

The Council observed a minute's silence in memory of former Mayor and serving Councillor Meakin following her recent death.

172/25-29 To note apologies for absence received.

RESOLVED;- that apology from Cllr R. Gascoigne be received and accepted.
Absent G Nash

173/25-29 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests.

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.

The following interests were declared

Councillor	Item	Dispensation
Cllr Broomhall	Item 180/25-29 Director Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre	To allow participation and voting on all matters relating to Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre
Cllr Towers	Item 180/25-29 Director Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre. 184/25-29 WSSA Trustee. 179d/25-29 Bias interest as Vice President Wem Jubilee Band and Baptist Church Member.	To allow participation but not voting on all matters relating to Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre To discuss but not vote on all matters relating to WSSA
Cllr Barker	179d/25-29 Member of Wem Jubilee Band and Wem Albion Bowling Club.	
Cllr Johnson	179d/25-29, Treasurer Wem Life.	
Cllr Soul	179d/25-29 Chairman North Shropshire Wheelers. 182/25-29 Trustee of Wem Town Hall.	To allow participation but not voting on all matters relating to NS Wheelers To allow participation but not voting on all matters relating to Wem Town Hall
Cllr Hoffmann	184/25-29 WSSA Trustee.	

Cllr Gilchrist	179d/25-29 North Shropshire Wheelers.	To allow participation and voting on all matters relating to NS Wheelers
Cllr Cotterell	185a/25-29 Member of WACA.	

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

None received.

174/25-29 Public Participation - a period of 15 minutes will be set aside for residents of Wem Town to speak.

A member of the public spoke in opposition of planning application 26/00077/FUL. The issues raised included risk of flooding, the detrimental impact of the development on the towns existing infrastructure and its capacity to cope with more dwellings. In addition, highway safety was raised as pavements along Whitchurch Road are in some places extremely narrow. Flooding photos of the site were circulated for Councillors. The impact the development would have on the town's biodiversity was also raised as the proposals would mean building on one of the last green fields on the town's northern boundary.

A member of the public spoke in objection of planning application 26/00116/OUT. They stated that the land is agricultural and outside of the development boundary. The site is not sustainable as defined by the NPPF and this application ignores Wem's circumstances and the character of the town. The town centre is 1km away from the development which is too far to comfortably walk. The biodiversity plan for the development is poor and lacks sufficient detail.

176/25-29 Council Minutes - to approve as a correct record the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Town Council held on 29.1.26.

RESOLVED:- that following the amendment to minute point 158/25-29 to state that the Deputy Mayor signed the minutes, to approve as a correct record the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Town Council held on 29.1.26.

177/25-29 Reports

a) To consider the Clerks progress report on decisions made at previous meetings.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

b) To receive written reports from the Council's representatives to other bodies. Cllr Soul gave a verbal report on Wem Town Hall.

RESOLVED:- to note the written report on the recent WSSA Trustee meeting.

c) To receive a written report from Shropshire Councillors for Wem Area.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

178/25-29 Planning Applications

a) To note the recent planning decisions.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

b) Planning Applications – to consider.

i) 26/00116/OUT Address: Proposed Residential Development Land To The West Of, Whitchurch Road, Wem, Proposal: Outline application for residential development (to include access).

A discussion took place on this item and views were expressed that the number of planning applications that had been submitted for the town in recent months was frustrating and concern was expressed about the lack of co-ordination of these developments considering the impact that they would have on the town's infrastructure.

RESOLVED:- to submit the following comments.

The Town Council object to this application for the following reasons:

- the proposed development site is not sustainable in the view of the Town Council as the development of this site for housing will cause continuing harm to the infrastructure of the town which cannot currently cope with the addition of such a large number of houses.
- the proposed development site is too far from the town centre and access from the site to the town does not provide a safe walking route for pedestrians due to its restrictive width.
- it is the Town Council's view that the ecological assessment submitted in support of this application is inadequate. Councillors are concerned that the proposed development would result in a harmful and potentially irreversible reduction in the town's biodiversity.

ii) 26/00077/FUL Address: Proposed Residential Development Land To The East Of, Whitchurch Road, Wem, Proposal: Erection of 55 Dwellings with Associated Access, Landscaping and BNG (5 Phases).

RESOLVED:- to submit the following comments.

The Town Council object to this application for the following reasons:

- the proposed development is not sustainable in the view of the Town Council as the development of this site for housing will cause continuing harm to the infrastructure of the town which cannot currently cope with the addition of such a large number of houses.
- the proposed development is too far from the town centre and access from the site to the town does not provide a safe walking route for pedestrians due to its restrictive width.
- flood risk is a particular concern, as the proposed site is known to flood regularly. Furthermore, the amenity space shown on the plans is located within the part of the site most susceptible to flooding, which is likely to render this area unusable for much of the year.
- Councillors are concerned that the proposed development would result in a harmful and potentially irreversible reduction in the town's biodiversity.

iii) 26/00393/FUL Proposed Residential Dwelling 40 Mill Street Wem, SY4 5EX, Erection of dwelling and formation of new vehicular access.

