

WEM TOWN COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN 2025 – 2029



Background and Introduction

The purpose of this Business Plan is to describe our business, providing a statement in relation to key objectives and resources, and giving an overview of the significant documents that detail our actions and aspirations.

Business Summary

There are 14 Councillors and two wards within the Wem Town Council parish. The Town Council is the first and most local tier of government, with an important role to play in representing our communities, promoting our town and facilitating the delivery of services.

Our Councillors are ambitious and determined to improve opportunities for the Town and its people. The Town Council is responsive to the needs of the local community and works proactively with partners to ensure we deliver on the key objectives. The Town Council combines a strategic role with the provision of operational services. The Town Council has General Power of Competence.

Our Vision

Wem Town is proud to be a friendly, active and inclusive community with low crime and strong local pride. Our vision is to nurture these qualities while making Wem more tidy and attractive. By doing so, we aim to create a town that is prosperous, vibrant and thriving for everyone.

Town Council Responsibilities

The Town Council owns and manages:-

- Love Lane Cemetery
- Love Lane Allotments
- 7 play areas
- Public toilets
- Over 200 streetlights
- 4 bus shelters
- 13 CCTV cameras
- Floral displays
- Street furniture in the Town

The Town Council controls and manages:-

- Wem Market

Approved 30th October 2025

The Town Council provides:-

- Financial support to youth services
- Financial support to the swimming pool
- Financial and staffing support to Wem Sports & Social Association
- Financial support to Wem Town Hall
- Financial support to Christmas lighting
- Grant funding for community groups
- Wem Store Cupboard
- Community Cars
- The Town Council meeting room in the Library for use by local groups in and around the town
- Events within the Town (in partnership with the community)

Progress on previous priorities

The following priorities were identified for the period 2022 – 2025:

Priority	Projects	Progress
1. Engage more effectively with residents, particularly hard to reach groups including 18-30-year-olds to develop services and facilities to meet community needs.	Consider holding quarterly informal open meetings to discuss current issues.	
	Engage with the community by attending key events / activities.	Ongoing
	Make the Town Council more accessible to residents by securing a permanent base for the Town Council in the town.	Continuing to work towards a permanent base.
	From time to time undertake specific targeted consultations with key groups.	Consultations over replacement of Christmas trees and new play equipment.
2. Continue the Town Council's commitment to progress Climate Change and Environmental Initiatives	Work in partnership with interested groups to secure the Mill Fields as informal recreation space for residents.	
	Work in partnership to promote and create cycleways and footpaths in and around the town.	
	Engage in tree planting projects.	Participated in Queen's Platinum Jubilee tree project and other tree planting.

Priority	Projects	Progress
	Wherever possible invest and promote green technologies on Council owned facilities.	Installation of solar panels on Swimming & Lifestyle Centre.
	Continue progress on Climate Change Action Plan.	Regular agenda item.
3. Ensure that future housing development meets the needs of the local community	Investigate whether a Housing Needs Survey would be suitable for the town.	
	Ensure place plan priorities continue to be relevant and reviewed.	Reviewed in August 2024
	Pursue funding for town projects that may come about as a direct result of development through all available means.	Lack of Neighbourhood Funding because only available when development occurs.
4. Take a holistic approach to the regeneration of some the town's aging infrastructure	Ensure consultation takes place to identify the needs of residents.	
	Campaign for and develop projects to improve the appearance of Wem Town Centre.	Ongoing, but frustrated by Shropshire Council's lack of resources for the Town.
	Work in partnership with organisations to develop festivals/ events to boost local economy.	Jubilee Events Christmas Festival Midsummer in Wem
	Work with Wem Town Hall to develop street fairs/ markets to increase the vibrancy of the town centre.	Town Council has developed fairs/markets but not in partnership.
	Work in partnership with key groups and organisations e.g Wem Economic Forum, Wem Sports and Social Association, WSLC, Wem Scout and Guide HQ to develop and improve leisure facilities at Bowensfield.	WSSA, which is supported by the Town Council, has carried out work.

Priority	Projects	Progress
	Continue to Campaign to improve the Town's Highways network.	Frustrated by Shropshire Council's lack of resources for the Town.

