

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 26th January 2023
at 7 p.m. in the Roden Suite, Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem

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

Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

3 members of the public present.

393/23 To note apologies for absence received.

394/23 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 |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Cllr 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 Towers and Glover | 401/23 Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre Directors | Dispensation to allow participation but not voting on all matters relating to Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre |
| Cllr Glover | 398/23 Bias interest in application 23/00059/FUL as runs business adjacent to the site | |

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

None received.

395/23 Public Participation - a period of 15 minutes will be set aside for residents of Wem Town to speak.

A representative from Wem Civic Society raised frustrations about Wem Town Council being expected to pay for the traffic survey.

A representative from Wem Civic Society raised concerns about the planning application adjacent to the Old Post Office which the Civic Society considers to be over-development of the site. They also spoke in opposition of the proposals to redevelop Edinburgh House and stated that the proposals did not fit in with the history of the site. As there were originally terraced houses on both sides of New Street this is what should be reinstated.

The demolition of Edinburgh House will constitute the loss of further public facilities and these need to be saved.

A representative from Wem Area Climate Action Group outlined concerns about the climate impact on the demolition of Edinburgh House as it would release a significant amount of carbon and any development on the location should involve the creation of more green space and possibly a town square.

Cllr Hoffmann entered the meeting at 19.10.

Standing orders were suspended at 19.20 to adjourn the meeting to allow Sian Griffiths from RCA Regeneration Lid to outline the proposals for the redevelopment of Edinburgh House. She stated that the plans were for 18 individual plots composed of a mixture of bungalows and apartments with some office space. The housing mix was developed on the basis of what is being requested currently by the community. However, the plans are constantly being updated and they were interested in examples of good design that might be suitable to incorporate into the plans. She outlined that roads in the development will be constructed to adoptable standard and will allow for some on road parking which may help alleviate the parking issues on the street around the development.

A question was asked about a local lettings policy as the Council would be keen that priority was given to residents of Wem or those with a strong local connection to the town.

Vaughan Place was suggested by councillors as a good example of a development that was well laid out and had a large amount of community open space.

She explained that they would very much like to attend a meeting once the application has been submitted.

The meeting was reconvened at 19.24.

396/23 Council Minutes.

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Meetings of the Town Council held on 15 December 2022, extraordinary meeting held 17 January 2023 and ordinary meeting held 19 January 2023.

RESOLVED:- that the minutes of the Town Council ordinary meetings held on 15.12.22, and 19.1.23 and the extraordinary meeting held 17.1.23 be approved as a correct record and they were duly signed by the Mayor.

397/23 Progress report - To consider the Clerks progress report on decisions made at previous meetings.

RESOLVED:- to note the progress report.

398/23 Planning Applications

a) To note the recent planning decisions.

RESOLVED:- to note the planning decisions.

b) To consider the following planning applications

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

i) **23/00059/FUL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED** - Redevelopment of site to include change of use of public house to retail (Class E a-g), retention of existing residential accommodation as a separate dwelling, erection of a new build residential building incorporating 7 no. apartments following removal of existing

outbuildings and associated external works (resubmission of application reference 21/05863/FUL)

LOCATION: - Old Post Office and Buildings To The Rear, 25 High Street, Wem.

Councillors expressed views that the proposals had included open space which had helped with over development but others expressed concern.

Cllr Broomhall proposed that as the number of dwellings has been reduced and green space introduced into the application the Council should support the application. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Edge.

Following a vote the proposal was defeated.

Cllr Glover returned to the room.

ii) **22/05761/FUL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED** - Conversion of existing stable block into dwelling house and associated external works (revision to 22/03619/FUL)

LOCATION: - Land At Rear Of, 73 High Street, Wem, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

RESOLVED:- to continue to object to the application for the following reasons

The proposed development would severely impact on the historic character of this area of Wem.

The proposed development is in contravention of heritage guidance set within the National Policy Planning Framework. Chapter 16 paragraphs 194-208.

The proposals will have a negative impact on a designated Scheduled Monument (castle mound) and up to 9 listed buildings all within the Conservation Area.

The development will cause the loss of historic green space within the centre of the town which will have a negative impact on wildlife and bio diversity.

The proposals will result in additional traffic accessing the site at Maunds Corner. There is concern for highway safety at this point as this is an already dangerous section of highway for road users and pedestrians alike.

iii) **23/00096/FUL** Development proposed – Extension and alteration to unit 30, and erection of 1x new commercial building (comprising 2 x B8 business units) to include provision of solar panels, EV charging points, and associated works
LOCATION Unit 30 And Land Adjacent Wem Business Park, New Street, Wem, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY45JX.

