

Minutes of the Special Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 23rd January 2020 at 7 p.m in the Roden Suite, Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem

Present:- Councillor P Glover (Mayor), Councillors, P Broomhall, R Dodd, R Drummond, K Edge, C Granger, M Meakin, C Mellings, J Murray, G Soul, E Towers.

Mrs Penny O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

0 members of the public present

142/20 To Receive Apologies for absence.

Resolved:- to accept the following apologies for absence

Cllrs, P Johnson, P Dee, G Nash

143/20 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.

The following interests were declared

Councillor	Item	Dispensation
Cllr Mellings	<p>Item 147a/20 Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre - a Disclosable pecuniary interest as a Director of WSLC.</p> <p>Millennium Green - Bias interest in the application for funding as a Trustee</p> <p>Wem Sports and Social Assoc. - Bias interest in the application for funding as trustee</p> <p>Item 148/20 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 145/20 Allotments – Bias interest in allotment fees as wife is an allotment holder.</p> <p>Item 147a/20 Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre - Disclosable pecuniary interest as a board member</p> <p>Wem Sports and Social Assoc. - Bias interest in the application for funding as a Trustee</p>	<p>Allowed to participate but not vote in discussions regarding WSLC</p> <p>Allowed to discuss but not vote on all</p>

	<p>The Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery - Bias interest in the application for funding as member of the Committee.</p> <p>Item 147b/20 Wem Economic Forum Bias interest as voting member of forum</p> <p>Item 148/20 Precept – pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town</p> <p>Items 149/20 Wem Baptist Church - Bias interest in the application for funding as a member of that Church.</p>	<p>matters relating to WSSA 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 Murray	<p>Item 145/20 Allotments – Bias interest in allotment fees as son is an allotment holder</p> <p>Item 147a/20 Wem Christmas Festival Committee - Bias interest in the application for funding as a member of the Committee.</p> <p>Item 148/20 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town.</p> <p>Item 149/20 Wem Scout and Guide HQ Bias interest as committee member Hope House Bias interest as family member works for organisation</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Meakin	<p>Item 147a/20 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 147b/20 Wem Town Hall Community Trust - Bias interest in the application for funding as a Trustee</p> <p>Item 148/20</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Christmas Festival</p> <p>Allowed to discuss and vote on all matters relating to WSSA</p> <p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>

	<p>Precept – Pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town</p> <p>Item 149/20 Wem Carnival Committee - Bias interest in the application for funding as member of the Committee. Westlands Community Group - bias interest as family members live at the Westlands</p>	
Cllr Dodd	<p>Item 145/20 Allotments – Bias interest in allotment fees as her husband is an allotment holder.</p> <p>Item 147a/20 The Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery - Bias interest in the application for funding as member of the Committee</p> <p>Item 147b/20 Wem Town Hall Community Trust - Bias interest in the application for funding as a Trustee</p> <p>Item 148/20 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town</p>	<p>Allowed to discuss and but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Town Hall</p> <p>Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept</p>
Cllr Broomhall	<p>Item 147a/20 Wem Christmas Festival Committee - Bias interest in the application for funding as member of the Committee.</p> <p>Item 148/20 Precept – pecuniary interest as council taxpayer 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 147a/20 Wem Youth Club – Bias interest as wife is committee member</p> <p>Item 148/20 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 147a/20 Wem Christmas Festival Committee - Bias interest in the application for funding as a member of the Committee.</p> <p>Item 148/20 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 147a/20 Wem Sports and Social Assoc. - Bias interest in the application for funding as trustee Wem Christmas Festival Committee - Bias interest in the application for funding as a member of the Committee.</p>	

	<p>Item 148/20 Precept – Pecuniary interest as council taxpayer in the town</p> <p>Item 149/20 Wem Army Cadets – Bias interest as treasurer of the cadets</p>	Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept
Cllr Soul	<p>Item 148/20 Precept – pecuniary interest as council tax payer in the town</p> <p>Item 149/20 Hope House - Bias interest in the application for funding as friend of Hope House</p>	Allowed to discuss and vote on the annual precept
Cllr Edge	<p>Item 147a/20 Wem Youth Club – Bias interest as is committee member</p> <p>Item 149/20 Wem ADOS - Bias interest in the application for funding as family member is a committee member of Wem ADOS</p>	

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

Cllr Edge applied for a dispensation under item 148/19 Town Council precept – to allow her to discuss and vote on the setting of the Council Precept.

Resolved:- to award the following dispensation to Cllr Edge to permit her to discuss and vote on the annual precept during the electoral term.

144/20 2019-20 Estimated Year End Income / Expenditure – to consider estimated budget report and accompanying notes
A discussion took place on the year end estimated expenditure/income and it was;

Resolved:- to note the report and recommend the Finance Committee make recommendations for the allocation of any overspend to earmarked reserves at its meeting in April 2020.

145/20 Fees and Charges for 2020-21 - 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 not increased and remain the same as for 2019-20.

b) Love Lane Allotments – Annual rents.
Cllr Dodd, Murray and Cllr Towers left the room and took no part in discussions.

