

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 28th September 2023
at 7 p.m. in the Town Council Meeting Room, Wem Library, High Street, Wem

Present:- Councillors, R Barker, R Dodd, R Drummond, R Gascoigne, P Glover, C Granger, D Hill, M Hoffmann, P Johnson (attended at 19.03), M Meakin, D Parry (Deputy Mayor), P Broomhall, E Towers.

Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).
0 members of the public present.

PC Jack Harper attended at the start of the meeting to provide an update on the work of Wem Safer Neighbourhood Team and outlined recent policing activity and changes to the Wem SNT team with the promotion of PC Heathcote to Sergeant. He reported that speed enforcement will be looked at along with an increase in the number of patrols around the town. Work is also planned with the local schools and youth club.

541/23 To note apologies for absence received.
The following apologies were noted - G Soul.

542/23 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests.
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 554/23 Bias interest as director 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)
Cllr Towers	Item 555/23 Bias interest as trustee of WSSA	To discuss but not vote on any matters relating to Wem Sports & Social Association (item 57/21b/21 Minutes 30.9.21)
Cllrs Drummond, Meakin and Barker	Item 555/23 Bias interest as trustees of WSSA	

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

543/23 Public Participation - a period of 15 minutes will be set aside for residents of Wem Town to speak.

Cllr Towers as a member of the public raised a concern that Covid 19 vaccinations are not being offered in the town.

544/23 Council Minutes - to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 27th July 2023 and extraordinary meeting held on 24th August 2023.

RESOLVED:-

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Town Council ordinary meeting held on 27.7.23 and they were duly signed by The Deputy Mayor as a true record.

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Town Council held on 24.8.23 and they were duly signed by The Deputy Mayor as a true record.

545/23 Progress report - To consider the Clerks progress report on decisions made at previous meetings.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

546/23 Planning Applications

a) to note the recent planning decisions.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

b) to consider the following planning applications

i) **23/03473/VAR** Thomas Adams School, Lowe Hill Road, Wem Shropshire Shropshire SY4 5UB Proposal: Variation of Condition No.2 (approved plans) attached to planning permission 21/04995/FUL dated 14/12/2021 to allow for an enlarged administration support office and rationalisation of roofing material.

RESOLVED:- to support the variation as it will improve the facility.

ii) **23/03610/FUL** Wem Sewage Works Orchard Way Wem Shropshire Proposal: Demolition of one building and the installation of one sludge thickening building and motor control centre kiosk.

RESOLVED:- to support the application as the proposal will update and enhance the existing sewage treatment facilities for town.

547/23 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 all internal control checks 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 approve the payments made under delegated authority and payments presented at the meeting as detailed below.

August: Direct Debits and Payments made under Delegated Powers

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	BACS no
Shropshire Council	Salaries Aug HMRC Pensions			6125.37 2242.95 2066.63	PAYROLL HMRC LGPS
Waterplus	Car Park Toilets – water (7.7.23 – 7.8.23)	44.80	0.00	44.80	DD27.23
EE	Mobile Phone charges (9.8.23 – 8.9.23)	26.00	5.20	31.20	DD28.23
Unity Bank	BACS charges (July)	17.54	0.00	17.54	DD29.23
Business2Business	Telephone and Broadband (August)	108.47	21.69	130.16	DD30.23
WME	Electric Toilets July	60.38	3.02	63.40	DD31.23
WME	Electrics Toilets June	57.90	2.90	60.8	DD32.23
Lloyds Bank	Corporate Card charges	3.00	0.00	3.00	CC5.23
Instant Print	Market posters	41.65	8.33	49.98	CC6.25
Security Wise	CCTV call out	439.00	87.80	526.80	89.23
Bob the Mole	Mole Control	75.00	0.00	75.00	90.23
PG Skips	Bin Emptying July	127.10	25.40	152.50	91.23
Healthmatic	Rec Toilet Cleaning (1-31 August)	434.86	86.97	521.83	92.23
Healthmatic	Car Park Toilet Cleaning (17 Jul – 16 Aug)	799.33	159.87	959.20	93.23
Shropshire Council	Payroll SLA Charge (1.4.23 – 31.3.24)	625.00	125.00	750.00	94.23
ISM IT	IT support	99.99	20.00	119.99	95.23
Shropshire Council	Streetlighting Energy (Q2)	2141.28	428.26	2569.54	96.23
DW Evans	Gravedigging - July	1305.00	0.00	1305.00	97.23
Mark Fitton	Bus Shelter cleaning	65.00	0.00	65.00	98.23
PKF	External Audit	1050.00	210.00	1260.00	99.23
A Roberts	Reimbursement – Parking Jul/Aug	17.31	3.49	20.80	100.23
Shropshire Pools & Spas	Swimming Pool Liner (balance), ladder cushions	18461.50	3692.30	22153.80	101.23
Parish Online	Mapping Services	261.00	52.20	313.20	102.23
Garroll Construction	Pool Building Structural Works	1582.00	316.40	1898.40	103.23
Kings	Cable ties	10.05	2.01	12.06	300123

September

Direct Debits and payments made prior to September meeting.

