

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 26th October 2023 at 7 p.m. in the Town Council Meeting Room, Wem Library, High Street, Wem

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

Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

0 members of the public present.

Amanda Cheeseman Public Health Development Officer attended the meeting to give an overview of the Wem Resident Health & Wellbeing survey (launched 23.10.23). Amanda and her colleagues outlined the survey and requested that the Town Council work closely with the officers concerning information sharing and promoting the survey to ensure that as many hard-to-reach groups are consulted with. It was explained that paper copies were available and colleagues would also be visiting the town to help seek the views of residents in the place plan area.

562/23 To note apologies for absence received.
None received.

563/23 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.

The following interests were declared.

Councillor	Item	Dispensation
Cllrs 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
Cllrs Towers and Glover	Item 573/23 Bias interest as directors of WSLC	To allow participation but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Swimming & Lifestyle Centre (item 57/21b/21 Minutes 30.9.21)

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

An application was received from Cllr Barker to speak but not vote on any matters relating to Wem Sports and Social Association.

RESOLVED:- to award Cllr Barker a dispensation to speak but not vote on any matter concerning Wem Sports and Social Association.

564/23 Public Participation - a period of 15 minutes will be set aside for residents of Wem Town to speak.

None present.

565/23 Council Minutes - to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 28th September 2023.

RESOLVED:-

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Town Council ordinary meeting held on 28.9.23 and they were duly signed by The Mayor as a true record.

566/23 Progress report - To consider the Clerks progress report on decisions made at previous meetings.
The Clerk was asked to arrange a meeting in late November / early December for a WSSA briefing Session and an extra Finance and Corporate Governance Meeting.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

567/23 Planning Applications
a) to note the recent planning decisions.

RESOLVED:- to note the decisions.

b) to consider the following planning applications
23/04484/TPO Tregwynt, Soulton Road, Wem Proposal: To remove 1no. Corsican Pine (T1) protected by The North Shropshire District Council (Soulton Road, Wem) TPO 1975 (Ref. NS/00078/75).

RESOLVED:- to object to the proposal as there is insufficient information provided in the application on the reason for removal of the tree.

c) Planning Appeal 23/03188/REF Demolition of two-thirds of Edinburgh House and change of use to the remainder (the former Police Station element) to create two floors of one and two bedroom apartments (10 apartments in total, across ground and first floors) with second floor remaining as office space (Class E) and erection of 18No dwellings on land at Edinburgh House.

RESOLVED:- not to submit any additional comments.

568/23 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 the internal controls carried out by the Mayor were up to date.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

c) Accounts for payment - to approve accounts for payment and those approved under delegated powers.

RESOLVED:- to authorise the following accounts for payment

Direct Debits and payments made prior to meeting.

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	BACS no
Shropshire Council	Salaries Oct HMRC Pensions	6170.09 2294.28 2112.41		6170.09 2294.28 2112.41	PAYROLL HMRC LGPS
EE	Mobile phone charges	26.00	5.20	31.20	DD41.23
Waterplus	Car park toilet water 7.9.23 – 7.10.23	44.15	0.00	44.15	DD42.23
Unity Trust Bank	BACS charges	17.54	0.00	17.54	DD43.23
West Mercia Energy	Car park toilets energy August 2023	60.38	3.02	63.40	DD44.23
Business2Business	Telephone/Broadband October	108.47	21.69	130.16	DD45.23
Lloyds Bank	Credit Card Payment	3.00	0.00	3.00	DD46.23
Credit card payments for information only					
Lloyds Bank	Monthly charge Oct	3.00	0.00	3.00	CC7.23
Forge & Foundry	'Letters to Heaven' box	150.00	30.00	180.00	CC8.23

Payments

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	Chq / BACS No
Healthmatic	Car Park Toilet Cleaning	799.83	159.87	959.20	124.23
ISM IT	IT Support	99.99	20.00	119.99	125.23
PG Skips	Bin Emptying	138.08	27.60	165.68	126.23
Shropshire Council	Office Rent	3835.50	0.00	3835.50	127.23
Education Sales	HDMI Cable	6.99	1.40	8.39	128.23
Hunter Lloyd	Rec Toilet electrics	185.00	37.00	222.00	129.23
ISM IT Ltd	IT Contract Licenses	213.37	42.67	256.04	130.23
WSSA	Reimbursement (PPE)	36.66	0.00	36.66	131.23
Mark Fitton	Bus shelter cleaning	75.00	0.00	75.00	132.23
Healthmatic	Recreation Toilet Cleaning 1-31 October	434.86	86.97	521.83	133.23
Shropshire Council	Non-Domestic Rates	2805.75	0.00	2805.75	134.23
Stevenson, Carter	Skate Park Refurb	3500.00	700.00	4200.00	135.23
Healthmatic	Call out & repair: Car park toilets	656.52	131.30	787.82	136.23
Shaw & Sons Ltd	Exclusive Right of Burial book	128.00	25.60	153.60	137.23
Sign & Poster Ltd	Road Closure notices	174.00	34.80	208.80	138.23
Arrow County Supplies	Refuse Sacks	176.95	35.39	212.34	139.23
SLCC Shropshire Branch	Clerks Training Day	30.00	0.00	30.00	140.23
David Kaiserman	Planning Training	434.00	0.00	434.00	141.23
Evans Welding Limited	Cemetery Railings Deposit (50%)	6377.95	1275.59	7653.54	142.23
A Roberts	Reimbursement - parking	22.35	4.45	26.80	143.23
StageTech	Stage Hire (Christmas Lights Festival)	2300.00	460.00	2760.00	144.23

