

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 18th January 2024
at 7 p.m. in the Town Council Meeting Room, Wem Library, High Street, Wem

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

Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

611/23 **To receive apologies and reasons for absence.**

Resolved:- to note the following apologies for absence Cllrs Hoffmann and Hill.

612/23 **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 Awarded
Cllr Towers	<p>Shropshire Council Twin-hatted member declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council.</p> <p>Item 615/23 Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre - Disclosable pecuniary interest as a Board Member.</p> <p>Wem Sports and Social Assoc. - Bias interest as a Trustee.</p> <p>Item 617/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	<p>Dispensation to allow participation and voting on all matters relating to Shropshire Council</p> <p>Allowed to discuss but not vote in discussions regarding WSLC</p> <p>Allowed to discuss but not vote on all matters relating to WSSA</p> <p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Meakin	<p>Item 615/23 The Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery – Bias interest in the application for funding as member of the Committee.</p> <p>Wem Sports and Social Assoc. - Bias Interest in the application for funding as a Trustee.</p> <p>Item 617/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Glover	<p>Item 615/23 Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre - Disclosable pecuniary interest as a Board Member.</p> <p>Wem Youth Club – Bias interest as wife is committee member.</p> <p>Item 617/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss but not vote on all matters relating to WSLC</p> <p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>

Cllr Broomhall	<p>Shropshire Council Twin-hatted member declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council.</p> <p>Item 617/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	<p>Dispensation to allow participation and voting on all matters relating to Shropshire Council</p> <p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Drummond	<p>Item 615/23 Wem Sports and Social Assoc. - Bias interest in the application for funding as Trustee. Millennium Green - Bias interest in the application for funding as Trustee.</p> <p>Item 617/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Soul	<p>Item 616/23Wem Town Hall - Pecuniary Interest as Trustee.</p> <p>Item 617/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss but not vote on matters relating to Wem Town Hall</p> <p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Granger	<p>Item 617/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Dodd	<p>Item 615/23 Whitchurch Road Cemetery - bias interest as member of the Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery.</p> <p>Item 617/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Johnson	<p>Wem Youth Club – Bias interest as is committee member.</p> <p>Item 617/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Parry	<p>Item 615/23 Whitchurch Road Cemetery - bias interest as member of the Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery.</p> <p>Item 617/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Barker	<p>Item 615/23 Wem Sports and Social Assoc. - Bias interest in the application for funding as Trustee. Item 617/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	

Cllr Gascoigne	Item 617/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.	
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b) To consider any applications for Dispensations under s33 of the Localism Act 2011 Cllrs Barker and Gascoigne applied for a dispensation under item 617/23 Town Council precept to allow them to discuss and vote on the setting of the Council Precept.

Resolved: - to award the following dispensations to Cllrs Barker and Gascoigne to permit them to discuss and vote on the annual precept during the electoral term.

613/23 **Estimated Year End Income / Expenditure 2024-25** – to consider estimated budget report and accompanying notes.

Resolved: - to note the report.

614/23 **Fees and Charges for 2024-25** - to review the following charges

a) Love Lane Cemetery charges.

Resolved: - not to change any of the fees for Love Lane Cemetery.

b) Love Lane Allotments – Annual rents, admin and waiting list fees.

Resolved: - not to change allotment rents, admin and waiting list fees

c) Market Rents.

Resolved: - to increase weekly pitches by £2 to £8 per week.

d) Market Licences.

Resolved: - to maintain licence fees at 2023-24 rates.

615/23 **Larger Contributions** - To consider contribution requests received from larger organisations running services or facilities within the Town.

Wem Swimming & Lifestyle Centre

Resolved: -

- **To award Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre a financial contribution of £55,000 towards the running of Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre for the year 2024-25.**

Cllr Towers and Cllr Glover did not vote on this item.

Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery

Cllrs Parry, Dodd and Meakin left the room and took no part in discussions.

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 2024/25.

Cllrs Parry, Dodd and Meakin returned to the room

Wem Youth Club

Cllrs Glover and Johnson left the meeting and took no part in discussions.

Resolved: - to award Wem Youth Club £2500 towards the running of the Youth Club for the financial year 2024/25.

Cllr Glover and Cllr Johnson returned to the meeting.

Wem Millennium Green

Cllr Drummond left the meeting and took no part in discussions.

Resolved: - to award Wem Millennium Green £1700 towards the maintenance and upkeep of the Millennium Green for the financial year 2024-25.

Wem Sports and Social Association

Cllr Meakin, Barker and Drummond left the meeting and took no part in discussions.

Resolved: to award Wem Sports and Social Association £21,000 towards the maintenance and upkeep of the land and properties managed by the Association.

Cllr Towers did not vote on this item.

Cllrs Meakin, Barker and Drummond returned to the meeting.

616/23 **2024-25 Budget**

7a) To consider the Town Council budget for 2024-2025

Lighting

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that the Public Lighting Budget be set at £57,800 with £10,000 allocation from general reserves for column replacement.

Cemetery

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that the Burial Ground Budget be set at £12400 inclusive of the contribution to Whitchurch Road Cemetery

Allotments

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that the Allotments Budget be set at £1200.

Recreation

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that the recreation budget is set at £57,600 to include an allocation of £15,000 from neighbourhood fund reserves for replacement play equipment.

Toilets

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that the Car Park Toilets budget is set at £14,600.

Bus Shelters

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that the bus shelter budget is set at £1700.

Miscellaneous Amenities/Services

Floral Planters

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that the budget for floral planters is set at £5500.

CCTV

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that the budget for CCTV is set at £5000.

Administration

The Clerk outlined the recommendations of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee.

Resolved: -that the Administration Budget is set at £42,000.

Cllr Expenses

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that the Cllr Expenses budget is maintained at £1,075.

Staffing

Resolved: - To approve the recommendation of the Staffing Committee that the Staffing budget is set at £153,554 and that an incremental pay rise be awarded to the Groundsman and Project and Finance Assistant.

Contributions

Resolved: - to approve a contributions budget of £22,600 to include an allocation of £5000 from general reserves towards the Christmas Lights infrastructure upgrade.

Swimming Pool

Resolved: - to approve the Swimming Pool budget of £67,300.

Msc.

Wem Town Hall

Resolved: - to allocate a budget of £16,000 as per year 3 of the 3 year service level agreement.

Cllr Soul did not vote on this item.

Markets

Resolved: - to allocate a budget of £1000 towards the running and management of markets.

Town Centre Improvements

Resolved: - to allocate a budget of £5341 for Town Centre improvements.

Resolved: - to approve a 2024-25 expenditure budget of £464,670.

The Clerk outlined the income budget and it was

Resolved: - to set an income budget (excluding precept) of £34,670 with an allocation of £30,000 from earmarked and general reserves.

7b) To consider the 3 year forward budget report.

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

617/23 **Town Council Precept** - To agree the Town Council precept for 2024-2025.

Resolved: - to set a Town Council precept for 2024-25 of £400,000.

Meeting ended 19.22

Mayor.....