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	BACS no
Shropshire Council	Salaries Sep HMRC Pensions			6244.61 2276.30 2015.29	PAYROLL BACSHMRC BACSLGPS
PWLB	Loan Repayment	1898.48	0.00	1898.48	DD30.23
EE	Mobile Phones	26.00	5.20	31.20	DD31.23
Unity Bank	Cash/cheque charges	13.20	0.00	13.20	DD32.23

Waterplus	Car Park Toilet water 7.8.23 – 7.9.23	44.80	0.00	44.80	DD33.23
Unity Bank	BACS charges	17.54	0.00	17.54	DD34.23
Unity Bank	Transaction Charges	35.55	0.00	35.55	DD35.23
WME	Car park toilet energy 1.6.23 – 30.6.23	57.90	2.90	60.80	DD36.23
WME	Car Park Toilet energy 1.7.23 – 31.7.23	60.38	3.02	63.40	DD37.23
Lloyds Bank	Credit Card Payment	52.98	0.00	52.98	DD38.23
Business2Business	Telephone/Broadband September	108.47	21.69	130.16	DD39.23
<i>Credit card payments for information only</i>					
Lloyds Bank	Monthly charge	3.00	0.00	3.00	CC 7.23

Payments

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	Chq / BACS No
Will Good	Adjusting pool steps	50.00	10.00	60.00	104.23
Healthmatic	Rec Toilet Cleaning 1-30 September	434.86	86.97	521.83	105.23
Healthmatic	Car Park Toilet Cleaning 17 Aug – 16 Sept	799.33	159.87	959.20	106.23
Wem Swimming & Lifestyle Centre	Grant (payments 2&3 of 4)	27500.00	0.00	27500.00	107.23
PG Skips	Bin Emptying - August	101.68	20.32	122.00	108.23
DW Evans	Grave Digging – August	327.00	0.00	327.00	109.23
SYA	Heads Up Summer 2023	3500.00	700.00	4200.00	110.23
SYA	Heads Up Autumn 2023	3500.00	700.00	4200.00	111.23
Security Wise	CCTV Maintenance 13.9.23 – 12.9.24	600.00	120.00	720.00	112.23
City Environmental Services	Asbestos removal Love Lane allotments	420.00	84.00	504.00	113.23
ISM IT	IT Support	99.99	20.00	119.99	114.23
Ricoh	Photocopying charges 1 June – 30 November	173.22	34.65	207.87	115.23
Waterplus	Recreation Ground Toilets Water 12.5.23 – 1.9.23	55.87	6.02	61.89	116.23
County Security	Gazebo Storage Unit damage repair	112.10	22.42	134.52	117.23
Mark Fitton	Bus shelter cleaning	285.00	0.00	285.00	118.23
Viking	Stationery	63.34	12.67	76.01	119.23
Bob the Mole	Mole Control	75.00	0.00	75.00	120.23
Security Wise	CCTV call out	169.00	33.80	202.80	121.23
David Murray	Summer Planters	4047.00	0.00	4047.00	122.23
Petty Cash	Top up	66.20	0.00	66.20	300125

d) Signatory for Nationwide Account – to appoint an additional signatory.

RESOLVED:- to nominate Cllr Broomhall and Cllr Granger as additional signatories on the Nationwide Savings Account.

e) Completion of 2022-23 External Audit - to note the completion of the external audit for 2022-23 and to note that the conclusion of the audit has been advertised in accordance with guidance.

RESOLVED:- to note the completion of the external audit for 2022-23.

548/23 Finance and Corporate Governance Committee held 13.7.23 – to note draft minutes.

RESOLVED:- to note the draft minutes.

549/23 Christmas Lights and Festival

To consider notes from Events Liaison Group meeting held 19.9.23 and receive verbal report from traders meeting held 21.9.23.

A discussion took place on this item and thanks were recorded for the input of Wem Rotary for this project as it would not have been possible without their help.

RESOLVED:- to receive the notes and note the verbal report from the traders meeting.

550/23 Love Lane Cemetery

a) Extension works – to consider quotes for new path.

Three quotes were presented for discussion and Cllr Parry explained that the extension working party had reviewed quotes and recommended that company A be awarded the contract.

RESOLVED:- award the contract for installing a new path at Love Lane Cemetery as per the approved specification to R A Allmark.

b) Quote to install new fencing – to consider.

RESOLVED:-

- To suspend financial regulations to permit only 1 quote to be considered due to the sensitive nature of the site and work involved.
- To award the contract for the supply and installation of 50m of fencing to match the existing fencing, complete with the installation of 1 pair of double gates and 2 single gates to Evans Welding Ltd.
- To allocate up to £3000 from general reserves for the works with the balance of the cost being made up from Cemetery Extension earmarked reserves, an allocation from unbudgeted cemetery income received during 2023-24 and vired from underspent cemetery expenditure codes.
- To approve the payment of a 50% deposit for materials.

c) To consider correspondence relating to installation of a Letters to Heaven Post box.

