

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Recreation & Leisure Committee
Held in Council Chamber, Shirehall
At 6.00pm on Wednesday 15 March 2023**

PRESENT

Councillors: K Pardy (Chair), B Bentick, P Gillam, C Lemon, A Mosley, E Roberts and D Vasmer.

IN ATTENDANCE

Amanda Spencer (Deputy Town Clerk), Gary Farmer (Head of Operations), Ruth Jones (Office Manager), Stuart Farmer (Projects Manager) and Michelle Farmer (Committee Officer).

72/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED:

That apologies be accepted from Councillors Wagner and Wall. Apologies also received from Helen Ball (Town Clerk) and Mike Cox (Outdoor Recreation & Asset Manager).

73/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY & NON-PECUNIARY) IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Shropshire Councillors	Those twin-hatted members declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council.
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74/22 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 18 January 2023 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 18 January 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

75/22 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

There were no Matters Arising for consideration.

Councillor Mosley and Councillor Vasmer joined the meeting.

76/22 PRESENTATION – THE RESET PROJECT

Terry Warburton, the Project Manager for RESET, attended the meeting to provide Councillors with an update on the project.

The project was in week seven of existence after a successful bid of £1.4million had been allocated to tackle issues surrounding rough sleeping and drug and alcohol abuse. The Rough Sleeping and Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant (RSDATG) had been made to Shropshire Council to commission a Multidisciplinary Team approach to support Rough Sleepers and those at risk of Rough Sleeping. WithYou at Shropshire Recovery Partnership were the lead provider as the existing commissioned substance misuse treatment provider in Shropshire.

The aims of the Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant were to:

- Move away from siloed working and develop more integrated working across local systems
- Improve integrated care for individuals with co-occurring substance dependence and mental health needs
- Provide access to effective and evidence-based drug and alcohol treatment in line with clinical guidelines
- Improving access to inpatient detox and residential rehabilitation
- Support and sustain recovery
- Out/in reach and care navigation models, focused on identifying challenging drug and/or alcohol use by intervening earlier
- Support people who previously may not have accessed or engaged with drug & alcohol treatment services
- Support people back into treatment services
- Improved engagement models, expanding/developing trauma informed approaches
- Wrap around multidisciplinary teams (MDTs)
- Improved access to peer mentoring

The expected outcomes were to:

- Reduce the number of people sleeping rough with substance misuse needs or at risk of sleeping rough with substance misuse needs
- Successfully increased numbers and opportunities to have completed treatment
- Increase community treatment options which were holistic, person centred and long term sustainable within the local system

- Increase inpatient detox, access identify the barriers, provide more enhance support and direct access as a result
- Increase residential rehab
- Reduction in percentage of deaths of people who are homeless from drug and alcohol poisoning Support
- Increase success of treatment with better support post treatment
- Locally developed services to meet the local populations needs
- Sustainable services model

Mr Warburton explained that the programme works alongside Withyou, Shropshire Council, Shropshire Domestic Abuse Service, Midlands Partnership Foundation Trust, Intuitive Thinking Skills and the Shrewsbury Ark. The RESET Journey was to assess, engage and sustain engagement.

With regards to Housing, they would work alongside Shropshire Council to:

- Manage a rough sleeper hostel, providing accommodation at 70 Castle Foregate for eleven former rough sleepers.
- Receive referrals of new rough sleepers, verify and offer support as outreach
- Case work and support.
- Each of our officers provide support to fifteen individuals. So roughly sixty cases. Identifying barriers to accommodation; assistance with homelessness application; referrals to other specialist services re drugs/alcohol, mental health etc; assistance in looking for suitable accommodation
- Funding of Outreach Worker at the Shrewsbury Ark
- Recording and reporting to Government at Department of Housing Levelling up and Communities (DHLUC) Monthly reports. November 2022 count recorded 16 individuals sleeping rough
- Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) Provide accommodation and support in cases of severe weather to rough sleepers
- Chair Weekly multi agency Homeless Outreach Street Triage (HOST) meeting

Mr Warburton explained that the team were currently working with ten rough sleepers from Shrewsbury who they hoped to put into accommodation shortly. One was already in accommodation and off drugs and in employment. They were looking to take on another thirteen rough sleepers by the end of March, leading up to a target of 50 by May.

The team were trying to increase the partners by including the Town Rangers and GPs. The project had got off to a good start and they had a year to deliver the project.

Councillor Bentick asked what housing was available to the project. He was informed that the temporary accommodation at the Ark could accommodate eleven rough sleepers and there was the same accommodation at Coton Hill. Mr Warburton explained that accessing housing was an ongoing issue and a concentrated effort was required to expand this provision.

Councillor Roberts asked if the numbers the project was working with included 'sofa surfers' and Mr Warburton responded that these were encapsulated within the wider number.

In response to the ten rough sleepers that had been taken from Shrewsbury it was asked if there was any particular criteria to meet in choosing people to which it was confirmed there was. It was also commented that he would be addressing the issue of the Ark and their early closing.

Councillor Mosley asked how Mr Warburton saw things developing in the longer term and how it could be made sustainable. Mr Warburton responded that they needed to build a business case to go back to Government to increase the funding once the initial amount had ceased. If the project proved successful it could roll out across other counties and this would also assist with further funding.

