

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHIREHALL, SHREWSBURY AT 6.00PM ON MONDAY 16 MARCH 2020

PRESENT

Councillors P Gillam (Mayor), P Adams, Mrs G Burgess (Deputy Mayor), J Dean, N Green, Mrs K Halliday, I Jones, A Mosley, Mrs P Moseley, P Nutting, K Parry, D Vasmer & Mrs R Wall.

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Gary Farmer (Operations Manager), Amanda Spencer (Deputy Town Clerk), Andy Watkin (Responsible Finance Officer), Carol Pullen (Acting Committee Clerk) & 2 members of public.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs H Fraser, Ms J Mackenzie & A Phillips.

82/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Shropshire Councillors	Twin hatted members declared personal interests in matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council.
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83/19 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 20 January 2020 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 20 January 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

84/19 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

85/19 ANNOUNCEMENTS

85.1 Mayor & Deputy Mayor's Engagements - Details of the Mayor & Deputy Mayor's engagements for January and February were circulated to members.

RESOLVED:

That the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's schedule of engagements be noted.

85.2 Announcements from the Mayor and Town Clerk

COVID-19

Following the Government's response plan to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Town Council would be acting on information and guidance available to both them and staff, and members of the public would be signposted to this information. The following documents were circulated to members:

- Risk Assessment and Business Continuity Response to COVID-19 (March 2020)
- Impact on services during the Coronavirus outbreak No 1 – 16 March 2020
- Frequently asked questions for Shrewsbury Town Council employees regarding Coronavirus March 2020
- Proposals for consideration

The Town Clerk reported that the Admag wrap-around was due to go out this week and links to relevant websites would be included. Councillors also had a part to play in directing their residents towards available help.

A list of Quarry events was circulated to members and the Town Clerk reported that the Outdoor Recreation & Asset Manager was in the process of contacting all organisers who had events booked in the Quarry during May & June to offer them the opportunity to cancel. He had also been liaison with the Football Association regarding cancelling football fixtures.

Discussion took place about how operational work such as grass cutting would be maintained during the coming months given that a high proportion of the workforce could be off sick or self-isolating at any one time. The Operations Manager reported that contingency was being made to combat any issues and that team leaders had been briefed on the Town Council's operational plan. Grass areas may be cut to a lesser frequency with priority being given to highway visibility splays. The workforce had been grouped into teams whereby they could easily be deployed to other areas/functions as required. Where there was a necessity to prioritise workload, this should be done by the Operations Manager.

The Town Clerk reported that the cleaning regimes at all the Council facilities had been increased. The Health & Safety Officer was sourcing additional PPE and ensuring adequate supplies were kept in store.

Members were asked to consider agreeing a Coronavirus Battle fund to support community groups and organisations. This grant pot would have few conditions and funds would be released within 48 hours of the application being received. There would be a simple form to complete, intended to make the process as straightforward as possible so community groups would not be spending time filling in forms when they could be helping residents.

Members welcomed the help for community organisations and it was agreed that a sum of £20,000 be allocated to the Coronavirus Battle Fund with a cap of £500 per group and that the Town Clerk and the Responsible Finance Officer be given the authority to consider the applications and determine who would receive them. Details and application forms for the Shrewsbury Town Council Coronavirus Battle Fund would be put on the website or could be accessed via Town Councillors.

Members had been extremely heartened by the grassroots support in local communities. Many were co-ordinating volunteers to help those most vulnerable in our society to get through the weeks ahead. The Town Clerk offered to arrange photocopying of leaflets detailing local community action and instructed members to send their requests to the Deputy Town Clerk.