RESOLVED:- to approve the purchase and installation of a Letters to Heaven postbox and to allocate funds for this purchase from the Cemetery Repairs and Maintenance budget.

d) Hedge Cutting quote – to consider.

RESOLVED:- to approve the quote received and award the hedge cutting contract to Via Della Emelia.

551/23 Asset Community Value Request – to consider.

RESOLVED:- to delegate authority to the Town Clerk to respond to the questions as outlined in the request but not to submit any extra information regarding the application.

552/23 Recreation Ground

a) Railings - to make a decision regarding the replacement of the recreation ground railings and consider commemorative arch proposal.
A discussion took place on this item and it was

RESOLVED:-

- To seek quotes for the supply and installation of new railings to replace the existing railings on Wem Recreation Ground adjacent to Aston Street for consideration at the October meeting.
- To consider seeking quotes for the installation of a staggered barrier as part of the works at the Aston Street entrance.

Cllr Hoffmann presented his suggestion for a decorative arch to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II and it was

FURTHER RESOLVED:- To defer to a future meeting discussion on the installation of a decorative arch at the entrance to Wem Recreation Ground from Aston Street.

b) Kiosk – to receive a verbal report from working party site meeting.
Cllr Barker gave a verbal report from this meeting and outlined the research he had completed to date on the project.

RESOLVED:- To defer discussions on this item to a future meeting.

553/23 Streetlight column replacement – to consider proposed columns for replacement in year 3 of the upgrade programme and review cost. It was explained that this work would be carried out as part of the Town Council's street lighting contract.

RESOLVED:- to approve the quote submitted by Highline Electrical for the replacement of 14 concrete columns and to consider an allocation for the replacement of additional concrete column replacements in the 2024-25 budget.

554/23 Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre – for update on work identified in structural inspection. To consider undertaking works to additional changing room as detailed in the structural inspection.

It was reported that the action plan had identified that works to the remaining changing room as identified in the structural inspection were programmed to be undertaken in 2024-25.

RESOLVED:- not to undertake any additional works to the changing room in this financial year.

555/23 Wem Sports and Social Association (WSSA) – to consider roles of Secretary and Treasurer.

Cllrs Barker, Drummond and Meakin left the room and took no part in discussions. Several members of the Council expressed concern that they did not fully understand the set up of WSSA and its relationship with the Town Council. A general discussion took place on the roles and Councillors expressed concern about the inclusion of the word conscience as part of the role of the secretary.

RESOLVED:-

- **To agree the roles of treasurer and secretary subject to an amendment to paragraph 5 removing the word conscience which would be delegated to the Town Clerk, Cllrs Parry and Gascoigne to reword**
- **To hold a meeting to brief Councillors on WSSA.**

Cllrs Barker, Drummond and Meakin returned to the room.

556/23 Correspondence

a) D Day 80 – to consider taking part in the nation's celebrations.

RESOLVED:- to task the Events Liaison Group to consider arrangements to mark this event once the 2023 Remembrance Commemorations are complete.

b) CAB Request to use meeting room – to consider.

RESOLVED:- that subject to the room being available to approve use of the Town Council meeting room free of charge by Citizens Advice Bureau working with Whitchurch foodbank to offer bespoke support foodbank recipients in the town.

c) SALC AGM – to consider submitting a motion concerning Shropshire Council response times to emails.

**RESOLVED:- to submit the following motion to the SALC AGM
That SALC be asked to request that Shropshire Council consider the creation of a joint communication charter between Shropshire Council and Town and Parish Councils in order to improve response times to emails, telephone messages and letters, as current response times are unacceptable.**

d) Christmas Tree Festival and Carol Service - to discuss invitation to take part.

RESOLVED:- to agree to take part in St Peters and St Pauls Christmas Tree Festival and carol service.

e) Public Right of Way amendment – to consider.

RESOLVED:- that the Town Council has no objection to the proposed amendments to the diversion of footpath 11 in Wem Urban Parish.

557/23 UKSPF Application – to consider submission of for market promotion.

RESOLVED:- to approve the submission of a grant jointly with Oswestry Town Council to include the purchase of new market infrastructure and signage for the outdoor markets and to approve a contribution from the Town Council of 30% of the total cost.

558/23 Reports

a) to receive written reports from the Council's representatives to other bodies. None received in advance of the meeting.

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

RESOLVED:- to note the written report from Cllrs Towers and Broomhall.

559/23 Future agenda items – for consideration Councillor's opportunity to raise items for inclusion on the next agenda. *Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making.*

b) To consider replacing this item with the adoption of an agenda item request form so items can be submitted for inclusion.

RESOLVED:- approve the removal of the standing agenda item, Future agenda items and instead adopt the agenda item request form.

560/23 Dates of future meetings – to note the date and time of October meeting.

RESOLVED:- to note that the October ordinary meeting will be held on Thursday 26th October 2023.

561/23 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

a) Office lease extension - to discuss.

The Clerk reported that no meaningful update had been provided in relation to the lease extension.

RESOLVED:- to instruct the Clerk in discussion with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to start to look at alternative locations for the Town Council office and report back to the next meeting

Meeting ended 21.00

Mayor.....