

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 25th May 2023
at 7 p.m. in the Town Council Meeting Room, Wem Library, High Street, Wem

Present:- Councillors, G Soul (Mayor), R Dodd (Deputy Mayor), R Barker, P Broomhall, R Drummond, C Granger, D Hill, M Hoffmann, P Johnson, M Meakin, D Parry, E Towers.

Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

1 member of the public present,

- 469/23 To appoint a Town Mayor for the year 2023-2024 and to receive declaration of acceptance of office.** The current Mayor presides for this item and then steps down from the Chair if an alternative Mayor is elected. The Mayor will invite nominations for the position. The Mayor may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.

Cllr Parry proposed Cllr Soul, Cllr Towers seconded the nomination.

RESOLVED:- that Cllr Soul be appointed Town Mayor for the year 2023-24.

- 470/23 To note apologies for absence.**
The following apologies received were noted - Cllr Glover.

- 471/23 To receive a record of Councillors attendance at Council Meetings 2022-2023.**

RESOLVED:-to note the report.

- 472/23 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.

Councillor	Item	Dispensation
Cllrs Towers and Broomhall	Twin-hatted members declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council	Dispensations to allow participation and voting on all matters relating to Shropshire Council
Cllr Meakin	Bias interest Item 487/23 as member of Christmas Lights Committee	To speak but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Christmas Lights and Festival
Cllr Broomhall	Bias interest Item 487/23 as member of Christmas Lights Committee	To speak but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Christmas Lights and Festival

Cllr Granger	Bias interest Item 487/23 as member of Christmas Lights Committee	
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b) To consider any applications for Dispensations under s33 of the Localism Act 2011.

None received.

c) register of interest – to remind members of the need to review and if necessary, update registers of interest.

RESOLVED:- to note.

473/23 Public Participation - a period of 15 minutes will be set aside for residents of Wem Town to speak. No matters raised.

474/23 Past Mayor's address - To receive an address from Cllr Soul.
Cllr Soul presented his review of the last year and thanked councillors and staff for their support during his Mayoral year.

475/23 Councillor Vacancy – to receive update on co-option applications.
The Clerk reported that there were no applications received within the deadline.

RESOLVED:- to readvertise the vacancy with a deadline of 21.6.23.

476/23 To appoint a Deputy Mayor.
Cllr Soul proposed Cllr Parry, Cllr Johnson seconded this proposal.

RESOLVED:- that Cllr Parry be appointed Deputy Mayor for the year 2023-24.

477/23 Council Committees
a) To review terms of reference and delegated powers Council Committees, Panels and Liaison Groups.

It was reported that the Finance & Corporate Governance committee has considered the terms of reference for this committee and their recommendation was contained within the minutes of that meeting.

RESOLVED:- to accept the recommendation for terms of reference as contained in the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee meeting held on 23.5.23.

b) To appoint Councillors onto the following Liaison Groups/Panels

Committee	2023/24
Finance & Corporate Gov. (all)	All councillors
Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre Liaison Group (4)	Cllrs Broomhall, Meakin, Hill, Johnson 2 subs Soul, Parry

Wem Town Hall Liaison Group (5)	Cllrs Dodd, Granger, Soul, Barker, Parry
Events Liaison Group. (6)	Cllrs Granger, Hoffmann, Barker, Dodd, Towers, Broomhall
Grievance Panel (3)	Cllrs Hoffmann, Towers, Parry
Discipline Panel (3)	Cllrs Hill, Hoffmann, Soul
Appeals Panel (5) not on GP or DP	Cllrs Dodd, Johnson, Meakin, Drummond, Barker
Complaint Panel (5)	Towers, Parry, Hill, Hoffmann, Soul

c) **Scheme of delegation** - to review.

RESOLVED:- to approve the scheme of delegation for 2023-24 with the exception of approving entertainment licence applications. Any decisions relating to the use of the entertainment licence will need to be considered by Full Council.

478/23 Appointment of Representatives – to appoint representatives to the following outside bodies

Group	2023/24
Wem S&LC Ltd	Cllr Glover
Wem Youth Centre	Cllr Johnson
Parish Emergency Advisor	Cllr Granger
Wem Scouts HQ Committee	Cllr Johnson
Wem Economic Forum	Not filled
RAF Shawbury Liaison Group	Cllr Barker, Cllr Granger reserve
Friends of Whitchurch Rd Cemetery	Cllr Parry and Cllr Meakin
Shropshire Association of Local Councils	Cllr Soul, Drummond
Wem Area Climate Action	Cllr Towers

479/23 Review of Council Regulations and Procedures – to review the following policies and protocols
a) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

RESOLVED:- to approve the amendment to Financial Regulation 6.18 to include more details about the management of the corporate credit card as recommended by the internal auditor.

b) Complaints Procedure

RESOLVED:- to remove reference to the complaints committee and approve the procedure review.

c) Freedom of Information Act 2000

RESOLVED:- to update the Town Council address and approve the policy review.

d) Data Retention

RESOLVED:- to approve the updated policy.

e) Data Protection

RESOLVED:- to approve the updated policy.

f) Press Policy

RESOLVED:- to approve the reviewed policy.

g) Employee Handbook and protocol on staff councillor relations – to agree to defer to a meeting of the Finance and Corporate Governance committee.