Resolved:-

- to approve the recommendations of the Amenities and Service Committee that to increase the rent of all plots from 1.4.20

- to maintain the £5 annual admin fee for all tenants
- to maintain the £5 waiting list fee

146/20 Recreation Ground Toilet Block – to discuss whether to agree to the transfer of ownership of the building to the Town Council (as per recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee on 10.12.19).
A discussion took place on this item and concerns were raised that the building had been empty for 11 years and a decision needed to be made on its future. Several options for the future of the building were discussed

Resolved:- that the Town Council will open discussions with Shropshire Council with a view to taking over the ownership of the Old Toilet Block on Wem Recreation Ground subject to a suitable transfer agreement being negotiated.

147/20 2020-21 Budget

a) To consider contribution requests received from larger organisations running services or facilities within the Town. Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre, Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery, Wem Youth Club, Wem Christmas Lights Festival, Wem Sports and Social Association, Millennium Green

Contribution requests from larger organisations running services and facilities within the Town were considered and it was:-

Resolved:- to approve the following contributions for 2020-21

RECEIVED FROM	Award
Cllrs Murray, Granger and Drummond left the room. Wem Christmas Lights & Festival Committee	£3,000
Cllrs Meakin and Dodd left the room Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery	£2,000
Cllr Mellings left the room Wem Millennium Green	£1,700
Cllrs Mellings and Drummond left the room Wem Sports and Social Association	£19,000
Cllrs Mellings and Towers left the room Wem Swimming & Lifestyle Centre	£55,000
Wem Town Hall (2 nd year of the previously agreed 3 year service level agreement)	£22,000
Cllrs Glover and Edge left the room and Cllr Broomhall took the Chair Wem Youth Club	£2,000

b) To consider the Town Council budget for 2020-2021

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

Lighting

Councillors were made aware of reduced maintenance charges following the LED conversion.

Resolved:-to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the Public Lighting Budget be set at £26,000

Cemetery

It was reported that this budget included provision to replace the cemetery fence.

Resolved:-to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the Burial Ground Budget be set at £7,590 including the contribution to Whitchurch Road Cemetery.

Allotments

The Clerk outlined the need to increase the budget slightly to cover increases in water charges.

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 was to keep the administration budget at the same level.

Resolved:-to approve the recommendation of the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee that the Administration Budget is set at £24,480.

Contributions

Other than the contributions agreed under item 147a/20 a discussion took place on the need to allocate funds for Wem Economic Forum and for the awarding of small grants.

Resolved:- to approve the contributions budget of £14,400 with £5000 being allocated for grant awards and £1000 allocated for Wem Economic Forum.

Recreation

It was explained that the play equipment budget required increasing in order to put funds aside for new items of play equipment including replacement skate ramps.

Resolved:-to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the recreation budget is set 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 2019/20 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 £108,404.

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 £15,000.

Bus Shelters

Resolved:-to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee that the bus shelter budget is set at £1,200.

Miscellaneous

Floral Planters

It was reported that there is a proposed increase in this budget to allow for the new supply and planting contract.

Resolved:- to approve the recommendation of the Amenities and Services Committee to set the budget for floral planters at £5,000.

CCTV

It was reported that an allocation in the budget would be put towards the upgrading of 1 of the Town Centre cameras.

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 £10,000 to this budget heading.

Youth Provision

A discussion took place on this new budget heading which was intended to provide a source of funds for services for young people in the town.

Resolved:-to allocate a budget of £6,000 to this budget heading.

Recreation Ground Toilet Block

Resolved:-to allocate a budget of £5,000 to oversee the potential transfer of this building into the Town Council's ownership.

Resolved:-to approve a 2020-21 expenditure budget of £349,049.00

Income

The Clerk outlined the income budget and it was

Resolved:- to set an income budget (excluding precept) of £15,000.

2020-21 Budget

Following the approval of all the budget headings it was

Resolved:-to formally adopt the attached budget for 2020- 2021.

148/20 Town Council Precept - To agree the Town Council precept for 2020-21

Resolved:- to set the annual precept for 2020-21 at £334,049.

149/20 Town Council Community Grants

a) To consider Community Grant Applications received from local groups and award grants for 2020-21.

A discussion took place over applications that had been received following the application deadline of 10.1.20 and it was

Resolved:-

- to not consider any applications received after the deadline of 16.00 on 10.1.20
- that the Grant guidelines be reviewed by the Town Council during 2020
- to award the following grants to applicants

Applicant	Awarded
Albion Bowling Club	£750
Army Cadet Force League <i>Cllr Drummond left the room</i>	£200
Carnival Committee <i>Cllr Meakin left the room</i>	£500
Hope House Children's Hospice <i>Cllr Murray and Soul left the room</i> Councillors stated that this application did not meet the grant criteria	0
Tennis Club	£1000
Vehicles of Interest	£500
Wem Scout & Guide Headquarters Committee <i>Cllr Murray left the room</i>	£300
Welcome to Wem Community Group	£100
Westlands Community Group <i>Cllr Meakin left the room</i>	£500

Meeting ended 20.50

Mayor.....