RESOLVED:- not to comment on this application.

iv) Consultation: Shropshire Council (Land to the east of Whitchurch Road, north of Creamore Villa, Wem) TPO 2026 (SC/00572/26).

RESOLVED:- to note.

179/25-29 Finance and Accounts for Payment.

a) Budget report – to consider.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

b) Internal Control checks – to note.

It was reported that all internal control checks were up to date.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

c) Accounts for payment - to approve accounts for payment.

RESOLVED:- to approve the following payments

Direct Debits and payments made prior to meeting.

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	BACS no
Shropshire Council	Salaries	£8,041.36		£8,041.36	BACS PAYROLL
	HMRC	£3,171.90		£3,171.90	BACS HMRC
	Pensions	£2,240.15		£2,240.15	BACS LGPS
Unity Trust Bank	Transaction charges January	£11.70		£11.70	DD 90.25
Waterplus	Car Park Toilet Water 8.1.26-8.2.26	£171.72		£171.72	DD 91.25
EE	Mobile Phones	£30.00	£6.00	£36.00	DD 92.25
Lloyds Bank	Credit Card Balance	£171.82		£171.82	DD 93.25
PWLB	Loan Repayment	£1,717.35		£1,717.35	DD 94.25
West Mercia Energy	Car Park Energy Jan	£63.15	£3.16	£66.31	DD 95.25
West Mercia Energy	Rec Toilet Energy Jan	£42.19	£2.11	£44.30	DD 96.25
B2B	Telephone/Broadband	£127.63	£25.53	£153.16	DD 97.25
Unity Bank	BACS January	£17.54		£17.54	DD 98.25
DANFO	Toilet Cleaning Dec	£1,029.24	£205.85	£1,235.09	SO7.25
Shropshire Council	Office Rent	£3,835.50		£3,835.50	251.25
NFU	First Aid Training	£102.00		£102.00	252.25
Total DDs / Early Payments				£17,078.40	

Credit Card Payments (for Information only)

Lloyds Bank	Monthly Charge	£3.00		£3.00	CC 24.25
Thomson Reuters	JCT Contract	£150.00	£30.00	£180.00	CC 25.25
Mr Flag	Mourning Ribbons	£16.86	£3.37	£20.23	CC 26.25
Jewson	Repair materials	£85.23	£17.05	£102.28	CC 27.25
Jewson	Repair materials	£17.68	£3.54	£21.22	CC 28.25
Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	Chq / BACS No

G&S Brough *	Washers (planters)	£73.00	£14.60	£87.60	253.25
Sarah's Embroidery	Work Clothing	£141.34	£28.27	£169.61	254.25
Shropshire Council	Streetlight Energy	£2,389.44	£477.89	£2,867.33	255.25
M Fitton	Bus Shelter Cleaning	£75.00	£0.00	£75.00	256.25
DW Evans	Gravedigging January	£1,040.00		£1,040.00	257.25
PG Skips	Rec Bin	£73.00	£14.60	£87.60	258.25
PG Skips	Cemetery Bin	£46.64	£9.32	£55.96	259.25
PG Skips	Cardboard Bin	£30.32	£6.08	£36.40	260.25
Shropshire Council	Payroll SLA	£1,396.10	£279.22	£1,675.32	261.25
Swimming Pool	Q4 Payment	£13,750.00		£13,750.00	262.25
Hunter Lloyd	PAT Testing	£127.50	£25.50	£153.00	263.25
Heathwood Nursery*	Wheatfield Trees	£995.00	£199.00	£1,194.00	264.25
Lisa Walker *	Return of Christmas Market Deposits	£20.00		£20.00	265.25
Sarah Davies*		£20.00		£20.00	266.25
Wiki Foksa*		£20.00		£20.00	267.25
South West Wildlife Fundraising*		£20.00		£20.00	268.25
Lauren Chandler*		£20.00		£20.00	269.25
Katie Carter*		£20.00		£20.00	270.25
SJ Thomas*		£20.00		£20.00	271.25
Martha Glanville*		£20.00		£20.00	272.25
Shelagh McCartan*		£20.00		£20.00	273.25
Millennium Green		£20.00		£20.00	274.25
Wem Brownies*		£20.00		£20.00	275.25
Kevin Clare*		£20.00		£20.00	276.25
Matt Hudson		£20.00		£20.00	277.25
ISM IT		IT Support	£340.39		£408.47

*new payee

d) Small Grants – to consider applications received and award the 2026-27 small grants

The grant applications were discussed at length and Councillors who had previously declared an interest in an organisation took no part in discussions relating to that organisation's application.

