

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> 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, P Glover, D Hill, M Meakin, D Parry, E Towers.

Mrs P O’Hagan (Town Clerk).

**385/23 To receive apologies and reasons for absence.**

**Resolved:- to note the following apologies for absence Cllrs Johnson and Granger.**

Absent Cllrs Hoffmann and Edge.

**386/23 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.

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Dispensation Awarded</b>
<b>Cllr Towers</b>	Shropshire Council Twin-hatted member declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council’s relationship with Shropshire Council.	Dispensation to allow participation and voting on all matters relating to Shropshire Council
	Item 390/23 <b>Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre</b> - Disclosable pecuniary interest as a Board Member.	Participate but not vote in discussions regarding WSLC
	<b>Wem Sports and Social Assoc.</b> - Bias interest as a Trustee.	Allowed to discuss but not vote on all matters relating to WSSA
	Item 392/23 <b>Precept</b> – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town.	Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept
<b>Cllr Meakin</b>	Item 388/23 <b>Wem Christmas Festival Committee</b> - Bias interest in the application for funding as member of the Committee.	
	Item 390/23 <b>The Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery</b> – Bias interest in the application for funding as member of the Committee.	
	<b>Wem Sports and Social Assoc.</b> - Bias Interest in the application for funding as a Trustee.	
	Item 392/23 <b>Precept</b> – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.	Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept

<b>Cllr Glover</b>	<p>Item 390/23 <b>Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre -</b> Disclosable pecuniary interest as a Board Member.</p> <p><b>Wem Youth Club</b> – Bias interest as wife is committee member.</p> <p>Item 392/23 <b>Precept</b> – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer 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>
<b>Cllr Broomhall</b>	<p><b>Shropshire Council</b> Twin-hatted member declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council.</p> <p>Item 388/23 <b>Wem Christmas Festival Committee -</b> Bias interest in the application for funding as a member of the Committee.</p> <p>Item 392/23 <b>Precept</b> – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer 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>
<b>Cllr Drummond</b>	<p>Item 390/23 <b>Wem Sports and Social Assoc. -</b> Bias interest in the application for funding as Trustee.</p> <p><b>Millennium Green -</b> Bias interest in the application for funding as Trustee.</p> <p>Item 392/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
<b>Cllr Soul</b>	<p>Item 391/23 <b>Wem Town Hall -</b> Pecuniary Interest as Trustee.</p> <p>Item 392/23 <b>Precept</b> – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss but not vote on matters relating to Wem Town Hall</p>
<b>Cllr Dodd</b>	<p>Item 392/23 <b>Precept</b> – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
<b>Cllr Hill</b>	<p>Item 392/23 <b>Precept</b> – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
<b>Cllr Parry</b>	<p>Item 390/23 Whitchurch Road Cemetery - bias interest as member of the Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery.</p> <p>Item 392/23 <b>Precept</b> – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>

<b>Cllr Crawshaw</b>	Item 391/23 Wem Town Hall – wife is a trustee.	
	Item 392/23 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.	

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

Cllrs Broomhall and Meakin requested a dispensation under item 388/23 to speak but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Christmas Lights and Festival.

Cllrs Hoffmann and Soul applied for a dispensation under item 392/23 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 Hoffmann and Soul to permit them to discuss and vote on the annual precept during the electoral term.**

**Cllrs Meakin and Broomhall to permit them to discuss but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Christmas Lights and Festival.**

387/23 **Estimated Year End Income / Expenditure 2022-23** – to consider estimated budget report and accompanying notes.

**Resolved: - to note the report.**

388/23 **Christmas Lights** - to discuss report outlining recommendation of the working party.

Cllr Meakin chairman of the Christmas Lights and Festival Committee explained that the request that the Town Council consider taking over the operation of the Christmas Lights received from the Committee Treasurer was incorrect. She explained that the committee only required the Town Council to pay for the upgrading of the electrical lines. Frustration was expressed that the Town Council had not been notified of this matter sooner especially as a working party had been established on 24.11.22 which had spent considerable time and effort producing the report to be considered.