RESOLVED:- to support the application as it will upgrade the business park and should be welcomed.

c) Public Consultation Land at Edinburgh House, Wem – to consider response.

RESOLVED:- to comment that the Town Council would welcome proposals that incorporated the original street scene of New Street with terraced houses on both sides of the road.

399/23 Finance and Accounts for Payment.

a) Monthly Budget report – to note.

RESOLVED:- to note.

b) Internal Control checks – to note.

It was reported that the monthly internal control checks had been carried out by the Mayor.

RESOLVED:- to note.

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

RESOLVED:- to approve the following payments**Payments made before the meeting and Direct Debits**

| Supplier | Service | Net | Vat | Gross | Chq / BACS No |
|---------------------|---|-------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Shropshire Council | Salaries January (Dec overtime/ expenses) | 5981.80 1986.68 2122.62 | | 5981.80 1986.68 2122.62 | PAYROLL LGPS HMRC |
| G Soul | Balance: Mayor's Allowance | 1205.00 | 0.00 | 1205.00 | BACS |
| EE | Mobile Phones | 42.51 | 8.50 | 51.01 | DD |
| Onecom | Office Telephone (Dec) | 40.40 | 8.08 | 48.48 | DD |
| Onecom | Office Telephone (Jan) | 34.54 | 6.91 | 41.45 | DD |
| Business 2 Business | Broadband | 49.98 | 10.00 | 59.98 | DD |
| Waterplus | Allotment Water Charges | 44.33 | 8.87 | 53.20 | DD |
| Waterplus | Water – Car park toilets | 81.45 | 0.00 | 81.45 | DD |
| Unity Trust Bank | BACS Charges (Nov) | 17.54 | 0.00 | 17.54 | DD |
| Unity Trust Bank | BACS Charges (Dec) | 17.54 | 0.00 | 17.54 | DD |
| Unity Trust Bank | Cash/Cheque charges | 6.90 | 0.00 | 6.90 | DD |
| Lloyds Bank | Corporate Card charges | 3.00 | 0.00 | 3.00 | DD |
| WME | Car Park Toilets Energy | 137.34 | 6.87 | 144.21 | DD |

Payments for authorisation

| Supplier | Service | Net | Vat | Gross | Chq / BACS No |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------|-------|----------|---------------|
| SLCC | Membership Fee | 236.00 | 0.00 | 236.00 | 184.22 |
| Ricoh | Printer/Copier | 195.18 | 39.04 | 234.22 | 185.22 |
| Highline Electrical | Streetlight repairs | 45.00 | 9.00 | 54.00 | 186.22 |
| ISM IT Ltd | Computer Support | 92.97 | 18.59 | 111.56 | 187.22 |
| PG Skips | Bin Emptying | 96.84 | 19.36 | 116.20 | 188.22 |
| Shropshire Council | Office Rental | 1525.00 | 0.00 | 1525.00 | 189.22 |
| Viking | Stationery | 102.77 | 13.75 | 116.52 | 190.22 |
| Wem Swimming & Lifestyle Centre | Contribution (1.1.22 – 31.3.22) | 13750.00 | 0.00 | 13750.00 | 191.22 |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| Rialtas | Cashbook Support Licence to 31.3.24 | 643.80 | 128.76 | 772.56 | 192.22 |
| Shropshire Council | Street light Energy Q3 | 1593.56 | 318.71 | 1912.27 | 193.22 |
| DW Evans | December Grave digging | 920.00 | 0.00 | 920.00 | 194.22 |
| SYA | Heads Up provision | 3333.33 | 666.67 | 4000.00 | 195.22 |
| NS Print | Stationery | 14.66 | 2.93 | 17.59 | 196.22 |
| Regency Factors | Jubilee Security (ESP) | 396.00 | 79.20 | 475.20 | 197.22 |
| Security Wise | CCTV White Lion | 160.00 | 32.00 | 192.00 | 198.22 |
| ISM IT Ltd | External Hard Drive | 120.00 | 24.00 | 144.00 | 199.22 |
| Via Della Emilia | Work at Love Lane | 470.00 | 94.00 | 564.00 | 200.22 |
| M Fitton | Bus shelter cleaning | 70.00 | 0.00 | 70.00 | 201.22 |

400/23 Finance and Corporate Governance Committee meeting held 10.1.23 - to receive draft minutes from this meeting and consider any recommendations not previously considered.

RESOLVED:- to receive the minutes of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee held 10.1.23 and approve the recommendations not previously considered.

401/23 Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre

To consider quotes for the supply and installation of the pool liner.

