

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held on
Thursday 25th February 2021 at 19.00 on the Zoom Virtual Meeting Platform

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

Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk)

3 members of the public present, 1 member of the press

334/21 To receive apologies and reasons for absence

None received. Absent Cllr Nash.

335/21 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
Cllr Mellings and Dee	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 Mellings	Item 341/21 Wem Cricket Club - Bias interest as Treasurer Wem Jubilee Band - Bias interest as Vice President	
Cllr Dee	Item 341/21 Wem Scouts and Scout and Guide HQ - Bias interest as Committee Member Wem Jubilee Band - Bias interest as Vice President	
Cllr Drummond	Item 341/21 Wem Army Cadets - Bias interest as Treasurer of the Cadets NS Wheelers - Bias interest as Voluntary driver for NS Wheelers Blossoming Wem - Bias interest as group member	
Cllr Everett	Item 341/21 Wem Scouts - Bias interest as Scout Leader	
Cllr Johnson	Item 341/21 Wem Bowling Club - Bias interest as Member Wem Bowling Club Wem Scout and Guide HQ - Bias interest as Committee Member	
Cllr Edge	Item 341/21 Wem ADOS - Bias interest as member of Stage Door Committee	

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

336/21 Public Participation Time - a period of 15 minutes will be set aside for residents of Wem Town to speak.

A member of Wem Civic Society outlined how important libraries are to the community and that Wem library is very much needed as it provides an important community service and can also increase footfall in the town. The space in the current library is inadequate and the Morgan Library is not a good alternative. It was suggested that the ideal place to locate a new library would be in the White Horse.

A member of the public raised concerns over the upcoming sale of the land off Mill Street and the detrimental impact that this could have on the town. They explained that the Wem Climate Change Group would like the land to be listed as an Asset of Community Value and would like the support of the Town Council in this as it was vital the community acted quickly.

A member of the public stated that if the land off Mill Street could be secured for the community it would provide an area of both wildlife and historic value for the community and visitors as well as informal access.

A general discussion took place on this matter and a suggestion was made that if Councillors were minded, they ask the Mayor to call an emergency meeting to consider this matter further.

337/21 Council Minutes

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on 28th January 2021 and the extraordinary meeting held on 10th February 2021.

RESOLVED:-

- **That the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on the zoom virtual meeting platform on 28.1.21 be approved as a correct record. Authority was given for them to be signed by the Mayor at a later date.**
- **That the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on the zoom virtual meeting platform on 10.2.21 be approved as a correct record. Authority was given for them to be signed by the Mayor at a later date.**

338/21 Reports –

a) Clerks progress Report - to consider the Clerks progress report on matters arising at previous meetings.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

339/21 Planning Applications

a) Planning Decisions – to consider report (copy enclosed).

The Clerk reported on applications that had been decided after the agenda was sent out.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

340/21 Finance and Accounts

a) Monthly budget report – for consideration.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

b) Internal audit - to consider matters raised in interim Internal audit. The Clerk reported that screenshots of accounts loaded for payment were scanned and sent to Councillors able to authorise payments prior to authorisation. The Wem Town Hall payment was not loaded on the banking site for authorisation along with other payments due to an oversight which is why it was missing from the April 2020 screenshot. Since then, procedures had been tightened to ensure all payments were included and that if a payment required authorisation between meetings a screen shot was always taken.

RESOLVED:- that

- Evidence of bank account details will in future be requested prior to any grant payments being made as per the recommendation.
- Receipts will in future be requested for all grant payments.

c) Accounts for payment – To approve accounts for payment and payments made prior to meeting under delegated authority including April 2020 payments amounting to £90,746.00.

RESOLVED:- to approve the following April 2020 payments made under delegated authority.

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	Chq / BAC S No
Shropshire Council	Electoral Register Information	24.50		24.50	1.20
The Right Sort Mailing Limited	Printing and distribution of covid-19 leaflet	1390.47	278.11	1668.58	2.20
Shropshire Council	Business Rates Love Lane Cemetery	97.31		97.31	3.20
Severn Business Solutions	Computer Assistance	150.00	30.00	180.00	4.20
Assistant Town Clerk	Expenses Amazon – Printer Cartridge	22.12	4.43	26.55	5.20
Shropshire Council	Rent & Service Charge 1.4.20 - 30.6.20	1525.00		1525.00	6.20
Shropshire Council	External Payroll Recharge 1.4.20 - 30.6.20	152.50	30.50	183.00	7.20
PG Skips	Cemetery Bin March	33.24	6.65	39.89	8.20
	Recreation Ground Bin	39.03	7.81	46.84	
	Total	72.27	14.46	86.73	
West Mercia Energy	Public toilets electricity Feb	117.71	5.89	123.60	9.20
Institute Cemetery Management	Membership	95.00		95.00	10.20
Eon	Work to Light 11 Footpath Shrubbery Gardens-Aston Street	83.11	16.62	99.73	11.20

