

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 27th March 2025
at 7pm in the Town Council Meeting Room, Wem Library, High Street, Wem

Present: - Cllrs D Parry (Mayor), B Barker, P Broomhall, R Dodd, R Gascoigne, C Granger, D Hill, M Hoffmann, P Johnson, M Meakin, G Soul, E Towers, Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

1 member of the public present.

881/25 To note apologies for absence received

Apologies were received from Cllrs Drummond and Glover.

882/25 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 Broomhall and Towers | Twin-hatted members declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council | To allow participation and voting on all matters relating to Shropshire Council |
| Cllr Soul | Trustee of Wem Town Hall | To allow participation but not voting on all matters relating to Wem Town Hall |

b) To consider any applications for Dispensations under s33 of the Localism Act 2011 - None received.

883/25 Public Participation - a period of 15 minutes will be set aside for residents of Wem Town to speak.

A member of the public spoke on behalf of Wem Civic Society and raised the following items:

White Horse Consultation – option 1 is the preferred option.

Midsummer in Wem – Civic Society are also joining in with this project.

A town trail is being developed that will help increase footfall across the town.

Lowe Hill Road planning application – the Society continue to have concerns about traffic and flooding on the site.

884/25 Council Minutes - to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 27th February 2025.

RESOLVED:- to approve as a correct record the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Town Council held on 27.2.25 and they were duly signed by The Mayor as a correct record.

885/25 Progress report - to consider the Clerks progress report on decisions made at previous meetings.

Mill Dam Seats – The Clerk was asked to progress this item.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

886/25 Planning Applications

a) to note the recent planning decisions.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

b) to consider the following planning applications

25/00208/TCA (validated: 17/02/2025)

Address: The Old Hall, New Street, Wem, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY4 5AB

Proposal: Fell group of Leylandii (G1/3), remove failed/hanging branches from 1no. Scots Pine (T2) and pollard to 2m 1no. Jacquemontii (T4) within Wem Conservation Area

RESOLVED:- not to comment.

24/04470/REM - Reserved Matters - Approval of access, layout, scale, appearance, and landscaping for 100 residential units pursuant to planning to appeal decision APP/L3245/W/20/3263642 dated 28 January 2022 (20/01054/OUT).

RESOLVED:- to object to the application and submit the following comments

The Town Council stands by its comments made previously about this application.

In relation to the LEAP (Local Equipment Area for Play) the Town Council remains very concerned about the proposals which are uninspiring and poorly designed.

Any play equipment on the site should be in line with most of the other play areas in the town and of steel construction, installed on a rubberised wet pour safety surface.

Play equipment should be selected that makes provision for use by a range of ages. Two multi play units one for infants and a more challenging unit for use by older children would be preferable to what is currently proposed.

Provision for informal play space should also be made within the proposed open space.

It should be noted that this area falls entirely within the boundary of Wem Town Council not Wem Rural Parish Council and any discussions regarding the long term management of the site should be with the Town Council.

887/25 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 carried out by the Mayor 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 | £6,528.73 | £0.00 | £6,528.73 | BACSPAY |
| | HMRC | £2,099.17 | £0.00 | £2,861.15 | BACSHMRC |
| | Pensions | £2,124.17 | £0.00 | £2,124.17 | BACSLGPS |
| Unity Trust Bank | Transaction charges | £11.70 | £0.00 | £11.70 | DD 94.24 |
| Unity Trust Bank | BACS charges Jan | £17.54 | £0.00 | £17.54 | DD 95.24 |
| WaterPlus | Car Park Toilet Water 8.1.25 - 8.2.25 | £41.23 | £0.00 | £41.23 | DD 96.24 |
| Waterplus | Rec Toilet Water 14.12.24 - 14.3.25 | £50.28 | £5.42 | £55.70 | DD 97.24 |
| EE | Mobile Phones | £30.34 | £6.07 | £36.41 | DD 98.24 |
| Lloyds Bank | Credit Card Balance | £3.00 | £0.00 | £3.00 | DD 99.24 |
| Unity Trust Bank | Cheque Charges 15.12.24 - 4.3.25 | £12.00 | £0.00 | £12.00 | DD100.24 |
| Business2Business | Telephone/Broadband | £114.42 | £22.88 | £137.30 | DD 101.24 |
| West Mercia Energy | Car Park Toilets Energy 1.2.25 - 28.2.25 | £203.58 | £10.18 | £213.76 | DD 102.24 |
| PG Skips | Rec Bins Jan | £65.76 | £13.16 | £78.92 | 262.24 |
| Security Wise | CCTV call out | £98.00 | £19.60 | £117.60 | 264.24 |
| Total DDs / Early Payments | | | | £11,280.71 | |