RESOLVED:- to defer to a future meeting of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee.

480/23 Finance and Corporate Governance Committee meeting 23.5.23 - to receive draft minutes from this meeting and consider any recommendations made.

RESOLVED:- to note the minutes of 23.5.23 and approve the recommendations contained within the minutes.

481/23 2022-23 Accounts

a) 2022-23 Accounts - to approve the accounts and supporting papers for the year ending 31 March 2023.

RESOLVED:- to approve the 2022-23 year end accounts and supporting papers.

b) Internal audit report - to consider.

It was reported that the only matter raised was signing of the annual salaries letter by the Mayor.

RESOLVED:- to accept the internal audit report and ensure that future correspondence to Payroll relating to annual salary changes be signed by the Mayor.

c) Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2022-23

i) To consider the Town Council's response to questions on part 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return - The Annual Governance Statement.

RESOLVED:- to answer yes to questions 1- 8 and n/a to question 9 on section 1 of the AGAR the Annual Governance Statement.

ii) To consider and approve part 2 of the AGAR, 2022-23 accounting statements.

RESOLVED:- to approve the Accounting Statements in section 2 of the 2022-23 AGAR.

iii) To approve explanation of variances and agree date of publishing AGAR.

RESOLVED:- to approve the significant variances report and to set the date for the advertisement of electors' rights from 5.6.23 to 14.7.23.

482/23 Council Minutes.

To approve as a correct record the minutes of Meeting of the Town Council held on 27th April 2023.

RESOLVED:- To approve as a correct record the minutes of Meeting of the Town Council held on 27th April 2023 and they were duly signed by The Mayor as a true record.

483/23 Progress report - To consider the Clerks progress report on matters arising at previous meetings.

RESOLVED:- To note the report.

484/23 Planning Applications.

a) Planning Applications for consideration

23/01915/FUL 17 Station Road, Wem, SY4 5BQ Proposal: Erection of conservatory to rear elevation of property.

RESOLVED:- To support the application as it is in keeping with other properties in the area.

b) To note the recent planning decisions.

RESOLVED:- To note the planning decisions.

485/23 Finance and Accounts for Payment (copies to follow).

a) Payments – to approve the use of BACS payments and variable direct debits (as per Financial Regulations).

RESOLVED:- to approve the use of BACS payments and variable direct debits as per Financial Regulation 6.7 for the following payments:-

- **Business to Business - Broadband / Telephone**
- **Shropshire Council, HMRC, LGPS - staff salaries**
- **Utilities – Waterplus and West Mercia Energy**
- **Public Works Loans Board – Loan repayments**
- **EE – mobile phone charges**
- **Lloyds Bank/ Unity Trust -Credit Card and bank charges**
- **Information Commissioners office – annual payment**

b) Precept and Neighbourhood Fund – to note payment of and discuss management of neighbourhood fund.

RESOLVED:- to note the payment and consider use of neighbourhood fund at a future meeting.

c) Accounts for payment - to approve accounts for payment and payments made prior to meetings.

RESOLVED:- to approve the following payments

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	BACS no
Shropshire Council	Salaries April HMRC Pensions			6177.66 2267.79 2083.54	BACSPAYROLL BACSHMRC BACSLGPS
Waterplus	Car Park Toilet Water Charges (7 Apr-7 May)	44.15	0.00	44.15	DD8.23
Lloyds Bank	Corporate Card charges (02.5.23)	3.00	0.00	3.00	DD9.23
EE	Mobile Phones (9.5.23)	26.00	5.20	31.20	DD10.23
Business2 Business	Broadband & Telephony June	108.47	21.69	130.16	DD11.23
Unity Trust Bank	BACS Charges April	17.54	0.00	17.54	DD12.23
Zurich Municipal	Insurance	4143.16	0.00	4143.16	33.23

Bank Transfer

From	To	Amount	Reason
Unity Trust Bank	Bulmer Cottage Account	£4000	Return £4k underspend from 21-22 Swimming Pool budget (approved 17.5.22)