RBL Poppy Appeal	Poppy wreath donation	20.00	0.00	20.00	300125
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569/23 Finance and Corporate Governance Committee held 12.10.23

a) to note draft minutes.

RESOLVED:- to note the draft minutes of 12.10.23.

b) to consider the Committee recommendation under minute point 9 that

- The terms of reference of the Finance and Corporate Governance are amended to remove staffing responsibilities as per the report.
- The Town Council's Grievance, Discipline and Appeals panels are disbanded.
- A staffing committee is established and terms of reference adopted as per the report with immediate effect.
- Staffing policies amended to reflect this as per the report (copy enclosed).

RESOLVED:- to approve the committee recommendations and nominate the following Councillors onto the Staffing Committee, Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Cllrs Broomhall, Gascoigne, Dodd, Towers and Hoffmann.

570/23 Events Liaison Group 3.10.23 - To note the report of a meeting of the Events Liaison Group to discuss the arrangements for Remembrance Parade and Service on 12.11.23.

RESOLVED:- to note the report and arrangement for the Remembrance Parade and Service.

571/23 Recreation Ground Railings – to consider quotes for supply and installation of replacement railings on Wem recreation ground adjacent to Aston Street. A discussion took place on this item and the quotes presented.

RESOLVED:- that

The Clerk to request samples of the railings to be installed from all companies and subject to the samples being satisfactory to delegate authority to the Clerk following discussion with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to place the works order for the removal of existing railings and supply and installation of new railings on Wem Recreation Ground.

572/23 Polling District, Polling Place and Polling Station Review – to consider whether to submit a response to the review.

RESOLVED:- to comment that the Town Council meeting room in Wem library is offered as a polling station at no charge.

573/23 Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre – To consider a request from WSLC board that subject to the outcome of the consultant's report into the reduction of energy costs at the centre, the Town Council registers with Salix Finance and applies to Salix Finance for Decarbonisation Funding.

The Clerk explained that no further information had been received in this matter

RESOLVED:- to delegate authority to the Town Clerk following consultation with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to permit her to register the Town Council

for Salix Finance and if necessary, apply to Salix Finance for Decarbonisation Funding subject to WSLC confirming that this project will not be to the financial detriment of the Town Council.

574/23 Maintenance of Shropshire Council owned public open spaces

To consider the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that except for the play equipment, due to the cost and staff time involved, the Town Council stops maintaining the Shropshire Council owned public open spaces Cordwell Park, Lowe Hill Gardens and The Grove from 1.4.24. The Clerk explained that Shropshire Council had offered to contribute £400 per area towards the maintenance of these areas which would total £1200 per year but this would not address the issue of staff workload.

RESOLVED:- to approve the recommendation of the Finance Committee and to inform Shropshire Council that, with the exception of the existing play equipment, the Town Council will stop maintaining the Shropshire Council owned public open spaces at Lowe Hill Gardens, The Grove and Cordwell Park from 1.4.24.

575/23 Correspondence

a) To consider request to install a memorial bench.

RESOLVED:- to

- Instruct the Clerk and Groundsman to carry out an inspection of all benches to identify any that may require refurbishment and contact the person making the request.
- The Town Council consider adopting a memorial bench policy for future requests.

576/23 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. A written report compiled by Cllrs Towers and Broomhall was previously circulated.

RESOLVED: to note the report.

577/23 Dates of future meetings – to note the date and time of November meeting.

RESOLVED:- that the next meeting of the Town Council will be held on 30.11.23 and an extra meeting of Finance and Corporate Governance Committee to be held 23.11.23.

578/23 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 (none present).

Town Council Office

a) Lease extension – for update.

The Clerk reported that she had no additional information in this matter.

b) Alternative locations for the Town Council office – to consider.

It was reported that an inspection had been made of 39-41 High Street but whilst it was a suitable size the financial commitment required by the Council was considered to be too high.

RESOLVED:-

- **Not to progress with any further discussions into the purchase or lease of 39-41 High Street.**
- **That the Clerk explores other possible locations as suggested at the meeting.**

Meeting ended 20.20

Mayor.....