Councillor Mosely also asked if there was a procedure in place to track where individuals had come from. Mr Warburton replied that there was and that the team was working closely with counterparts in other counties.

Councillor Mosley invited Mr Warburton back to a future committee (Full Council or Recreation & Leisure) to provide an update. He was happy to do this and suggested any meeting after May 2023, when he could provide more detailed statistics to the Councillors.

RESOLVED:

That Terry Warburton be invited to Full Council in June to update all Councillors on the project.

77/22 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Head of Operations reported the following:

- Office works were on track for completion and handover was due on 17 March with a moving date of 23/23 March 2023.
- War Memorial in the Park – they now had a way forward with the Conservation Officers – quotes were being revisited but it was likely to cost about £7000.
- Nature Trail – the Countryside & Greenspace Manager had met with Councillors Vasmer & Mosley about interpretation boards – they had costings which were considerably more than the budget, so they proposed to amalgamate the education budget and the residue from the Reabrook Interpretation Board Project – they did require a decision quickly to avoid any further cost increases.
- Kynaston Wheeled Track tender was out.
- Kynaston Infant Play Area was out.
- Kynaston Drainage tender was out.
- Upton Lane Play Area location and specification was being finalised with Councillor Moseley.
- Moston Road Wheeled Track tender had been awarded and they awaited a start date.

- Monkmoor Recreation Ground Floodlights tender had been awarded and they awaited a start date.
- Discussions were starting around how they would undertake a structural inspection programme of all of their Statues and Memorials – many of them were listed so they have a duty to keep them in good order.
- Shorncliffe Recreation Ground feasibility had been picked up with Redkite.
- Beaver Project fencing tenders were in, and the costings were being considered.

Councillor Vasmer enquired further regarding Shorncliffe Drive & Monkmoor and the signing over of the properties. It was agreed that further investigations be made and reported back.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Capital Programme report be noted.**
- (ii) That the Town Clerk would report back to Councillor Vasmer regarding the status of Shorncliffe Drive and Monkmoor.**

78/22 FOOTFALL

The Projects Manager updated the Committee on footfall in the town. Visitor numbers had continued to follow a similar pattern as previous years with a small drop off in January. The average number of new visitors had once again remained relatively stable although the overall figure had reduced. Whilst total visitor numbers had dropped off in recent months the percentage of new and repeat visitors had remained relatively stable throughout the 12-month period. Total Quarry visitors for March 2022 to March 2023 was 1.23 million showing that total visits. This gave an average daily visitor number of 3,360.

Councillor Vasmer asked as to whether the information provided in the report could be shown in a graph instead and to also show events. The Project Manager agreed that he would be happy to return to providing the information on graphs and he would try to get more information in the report.

Councillor Mosley requested if they could focus more on the footfall for the Quarry. Overall, he commented that the figures showed there had a been a drop in visitors and enquired if they knew the reason why.

Councillor Roberts commented that she believed the footfall reduction, especially in the Market Square was possibly due to the lack of bus services into town over the weekend and this was the feeling of the traders in the Square. Road Closures and bus services were not under the control of Shrewsbury Town Council.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Footfall Report be noted.**
- (ii) That the footfall figures would be shown in graph form and would concentrate more on figures for The Quarry.**

79/22 FISHERIES

79.1 Shrewsbury Town Fisheries update.

In the absence of the Outdoor Recreation & Asset Manager, the Head of Operations updated the Committee on Shrewsbury Town Fisheries.

Mousecroft Pool - The last of the three new fishing platforms had been installed, which was completed with funding from a successful grant application from the Environment Agency. The platform would enable easy and safe access to the pool for anglers, in particular, juniors to enjoy. In addition, Andy Jones the Fisheries Manager confirmed that he stocked the pool with a small number of crucian carp and bream that were part of last year's stocking plan, but they were not available last year. Mousecroft originally had a number of crucian Carp, but they had dwindled over the years, these introduced fish would complement the existing stock and further enhance the aquatics of the pool.

Monkmoor / Belvidere Fishery - The new boundary signs were to be installed within the next three weeks, this work was delayed due to emergency repairs being carried out in the Quarry and County Ground which was a priority for safety reasons.

Oxon Pool - The bark around the pool had been replenished along the footpaths and other areas to make the facility look tidy. A grant was available in March for protective fencing along one of the boundaries, this would be a significant benefit to the site to ensure the site was tidy and to keep it secure, this funding if successful would be via the Angling trust

Reabrook Fishery - There had been reports of tree damage and spray paint vandalism made to the Countryside Team, so the fisheries had stepped up enforcement with the bailiffs in the area to assist with a crackdown on anti-social behaviour and to report back to Jim Goldsmith.

Radbrook Pool - The disabled platform was becoming overgrown. Work had been completed on the shrubs to ensure access was now available to all. The work had been completed with the assistance of Mike Pugh (Contracts & Arbs Officer) and the Countryside Team. The team had also removed more of the debris from the pool which should protect the aquatic wildlife.

County Ground and Quarry - The fisheries team had recently completed repairs and general maintenance of the fishing platforms. There were still two that cannot be repaired due to the rotten wash boards. All of the tree work had now been completed with the help of Mike Pugh (Contracts & Arbs Officer) and the Countryside Team.

