

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 29th February 2024
at 7 p.m. in the Town Council Meeting Room, Wem Library, High Street, Wem

Present:- Councillors, G Soul (Mayor), R Dodd, R Gascoigne, C Granger, D Hill, P Johnson, D Parry (Deputy Mayor), E Towers.

Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

No members of the public present.

635/24 To note apologies for absence received.

RESOLVED:- to note apologies received from Cllrs Hoffmann, Broomhall, Glover, Drummond, Barker and Meakin.

636/24 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	Twin-hatted member declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council 644/24 Wem Area Climate Action member of WACA 644/24 Bias interest as. Vice President Wem Jubilee Band.	Dispensation to allow participation and voting on all matters relating to Shropshire Council To discuss but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Area Climate Forum
Cllr Soul	644/24 Bias interest NS Wheelers Chairman 652/24 Wem Town Hall - Trustee	Dispensation to allow participation but not vote on all matters relating to Wem Town Hall
Cllr Johnson	644/24 Bias Interest as member of Wem Carnival Committee	
Cllr Parry	644/24 Bias Interest as member of Wem Parish Paths Partnership Committee	

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

None received.

637/24 Public Participation - a period of 15 minutes will be set aside for residents of Wem Town to speak.
None present.

638/24 Council Minutes - to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 25th January 2024.

RESOLVED:- to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Town Council ordinary meeting held on 25.1.24 and they were duly signed by The Mayor as a true record.

639/24 Progress report - To consider the Clerks progress report on decisions made at previous meetings.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

640/24 Planning Applications

a) to note the recent planning decisions.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

b) to consider the following planning applications

24/00190/FUL Park View Park Road Wem Shrewsbury Shropshire SY4 5DA

Proposal: Extension and alterations of existing dwelling and other associated works

No comments submitted as application was granted before the meeting despite an extension being granted to the Town Council.

23/05551/FUL 45 New Street, Wem, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY4 5AE

Proposal: Installation of 12no Solar Panels, 6 of which will be on the rear facing roof and 6 will have to be on the front facing roof, facing the street.

RESOLVED:- to support the comments of the Conservation Officer and recommend that if permission is given it is to install solar panels on the back of the property only due to the detrimental impact on the conservation area.

641/24 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 control checks were up to date.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

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

RESOLVED:- to approve the following payments.

Direct Debits and payments made prior to meeting.

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	BACS no
Shropshire Council	Salaries February HMRC Pensions	7303.59 2490.14 2133.46			BACSSPAY BACSHMRC BACSLGPS
WaterPlus	Allotment Water 23.12.23 - 12.1.24	29.08	5.82	34.90	DD 72.23
West Mercia Energy	Car Park Toilets Energy 1.12.23 – 31.12.23	235.93	11.80	247.73	DD 73.23
EE	Mobile Phones	26.00	5.20	31.20	DD 74.23
PWLB	Loan repayment	1862.25	0.00	1862.25	DD 75.23
Unity Trust Bank	BACS charges	17.68	0.00	17.68	DD 76.23
WaterPlus	Car Park Toilets Water 8.1.23 – 8.2.23	44.80	0.00	44.80	DD 77.23
West Mercia Energy	Car Park Toilets Energy 1.1.24 – 31.1.24	239.91	12.00	251.91	DD 78.23
Business2 Business	Telephone/Broadband	108.47	21.69	130.16	DD 79.23
John Ralphs	Reimbursement (Tree)	65.00	0.00	65.00	193.23
Sarahs Embroidery	Workwear	130.99	26.19	157.18	206.23
Credit card payments for information only					
Lloyds Bank	Monthly Charge	3.00	0.00	3.00	CC 12.23
Amazon UK	Gazebo tape	11.22	2.24	13.46	CC 13.23
NALC	Councillor Training	32.68	6.54	39.22	CC 14.23

Payments

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	Chq / BACS No
Rialtas	Training (A Roberts)	70.00	14.00	84.00	194.23
Viking	Stationery	159.84	31.97	191.81	195.23
PG Skips	Bin Emptying (Jan)	146.92	29.37	176.29	196.23
Healthmatic	Toilet Cleaning 17.1.24 – 16.2.24	799.33	159.87	959.20	197.23
CityBGroup	Market Gazebos	1556.00	311.20	1867.20	198.23
Severn Hospice	Donation (in lieu of honours board payment)	55.00	0.00	55.00	199.23
ISM-IT	IT Support	99.99	20.00	119.99	200.23
JSL Water Systems	Allotment Sundries	45.81	9.18	54.99	201.23
Sign & Poster Ltd	Market Signs	335.80	67.16	402.96	202.23
Security Wise	Fault investigation	372.00	74.40	446.40	203.23
DW Evans	Grave Digging January	320.00	0.00	320.00	204.23
SYA	Heads Up Provision Spring 2024	3500.00	700.00	4200.00	205.23
JDH Business Services Ltd	Interim internal audit	340.00	68.00	408.00	207.23

Mark Fitton	Bus shelter cleaning	75.00	0.00	75.00	208.23
WSSA	Reimbursement	30.83	0.00	30.83	209.23
Highline Electrical	Street Lighting Repairs December 2023	359.00	71.80	430.80	210.23
Highline Electrical	Street Lighting Repairs January 2024	134.50	26.90	161.40	211.23
Traffix	Traffic Management (railings installation)	500.50	100.10	600.60	212.23
Healthmatic	Toilet Cleaning 17.2.24 – 16.3.24	799.33	159.87	959.20	213.23
Highline Electrical	Street Lighting Repairs May 2023	213.00	42.60	255.60	214.23
Shropshire Council	Street Lighting Energy Jan – March 2024	2141.28	428.26	2569.54	215.23
Forester & Arborist Services Ltd	Tree Inspection	275.00	0.00	275.00	216.23
Friends of Wem Swimming Pool	Contribution 3/3	13750.00	0.00	13750.00	217.23

d) Interim Audit – to consider report.