Priorities identified for 2025 – 2029

Priority	Projects
1. Encourage improvements to the wider High Street area	Work with other organisations and the community to organise Wem in Bloom
	Continue to Campaign to improve the Town's Street scene
	Shropshire Council own three prominent buildings on the High Street. Encourage them to: Keep the Morgan Library in a visually attractive state; Improve the appearance of the White Horse and work swiftly to bring it back into use
	Seek to take over the ownership of Jubilee Square from Shropshire Council to prevent parking and raise its profile as the Town Square.
2. Continue the Town Council's commitment to combat Climate Change and Environmental initiatives.	Establish ownership of the Millfields land and explore all options for informal recreational use of the land by the Town, including walking routes, pump track, community orchard etc.
3. Show strong local Leadership and develop community pride.	Find a permanent Town Council office and meeting room.
	Continue to run community events and increase the use of social media promotion.
4. Ensure the sustainability of under-threat local services.	Consider taking on some of Shropshire Council's non-statutory services which are important to the Town, subject to the costs involved and staff capacity.

Summary of Wem Town Council Budget

Budget Heading	2024-25	2025-26
Expenditure		
Public Lighting	£57,800	£57,700
Burial Grounds	£12,400	£25,550
Allotments	£1,200	£1,500
Recreation	£57,600	£40,300
Public Toilets	£14,600	£22,800
Bus Shelters	£1,700	£1,800
Floral Planters	£5,500	£6,000
CCTV Scheme	£5,000	£6,000
Administration	£42,000	48185
Cllr Travel Expenses	£1,075	£1,075
Staffing Costs	£153,554	£162,905
Grants and Contributions	£22,600	£25,500
Swimming Pool	£67,300	£73,300
Funding Agreement Wem Town Hall	£16,000	£14,000
Markets	£1,000	£1,000
Town Improvement Projects	£5,341	£5,000
Total Net Expenditure	£464,670	£492,615
Income		
Bank Interest	£11,000	£16,000
Allotment Rents	£1,800	£2,200
Burial Fees	£15,000	£18,000
Story Of Wem	£120	£0
Toilet Income	£1,750	£1,500
Market	£3,000	£3,000
Gravedigging	£2,000	£2,000
Contribution from Reserves*	£30,000	£26,000
Total Including Reserves	£64,670	£68,700
Town Precept	£400,000	£423,915
Total Net Income	£464,670	£492,615

*Contributions From Reserves		
Cemetery Works From Neighbourhood Fund	£10,000	£13,000
Streetlight Columns (General)	£15,000	£5,000
Christmas Lights Year 3 Works	£5,000	£5,000
Tablet Purchase		£2,000
Event Infrastructure	£0	£1,000
Total	£30,000	£26,000

The budget is carefully monitored by the Finance and Corporate Governance Committee as well as Town Council with schedules of payments going to every Town Council meeting for approval and published on the Town Council website.

A summary of the accounts is posted in the Town Council notice board by 30th September each year once signed off by the External Auditor.

Committees, Panels and Liaison Groups 2025/26

Full terms of reference are available on request

Name	Overall Purpose
Finance and Corporate Governance Committee	To ensure that the council's finances, audit, and its statutory obligations are conducted in accordance with good practice.
Staffing Committee	To effectively and efficiently discharge the Council's duties as an Employer.
Complaints Panel	To investigate complaints made against the council.
Events Liaison Group	To oversee the management and organisation of any events run by the Town Council or in partnership with other groups and individuals.
Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Liaison Group	To liaise with staff and directors of Wem Swimming and Lifestyle Centre.
Town Hall Liaison Group	To liaise with staff and directors of Wem Town Hall Trust

In addition, the Council establishes working parties specifically to review information and make recommendations to Council or the appropriate committee. The following working parties were in existence on May 2025.

Working Party	Remit
Office working party	To review previously considered locations for a Town Council office, consider new locations and report any findings back to the Town Council.
Cemetery Extension Working Party	To make recommendations and consider the design of a cremated remains section, review regulations relating to internments and management of cremated remains, consider fees and charges for internment.
CCTV Working Party	To review the current CCTV system to establish whether it is suitable.

Councillor Roles 2025 - 26

Councillor	Civic Role	Full Council	Finance & Corporate Governance Committee	Staffing Committee	Complaints Panel	Events Liaison Group	WSSL Liaison Group	Town Hall Liaison Group
P Broomhall		✓	✓			✓	✓	
B Barker	Deputy Mayor	✓	✓	✓				✓
B Cotterell		✓	✓			✓		✓
R Gascoigne		✓	✓	✓				
D Hill		✓	✓		✓		✓	
M Hudson		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
M Hoffmann		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
P Johnson		✓	✓		✓		✓	
M Meakin		✓	✓				✓	
D Parry	Mayor	✓	✓	✓				
G Soul		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
E Towers		✓	✓	✓		✓		
G Nash		✓	✓					
L Gilchrist		✓	✓				✓	