

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, FRANKWELL QUAY, SHREWSBURY AT 6.00PM ON MONDAY 25TH MARCH 2019

PRESENT

Councillors P Nutting (Mayor), P Adams, J Dean, N Green, I Jones, N Laurens, Mrs P Moseley, A Mosley, K Pardy, A Phillips, K Roberts, D Vasmer and Mrs R Wall.

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Gary Farmer (Operations Manager), Andy Watkin (Responsible Finance Officer), Rebecca Oliver (Committee Clerk), Chris Raine, 89 members of the public and one member of the press.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs H Fraser, P Gillam and Ms J Mackenzie.

74/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Shropshire Councillors	Twin hatted members declared personal interests in matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council
Councillor P Nutting	Declared a prejudicial interest in item 91/18 as he has sought legal advice on the matter in Greenfields. He left the meeting for this item.
Councillor A Phillips	Declared a personal interest in item 91/18 and left the meeting whilst it was discussed to avoid any perceptions of him prejudicing any decision.
Councillor A Mosley	Declared a personal interest in item 81/18 as his son works with the Care Leaver Team.

75/18 MINUTES OF COUNCIL

The minutes of the Town Council meetings held on 21 January and 12 February 2019 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Town Council meetings held on 21 January and 12 February be approved and signed as a correct record.

76/18 MATTERS ARISING

- 76.1 Ref: Min: 65/18 Local Policing in Shrewsbury** – The Town Clerk confirmed that funding is available for CCTV provision and Community Road Safety and she will circulate details to all members.
- 76.2 Ref: Min: 70/18 Application to Register Greenfields Recreation Ground as a Town or Village Green** – The Town Clerk confirmed that she has sent a letter to Shropshire Council outlining the Town Council's objection to this application.

77/18 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 77.1 Mayor & Deputy Mayor's Engagements** - Details of the Mayor & Deputy Mayor's engagements for February and March were circulated to members.

RESOLVED:

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

- 77.2 Announcements from the Mayor**

77.2.1 Social Event – The Mayor is holding a charity social event on 10 May 2019 as a fundraiser for the Little Rascals Foundation.

- 77.3 Announcements from the Town Clerk**

77.3.1 Councillor Vacancy - The Town Clerk confirmed the resignation of Councillor Taylor from both Shropshire Council and Shrewsbury Town Council. The vacancy has been advertised and a bye-election will be held on 25 April 2019 for the Belle Vue ward. Members were advised that there will be usual purdah restrictions on publicity and should there be any issues raised as part of campaigning they will not be addressed until after the election, unless they posed a serious Health & Safety risk.

78/18 PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

- 78.1 Pedestrian Safety on New Street**

The following question was received from Chris Raine, who was in attendance.

"What is the outcome of the action agreed in the Town Council Minute 47/18 with reference to New Street, Porthill and what are the next steps to secure the implementation of the preferred option in the 2017 Feasibility scheme to improve pedestrian safety in New Street?"

The Town Council has already agreed a 20mph policy for the town. Will they urge Shropshire Council to extend their current plan for the 20mph speed limit implementation in the `Loop` and over the Welsh Bridge to include in the Frankwell roundabout, New Street up to Pengwern Road junction, Copthorne Road up to the Bricklayers Arms and the Mount up to Barrack Lane and the connecting roads? Is the 20mph speed limit part of the latest stages on the Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Strategy?

The Frankwell Roundabout and the Theatre Severn are part of the night time and visitor economy in Shrewsbury. Frankwell is also the gateway into the town from the West and Wales. Extending the 20mph zone to these areas would make a strong statement to drivers that they are expected to slow down and drive accordingly through the town centre. It would also bring benefits to residents, local business and visitors accessing the Quarry and town centre over the Porthill pedestrian Bridge with improvements to pedestrian safety."

A written response from the Town Clerk was tabled in response to this question submitted prior to the meeting. She reported that since the meeting in November, she wrote to the Interim Head of Infrastructure and Communities (Steve Brown) about the need to consider a scheme to address ongoing concern about road safety at New Street and other road safety schemes in Shrewsbury. She is awaiting a formal response and agreed to share this letter with Mrs Raine.

Steve Brown reported that Shropshire Council receive a block grant of £1.5m from the Department for Transport for highways works. Of that £600-700k is spent on Design, Post-Maintenance and Monitoring. The remainder is used to support Highway projects to address accident clusters. The budgets of 2018/19 and 2019/20 have seen a reduction of £5m. It is hoped that this will be reinstated for the 2020/21 financial year at which point deferred schemes will be reconsidered.