The Clerk outlined that despite advertising the contract on contract finder and contacting in excess of 10 companies direct about this contract only 2 quotes were returned. A discussion took place on the quotes and it was

RESOLVED:- to

- **Suspend Financial Regulations to permit 2 quotes to be considered.**
- **Award the quote for the supply and installation of a new pool liner to Shropshire Pools and Spas.**
- **To allocate a maximum of £32,500 from the Bulmer Cottage Fund towards this work.**

402/23 Gravedigging Love Lane – to approve extension of contract to 31.5.24 and note price increases.

RESOLVED:- to extend the contract with David Evans for gravedigging in Love Lane Cemetery to 31.5.24 and approve the price increase from 1.4.23.

403/23 Floral Planters Watering and maintenance contract – to consider quote received.

The Clerk reported that only 1 quote had been received for the works.

RESOLVED:- to

- **Suspend Financial Regulations to permit 1 quote to be considered.**
- **Award the 2023 floral planters watering and maintenance contract to David Murray.**

404/23 Markets – to establish a Markets Working Party to progress market policies and draft agreement with existing markets.

RESOLVED:- to extend the remit of the Market Working Party established on 28.7.22 under minute point 278/22 to consider market policies and licence agreements and report back to the next meeting.

405/23 Budget Consultation Shropshire Council – to consider.
A general discussion took place where the view was expressed that the documents detailing the savings proposals were so vague it was impossible to submit meaningful comments on the consultation. The Town Clerk presented draft suggestions for inclusion. Following a discussion it was

RESOLVED:- to comment that the Town Council strongly objects to the following savings proposals outlined in savings plan

- Introduction of charges for doorstep collections of green waste.
- Cuts to library services and youth.
- Increase in prices for car parking.

406/23 Request for Shropshire Council to fund the Traffic Impact Assessment into a one-way system in Wem - to consider response received (at request of Cllrs Towers and Broomhall).
Disappointment was expressed on the news that the project must be put forward for consideration for inclusion in the 2024-25 capital budget.

RESOLVED:- to request that Cllrs Broomhall and Cllrs Towers establish from Shropshire Council when a request needs to be made for the project to be considered for inclusion in the 2024-25 capital budget and report back.

407/23 UK Shared Prosperity Fund Feasibility Fund –to consider submission of an application to the fund.
The Clerk explained that two grant applications had been drafted, a joint application with Oswestry TC focusing on improvements to the Town's markets along with an application for a feasibility study / community consultation in Wem. It was explained that due to the short timescales involved with the grant application process it had not been possible to obtain three quotes for the project.

RESOLVED:- to suspend Financial Regulations to permit 1 quote to be considered for the consultation subject to the grant being approved

- To permit the Town Clerk to submit the application to Shropshire Council's shared prosperity fund to undertake a community consultation in Wem as detailed in the application form.
- Subject to the grant being awarded, to award the contract to carry out the community consultation and feasibility study to Resources for Change as per the quote submitted.
- To approve submission of the joint application with Oswestry Town Council to undertake research focussing on the improvements to markets in both towns.

408/23 Correspondence
SYA Heads Up - to consider report and notification of price increase.

RESOLVED:- to note the report and approve the price increase.

409/23 Reports

a) To receive written reports from the Council's representatives to other bodies.
None received.

b) To receive a written report from Shropshire Councillors Broomhall and Towers.

RESOLVED:- to note the report submitted by Cllrs Broomhall and Towers.

410/23 Future agenda items – for consideration Councillor's opportunity to raise items for inclusion on the next agenda – *Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making.*

411/23 Dates of future meetings –

a) To note the date and time of February meeting.

RESOLVED:- to note the next meeting will be held on Thursday 23rd February 2023.

412/23 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.

a) Office relocation – to discuss options and consider correspondence received from Shropshire Council.

The Clerk explained that whilst a price for the annual rent and the business rates had been established, the cost of the annual service charge for the rooms adjacent to the library was awaited.

RESOLVED:- to delegate authority to the Clerk in consultation with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairman of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee, to progress this matter providing the annual costs associated with renting the rooms is within the amount set for the Town Council office in the 2023-24 budget.

b) Morgan Library – To consider and approve works required report.

The confidential report which outlined the maintenance works required on the building identified in the viability appraisal was discussed. Councillors expressed the view that it would be a waste of taxpayers money to take on a lease until Shropshire Council addressed the high risk items identified in the appraisal.

RESOLVED:- that prior to the Town Council agreeing to a lease on the building the landlord must agree to address the high risk maintenance items listed in the viability appraisal to the Town Council's satisfaction within 3 years of the start of any lease.

Meeting ended at 20.40

Mayor.....