



WEM TOWN COUNCIL

Annual Report 2017/2018

Mayor of Wem 2017-18 – Cllr Edward Towers
Deputy Mayor of Wem 2017-2018 – Cllr Philip Glover

Mayor of Wem 2018- 2019 – Cllr Connie Granger
Deputy Mayor of Wem 2018-2019 – Cllr Philip Glover

Mayor's Report

The Past Mayor of Wem, Cllr. Edward Towers gives an overview of his term of office.

It has been a great privilege and honour to have been able to serve as Town Mayor for the Civic Year of 2017/18. Whilst there is a considerable amount of work, effort and time involved this is made much easier because I am working for a wonderful town (the 8th largest town in the County according to the latest Shropshire Council data profile!) and yourselves as it's residents.

The Civic year began last May with Local Elections in Wem and as a result we were able to welcome Cllr Peter White and Cllr George Nash to our meetings, each bringing valued experiences and ideas to our discussions – not to mention greater youth!

Two new Honorary Townsmen were created during the year, on this occasion to Mr Rod Owens (now at Wem Town Hall) and Mr Roger Ashton (Wem Rotary) for their many hours of inspiring voluntary work and leadership within the community. Their presentation took place in November.

A considerable amount of strategic work and forward planning has again been done this year resulting in public consultations for 'Planning Matters' up to 2036 and more recently a Drop-In 'to assess opinion on a range of possible solutions to Wem's longstanding Highway problems'. Both were very well supported and results are now being carefully considered prior to further discussions with Shropshire Council.

The Town Council have introduced 'Briefings' this year as a new style of meeting needed to give more time to discuss issues of concern than our 'packed' monthly meeting agendas allow. To date we have looked at 'Social issues and Policing' in Wem and 'Ways to encourage commerce on our High Street'

During the year we have had visits from:

- the Police and Crime Commissioner (John Campion) and his Deputy (Tracey Oswell) to discuss a range of police issues in our area
- Owen Paterson MP on three occasions to help in our discussions with Shropshire Council about 'highway concerns'
- Peter Nutting, the new Leader of Shropshire Council, who came to speak and listen at one of our Town Council meetings. This is something of a first occasion for us to have this happen!

These visits are all very helpful in building relationships and presenting our case as a town.

Within the town it has been good to see the Christmas Festival drawing a huge crowd this year for 'Late Night Shopping and Lights Switch On' as the 'Camels and their Kings' joined the mix of festivities. The Harvest and St George's Markets too have continued to develop through additional stall space in the Baptist Church hall. The annual Eckford Sweet Pea Show combined with 'Where Everyone Meets' for voluntary groups on the Church Lawn, the 'Vehicles of Interest' Parade and Display on the Recreation Ground and the Annual 'end of school holidays' Carnival were again great Town summer occasions – where the good weather simply added to the welcome we in Wem gave to all our many visitors - including Shropshire High Sherriff, Mr Charles Lillis, who was more than impressed!

We have been seeking to support the Gym Extension Project at Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre for the Mayor's Charity this year. To this end we have held a Barn Dance, Quiz and Chips Evening and Spring Ball. In addition, we have had generous donations from people/organisations in Wem. Whilst final figures are still coming in it is anticipated that the final total will be just over £3750. To all who were part of this we say a huge 'thank you' for your support at these events and for your generosity. This seemed an impossible amount a few months ago. Please go and enjoy the new facility when it opens and realise that you helped make this possible!

Can I conclude this report by also saying 'thank you' for the warm welcome I have had from everyone. I have been invited to many of your special occasions as you will see from the Mayors Diary on the Town Council website, as well as representing Wem in many place across Shropshire to 'put a face to a place' and build good relations to help us all prosper into the future. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to meet so many others of 'like-mind' to ourselves who I can now support and encourage as I continue to work for the best interests of all in Wem following my year of office.

THE COUNCIL'S YEAR

The Full Council has met 13 times over the past year and the various committees have also met on a regular basis throughout the year. Outlined below is a brief snapshot of some of the issues considered by the Town Council over the past year.

Planning

The Town Council comments on all planning applications within the town area prior to their consideration by Shropshire Council who make the final decision on approval or otherwise. The Town Council works hard to listen to the views of residents prior to submitting comments on any application. In 2017 Shropshire Council started a review of its Local Plan. In order to ensure that the response provided to this consultation reflected the views of local residents the Town Council delivered a questionnaire to the majority of houses in the town to seek opinions on the amount of additional housing the town should have in the next 10 years. The result of this consultation was that residents wished to see a maximum of 250 additional houses built in Wem in the next 20 years. The Town Council has used this figure in its response to Shropshire Council's Local Plan Review. It is anticipated that a further consultation from Shropshire Council on the sites put forward for development in the town will take place in the autumn of 2018.

Lighting

During 2017/18 the majority of the Town Council owned lights in the town have been converted to LED lights. The money saved from reduced energy costs will be used to upgrade the oldest lamp columns.

Floral Display

The floral displays in the town were expanded again in 2017 to incorporate the planters at the entrances to the town which were installed originally by Wem Rotary. A grant was also received to enable the Town Council to purchase 2 floral tower planters for the town and these will be on display during the summer of 2018.

CCTV

During 2017 the Town Council was awarded a grant from the Police and Crime Commissioner to help support the purchase of 2 new CCTV camera's in the town. One of these cameras will be used to upgrade the existing camera on the recreation ground and the other camera will be installed in a new location to cover the Aston Street area of the Town.

Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre (WSLC)

The Town Council continues to support the swimming pool financially. In 2017 the Town Council worked with the committee to oversee the extension project that should be completed in the summer of 2018. In addition the Town Council financed the installation of new filters for the pool which were long overdue for replacement.

Communication

The Town Council has worked hard over the past year to improve the way it communicates with all residents. Monthly Councillor surgeries have been established and these are held in Wem Library or at an event already taking place in the Town. Full details can be found on our website.

Wem Economic Forum

In 2017 Wem Economic Forum was relaunched and an action plan developed. As a result of this a number of working parties have been established to look at specific projects in the Town and surrounds. These include Highways and Traffic and Markets. Forum meetings are open to all and if you would like to get involved please find more details on the website.

Grants

In January of each year the Town Council awards grants to a number of local organisations to help with running costs and one off projects. If you know of an organisation in the town that could benefit from a small grant please contact the Town Clerk.

Town Council Income and Expenditure 2017-2018

2016/17	Income Summary	2017/18
274,737	Precept	289,549
942	Administration	849
0	Recreation	2,263
385	Swimming Pool	0
1,845	Public Toilets	2,328
9,945	Cemetery	9,925
1,096	Allotments	1,084
240	Miscellaneous	2,959
289,189	Total Income	308,957
	Expenditure	
78,833	Staffing	76,993
21,383	Administration	20,243
407	Cllr Expenses	606
10,422	Grants/ Town Promotion	10,508
21,989	Recreation	42,395
63,402	Swimming Pool	83,913
15,450	Public Toilets	17,489
540	Bus Shelters	600
43,016	Street lighting	63,548
3,897	Cemetery	3,299
85	Allotments	222
27,876	Miscellaneous	30,317
287,300	Total Expenditure	350,133

Small Grants Awarded during 2017-18

Applicant	Amount
Wem Branch Shropshire Army Cadet Force League	£300
Wem Carnival Committee	£500
Eckford Sweet Pea Society	£900
Wem Scout and Guide HQ	£500
1 st Wem Scout Group	£500
NS Wheelers	£500
Wem Jubilee Band	£300
Wem Baptist Holiday Bible Club	£200
Welcome to Wem Community Group	£300
Wem Albion Bowling Club	£200
Shropshire Handball Foundry	£100

Councillor Contact Details

The Council comprises of 14 Councillors representing 2 Town Wards, East and West. The Councillors are elected every 4 years with the last Election being held in May 2017. The Town Council is served by a Town Clerk and 3 other full and part-time staff. The Council is chaired by the Town Mayor who, with the Deputy Mayor, is elected each year at the Annual Meeting of the Council in May.

Cllr P Broomhall	Sunnyside, 3 Swain Close, Wem, SY4 5NZ peterbroomhall2@icloud.com	232573
Cllr Mrs P A Dee	17 Chapel Street, Wem, SY4 5ER pauline.dee@shropshire.gov.uk	233037
Cllr Mrs R E Dodd	Craiglea, 18 Marlcroft, Wem, SY4 5AN rosemary.dodd@mypostoffice.co.uk	233083
Cllr P Glover (Deputy Mayor)	6 Trentham Close, Wem, SY4 5AS philipeglover@gmail.com	234037
Cllr Mrs C Granger (Mayor)	1 Barnfield Avenue, Wem, SY4 5HT constancegranger123@btinternet.com	236460
Cllr P Johnson	The Thimbles, 55 Eckford Park, Wem, SY4 5HL paul.johnson27@yahoo.com	232035
Cllr Mrs M J Meakin	5 Station Road, Wem, SY4 5BQ mandymeakin@gmail.com	234834
Cllr C J Mellings	Dwyfor, 37 Kynaston Drive, Wem, SY4 5DE Chris.mellings@shropshire.gov.uk	01743 252929
Cllr P Moyse MBE JP	7 Marlcroft, Wem, SY4 5AN cllrjpmoysewtc@gmail.com	233533
Cllr J H Murray	6 Marlcroft, Wem, SY4 5AN jhmurray@hotmail.co.uk	232007
Cllr G Nash	Brook Cottage, Tilley, Wem, SY4 5HE George.h.nash@hotmail.com	07947 558402
Cllr P White	40 Shrubbery Gardens, Wem, SY4 5BZ peter.white88@protonmail.com	07975 569718
Cllr E W Towers	Bramfields, 8 Fismes Way, Wem, SY4 5YD edwardtowers@btinternet.com	235283
Cllr G Soul	Oakleigh, Aston Road, Wem SY4 5JD	232544

Wem Town Council meets on the last Thursday of every month except August and December at Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem, at 7pm. The Council always welcomes electors' comments and suggestions and allows time at the start of each monthly meeting for questions from residents of the town wishing to attend. A copy of the agenda for meetings is displayed on the Town Council's official notice board at the front of the Town Hall, High Street and on the Council's official website: www.wem.gov.uk

Town Council Staff

Town Clerk Penny O'Hagan	Town Council Office, Edinburgh House, New Street SY4 5DB	01939 232733 Email info@wem.gov.uk
Assistant Clerk Sue Thornhill	Town Council Office, Edinburgh House, New Street SY4 5DB	01939 232733 Email assistant.clerk@wem.gov.uk
Groundsman John Ralphs		07970969037 Email groundskeeper@wem.gov.uk
Litterpicker Chris Martin		01939 232733