New Street has repeatedly been raised through the Sites of Community Road Safety Scheme. The Town Clerk stated that out of the 118 locations that have been looked at, 73 were prioritised and only 5 schemes were delivered.

Mrs Raine asked:

- What are the recorded accident statistics on New Street and does it conform to the criteria for the scheme to be looked at? What is the criteria?
- What are the accident statistics on Town Walls where work is taking place?
- Would Shrewsbury Town Council support New Street and other areas, as stated in the question above, becoming a 20mph speed limit zone?

Mrs Raine was invited by the Mayor to visit the Shirehall and seek answers to these questions from Shropshire Council Highway Officers.

78.2 Climate Emergency

The following question was received from Adam Shipp, who was in attendance.

"The people here today are hoping to witness the Town Council declare a Climate Emergency. They are also here to hold their local councillors to account - as Sir David Attenborough recently stated "Leaders of the World, you must lead" - finally, we are here to offer you help, amongst us are individuals whose skills will be invaluable to you in reaching Carbon neutrality.

So my question to you all is - will you declare a Climate Emergency for the sake of our children and our grandchildren, will you ensure that these are not hollow words, but backed up with actions and lastly will you accept our offer of help to achieve the goals of the motion?''.

Councillor Mosley showed his support to this question which was backed by his motion.

79/18 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

There were no questions received from members for consideration.

80/18 MOTIONS

80.1 CLIMATE EMERGENCY

The following Motion was presented by Councillor Mosley.

This Council notes that the IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, published in October 2018, describes the enormous harm that a 2°C rise is likely to cause compared with a 1.5°C rise, and confirms that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities and others.

As well as increasing temperatures and more extreme weather, human activities are also having a massive impact on nature. The worldwide population of mammals, birds, fish and aquatic creatures, amphibians and reptiles have plunged by almost 60 percent, since 1970. Current rates of species extinction are 100- to 1,000-times higher than the 'standard rate' of extinction. There are also huge health impacts associated with fossil fuels, for example, air pollution causes 40,000 excess deaths every year in the UK and reduces average life span globally by 2 years.

To reduce the chance of runaway global warming and limit the effects of climate breakdown, it is imperative that, as a species, we reduce our CO₂eq (carbon equivalent) emissions from their current 6.5 tonnes per person per year to less than 2 tonnes as soon as possible. Individuals cannot be expected to make this reduction on their own. Society needs to change its laws, taxation, infrastructure etc., to make low carbon living easier and the new norm. The good news is there are many social, environmental and economic benefits in doing so.

We welcome action by London, Bristol and other City Councils around the world to declare and commit resources to tackling a 'Climate Emergency'. We also welcome actions by other Town and Borough Councils such as Scarborough, Frome and Stroud and more locally Machynlleth and Oswestry to pledge to be carbon neutral by 2030.

We therefore resolve that Shrewsbury Town Council:-

1) Supports the Declaration of a Climate Emergency

2) Pledges to make the Council carbon neutral by 2030

3) Calls on Westminster to provide powers and resources to make this possible

4) Signs up to the Covenant of Mayors

5) Requests that the Finance and General Purposes Committee develops a detailed Action Plan in pursuit of the above objectives and reports back within 6 months.

Councillor Mosley added that Shrewsbury Town Council has already shown its commitment to becoming environmentally friendly with the introduction of LED footway lights, investing in more cycleways and footpaths, investigating the use of solar lighting, nurturing 'Natural Shrewsbury' through the Big Town Plan, reducing waste and for the future is looking into introducing electric vehicles into its fleet. Councillor Mosley hopes Shrewsbury can lead the way and encourage other towns to follow suit for the sake of future generations.

Councillor Dean proposed (Councillor Vasmer seconded) an amendment to the motion by adding:

6) To call on Shropshire Council to support the Declaration of a Climate Emergency

7) We note that In 2017 the transport sector accounted for 34 per cent of all carbon dioxide emissions. This sectors emissions remain similar to 1990 levels, but have actually increased since 2013 due to an increase in vehicle kilometres travelled, despite fuel efficiency improvements (2017 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Provisional Figures; Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy). Therefore there is an urgent need to reduce journeys made by fossil fuel dependant vehicles. In the light of this, and taken together with the inevitable negative impact on wildlife habitats and biodiversity, the Town Council withdraws its support for the imminent construction of the North West Relief Road, as this will both increase road journeys overall (as evidenced by the experience of all other By-Pass projects) and will reduce the incentives to invest in low or zero carbon alternatives for crosstown traffic, and to masterplan in such a way as to reduce the need for such journeys.