Water Keepers / Bailiffs Team - The bailiff team had been attending online enforcement workshops with the Environment Agency for additional training to assist them with their duties. On March 11th another seven bailiffs would have completed throw line training with the fire service in Shrewsbury.

Water Testing – They had increased from three to six volunteers testing the River Severn in Shrewsbury. Testing was being carried out in eight different locations for Phosphates, Nitrates and recently includes Ammonia. This was part of the Severn Catchment Project with the Angling Trust and was currently rolling out nationally in the UK on all of our rivers. Results were sent from the Fisheries Manager to Kris Kent at the Angling Trust to collate the data and Mike Cox (Outdoor Recreation and Asset Manager) at the Town Council for information.

Plans for 2023 - An application had been applied to match fund ten fishing platforms on the river. Three at Monkmoor, two at Sydney Avenue which need replacing after being damaged by the recent floods, and five to replace former platforms on the Emstrey Fishery. Work was being done on the junior coaching sessions at Mousecroft Pool for the summer.

Councillor Bentick enquired about the water testing and asked if the results could come to this Committee. It was confirmed this question would be raised with the Outdoor Recreation & Asset Manager.

79.2 Rowley & Fenemere Fisheries at Castlewalk

Committee members were updated on the work of Rowley and Fenemere Angling Association. The area in question was situated between the Railway Land and the Fish Pass above the Weir.

It was noted that in 1972, the Ditherington Angling Association purchased the fishing rights for the sum of £2500. Various Angling Clubs were concerned that the fishery had not been maintained or managed properly for a number of years and the pegs had fallen into disrepair and become overgrown, this was leading to increased reports of poaching on the site and no one available to manage the problems.

Rowley and Fenemere Angling Association purchased the fishing rights from the Ditherington Angling Association in 2019. When Fenemere acquired the rights, a site meeting was held in 2021 to look at the site in question, and it was identified that safe access to the pegs was not possible. Under the deeds for the fishery, the club had the rights to trim trees and bushes along the said banks and to cut reeds and other water plants that may be detrimental or an obstruction to the fishery. As landowner, they had to ensure the anglers could access and use the site in safety. At the site meeting, location of the priority pegs were identified and pegged (this phase was between rail track land and the footbridge) and any potential hazards noted for inspection by a competent person. Mike Pugh (Contracts & Arbs Officer) carried out an initial inspection in March 2022 and concluded that two branch removals were required to provide safe use of pegs and various works listed however due to safety concerns and the Safe Useful Life Expectancy (SULE) of the trees, Mike Pugh (Contracts & Arbs Officer) arranged for a consultant to visit the site.

On the 29 March 2022 the consultant identified three additional trees required work at the same time for safety reasons. A planning application was made on the 4 April and the issue was discussed at the planning committee on the 26 April 2022 and then adopted by full council on the 27 June 2022. At a recent site visit a large number of trees along the riverbank had broken limbs with two large limbs in the river, with one from Network Rail land. Having had a number of complaints about people poaching from this location, the club was advised to erect some signs to indicate the fisheries were now being managed. The Association was waiting for the tree works to be carried out before they applied for Grants to install a minimum of five fishing pegs along this stretch of the river, at the moment only one fishing peg was currently accessible. The Association reported that they would be looking to make a bid to the Environment Agency during 2025 and work to commence on the pegs in 2026. Once this phase was completed or well under way, they would look at what works were required from between the bridge and the weir. The Association had been liaising with officers of the Council and the Environment Agency to ensure they were not in breach of any rules, as they had found elsewhere, some clubs had not liaised, they had nailed signs to trees, dug out parts of the riverbank and felled trees which had created issues with local landowners and speeded upriver bank erosion. When the Association was notified as to whether they had been successful with their grant applications, they could update the committee of progress. The Town Council had no intention of funding major works, signage or pegs associated with this fishery as it was not part of their

management area, however they did need to ensure that the club had safe access and could safely use their facility and that any works would not be detrimental to the local wildlife, residents or the river itself, and that the Association managed the site to prevent and report anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Mosley added that himself and Councillor Vasmer had a meeting scheduled with Mike Pugh and Mike Cox about the land. He was disappointed that the Town Council had not purchased the land and described this as a lost opportunity. Gary Farmer responded that it had been too late to do so by the time the Town Council found out it was for sale. It was asked if enquiries could be made if the land could be purchased now and agreed that this would be discussed further at the scheduled meeting.

Councillor Mosley also commented that five posts had been erected with significant signage which was on Town Council land and discussion needed to take place about this. Some clearance work was underway but more needed to be done. There were also concerns about the future usage of the land and if competitions would take place as both of these had the potential to significantly affect the amount of car parking needed in an already congested area.

Councillor Lemon commented that the report states Rail Track land, but this is actually Network Rail land.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) That the report is noted.**
- (ii) That officers continue to liaise with Association and Environment Agency.**
- (iii) That Officers update the committee and local councillors of progress.**

80/22 TEAM SHREWSBURY

The Office Manager provided an update on Team Shrewsbury activities.