Education Sales Ltd	Purchase of Webcam	19.99	4.00	23.99	12.20
Town Clerk Expenses -	BT April calls home line	15.50		15.50	13.20
	Zoom Subscription Month	11.99	2.40	14.39	
	Toner Cartridge	27.90	5.58	33.48	
	Total	55.39	7.98	63.37	
Mark Fitton	Cleaning Bus Shelters April 2020	65.00		65.00	14.20
Shropshire Council	Health & Safety Contract 2020 – 2021	920.00	184.00	1104.00	15.20
Shropshire Council	Pensions Deficit lumpsum 2020-21	200.00		200.00	16.20
Shropshire Council	Staff Salaries April	7758.26		7758.26	17.20
Healthmatic	Toilet Cleaning April	829.17	165.83	995.00	18.20
Ray Parry Playground	Parts supply	780.00	156.00	936.00	19.20
Wem Town Hall	SLA Agreement	22000.00		22000.00	20.20
Wem Swimming & Lifestyle Centre	Annual Contribution	41250.00		41250.00	21.20
Wem Youth Club	Contribution towards running of club	2000.00		2000.00	22.20
Wem Christmas Lights & Festival Committee	Contribution towards running of event	3000.00		3000.00	23.20
Friends of Whitchurch Road Cemetery	Annual Maintenance Contribution	2000.00		2000.00	24.20
Wem Millennium Green	Annual Maintenance Contribution	1700.00		1700.00	25.20
Albion Bowling Club	Grant	750.00		750.00	26.20
Wem Branch Army Cadet Force League	Grant	200.00		200.00	27.20
Carnival Committee	Grant	500.00		500.00	28.20
Wem Tennis Club	Grant	1000.00		1000.00	29.20
Wem Scouts & Guides HQ	Grant	300.00		300.00	30.20
Welcome to Wem Group	Grant	100.00		100.00	31.20
Westlands group	Grant	500.00		500.00	32.20
Onecom	Telephone Charges	75.67	15.13	90.60	DD

RESOLVED:- to approve the following outstanding accounts for payment

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	Chq / BACS No
Viking	Stationery	54.84	10.97	65.81	183.20

West Mercia Energy	Electricity Supply Public Toilets 1.12.20-31.12.20	95.86	4.79	100.65	184.20
PG Skips	Bin emptying Cemetery and Recreation Ground January 2021	88.68	17.76	106.44	185.20
ISM Ltd	Computer Contract	61.98	12.40	74.38	186.20
Arrow Country Supplies	Refuse Sacks	105.03	21.01	126.04	187.20
Waterplus	Water Supply Public Toilets 7.11.20-7.2.21	86.14		86.14	188.20
NALC	NALC Training Cllr Broomhall, Cllr Drummond	32.44 32.44	6.49 6.49	38.93 38.93	189.20
	Total			77.86	
Shropshire Council	Street Lighting Energy 1.1.21-31.3.21	1701.83	340.37	2042.20	190.20
Shropshire Council	Salaries Feb	8186.73		8186.73	191.20
Mark Fitton	Bus Shelter Cleaning February 2021	65.00		65.00	192.20
JDH Business	Internal Audit interim	283.50	56.70	340.20	193.20
Healthmatic	Toilet Cleaning February	829.17	165.83	995.00	194.20
Town Clerk	Home Telephone calls Dec-Feb	28.94		28.94	195.20
Onecom	Telephone Charges January 2021	41.02	8.20	49.22	DD

341/21 Town Council Small Grants – to consider applications received and agree the Town Council Small Grants awards for 2021-22.