**Resolved: - that the proposed Christmas lights budget amount be agreed for the purposes of the 2023-24 budget. But that the final implementation of a new or revised lighting scheme be deferred to allow for further discussions with the Christmas Lights and Festival Committee with a final decision to be made by the end of March 2023.**

389/23 **Fees and Charges for 2023-24** - to review the following charges as per recommendations of the Amenities and Services Committee.

a) Love Lane Cemetery charges.

**Resolved: - to approve the recommendations of the Amenities and Services Committee and increase cemetery charges as per the recommendation for 2023/24.**

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

**Resolved:** - to approve the recommendations of the Amenities and Services Committee and increase allotment charges as per the recommendation for 2023/24.

390/23 **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 2023-24.
- To consider any additional requests for further financial support on a case by case basis.

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

#### **Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery**

Cllr Parry and Meakin 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 2023/24.

#### **Wem Youth Club**

Cllrs Glover 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 2023/24.

Cllr Glover returned to the meeting.

#### **Wem Christmas Lights & Festival Committee**

**Resolved:** - to defer a decision to this to a later 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 2023-24.

#### **Wem Sports and Social Association**

Cllr Meakin 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.

Cllrs Meakin and Drummond returned to the meeting.

391/23 **2023-24 Budget**

7a) To consider the Town Council budget for 2023-2024

### **Lighting**

**Resolved:** - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the Public Lighting Budget be set at £39,900.

### **Cemetery**

**Resolved:** - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the Burial Ground Budget be set at £15,340 including the contribution to Whitchurch Road Cemetery with an allocation of £6440 from earmarked reserves for the cemetery extension.

### **Allotments**

**Resolved:** - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the Allotments Budget be set at £1,200.

### **Recreation**

**Resolved:** - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the recreation budget is increased to £61,200 and that £10,000 from this budget will be allocated from general reserves to contribute towards the Recreation Ground railings replacement.

### **Toilets**

**Resolved:** - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the Public Toilets budget is set at £13,100.

### **Bus Shelters**

**Resolved:** - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the bus shelter budget is set at £1,600.

### **Miscellaneous Amenities/Services**

#### **Floral Planters**

**Resolved:** - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the budget for floral planters is set at £5000.

### **CCTV**

**Resolved:** - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the budget for CCTV is set at £5000.

### **Administration**

The Clerk outlined the recommendations of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee and a discussion took place on the need to increase the overall administration budget due to the relocation of the Town Council office from 1.4.23.

**Resolved:** -that the Administration Budget is set at £40,435.

### **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 Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that the Staffing budget is set at £135,754 and that an incremental pay rise be awarded to the Groundsman, Clerk and Project and Finance Assistant.

### **Contributions**

**Resolved: - to**

- **approve a contributions budget of £39,600 inclusive of an allocation of £30,000 towards Christmas Lighting Upgrade and the 2023 festival.**
- **£21,000 of the allocation for the Christmas lighting upgrade to be taken from general reserves.**

**Swimming Pool**

In addition to the contribution agreed for Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre under item 390/23 it was reported that the budget for insurance and repairs be maintained at 2022/23 levels.

**Resolved: - to approve the Swimming Pool budget of £100,300 with an allocation of £36,000 to be taken from general reserves for the supply and installation of the pool liner.**

**Msc.**

**Wem Town Hall**

**Resolved: - to allocate a budget of £18,000 as per year 2 of the 3 year service level agreement.**

**Markets**

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

**Resolved: - to approve a 2023-24 expenditure budget of £478,504.**

The Clerk outlined the income budget and it was

**Resolved: - to set an income budget (excluding precept) of £24,670 with an allocation of £73,440 from earmarked and general reserves.**

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

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

392/23 **Town Council Precept** - To agree the Town Council precept for 2023-2024.

**Resolved: - to set a Town Council precept for 2023-24 of £380,394.**

Meeting ended 20.30

Mayor.....