From the yearly comparisons the incidents reported for 2023 were much higher than 2022, which was a result of the additional reporting from Security following the Safer Streets 4 Funding. However, when looking at the comparisons for the last three months, issues were starting to decrease. The effects of the Town Rangers and Quarry Security patrols were starting to reduce the issues that they had been encountering. The Security Teams were picking up an understanding of persistent problems and engaging with individuals on a daily basis.

The Purple Flag assessment evening took place on 4 March where the Shrewsbury BID, West Mercia Police, Shropshire Council, Street Pastors and Shrewsbury Town Council patrolled the Town visiting a number of premises and observing the movements around the Town. The results should be available over the next couple of months. During the evening the County Lines Prevention team were patrolling the Town with their dogs, which resulted in a number of arrests.

Policing Charter submissions were now required on a quarterly basis via a form. The details would be issued late April for approval at the next Recreation & Leisure meeting on 10 May. Updates from the previous submissions would be sent in due course.

RESOLVED:

That the Team Shrewsbury Report be noted.

81/22 SAFER STREETS 4 FUNDING

The Head of Operations provided the Committee with an update on Safer Streets 4 Funding.

Officers had previously reported on the success of the Safer Streets 4 Funding bid made to the Home Office by the West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner on behalf of Team Shrewsbury. £548,178 was awarded of which the following sums were awarded to the Town Council to manage:

- Lighting of Life Saving Equipment along the River - £43,700
- Expansion of the existing Quarry Security to include Taxi Marshal - £168,480

Security provision in the park was increased in August from 30 hours a week to 60 hours a week with 12 hours a week Taxi Marshalling added to the contract to manage the night-time economy. Officers had also undertaken a tender process to install solar lights to all Throwline Boards and all high-profile Lifebuoy Stations along the river; this project had now been completed.

Since the last meeting, Quarry Security had been operational since April with enhanced hours paid for by Safer Streets since August. Quarry Security were currently operating on winter hours and would revert to extended summer hours once the clocks go forward at the end of March. Taxi Marshals began in August and had worked every Friday/Saturday night. Town Rangers were managed by the BID and had been functioning since October.

The Town Clerk & Office Manager received weekly reports on all three sets of activity; those reports were reviewed, and key partners were notified on a need-to-know basis. All incidents were recorded on the Town Council's ASB logs and 101/Online Reporting or Crimestoppers was used to report matters of concern to the Police. This collective reporting was showing trends of people, locations and activity and this was helping to prioritise patrols and workflows. Officers continued to work with the Police Problem Solving Hub who had the responsibility to report activity and success of the project to the Home Office. They had previously reported successful visits by Home Office Staff as well as the Chief Constable and Police & Crime Commissioner to witness the project first hand.

Quarry issues were being well managed. The Security Staff were well received by staff, the public who use the park, and in particular young people who saw them as safe individuals to talk to. Taxi Marshals had helped continue to strengthen relations between the Hackney Carriage Drivers and the Private Hire Drivers. They continued to review live bookings with Taxi Drivers and report any breaches to the Licensing Team. Taxi Marshals had also assisted Licensing Officers from Wolverhampton City Council reviewing activity of Wolverhampton licensed private hire drivers in the town. Town Rangers continued to be busy addressing issues associated with Rough Sleepers; this included, drug taking and dealing, drinking alcohol on the streets, begging and shoplifting. They had started to instil a regime of better behaviour. Town Rangers carried out joint patrols with various organisations to improve intelligence knowledge and skillset.

The next Quarterly meeting was scheduled for April; this would include Officers from the Town Council and the BID as well as representatives from Prosecure. These meetings allowed for activity to be retargeted to maximise the benefit of the resource. The three Security detail had recently undertaken County Lines Training to assist them in identifying any people on the streets vulnerable to County Lines. Since the visit in December of the Police & Crime Commissioner, there had been further conversations with the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner to help support longer term sustainability of the service. Public attitude to all three elements of the Safer Streets project was excellent with people saying they felt much safer in the town centre and the park.

RECOMMENDATIONS

(i) That the report be noted

(ii) That Officers continue to report on progress to the Recreation & Leisure Committee

82/22 MARTYN'S LAW

82.1 Martyn's Law

The Head of Operations updated the Committee on the future legislative rollout of Martyn's Law and the impact this would have on the Town Council.

At the March 2022 Recreation & Leisure Committee, the Town Clerk reported on the likely introduction of legislation designed to protect the public in the event of a terrorist attack. This resulted in the Town Council adopting a Policy around Security Planning. It was reported in March 2022 that Government had previously consulted on the recommendations of the Manchester Bombing Inquiry; namely a statutory Protect Duty and at the time of last year's meeting a government response to that consultation had been published. The Queen's Speech to the House in June last year detailed Government's commitment to bringing forward legislation and just before Christmas last year Government provided further detail.

Further details were shared on a recent Home Office Webinar. Legislative proposals would identify Qualifying Premises, Qualifying Activities and Capacity Thresholds. Qualifying Premises would include buildings including any land on which that building occupies and any land with a readily identifiable physical boundary (be that permanently or temporarily (e.g., Heras fencing at an event)).

Qualifying Activities were broad including sporting activity, entertainment, shopping, visitor attractions as well as local government buildings. There shall be two thresholds:

- Standard – 100 -799 capacity
- Enhanced – 800+ capacity

There will be various statutory requirements:

Standard threshold properties would be required to prepare a Preparedness Plan.