Payments

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	Chq / BACS No
P O'Hagan	Reimbursement – Coronation Materials	19.99	4.00	23.99	34.23
SALC	Affiliation Fees	1971.92	0.00	1971.92	35.23
PG Skips	Bin Emptying	101.68	20.32	122.00	36.23
ISM IT Ltd	IT Support	92.97	18.59	111.56	37.23
Mark Fitton	Window Cleaning	75.00	0.00	75.00	38.23
The Sign Shed	Playground signs	62.80	12.56	75.36	39.23
Healthmatic	Car Park Toilet Cleaning Mar - Apr	799.33	159.87	959.20	40.23
Healthmatic	Car Park Toilet C&M (17 Apr – 16 May)	799.33	159.87	959.20	41.23
Healthmatic	Rec. Toilet C&M (1-30 Apr)	434.86	86.97	521.83	42.23
Healthmatic	Rec. Toilet C&M (1-31 May)	434.86	86.97	521.83	43.23
PG Skips	Skip Hire	90.00	18.00	108.00	44.23
DW Evans	Gravedigging (April)	275.00	0.00	275.00	45.23
Severn Trent	Rec Ground Toilets Water	14.74	0.00	14.74	46.23
Rialtas	Year End Omega Support	755.00	151.00	906.00	47.23
Viking	Stationery	82.76	16.55	99.31	48.23
JDH Business Services	Internal Audit Fee	307.50	61.50	369.00	49.23

Highline electrical	SP Connection Fees	25080.92	5016.18	30097.10	50.23
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d) Health and Safety Contract – to approve.

The quote and contract for the delivery of Health and Safety Services for the Town Council was considered and it was

RESOLVED:- to appoint Shropshire Council to provide Health and Safety services and advice to the Town Council from 1.4.23-31.3.24.

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	Chq / BACS No
Shropshire Council	H&S Services (29.4.23 – 28.4.24)	688.00	137.60	825.60	19.23

e) Quote for installation of screen and projector – to consider.

RESOLVED:- to approve the quote to install the screen and projector in the Town Council meeting room.

486/23 Markets - to consider recommendations of working party meeting held 16.5.23.

RESOLVED:- to approve the following recommendations of the working party

- The traders' application pack and associated documentation for the outdoor market be approved for use from 1.6.23.
- The outdoor market pitch fee to be set at £6 per pitch with the fee to be reviewed in January 2024.
- To issue a licence to Wem Town Hall Trust to permit the holding of a weekly market on a Thursday between 8am and 2pm inside the Town Hall only, no stalls are permitted outside of Wem Town Hall. This licence will be subject to the condition that the market shall not permit any trader to sell fresh fruit and vegetables, any fish including shell fish. The sale of some plants may be approved subject to the type of plants to be sold and permission must be sought from the Town Council before any stall selling plants is allowed.
- The Town Clerk to be given delegated authority to spend from the market budget up to a maximum single item of £300. All expenditure to be reported to the next Council meeting.
- The Town Clerk be tasked with compiling and presenting a quarterly market report for consideration at full council.

487/23 Christmas Lights - to discuss future of the Town's Christmas Lighting Display and switch on festival.

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

Thanks were recorded for all the work of the Christmas Lights and Festival Committee and of the enormous contribution of volunteers in running the lights and festival over the past 20 years.

RESOLVED:- to establish a working party composed of Cllr Barker,

Cllr Hoffmann, Cllr Soul, Cllr Drummond, Cllr Towers, Cllr Johnson, Cllr Parry, Cllr Broomhall with the remit to:

- **Oversee the drafting of a Christmas Lighting Contract to be considered at June Town Council meeting.**
- **Recommend whether the Town Council should take over the organisation of a festival and light switch on in 2023.**

Cllr Granger returned to the room.

- 488/23 Boundary Review** – to consider the Boundary Commissions proposals for the Wem and Whixall Division
A discussion took place on this item and it was strongly felt that the existing two councillor division should remain.

RESOLVED:- to submit delegate authority to Clerk and Mayor to submit a response outlining the Town Councils opposition to the proposal

489/23 Correspondence

a) To consider application from Wem Rotary to use the Town Council's Entertainment Licence for Wem Rotary Music Fest Saturday 27.5.23.

RESOLVED:- to approve the licence application.

490/23 Dates of future meetings

a) To note date of June meeting.

RESOLVED:- to note the date of the June meeting of 29.6.23

b) To approve Town Council meeting dates for 2023-24.

RESOLVED:- to approve the 2023-24 meeting dates.

c) To approve proposed meeting dates and times for Finance and Corporate Governance Committee.

RESOLVED:- to approve the 2023-24 meeting dates for the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee.

491/23 Exclusion of press and public

To resolve: That in accordance with s1(2) Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960, members of the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the following items to be considered involves the likely disclosure of confidential information.

RESOLVED:- to exclude the press and public.

a) To receive any nominations for Honorary Townsmen.
Nominations were received.

b) Office lease – for update.
No update was provided by Shropshire Council in time for the meeting.