The report was reviewed and it was reported that the recording error under issue 1 had been corrected.

RESOLVED:- to

- ensure that the IT equipment used by bank signatories who have authority to access the Town Council’s bank accounts via the internet for authorisation purposes meets the requirements of Financial Regulation 6.14.
- to add scrutiny of income received to the monthly internal control checks.

e) Financial Regulation 6.14 - to discuss.

RESOLVED:- that checks are made to ensure that all bank signatories who have authority to access the Town Council’s bank accounts via the internet can meet Financial Regulation 6.14 prior to becoming approved as a signatory.

f) Maximising bank interest – to consider.

RESOLVED:- to approve the transfer of a total of £113,515 from Town Council’s Unity Trust and Nationwide Accounts to the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Account.

g) Payroll Contract – to consider quotes received.

RESOLVED:- to award the contract for payroll to Shropshire Council to manage the Town Council’s payroll for 2024-25.

h) Finance Risk Assessment – to consider.

RESOLVED:- that following an amendment to new supplier checks which will be undertaken by the RFO instead of a Councillor, to approve the Finance Risk Assessment the report.

642/24 Staffing Committee meeting – to consider draft minutes and recommendations from the Staffing Committee meeting held 15.2.24.

RESOLVED:- to note the minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 15.2.24 and approve the recommendation contained within.

643/24 Grave Digging contract – to approve increase in gravedigging charges and consider extending for a further 2 years.

RESOLVED:- to extend the gravedigging contract to 30.4.26 and approve the inflationary price increases.

644/24 Town Council Small Grants – to consider applications received and agree the Town Council Small Grants awards for 2024-25.
Cllr Soul left the room and took no part in discussions around NS Wheelers application.
Cllr Johnson left the room and took no part in discussions around Wem Carnival's application.
Cllr Towers left the room and took no part in discussions around Wem Jubilee Band's application
Cllr Parry left the room and took no part in discussions around the Parish Paths Partnership's application.

RESOLVED:-

- to award the following grants for 2024-25

	Amount
Eckford Sweet Pea Society of Wem	£300
NS Wheelers Community Bus Project	£500
Rotary Club of Wem & District	£500
United Services Bowling Club	£300
Wem AODS	£300
Wem Albion Bowling Club	£300
Wem Army Cadet Force League	£200
Wem Carnival Committee	£500
Wem Jubilee Band	£300
Wem Parish Paths Partnership	£300

- to defer a decision to March 2024 on the application from WACA for a replacement fence behind the Incredible Edible area until ownership of the fence can be determined.

645/24 Floral Planters Watering and Maintenance contract – to consider quotes received and award the 2024-25 contract.
It was reported that only 1 quote was received.

RESOLVED:- to

- suspend financial regulations to permit only 1 quote to be considered.
- award the contract for the 2024-25 Floral Planters Watering and Maintenance contract to David Murray.
- Approve the quote received from Homedene for the supply of plants for 2024.

646/24 Cemetery Extension – to receive an update on works to date and discuss way forward for the installation of a Cremated Remains area.
A discussion took place on the need to provide an area for cremated remains in Love Lane Cemetery.

RESOLVED:- to progress with the creation of a cremated remains area at Love Lane Cemetery, and to establish a working party comprised of Cllrs Parry, Johnson, Dodd with the remit to make recommendations and consider the following

- Design of cremated remains section.
- Regulations relating to interments and management of cremated remains in the new section.
- Fees and charges for interment of cremated remains in the cremated remains section.

647/24 Summer in Wem – to consider working in partnership with Wem Town Hall Trust and Traders to develop Midsummer in Wem in June 2024.

It was explained that Wem Town Hall were keen to work in partnership with Wem Town Council to plan this event, but it would require the support of High Street Traders to make it a success.

RESOLVED:- to

- in principle support the development of a Midsummer in Wem event on 21.6.24 subject to support from traders.
- approve a £50 contribution towards the bespoke welcome sign requested by Wem Town Hall.
- defer a decision on the quote for the erection of bunting.

648/24 Climate change

a) To consider the adoption of Biodiversity Policy for Wem and Action Plan.

RESOLVED:- to adopt the policy and action plan.

b) To consider review of Climate Change Action Plan.

RESOLVED:- to refer to the action plan to Wem Area Climate Action for comments and consider at a future meeting.

649/24 Correspondence

a) Wem Civic Society – Comments from meeting held to discuss the White Horse.

RESOLVED:- to note the comments.

b) West Mercia Police – To consider Council policing priorities for 2024.

RESOLVED:- to set the following priorities for 2024

1. Speeding
2. Anti Social Behaviour
3. Thefts

c) Parking Charges – To consider email received from Pauline Dee BEM.

RESOLVED:- to note the email.

d) Shropshire Council Financial Position – to note.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

e) Supermarkets in Wem – to consider correspondence received.

RESOLVED:- to instruct The Clerk to contact Aldi and Lidl supermarkets to understand the criteria they use when deciding whether to build a new supermarket in a town.

650/24 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 note the report received from Cllrs Broomhall and Towers.

651/24 Dates of future meetings – to note the date and time of March meeting.

RESOLVED:- to note that the next meeting will be held Thursday 28th March 2024.

652/24 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)

a) Town Council office – for update.

The report prepared by Cllrs Towers, Barker and Parry was considered and it was

RESOLVED:- to

- **approve the Tenancy at Will for the offices at Talbot House and authorise The Clerk to sign the document.**

Meeting ended 20.54

Mayor.....