Enhanced threshold properties were required to undertake much broader planning, including:

- Risk Assessment on the vulnerability of the property to terrorist attack
- Security Plan detailing all reasonable practical mitigating measures. This Security Plan must be recorded, auditable and reviewed.
- Framework for measures in the event of an emergency. This should include physical measures, people, systems and processes.

A "responsible person" (i.e., a person in control of the building/land) would be required to prepare these measures and there shall be a duty to co-operate both where there are multiple premises within one building (e.g. Shopping Centres) and also where the owner of the property was not necessarily the person in control of the building (this would affect Events in the Quarry as well as the leases of Community Centres).

The Government shall appoint a regulator to ensure compliance. It was not yet known whether it shall be a new Government body or whether the remit of an existing Government body would be extended. That body would be given a number of legal powers including Power of Entry, Power to Access Areas, Powers to obtain data and Power to Interview Staff.

Sanctions would be determined by the Regulator and would range from Site Close & restrictions to Fine/Monetary Penalties and for serious breaches Criminal Prosecution.

The Government had not set specific dates other than to say that the Bill would be published in Spring, reviewed by the Home Office Select Committee, tabled for Parliamentary Debate before enactment and it was anticipated that there would be time allowed for preparedness.

The Town Council needed to consider:

- The Town Council's Approach to Security Policy was scheduled for its annual review. This had been reviewed and amended. It was therefore proposed that this should be re-adopted as the temporary default position;
- Key front-line staff had undertaken the Action Counters Terrorism (ACT) & See, Check & Notify (SCaN) Training to ensure they know the tell-tale signs of any terrorist activity. Senior officers have undertaken Joint Emergency Strategic Interoperability Protocols (JESIP) Awareness Training. Staff learning should be refreshed annually;
- All Counter Terrorism information was cascaded from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) on to its one-stop platform. There was also an APP which had all the necessary risk methodology processes and checklists need to follow in the event of an emergency. All front-line staff should have phones which will allow the APP to be accessed.
- The Qualifying Premises, Activities and Thresholds were likely to affect a number of locations and activities which would require the production of various documentation by a "Competent Person". There was currently no definition of what a "Competent Person" is. After clarification Council will need to consider whether any current member of staff can be classed as competent currently or competent with specific training or whether it might be a service the Council would need to buy in (like Fire Risk Assessments);
- Much of the criticism of the Manchester Bombing was that whilst there were emergency plans, they had not been tested. This new process will regulate the need for testing. Discussions are ongoing with the Safety Advisory Group as to the potential of developing Desktop Scenario Exercises to test the elements of a Security Plan and the interoperability of various partners that will inevitably be involved. Given the current resourcing of the emergency services, there will be a requirement for Town Council staff to step up to support an emergency on land owned by the Town Council, therefore preparedness is crucial. There is likely to be a resource implication to facilitate such an activity.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (I) That the report be noted.**
- (II) That the Approach to Security Planning be re-adopted.**
- (III) That Officers retain a watching brief on the rollout of legislation.**
- (IV) That the Town Clerk:**
 - a. Considers the implications of Qualifying Premises, Activity, Capacity on Town Council Assets and Activity;**
 - b. Determines the personnel that would be required to prepare for new legislation with any required training, phone capacity etc and fund accordingly;**

- c. Determines the competency levels of staff to meet the requirements of the legislation and funds accordingly;**
- d. Develops a regime to test any plans to meet the requirements of the legislation and funds accordingly.**

(V) That Officers continue to keep this committee abreast of progress.

82.2 Approach to Security Planning Policy

The Head of Operations requested that the Security Planning Policy that this Committee ratified last year be reaffirmed whilst they awaited details of legislative change. The Town Clerk had stressed in her report the need for vigilance particularly around the potential for extremist attacks and even in Shrewsbury they could never be complacent. They awaited new legislation which would force down a certain route and over the last year the Town Clerk had been encouraging staff to embrace the principals and raise awareness. The Policy set out how they intended to take this further. An upskilled workforce working in partnership with other Team Shrewsbury Colleagues was essential. The Town Clerk's report was for noting and she had outlined actions they needed to start to take.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the report was reaffirmed by Committee.**

83/22 RIVER SAFETY

The Head of Operations reported to Committee that the Town Clerk had submitted notes of the Town Council's Working Group looking into River Safety. She had also attached the Team Shrewsbury Notes from the wider Group which had the responsibility of bringing partners to account. They had continued to look at improvements to barriers and landscaping where they knew there were vulnerabilities and he confirmed that the Safer Streets Lighting project was complete and working. It was the intention of the Town Council's Working Group to meet just before the Quarterly meetings of Team Shrewsbury so that any activity could be fed into the wider group.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted

84/22 QUARRY

84.1 Quarry Events Programme for 2023

The Deputy Town Clerk reported on the upcoming Quarry Calendar. Many of the big events were back. The Town Clerk and the Outdoor Recreation & Asset Manager had had discussions with Let's Rock who were hosting back-to-back events – one with the traditional 80s theme and the other reflecting the 90s Manchester Hacienda theme. They had also had conversations with the Horticultural Society about the Flower Show- there was new personnel looking at Show Ground Management and Health & Safety so both knew the requirements to fulfil our premises licence conditions.