Credit Card Payments (for Information only)

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------|--------|---------|----------|
| Lloyds Bank | Monthly Charge | £3.00 | £0.00 | £3.00 | CC 22.24 |
| Scaffolding Direct | Planter clips | £42.53 | £8.51 | £51.04 | CC 23.24 |
| Stampit | Town Council Stamp | £87.55 | £17.51 | £105.06 | CC 24.24 |

Internal Transfers

| From | To | Amount | Reason |
|------------|-----|---------|------------------------------|
| Nationwide | UTB | £55,000 | Insufficient working balance |

Payments

| Supplier | Service | Net | Vat | Gross | Chq / BACS No |
|----------|------------------|---------|--------|---------|---------------|
| Ricoh | Printing/Copying | £184.68 | £36.94 | £221.62 | 261.24 |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|--------|
| JDH Business Serv | Interim Audit | £355.00 | £71.00 | £426.00 | 263.24 |
| PG Skips | Cemetery Bins | £42.00 | £8.40 | £50.40 | 265.24 |
| PG Skips | Rec Bins Feb | £65.76 | £13.16 | £78.92 | 266.24 |
| PG Skips | Cardboard Bin | £27.32 | £5.48 | £32.80 | 267.24 |
| Wem Swimming & Lifestyle Centre | Contribution | £13,750.00 | £0.00 | £13,750.00 | 268.24 |
| Healthmatic | Toilet Cleaning 17.2 - 16.3 | £783.25 | £156.65 | £939.90 | 269.24 |
| ISM IT | IT Support | £146.89 | £29.38 | £176.27 | 270.24 |
| Shropshire Council | Streetlight energy Q4 | £2,325.59 | £465.12 | £2,790.71 | 271.24 |
| Shrewsbury TC | Training Course Fee | £44.44 | £0.00 | £44.44 | 272.24 |
| Amberol | Floral Planters | £769.36 | £153.87 | £923.23 | 273.24 |
| M Fitton | Bus shelter cleaning | £75.00 | £0.00 | £75.00 | 274.24 |
| Sutcliffe Play | Playground parts | £583.70 | £116.74 | £700.44 | 275.24 |
| David Murray | Floral Planters | £320.00 | £0.00 | £320.00 | 276.24 |
| Highline Electrical | Column Replacements | £34,338.75 | £6,867.75 | £41,206.50 | 277.24 |
| Fenland Leisure | Playground parts | £491.00 | £98.20 | £589.20 | 278.24 |
| Viking | Stationery | £195.82 | £39.16 | £234.98 | 279.24 |
| A Roberts | Car Parking | £45.75 | £9.05 | £54.80 | 280.24 |
| Bullfinch Ltd | Bowl Beacon | £549.00 | £109.80 | £658.80 | 281.24 |
| RBLI | VE Day 80 Flag | £19.99 | £3.99 | £23.98 | 282.24 |
| Total New Payments | | | | £63,297.99 | |

d) Town Council Insurance 2025-26 – to consider valuation report and review insurance levels.

RESOLVED:- to approve the valuation report and to consider whether to amend the insurance levels for the public toilets when the renewal quote is received.

888/25 Events Liaison Group 6.3.25 – to receive the notes from the meeting held on 6.3.25 and consider recommendations contained within the notes.

