

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 30th March 2023
at 7 p.m. in the Town Council Meeting Room, Wem Library, High Street, Wem

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

Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

6 members of the public present. 1 Member of the press

434/23 To note apologies for absence received.
Apologies were received from Cllr Hoffmann.

435/23 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.

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
Cllr Towers	Bias interest as director of Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre	To allow participation but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Swimming & Lifestyle Centre
Cllr Glover	Bias interest as director of Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre	To allow participation but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Swimming & Lifestyle Centre
Cllr Granger	439/23iii Bias interest in application 23/01083/FUL 26 - 28 Aston Street as is related to the applicant. 443/23 Bias interest as member of Christmas Lights Committee	
Cllr Meakin	443/23 Bias interest as member of Christmas Lights Committee	To speak but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Christmas Lights and Festival
Cllr Broomhall	443/23 Bias interest as member of Christmas Lights Committee	To speak but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Christmas Lights and Festival

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

436/23 Public Participation - a period of 15 minutes will be set aside for residents of Wem Town to speak.

A member of Wem Climate Change Action Group spoke in opposition to planning application 23/00873/FUL and stated that the building should not be demolished it should be repurposed. Concerns were also raised about the site being a designated employment area and how this would impact on the town. Several suggestions were made about how the building should be used these included hot desks, an area for Civic Offices as well as one bedroom apartments.

437/23 Council Minutes - to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 23rd February 2023.

RESOLVED:- that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of Wem Town Council held on 23.2.23 be approved as a correct record and they were duly signed by the Mayor.

438/23 Progress report - To consider the Clerks progress report on decisions made at previous meetings.

Thanks were recorded for the work carried out by the Projects Assistant to secure grant funding for the Heads Up project.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

439/23 Planning Applications

a) to note the recent planning decisions.

RESOLVED:- to note the planning decisions.

b) to consider the following planning applications

i) **23/00909/FUL** Flat 1 78 High Street, Wem, Shropshire, SY4 5DR

Proposal: Application under Section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for change of use of ground floor flat to a studio Flat.

RESOLVED:- to support the application as it will improve the building within the conservation area.

ii) **23/00873/FUL** Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem, Shropshire, SY4 5DB

Proposal: 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.

Concerns were raised about the loss of protected employment land and the impact knocking down the building will have on the environment. Additional traffic along New Street was also considered to be a problem.

RESOLVED:- to object to the application for the following reasons

- **Highways** - The Council is concerned about the impact the proposals will have on the adjacent highways particularly at the junctions of New Street with Park Road and New Street with High Street. These junctions

are heavily used and will be insufficient for the amount of additional traffic the development will create.

- Loss of protected employment land in the centre of the town - The proposals should allow for more office space. This site is designated for employment and the proposed amount of office/ employment space being offered is insufficient for the size of the site.
- Layout and density of the building – The Council object to the existing building being demolished as this is unnecessary. Demolition of the building would result in the release of a significant amount of carbon which is against the Town Council's climate change commitment. The Town Council's preference is that the original building is repurposed with a combination of flats and office/ meeting space.
- Impact on Listed Building – The Council does not consider that the impact that this development will have on Park House has been fully appreciated or addressed in the plans.

iii) **23/01083/FUL** 26 - 28 Aston Street, Wem, Shropshire, SY4 5AY
Proposal: Erection of 6No dwellings following demolition of existing disused building, associated works and modifications of existing vehicular access.
Cllr Granger left the room and took no part in discussions

RESOLVED:- to support the application as it will improve the area and bring back into use a brownfield site.

Cllr Granger returned to the room.

iv) **23/01132/TCA** 56A High Street, Wem, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY4 5DW
Proposal: Reduce height by 3m and reduce lateral spread by 1m of 1no Sycamore within Wem Conservation Area.

RESOLVED:- to support this application as the work is necessary and will not impact detrimentally on the tree.

c) Pre Application Employment Allocation adjacent to Shawbury Road (ELR031), Wem - to consider request for pre-application opinion in relation to proposals for B1, B2, B8 employment uses with detailed access arrangements and proposals for haulage yard Reference: PREAPP/23/00203
Standing orders were suspended to ask questions of the landowner's representative who explained that the plans were in the early stages and a community consultation would take place prior to the formal submission of an application. Following a general discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- to submit the following comments on the pre application proposal

- Sewage – any proposals for the site should not have a detrimental impact on the existing sewage system in the area.
- Link road – The Town Council has a long term aspiration for the creation of link road between Shawbury Road and Aston Road to reduce traffic in the centre of the town. As part of these proposals the Council would very much like the developer to consider the allocation of a strip of land which could help deliver this aspiration in the future. This project is included as a priority A project in the Wem Area Place Plan *Construction of by-pass / relief road (page 14)*.
- Green Walkway – The Town Council would wish to see the allocation of some land alongside the railway embankment on the edge of the site that would enable the creation of a walkway / cycleway to provide a

route to Aston Road. This is an aspiration of the Town Council as recorded in the place plan *Development of green network / corridor through Wem to encourage more cycling and walking and to reduce congestion.*

- The Town Council would wish that any application includes provision for appropriate landscaping and screening of the site.

440/23 Finance and Accounts for Payment.

a) Monthly Budget report – to note.

RESOLVED:- to note the reports

b) Internal Control checks – to note. It was reported that due to the office move and other factors internal control checks for February were yet to be completed.

c) Accounts for payment - to approve accounts for payment.