RESOLVED:

That the Quarry Events Report be noted.

84.2 Policy for Outdoor Music Events in the Quarry and Other Council Owned Land

The Outdoor Music Events Policy had been presented to Committee for ratification. This in effect gives additional criteria to over and above their premises licence to manage events effectively. These were big events that attracted big numbers and it was about keeping people safe.

Councillor Mosley asked if anything additional had been added to the policy and it was confirmed that nothing had been added.

RESOLVED:

That the policy be noted and ratified by Committee.

85/22 SHREWSBURY IN BLOOM

85.1 Summer planting for 2023

The Head of Operations reported that since the last meeting, operational staff were progressing well in the Nursery as this was the busy season for planting. Staff were also working on the Sedum roofs for the bus shelters. They were focussing on more grasses and plants this year and working in Partnership with Climate Change.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted

85.2 Roundabout sponsorship

The Head of Operations updated the Committee on Shropshire Council's intention to outsource Roundabout Sponsorship and to clarify some miscommunications regarding those proposals and the Town Council's involvement in roundabout maintenance. The report was also to update the Committee on Shrewsbury in Bloom's proposals going forward in relation to providing an affordable scheme for those who did not wish to take advantage of the new scheme provided by Shropshire Council.

Shropshire Council presented a report to cabinet in July 2021 about proposals to source additional revenue funding through advertising. This resulted in officers at Shropshire Council contacting Town Council Officers to discuss roundabout sponsorship in Shrewsbury. Of the 85 roundabouts for consideration across Shropshire, 27 were maintained by Shrewsbury Town Council on which the long-established Shrewsbury in Bloom Sponsorship Scheme operated.

Shrewsbury in Bloom had run a sponsorship scheme for over 35 years since the Borough Council days and upon local government reorganisation in 2009, the management of that scheme passed to the Town Council. At the time, all signs were minimal in black and gold designed to be respectful of the Shrewsbury Conservation Area and not detract from the sightlines of passing traffic. Following discussions with both the Highways Authority and the Planning Authority, the Town Council submitted an application to the Planning Authority for consent to advertise across a number of sites with an increased size sign with the ability to brand to the requirements of the sponsor; this was duly approved.

All Town Council signs were 600mm x 375mm and the number of signs were limited as part of the original application – most roundabouts had three signs with larger roundabouts like Meole Brace having four.

The Scheme ran a Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze Scheme with charges ranging from £266 - £1,200 + VAT per year depending on the size, vehicular flow and horticultural excellence of the roundabout. Only one island was Platinum, and the majority of the roundabouts were Gold. Without exception all roundabout sponsors had been very local companies/organisations from Crowmoor School which sponsors the island on the inner ring road at Crowmere Road to organisations like Salop Leisure & Morris Leisure who sponsored islands near to their establishments.

Sponsorship was not just restricted to roundabouts, but also open spaces and flower beds belonging to the Town Council.

Sponsors were invoiced annually, though in 2020 they didn't seek sponsorship income due to COVID and the following year they charged half the agreed fee reflecting trying times for local businesses. As Shropshire Council advised the Town Council in February that their new scheme had gained Cabinet approval, the Town Council had not issued any further invoices. All business rate liability was paid up to 31st March 2022 and any new invoices had been returned to Shropshire Council signposting the officer in charge of the new scheme.

A number of Shrewsbury in Bloom sponsors had said that their sponsorship was more about supporting the bloom ethos than out an out advertising reflecting the good standing they placed in Shrewsbury in Bloom and Shrewsbury Town Council.

Demand for sponsorship locations was high with the regular commentary from prospective sponsors being they wanted to put something back into the town rather than any aspirations of increased business activity.

Shropshire Council's proposals were to outsource roundabout sponsorship to a Marketing agency and expected to be able to generate £3-4k a roundabout generating £392k over a four-year term. For this to work they required a single sponsorship arrangement across the county. In return the Town Council was required to cease its sponsorship scheme and Shropshire Council would guarantee a comparable level of income that the Town Council currently received. The Cabinet report also reported that the Marketing agency would retain 40% of any income received.

This request was submitted to both the Bloom Committee and the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Further discussions took place with officers of Shropshire Council in which the following was discussed:

The viability of achieving £4000 on a roundabout within the inner ring road of the town – Shrewsbury Town Council officers suggested focus be given to the outer ring road and Meole/Frankwell Roundabouts – Shropshire Council Officers felt that £4000 was a reasonable sum and was similar to businesses placing an advert in the Shropshire Star every week.

The level of guarantee that the Town Council would receive a comparable sum to the sponsorship income received year on year given that much of that funding was used to fund additionality to those roundabouts (Hanging Baskets, Planters and Pole Mounted Planters were additional features

that were installed over and above the Horticultural Service Level Agreement). The Town Council also cited a number of instances where promises of funding had been withdrawn including the Civics Grant and the Council Tax Support Grant.

Shropshire Council requested full details of all of the sponsors; this was declined as it was intended to offer them alternatives to the new scheme if the option proved unaffordable. Officers did however offer to draft a letter to all Sponsors signposting them to the new Sponsorship Scheme. Shropshire Council Officers requested that the letter wasn't sent as their scheme was not up and running.