RESOLVED:- to approve the following recommendations, that the Town Council:

- Accepts the quote received from the Affine Resourcing to supply and install the stage for the festival on 29.11.25.
- Subject to assurance that the inflatables would be managed by the Premier Bounce a provisional booking for an inflatable snow dome and bucking reindeer inflatable is made, as they would be suitable for use indoors in case of wet weather.
- Reserves four mascot costumes.

- **Considers running a Creative Kids Christmas Light competition subject to sponsorship totalling approximately £2400 being found to cover a three year period.**
- **Organises a morning market to be held on Jubilee Square on 21.6.25.**
- **Purchases a Summer in Wem banner to go across the High Street when the bunting is installed.**
- **Produces leaflets/posters promoting summer events in Wem.**

889/25 Annual Town Meeting 13.3.25 – to note the holding of the meeting and consider any matters raised.

No matters were raised for further discussion. All present agreed that the Sports person of the Year Award was a welcome new initiative.

890/25 Mayoral Chain – to consider report and quotes for a new chain.

A lengthy discussion took place and Councillors expressed the view that due to the pressures on public finances they were not willing to take funds from general reserves for the purchase of a new chain.

RESOLVED:-

- **Not to purchase a new chain at this time but to allocate £1320, which is the underspend on the Mayoral chains from 2023-24 and 2024-25, to a new earmarked reserve and to continue to add to this each year to permit the purchase of a new Deputy Mayor's chain and Mayors chain when sufficient funds are available.**
- **To continue to record the names of Mayors on the Mayoral Board.**

891/25 Jubilee Square Tree – to consider proposal from Cllr Towers.

RESOLVED:- to earmark £600 underspend from the 2024-25 tree budget for the purchase and planting of a tree on Jubilee Square to replace the missing tree in the Autumn.

892/25 Wem Town Hall - to receive a report from the meeting between Wem Town Hall Liaison Group and Trustees held on 25.3.25.

A discussion took place on the changes that the Town Hall Trust had proposed to the reporting criteria of the funding agreement and it was

RESOLVED:- to set the following reporting criteria for 2025-26 funding agreement with Wem Town Hall Trust:

- **Objective 1 - A quarterly report must be submitted to the Town Council by the following dates 30.6.25, 30.9.25, 31.12.25 and 31.3.26. This report is to detail ongoing, new and planned activities that meet the funding agreement objectives. The report may include the contribution of volunteer time to activities. The report is to include financial details including any income, costs of delivering and identification of potential grants. Particular reference is to be made to activities that would not be possible without the Wem Town Council grant.**
- **Objective 2 - A quarterly report must be submitted to the Town Council by the following dates 30.6.25, 30.9.25, 31.12.25 and 31.3.26. This report is to detail ongoing, new and planned activities that contribute to economic development in Wem Town.**

893/25 Weekly Market Report – to consider the quarterly report.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

894/25 Casual Litter picker – to delegate authority to the Town Clerk to advertise and recruit for the position of casual litter picker to cover holidays to be appointed on fixed salary scale point 2.

RESOLVED:- to delegate authority to the Town Clerk to advertise and recruit for the position of casual litter picker to cover holidays to be appointed on a fixed salary scale point 2.

895/25 Correspondence

a) Barber Trust – to nominate trustees for a 3 year term.

RESOLVED:- to nominate John Murray, Mandy Meakin and Connie Granger as trustees on The Barber Trust.

896/25 Reports

a) to receive written reports from the Council's representatives to other bodies.
The report of the Clerks recent training was received.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

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

RESOLVED:- to note the report received from Cllrs Broomhall and Towers. Cllrs Broomhall and Towers were asked to contact Dr Wigley to discuss The White Horse consultation with the Town Council to seek their views when the preferred option is agreed.

897/25 Dates of future meetings – to note the date and time of April meeting.

RESOLVED:- to note that the next meeting will be held on 24.4.25.

898/25 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) Town Clerks Appraisal and Job Description – to note completion of the appraisal and approve amendments to the job description.

RESOLVED:- to approve the amendments to the Town Clerks job description and title.

b) Talbot House – to receive an update on meeting held 20.3.25.

RESOLVED:- to defer this matter to the office working party to consider and report back to the next meeting.

Meeting ended 20.45

Mayor.....