Councillor Mosley was content for (6) to be added to the Motion but was not content for (7) to be added. He believed that there was a general public demand for the North West Relief Road and in particular a need to relieve through traffic from the town centre. If there was no plans for NWRR the town centre would inevitably become more congested.

The majority of Members had concerns about withdrawing the council's support for the North West Relief Road (point 7) which is expected to improve the air pollution in the town centre by removing slow moving traffic. This has been backed up with statistics published in the Big Town Plan. Members are hopeful that the future will see more eco-friendly vehicles but recognise it'll take more than a generation to change people's travelling habits. Councillor Vasmer stated he felt the NWRR will be an environmental and financial disaster.

In supporting the substantive motion the following comments were made:

- People should be incentivised to change their travelling behaviour;
- There should be greater use of eco-friendly modes of transport with electric charging points more readily available;

- There was a need to address air quality in the town;
- Town Council needs to think outside the box when developing an Action Plan;
- Shrewsbury Cup was a good example of waste reduction;
- With the extensive treestock that the Town council is responsible for it is arguable that the Town Council is already carbon neutral.

A vote on amending the original motion to include point 7 was not carried as only 2 were in favour. A vote on the original motion and including point 6 was unanimously carried.

Members were in agreement that the Finance & General Purpose Committee takes this forward for further discussion, for setting targets to achieve the objectives and an opportunity will be provided to hold an open forum when first discussed so interested parties can get involved.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Council;

- i) Supports the Declaration of a Climate Emergency;**
- ii) Pledges to make the Council carbon neutral by 2030;**
- iii) Calls on Westminster to provide powers and resources to make this possible;**
- iv) Signs up to the Covenant of Mayors;**
- v) Requests that the Finance and General Purposes Committee develops a detailed Action Plan in pursuit of the above objectives and reports back within 6 months;**
- vi) Calls on Shropshire Council to support the Declaration of a Climate Emergency;**
- vii) Requests that the Finance and General Purposes Committee provides an open forum for their first meeting so interested parties can contribute to the initial discussions.**

80.2 BIG TOWN WALK

The following motion was presented by Councillor Dean.

We welcome the developing scheme for 'Big Town Walks' with a launch event on Saturday May 18th. We hope that this initiative will encourage residents to enjoy the many green spaces around the town. We hope that participation in this scheme helps to highlight areas where our green infrastructure and connectivity would benefit from improvements, to realise some of the objectives of the Big Town Plan.

We encourage members to allocate a proportion of their unspent personal fund allocations to support the production of high quality materials to promote the routes and guide walkers.

A map illustrating the five walking routes was circulated although it is thought that only four will be used on 18 May. Each route will have two starting points, preventing residents having a long walk to reach the start. Each walk will take about 2.5 hours to complete. Community venues such as cafes and churches are getting involved and providing refreshments.

Members requested that shorter walks be considered so walkers of all abilities and families with young children can get involved, and for the maps to indicate the terrain and suitability for different abilities. Councillor Jones was dismayed that there were no routes in the Harlescott area despite the existing Battlefield walk being available.

It was suggested that Councillor Dean applies for grant funding by following the proper procedure and completing the relevant form.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Council supports the Big Town Walks in principle and will consider a request for funding when submitted through the grant application scheme.

81/18 CARE LEAVER COVENANT

The Care Leaver Covenant is a promise made by private, public or voluntary organisations to provide support for care leavers aged 16-25 to help them to live independently, reach adulthood and find employment.

The Town Council was asked to support the covenant in principle and refer to the Finance & General Purpose Committee to investigate the practicalities and opportunities and report back to Full Council. The Town Council could support the scheme by designating an apprenticeship, providing work experience, internships, advice, special services or volunteering opportunities.

As Shropshire Council Leader, Councillor Nutting was asked to request from BT Openreach if free Wi-Fi and broadband could be issued to care leavers to enable them to access the Care Leavers App. Councillor Nutting agreed to investigate this request and explained the ways Shropshire Council already support this age group.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Council supports the Care Leaver Covenant and requests the Finance & General Purpose Committee investigates the Covenant further.

82/18 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 04 February 2019 were submitted as circulated and read.