RESOLVED:- to

- **Approve the consideration of the Hope House Application although it was received after the deadline as Councillors were satisfied it had been sent prior to the deadline.**
- **Award the following grant awards from the 2021-22 Small Grants Fund**

ORGANSIATION	AMOUNT AWARDED
Cllr Edge left the meeting Amateur Dramatic and Operatic Society	£500
Cllr Edge returned to the meeting Cllr Drummond left the meeting Army Cadet Force League	£200
Blossoming Wem Group	£500

Cllr Drummond returned to the meeting Cllr Mellings left the meeting Cricket Club	£500
Cllr Dee left the meeting Jubilee Band	£500
Cllr Mellings and Dee returned to the meeting Cllr Drummond left the meeting NS Wheelers	£500
Cllr Drummond returned to the meeting Vehicles of Interest	£500
Cllr Johnson left the meeting Wem Bowling Club	£500
Cllr Johnson returned to the meeting Cllr Dee and Cllr Everett left the meeting 1st Wem Scouts	£300
Cllr Everett returned to the meeting Cllr Johnson left the meeting Wem Scout & Guide Headquarters Committee	£500
Cllr Johnson and Dee returned to the meeting Hope House	£250

342/21 Office Move

a) Updating phone system and broadband - to consider quote received.
Cllr Mellings left the meeting due to poor wifi connection.
The Clerk explained that only one quote had been sought from the Town Council's existing IT contractor for relocation works as they had in depth knowledge of the current IT system.

RESOLVED:-

- To approve the quote for the relocation of the office IT System.
- That this work along with any other costs associated with the office move is funded in the first instance through any underspend in the 2020/21 salaries budget which will be earmarked for this purpose at the year end.
- To defer a decision on the upgrade of the telephone system until clarification can be sought on existing contracts.

b) Project Officer computer – to discuss.

RESOLVED:- to approve the purchase of computer equipment for the new Project Officer up to a maximum of £851 as per the quote received and that this expenditure is spent from reserves earmarked for the office move.

Cllr Mellings returned to the meeting.

343/21 Return to Face to Face Meetings – to discuss NALC guidance and options open to the Town Council.

RESOLVED:- to approve the Clerk's recommendation that the Clerk seeks advice from SALC on the holding of hybrid meetings and develops a plan for the return to face to face meetings in May 2021 based on advice given by SALC and room hire conditions.

- 344/21 The Future of the Wemian** (at request of Cllr Mellings) – to discuss the future organisation of the Wemian following the decision of the current Editors and Treasurer to step down from the roles.
Cllr Mellings presented this item and explained that an option being considered was that the Wemian was produced as an online only publication. Councillors expressed concern that the Wemian does not become an online only magazine as it is so popular with the community especially those without access to the internet. Various suggestions were made including that the production could be taken on by Wem Town Hall, Wem Economic Forum, Thomas Adams School or the Town Council. It was also recommended that the editors put out a request for volunteers via social media and the local press.

RESOLVED:- to request that suggestions made are fed back to existing editors for them to consider.

- 345/21 Legionella Risk Assessment Public Toilets** – to consider quote received.

RESOLVED:- to approve the quote received to undertake a Legionella Risk Assessment of Wem Public Toilets.

- 346/21 Wem Library** – to receive an update on Shropshire Council's plans for the future location of Wem Library once the lease ends in 2022.
The Clerk gave a verbal report on the library's consultation meeting she had attended earlier that day and it was reported that a meeting was to be arranged with the head of the library service to specifically discuss Wem Library.

RESOLVED:- to note the report and nominate Cllr Glover to attend the meeting along with the Town Clerk and Cllr Mellings.

- 347/21 Correspondence** - for consideration (copy enclosed)
a) SALC Covid Survey – to consider submitting a response.

RESOLVED:- to delegate authority to the Clerk to complete the survey on behalf of the Town Council.

- 348/21 Reports**
a) To receive written reports from the Council's representatives to other bodies. No matters raised
b) To receive a written report from Shropshire Council Councillors Mellings and Dee.

RESOLVED:- to note the written report received from Cllr Mellings and written update received from Cllr Dee.

- 349/21 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.*
Request for an officer of Wem SNT to attend.

350/21 Date of next meeting – to note date of March meeting and set date for Annual Town Meeting (April).

RESOLVED:- that

- **The next meeting will be held on Thursday 25th March 2021.**
- **The Annual Town Meeting would be held on 22.4.21 and grant recipients are to be invited to give a short presentation of the work of the organisation they represent.**

The Clerk highlighted that both these meetings would fall within the pre-election purdah period and Councillors would need to be mindful of this.

Meeting ended 20.45

Mayor.....