

Minutes of the Special Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 21st January 2021 at 7 p.m. on the Zoom Virtual Meeting platform

Present: - Councillor P Glover (Mayor), Councillors, R Drummond, K Edge, A Everett, C Granger, D Hill, P Johnson, M Meakin, C Mellings, G Soul, E Towers.

Mrs Penny O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

305/21 **To Receive Apologies for absence.**

Cllr Dee

Absent Cllr Nash and Broomhall

306/21 **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
Cllr Mellings	<p>Item 309/21 Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre - a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest as a Director of WSLC.</p> <p>Millennium Green - Bias and predetermination interest in the application for funding as a Trustee</p> <p>Wem Sports and Social Assoc. - Bias interest and predetermination in the application for funding as Trustee.</p> <p>Item 311/21 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p> <p>Shropshire Council – twin hatted member</p>	<p>Allowed to participate but not vote in discussions regarding WSLC</p> <p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p> <p>Allowed to participate but not vote in discussions regarding Shropshire Council</p>
Cllr Towers	<p>Item 309/21 Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre - Disclosable pecuniary interest as a Board Member.</p> <p>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 311/21 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to participate but not vote in discussions regarding WSLC</p> <p>Allowed to discuss but not vote on all matters relating to Whitchurch Road Cemetery</p> <p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>

Cllr Meakin	<p>Item 309/21 Wem Christmas Festival Committee - Bias interest in the application for funding as member of the Committee.</p> <p>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 311/21 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Christmas Festival</p> <p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Glover	<p>Item 309/21 Wem Youth Club – Bias interest as wife is committee member.</p> <p>Item 311/21 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Granger	<p>Item 309/21 Wem Christmas Festival Committee - Bias interest in the application for funding as a member of the Committee.</p> <p>Item 311/21 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Drummond	<p>Item 309/21 Wem Sports and Social Assoc. - Bias interest in the application for funding as Trustee.</p> <p>Wem Christmas Festival Committee - Bias interest in the application for funding as a member of the Committee.</p> <p>Item 311/21 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Soul	<p>Item 311/21 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Edge	<p>Item 309/21 Wem Youth Club – Bias interest as a member of the Committee.</p> <p>Item 311/21 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Hill	<p>Item 311/21 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.</p>	

Cllr Everett	Item 311/21 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.	
Cllr Johnson	Item 311/21 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town.	Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept

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

Cllr Hill and Cllr Everett applied for a dispensation under item 311/21 Town Council precept to allow them to discuss and vote on the setting of the Council Precept. Cllrs Towers and Drummond applied for a dispensation to allow them to discuss but not vote on any matters relating to Wem Sports and Social Association

Resolved: - to award the following dispensations

- To Cllrs Hill and Everett to permit them to discuss and vote on the annual precept during the electoral term.
- To Cllrs Towers and Drummond to allow them to discuss but not vote on any matters relating to Wem Sports and Social Association during the electoral term.

307/21 **2020-21 Estimated Year End Income / Expenditure** – to consider estimated budget report and accompanying notes.

Resolved: - to note the report and authorise the Finance Committee to make recommendations for the allocation of any overspend to earmarked reserves at its meeting in April 2021.

308/21 **Fees and Charges for 2021-22** - to review the following charges as per recommendations of the Amenities and Services Committee.

a) Love Lane Cemetery – Interment and Memorial fees.

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Service Committee that Love Lane Cemetery fees are increased as per the recommendation.

b) Love Lane Allotments – Annual rents.

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Service Committee that Love Lane Allotment fees are increased as per the recommendation.

309/21 **Larger Contributions** - To consider contribution requests received from larger organisations running services or facilities within the Town.

Resolved: - to approve the following contributions for 2021-2022

Wem Swimming & Lifestyle Centre

Cllr Mellings outlined the challenging year that the pool has had due to the pandemic and the exact losses were still unknown.

Resolved: - to award Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre a contribution of £55,000 and to agree to consider an allocation of an emergency grant to Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre later in the 2021/22 financial year if such a request is made. Cllrs Mellings and Towers did not vote on this item.

Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery

Cllr Meakin left the meeting.

Resolved: - to award Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery a financial contribution of £2000 towards maintenance and upkeep of the Cemetery.

Cllr Meakin returned to the meeting.

Wem Youth Club

Cllrs Glover and Edge left the meeting and Cllr Mellings took the Chair.

Resolved: - to award Wem Youth Club £2000 towards the running of the Youth Club and to agree to consider a further allocation of up to £6000 later in the financial year if a request is made.

Cllrs Glover and Edge returned to the meeting.

Wem Christmas Lights & Festival Committee

Cllrs Granger and Drummond left the meeting.

Resolved: - to award Wem Christmas Lights & Festival Committee £3000 towards the upkeep of the Christmas Lights and running of the festival in 2021.

Cllrs Granger and Drummond returned to the meeting.

Wem Millennium Green

Cllr Mellings left the meeting.

Resolved: - to award Wem Millennium Green £1700 towards the maintenance and upkeep of the Millennium Green.

Wem Sports and Social Association

Cllrs Meakin left the meeting.

Resolved: - to award Wem Sports and Social Association £19000 towards the maintenance and upkeep of the land and properties managed by the Association. £6500 to allocated specifically for equipment.

Cllrs Mellings and Meakin returned to the meeting.

310/21 **2021-22 Budget**

To consider the Town Council budget for 2021-2022

A discussion took place on the budget setting and the issues that the Council were having to face due to a reduction in the tax base.

Each budget heading was discussed and the following decisions made: -

Lighting

Councillors were made aware of the contribution from earmarked reserves towards the column replacement programme as previously agreed.

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the Public Lighting Budget be set at £33,403.

Cemetery

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the Burial Ground Budget be reduced to £6,090 including the contribution to Whitchurch Road Cemetery.

Allotments

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the Allotments Budget be set at £1,000.

Administration

The Clerk outlined that the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee.

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that the Administration Budget is set at £26,490.

Contributions

Resolved: - to approve the contributions budget of £21,856.

Recreation

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the recreation budget is maintained at £32,600.

Swimming Pool

In addition to the contribution agreed for Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre under item 147a/20 it was reported that the budget for insurance and repairs be maintained at 2020/21 levels.

Resolved: - to approve the Swimming Pool budget of £64,300.

Staffing

Resolved: -

- To approve the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that the Staffing budget is set at £116,174 and that a pay rise of one increment be awarded to the Groundsman.
- To approve the recommendation of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairman of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee following the Clerk's appraisal that she be awarded a pay rise of one increment.

Cllr Expenses

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

Toilets.

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the Public Toilets budget is set at £12,500.

Bus Shelters

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the bus shelter budget is set at £1,400

Miscellaneous

Floral Planters

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee to maintain the budget for floral planters at £5,500.

CCTV

Resolved: - to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the CCTV budget is maintained at £5,000.

Town Transformation

The Clerk outlined that the funds allocated under this budget heading were for the Town Council to carry out specialist works associated with the taking on of new assets/services/facilities in the town.

Resolved: - to allocate a budget of £7000 to this budget heading.

Wem Town Hall

Resolved: - to allocate a budget of £22,000 as per year 3 of the 3 year service level agreement.

Recreation Ground Toilet Block

Resolved: - to allocate a budget of £1000.

Resolved: - to approve a 2021-22 expenditure budget of £357,388.

Income

The Clerk outlined the income budget and it was

Resolved: - to authorise the following contributions from earmarked reserves
£606 for Christmas Lights Lease
£300 Lamp post poppies project
£7403 Streetlight column replacement

Resolved: - to set an income budget (excluding precept) of £15,080 with a contribution of £8,309 from earmarked reserves.

Resolved: -to formally adopt the attached budget for 2021- 2022.

311/21 **Town Council Precept** - To agree the Town Council precept for 2021-2022.

Resolved: - to set the annual precept for 2021-22 at £333,999.

Meeting ended 20.20

Mayor.....