Discussions also took place regarding what was actually in the Horticultural Service Level Agreement in relation to maintenance of roundabouts. The maintenance map on the Shropshire Council's mapping system was clear on the level of maintenance. Many of the roundabouts had been embellished with seasonal bedding and infrastructure to meet the requirements of individual sponsors and whilst ground features would be retained, infrastructure would be removed.

The conclusion of the meeting was that Shropshire Council was to continue with its sponsorship scheme and the Town Council would restrict its involvement in those roundabouts to what was within the Service Level Agreement. Infrastructure would be relocated to other parts of the Town Council's estate and floral features would be restricted to central bedding features. The Town Council would happily provide costings for any floral embellishments that Shropshire Council wished to make but they could not give a general cost as roundabouts came in different shapes and sizes and each sponsor had different requirements.

It was understood that a letter had been sent to all sponsors by Shropshire Council officers advising of their intention to organise sponsorship from now on. This had caused some disquiet amongst some sponsors, one of which had expressed his annoyance at now having to pay four times as much to sponsor the same roundabout.

It was understood that the Officer at Shropshire Council wrote to members about the new scheme. He further wrote to Councillors Wilson, Dean & Evans to advise that the Town Council had removed infrastructure from the Cemetery Island (Roman Road), Porthill Roundabout (Roman Road), Copthorne Roundabout (Mytton Oak Roundabout) and the Hospice Roundabout (Welshpool Road) without their knowledge and that they wanted to assure the Councillors that they would make sure they would remain attractive. In further emails when questioned about floral features it was reported that new judging criteria had been received from the National Horticultural Society and designs were currently being worked on. The officer reported that the signs were only marginally larger than existing signage.

To clear up misunderstandings the Head of Operations reported that:

- Town Council staff had always said that they would cost out floral embellishments should any new sponsor wish, but detail would be required.
- All floral infrastructure was always removed from every roundabout once the summer bedding had been removed. They had never informed Shropshire Council of this.
- It had already been agreed that any ground planting on these roundabouts would continue – it was the infrastructure which had been paid for by Bloom that was to be removed and relocated elsewhere.
- There was no such organisation as the National Horticultural Society.
- There was no new Bloom criteria for 2023; Roundabout Sponsorship would fall within a number of categories, which Shrewsbury in Bloom were exceptionally strong in.

- Existing signs were 600mm x 375mm whereas new signs are 800mm x 450mm – 60% larger.

Bloom Sponsorship had been a feature of Shrewsbury in Bloom since the Committee was formed in 1985 and funding and support features strongly in the RHS Bloom Criteria. It had always been seen as an opportunity for local businesses to show their support for the Bloom campaign and officers retain a list of businesses who would love to support activity at a reasonable and affordable way.

Officers had therefore been looking at locations that sponsorship could continue in a respectful way; this includes:

- Bus Shelters
- Flower Beds
- Planters & Hanging Baskets
- Play facilities
- Bins

Sponsorship wasn't designed to be a cash cow, more to support the maintenance and floral enhancements of assets. Officers were extremely conscious of the need to be respectful of settings and particularly within the Conservation Area.

The Head of Operations explained to Committee that they had removed all the infrastructure as they did after the summer planting season, but they would relocate infrastructure to other places they owned. They would continue to plant the centre beds. Additionally, they had been looking at locations for other sponsorship opportunities but stressed that this wasn't about funding core budgets but about helping to support the delivery of much-loved assets and their primary concern was about doing things respectfully.

Depending on size there may be a need to submit an application for consent to display advertisements under the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. There were however a number of exemptions within the Regulations which meant a number of sites could be utilised without the need for planning consent.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That the Report be noted;**
- (ii) That officers explore other opportunities that might support business and community financing of assets**
- (iii) That new scheme details would come to a further Recreation & Leisure Committee when available.**

86/22 RECREATION GROUND MATTERS

86.1 Church Road Recreation Ground - hardstanding area and basketball court

The Head of Operations informed Committee that following the last meeting, decisions were deferred on the Church Road Recreation Ground. He had spoken to Councillor Bentick and in his professional capacity he recommended that no action took place to segregate the Basketball area from car parking. They could, if necessary, look to pothole repairs and sealing of the site, leaving future recreational facilities both at Church Road Recreation Ground and Stanley Lane. The Town Clerk had advised that Councillor Bentick has issued a wish list to the Town Clerk for his ward and

the Leader of the Council has advised him that these would have to be prioritise alongside all other Councillor requests as part of the Visioning Exercise.

Councillor Bentick proposed to Committee an Option 5 for the Church Road Recreation Ground which was:

Resurfacing of Church Road Recreation Ground hardstanding tarmac to include basketball hoops with no further action until capital was available for a MUGA installation at Stanley Lane Recreation Ground at a later date.

Councillor Mosley asked Councillor Bentick if he had any idea of the costs for his proposed Option Five, including the cost of a new MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area). Councillor Bentick claimed the cost for the hardstanding would be around £20,000.

The Head of Operations estimated that the cost of a new MUGA would be £100,000 - £150,000.

Councillor Mosley stated that there were still items outstanding on the Capital Programme before this option could be considered and there had already been considerable works completed in Councillor Bentick's ward.