RESOLVED:- to note the following Direct Debits and payments made prior to meeting

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	Chq / BACS No
Shropshire Council	Salaries March			6020.17 2001.75 2140.11	PAYROLL LGPS HMRC
EE	Mobile Phones	42.51	8.50	51.01	DD
Onecom	Office Telephone Mar	34.54	6.91	41.45	DD
Waterplus	Allotment Water Feb	46.19	9.24	55.43	DD
Waterplus	Allotment Water March	40.60	8.12	48.72	DD
Waterplus	Car Park Toilet Water Charges	41.11	0.00	41.11	DD
Unity Trust Bank	BACS Charges January	17.54	0.00	17.54	DD
Unity Trust Bank	BACS Charges February	17.68	0.00	17.68	DD
Unity Trust Bank	Bank Charges (transactions)	32.85	0.00	32.85	DD
Unity Trust Bank	Bank Charges (cash & cheques)	3.90	0.00	3.90	DD
Lloyds Bank	Corporate Card charges	3.00	0.00	3.00	DD
Business2Business	Broadband	37.48	7.50	44.98	DD
WME	Energy – car park toilets	142.62	7.13	149.75	DD
Glyn Upton	Office removal	880.00	176.00	1056.00	221.22
Nationwide	Unity Bank			40000.00	Transfer

RESOLVED:- to authorise the following payments

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	Chq / BACS No
Thomas Consulting	Swimming Pool Inspection	1446.00	289.20	1735.20	213.22
PG Skips	Bin Emptying	96.84	19.36	116.20	214.22
ISM IT Ltd	Office Move IT Costs	1329.69	265.94	1595.63	215.22

Shropshire Council	Streetlighting Energy	1593.56	318.71	1912.27	216.22
Maddox Contractors	Work at Love Lane Cemetery	1560.00	312.00	1872.00	217.22
SALC	Councillor Training	75.00	0.00	75.00	218.22
ISM IT Ltd	IT Support	92.97	18.59	111.56	219.22
Shropshire Council Licensing	Premises Licence	70.00	0.00	70.00	220.22
DW Evans	Gravedigging – February	855.00	0.00	855.00	222.22
Severn Trent	Rec. toilet water charges	33.37	0.00	33.37	223.22
Mark Fitton	Bus shelter cleaning	70.00	0.00	70.00	224.22
Shropshire Council	Non-Domestic Rates – Cemetery	102.17	0.00	102.17	225.22
Shropshire Council	IOSH Training	400.00	80.00	480.00	226.22
ISM IT Ltd	CCTV	383.65	76.73	460.38	227.22
Hunter Lloyd	CCTV	115.00	23.00	138.00	228.22
Highline Electrical	Street Light Upgrade	17827.00	3565.4	21392.40	229.22
Ricoh	Move copier	75.00	15.00	90.00	230.22
Royal Mail	Mail redirection	642.00	0.00	642.00	231.22
Healthmatic	Toilet Cleaning	829.17	165.83	995.00	232.22
David Murray	Planter maintenance	240.00	0.00	240.00	233.22
Shropshire Council	Edinburgh House Rent – balancing payment (backdated 1.10.21)	3823.53	0.00	3823.53	234.22
Highline Electrical	March Repairs	45.00	9.00	54.00	235.22

441/23 Councillor Vacancy– to consider and vote on co-option applications. The Clerk reported that two applications for co-option had been receive and following a vote it was

RESOLVED:- to co-opt Robert Barker onto Wem Town Council. Robert Barker signed the declaration of acceptance of office and joint the meeting.

442/23 Amenities and Services Committee Meeting 14.3.23 – to receive draft minutes from this meeting and consider any recommendations contained within the minutes.

RESOLVED:- to receive the draft minutes from the meeting held 14.3.23 and approve the recommendations contained within the minutes.

443/23 Christmas Lights and Festival

a) to receive a report from a meeting held with representatives from the Christmas Lights Working Party and members of Wem Christmas Lights and Festival Committee on 14.3.23.

Cllr Granger left the meeting and took no part in discussions

RESOLVED:- to receive the report from the meeting held with representatives from the Christmas Lights Working Party and members of Wem Christmas Lights and Festival Committee on 14.3.23.

b) to approve the proposed consultation.

RESOLVED:- to approve the consultation and set a deadline for responses of 14.4.23.

Cllr Granger returned to the meeting.

444/23 Coronation of King Charles III

a) to consider a report from the working party meeting held 21.3.23 outlining plans for marking the event.

RESOLVED:- to note the report and instruct The Clerk to contact Shropshire Council for permission to locate the coronation plaque on the wall of Wem Town Hall

b) Coronation Champions Award – to consider nominations.

RESOLVED:- to move to closed session due to data protection concerns.

445/23 Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre liaison Group Meeting 29.3.23 – to

receive verbal update on this meeting.

Clerk agreed to send out the draft meeting notes in the next few weeks.

RESOLVED:- to note the verbal report.

446/23 Correspondence

a) Climate Change and Ecology Bill – to discuss

A discussion took place on this item and councillors expressed concern about the lack of detailed information on the bill felt it was inappropriate at a Town Council level.

RESOLVED:- to note the correspondence.

447/23 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.

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

448/23 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.*

Swimming Pool Report.

449/23 Dates of future meetings – to note the date and time of April meeting and agree date, location, theme and format of the Annual Town meeting.

RESOLVED:- to note the April meeting will be held on 27.4.23 and that the Annual Town Meeting will be held 20.4.23 with all groups in receipt of a 2023-24 town Council Grant invited to attend.

450/23 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.

Lease – to formally note the signing of the lease for the Town Council office.

RESOLVED:- to note that the lease for office and meeting space in Talbot house has been signed.

b) Coronation Champion Awards.

RESOLVED:- not to submit a nomination from the Town Council.

Meeting ended 20.25

Mayor.....