RESOLVED:- to award the following grants for 2026-27

Organisation	Grant awarded
Wem Jubilee Band	£250
Eckford Sweet Pea Society	£200
WADOS	£120
Albion Bowling Club	£250

Wem LIFE	£500
1 st Wem Brownies	£240
Wem Carnival	£250
Wem ACF	£100
Wem Baptist Church	£250
NS Wheelers	£500
1 st Wem Scouts	£150
Tennis Club	£125
Wem Cricket Club	£250
SEN Hub	£250

e) Payroll – to consider renewing Town Council’s payroll SLA

RESOLVED:- to approve the quote and renew the Town Council’s contract with Shropshire Council to undertake the Town Councils payroll for a further year starting 1.4.26.

180/25-29 Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre - to discuss amount of Town Council staff support to be offered to the trustees.

RESOLVED:-

- that the RFO will be tasked with undertaking a governance review of the WSLC Board, including a review of its constitution and policies. The review will include observation of a board meeting, consultation with Trustees, and liaison with the Manager and Staffing Group.
- that the RFO be requested to provide a report outlining governance strengths and areas for improvement, recommendations to enhance director and staff relations, a proposed policy framework and opportunities for improved collaborative working going forward.
- to earmark £665.00 from the 2025-26 staffing budget underspend to cover the costs of the project.

181/25-29 Fothergill Way Open Space – to consider re-registering the public open space as an Asset of Community Value (deferred from January 2026)

RESOLVED:- to instruct the Clerk to re-apply for the land to be registered as an asset of community value.

182/25-29 Working Parties

a) to consider report from Honorary Townsman Review Working Party

RESOLVED:- to accept the recommendations of the working party

- to enable public nominations for the award on the condition that they are supported by a serving Councillor and submitted via a standard nomination form.
- to revising the timetable and move the nomination closing date to June, with selection and voting to take place at the July Full Council meeting.
- to retain the existing presentation evening format, with the only amendment being to extend invitations to include the nominator and a guest.

b) to consider report back from the Town Hall Funding Agreement Working Party

The working party report was considered and following a discussion it was

RESOLVED:- to:

- **approve the amended objectives and service level agreement recommended by the working party and to award Wem Town Hall £12,000 in 2026-27 subject to it fulfilling the terms of the Service Level Agreement**
- **disband the Wem Town Hall Liaison Group.**
- **no longer formally require a trustee from Wem Town Council to sit as a trustee on Wem Town Hall Trust as a condition of the funding agreement.**

c) to establish a Service Support Working Party as per minute point 152/25-29d and agree its remit (deferred from January meeting).

RESOLVED:- to elect Cllrs Barker, Towers, Hudson, Hill and Parry onto the Service Support Working Party supported by the RFO and to approve the remit of the working party as follows

- **to outline the purpose of the Service Support budget code including what it may be used to fund, ensuring alignment with the Council's financial constraints, legal powers and community priorities.**
- **to provide guidance on the use of earmarked reserve funds within the current financial year to respond to urgent service needs, ensuring timely support for services under immediate threat.**
- **to develop a clear process for organisations to apply for funding in 2027-28 ensuring a fair and transparent process and consider how the Town Council will make organisations currently in receipt of larger contributions aware of this change.**

183/25-29 **Improvements to the front of The White Horse - To Consider Report**
Councillors spoke strongly about providing public money to improve a building that was not within the ownership of the Town Council as Councillors were concerned that this could set a precedent .

RESOLVED:- not to progress any of the recommendations in the report and to continue to press Shropshire Council to improve the frontage of building.

184/25-29 **WSSA Tractor Replacement – to consider recommendation of WSSA Trustees**

RESOLVED:- to

- **endorse the Trustees' view that replacing the tractor represents better value for money currently than replacing the mower.**
- **confirm the Town Council's support, in principle, for the use of WSSA's earmarked machinery reserves for the replacement of the tractor.**

185/25/29 **Correspondence**

a) WACA – to consider request for purchase of litter bins on Jubilee Square
It was reported that a price for litter bin emptying had not been received in time for the meeting.

RESOLVED:- to defer this matter to the next meeting so bin emptying costs can be obtained.

186/25-29 Dates of future meetings – to note the date and time of March meeting and set the date and format of the Annual Town Meeting and May Annual Town Council meeting

RESOLVED:- to note the date of the March ordinary meeting as 26.3.26 and to agree the following meeting dates

- Annual Town Meeting - 31.3.26 at 7pm in Wem Town Hall.
- Annual Town Council meeting 14.5.26 7pm Wem Library.

187/25-29 Exclusion of Public and Press

To resolve 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.

RESOLVED:- to exclude the press and public

Town Clerks Accrued Hours – to discuss.

RESOLVED- That the Town Clerk be permitted to work from home on Fridays (or another agreed day where necessary). Any hours worked in excess of the Clerk’s contracted 37 hours per week will be recorded as TOIL and normally taken on that day. The Clerk may also take the whole of the Friday (or agreed alternative day) as TOIL or annual leave, subject to sufficient accrued hours and operational requirements.

Menai Bridge Procedure – to review.

RESOLVED:- to approve the review.

Meeting ended 20.50

Mayor.....