The Committee went to a vote on this option. Three Councillors were in favour of supporting the new option whilst three Councillors were against it. The Chair therefore took the casting vote in line with Standing Orders which meant that the Committee voted against the proposal.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That Option 5 was not accepted by Committee.**
- (ii) That the issue of the potholes did need to be addressed.**

86.2 Old Riverbed –Beaver Project and recent tendering arrangements for the Beaver Compound

The Projects Manager stated that previously the Town Council had updated the Committee on the project and particularly around permissions and financing. The Projects Manager had been involved in the tender process. They had received a number of tenders, and these were being evaluated and would be discussed with the Countryside & Greenspace Manager and Town Clerk alongside officers at the Wildlife Trust. At this stage they couldn't state who would be awarded the job or a likely start date. The Town Clerk had also asked to mention that there was a Strategic Group involving Councillors Phillips and Councillor Roberts as well as two Wildlife Trustees and it was hoped they would meet in the next couple of weeks.

Councillor Lemon enquired if the new Planning decision at Hencote would now make any difference to the Beaver Project. It was suggested that the Countryside & Greenspace Manager be invited to the Recreation & Leisure committee to talk through the Beaver Project further with Committee and answer any questions.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the update be noted.**
- (ii) That the Countryside & Greenspace Manager attend a future Recreation & Leisure Committee to discuss the Beaver Project.**

87/22 COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT

87.1 Licence to Cultivate in relation to any approvals for Community Allotments on Town Council land

The Head of Operations updated the Committee on the project at the Grange Youth Centre. This was going well, and they continued to monitor the project. The Group was looking to undertake a similar project on land at Rocke Street which was owned by Shropshire Council. Shropshire Council had passed a motion to support such projects on their land and they had agreed that the Community Assets Team would manage the process and any applications in the first instance would need to go through the Town Council. The Head of Operations explained that the Town Council are unable to submit an application until the process had been established with Shropshire Council. The Town Clerk had been in discussion with the CAT Team, and they had draft documents which were being reviewed and would be forwarded to Parish Councils for comment. The Town Council had offered to use a request locally as a test for the process; the Town Clerk had also offered her assistance, along with the Head of Operations in helping to develop documentation.

They had shared their documentation in the hope that the process, if a community group wanted to cultivate on Town Council land was the same as if they wanted to cultivate on Shropshire Council land.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the update be noted.**
- (ii) That the licence to go to Finance & General Purposes Committee for approval.**

87.2 CAT process for any Community Allotment requests on Shropshire Council land

The Head of Operations informed Committee of the draft Licence to Cultivate that the Town Clerk and himself had drafted. They needed to be sure that people using Town Council land were safe as well as any impacted wider public and that should the project cease there was an established mechanism to make good.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted

88/22 COMMUTED SUMS

The Deputy Town Clerk gave an update on negotiations with developers and transfer arrangements:

- (i) Copthorne Barracks Play and Open Space** – offsite contributions to play (£30,498 - £20,498 for Shorncliffe Drive & £10,000 for Silks Meadow – to be paid on 75% occupancy) and open space (£115,000 for sports pitches & associated facilities at County Ground – paid on 50% occupancy) - funds in relation to landscaping at the County Ground have been drawn down.
- (ii) Barratt Homes/Bovis Homes – Mytton Oak Road** – Phase 1 adopted; Snagging Phase 2/3 commenced. No identified date for transfer.

(iii) Shrewsbury South Urban

1. Sutton Grange site – ongoing – likely transfer in 2023/24 – recent meeting with Taylor Wimpey to discuss logistics for transfer
2. Bellway Homes site – discussion on land adoption and adoption of acoustic fencing
3. Galliers site – early discussions on land adoption
4. Community Centre – location on the site

(iv) Crowmoor House – s106 agreement for offsite play & open space contribution to be used for Upton Lane & Monkmoor Recreation Ground – two-staged payments on trigger on percentage occupied properties. Council to bankroll work at Upton Lane Rec – forms received for drawn of funding.

(v) Harlescott Infants/Juniors site – Offsite contributions to sport. Approvals for use of the funds at Kynaston Road Recreation Ground for drainage works – form received for drawdown of funds.

(vi) Radbrook College site – Open space adoption – officers met with Floreat Homes on site – likely adoption once all phases are complete.

(vii) Weir Hill – Agreements to adopt the land at a future time have been signed - meeting with Taylor Wimpey looking at the possibility of the countryside land to be transferred ahead of the POS on the development site.

Councillor Mosley enquired about the County Ground and what had happened to the proposals regarding the pavilion upgrade. The Projects Manager explained that they had come to a bit of a brick wall with the users of the site in terms of a potential development. The development was still an option to progress with, but it had taken a back-seat for the time being.

Councillor Lemon enquired about Mytton Oak Road and what was outstanding on the snagging list. The Head of Operations confirmed that work had been done with the local contractor who was currently in discussions with Mike Pugh (Contracts & Arbs Officer), and they would inform the Councillor of the outstanding snagging list.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the update be noted.**
- (ii) Report back at the next meeting on the developments at the County Ground including spend to date.**

89/22 CLOSING REMARKS

In closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked Councillors for attending and taking part in this Town Council meeting and thanked the staff involved in this meeting. All papers related to the meeting could be found on the website www.shrewsburytowncouncil.gov.uk.