Councillor Mosley reminded Members that any unspent Councillor Grants after a 2-year period, will be reinvested into the Community Grant Fund. Councillor Mosley asked all members to get involved with the Medium Term Financial Plan by contributing ideas from within their ward.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 04 February 2019 be accepted and approved.

83/18 RECREATION & LEISURE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 13 February 2019 were submitted as circulated and read.

Councillor Pardy reported on an enlightening presentation delivered by Paul Briscoe (STC Cleaning Operative) on anti-social behaviour and drug misuse in public conveniences. It is hoped that this presentation can be repeated to Full Council.

Councillor Roberts announced that the next Shrewsbury In Bloom meeting is on Thursday 28 March. Anyone interested in joining the committee should get in touch with Councillor Roberts. Twelve Primary Schools have been invited to visit Weeping Cross Depot and will return to school with a plant to nurture for a season.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 13 February 2019 be accepted and approved.

84/18 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 29 January, 19 February and 12 March 2019 be submitted as circulated and read.

The Town Clerk reported on a request from a resident that their name and address be removed from the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting on 09 October 2019 which accompanies their planning application. This information which is extracted from Shropshire Council is also published on the ePortal site. Members agreed to redact the minutes upon this request.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 29 January, 19 February and 12 March 2019 be accepted and approved.**
- (ii) That the minutes of the 09 October be redacted to remove the personal details of one applicant under GDPR.**

85/18 YOUTH COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Youth Committee meeting held on 23 January 2019 were submitted as circulated and read.

Councillor Mosley reported on the following items:

Ref: Min: 18.5 Launch Date - that the refurbishment of the Grange Youth Centre is complete and a launch event is planned for Sunday 14 April 2019.

Ref: Min: 19 Club Activity - The minutes describe the club activity which overall usage has increased at all venues. The Youth Workers were commended for this achievement.

Ref: Min: 20.2 Meet Place - An allocation of £20k has been added to the budget to expand Meet Place in Meole Brace on the condition that this is match funded by the Trinity Church and Severnside Housing.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Youth Committee meeting held on 23 January 2019, having been amended to read 'Easter Holidays' and were accepted and approved.

86/18 GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Grievance Committee meeting held on 14 January 2019 be submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Grievance Committee meeting held on 14 January 2019 be accepted and approved.

87/18 FUTURE HIGH STREET FUND

It was reported that Shropshire Council has submitted a bid to the Future High Streets Fund on behalf of Shrewsbury. The Town Clerk, Seb Slater and Shropshire Council staff who have worked on this submission were commended for their work. The Council awaits the outcome some time in the summer.

88/18 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with s1(2) Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960, members of the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following items being considered involve the disclosure of confidential information.

Two members of the public and one member of the press left the meeting.

89/18 BARGE GUTTER

The Town Clerk reported on the Council's bid to purchase Barge Gutter; this land was being marketed by Pooks. The owner had now considered the proposal and was happy to proceed.

Given that this was some time ago, members were asked to consider whether they wished to proceed.

The Operations Manager reported on condition of the site and advised that the Town Council would maintain it as greenspace, address the problems of the Japanese Knotweed (which staff are used to dealing with), thin out the woodland and address the anti-social behaviour all using in-house expertise and resources.

RESOLVED:

That the Council proceed with purchase on the terms previously outlined.

90/18 WEIR HILL OPEN SPACE

The Town Clerk reported on a request to consider adoption of open space at Weir Hill in accordance with the provisions of the s106 agreement. The Town Clerk detailed the likely expense against the developer's unwillingness to make a contribution to the management of open space in accordance with the Council's Land Adoption Policy.

Members made reference to the level of residential engagement they receive from sites that entered into a adoption agreement with the Council against those who maintained land under a management company. This issue was a national issue and Government have announced they are to investigate charging mechanisms by Management Companies.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerk make further enquiries and report back to the Finance & General Purpose Committee on the outcome.

The Mayor and Councillors P Adams, A Phillips and Mrs R Wall left the meeting. In the absence of a Deputy Chair, Councillor A Mosley took over as Chairman.

91/18 GREENFIELDS RECREATION GROUND

The Town Clerk reported on discussions both with the Council's Solicitor and Shropshire Council regarding the Judicial Review process following Dr Day being granted permission to

proceed to hearing. The Town Clerk outlined the need to seek independent Counsel's opinion on the Town Council's position even though the proceedings were being brought against Shropshire Council.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to seek the necessary legal advice and report findings to the Finance & General Purpose Committee.