Councillor Mosley thanked the Town Clerk and the team for their work in preparing the Council's response to the fast emerging COVID-19 outbreak.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That in response to the Covid-19 outbreak in the UK, and in the event that it is not possible to convene a meeting of the Council in a reasonable time, the Town Clerk shall have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the Council where such decision cannot reasonably be deferred and must be made in order to comply with a commercial or statutory deadline. This will be carried out where possible by consultation with members by electronic means or telephone. The Town Clerk will further consult with the Mayor, Leader & Group Leaders for guidance as necessary. The delegation does not extend to matters expressly reserved to the Council in legislation or in its Standing Orders or Financial Regulations. Any decisions made under this delegation must be recorded in writing and must be published in accordance with the relevant regulations. This delegated authority ceases upon the first meeting of the Council after the Council meeting at which the delegation was put in place.**
- (ii) That the Scheme of Delegation as presented be adopted**
- (iii) That meetings of Standing Committees be cancelled for the remainder of the 2019/20 Municipal Year and that the Town Clerk determine the meeting schedule thereafter in conjunction with the Mayor & Leader**
- (iv) That the Annual Town Meeting scheduled for 27 for April be delayed and convened at a later date when safe to do so.**
- (v) That the Annual Town Council Meeting scheduled for 18 May remain a scheduled meeting, to take place if safe to do so and the Town Clerk to determine the format to meet the Council's statutory requirements, in conjunction with the Mayor & Deputy Mayor.**
- (vi) That the RFO be authorised to make payments electronically and remotely, having been authorised by any two of the Council's signatories with**

payments being validated remotely by one of the Town Clerk or Operations Manager.

- (vii) That the Deputy Town Clerk arrange for any planning responses to be made in consultation with the members of the Planning Committee.
- (viii) That the Operations Manager be given delegated authority to determine operational priorities and allocation of operational resources over the whole of the Council's estate.
- (ix) That the Town Clerk ensure that throughout Members are kept informed of the work of the Council on a weekly basis

That the following be cancelled:

Mayors Awards Evening – 29th April
VE Day Celebrations – 8/9th May
Weeping Cross Open Day – 25th May

- (x) That £20,000 be allocated to the Coronavirus Battle Fund, with a maximum of £500 to be used to assist groups in helping with community projects to support those in isolation. Vetting process to be carried out by the Town Clerk & the Responsible Finance Officer.
- (xi) That the Deputy Town Clerk co-ordinate the printing of any Ward leaflets.

86/19 PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

No public questions or comments had been received.

87/19 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

There were no questions received from members of the Council.

88/19 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 10 February 2020 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 10 February 2020 be accepted and approved.

89/19 RECREATION & LEISURE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 5 February 2020 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 5 February 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

90/19 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 28 January, 20 February & 10 March 2020 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 28 January 2020, 20 February & 10 March 2020 be accepted and approved.

91/19 YOUTH SERVICES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Youth Services Committee meeting held on 4 March 2020 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Youth Services Delivery Committee meeting held on 4 March 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

92/19 JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 28 January 2020 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 28 January 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

93/19 PLASTIC FREE TOWN GROUP

Councillors Mrs G Burgess, J Dean & D Vasmer had previously expressed an interest in joining the Steering Group and the Town Clerk had spoken to the Plastic Free Town Group to confirm this.

RESOLVED:

That Councillors Mrs G Burgess, J Dean & D Vasmer be elected to represent Shrewsbury Town Council on the Plastic Free Town Group.

94/19 NORTH WEST RELIEF ROAD

The consultation on the North West Relief Road was due to finish in April. Matt Johnson, the Strategic Project Executive Manager had originally be invited to the meeting but his attendance had been postponed due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

It was reported that the Big Town Plan had commissioned a Movement Strategy for the town and it was felt more appropriate to await that and have an understanding of public feeling on the current consultation ahead of making a corporate response. The Town Clerk had contacted the Strategic Project Executive Manager who was content with a delay to the response.

RESOLVED:

That further discussion on the North West Relief Road be delayed until the outcome of current Movement Strategy work streams.

95/19 WEST MERCIA ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

Members considered the West Mercia Road Safety Strategy and asked that the Town Clerk prepare a response.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerk prepare a response to be circulated to members.