

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, FRANKWELL QUAY, SHREWSBURY AT 6.00PM ON MONDAY 24 JUNE 2019

PRESENT

Councillors P Gillam (Mayor), N Laurens (Deputy Mayor), P Adams, J Dean, N Green, Mrs K Halliday, I Jones, Ms J Mackenzie, A Mosley, Mrs P Moseley, P Nutting, K Pardy, A Phillips & D Vasmer

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Gary Farmer (Operations Manager), Andy Watkin (Responsible Finance Officer), Carol Pullen (Acting Committee Clerk) and two members of the public.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Keith Roberts and Mrs B Wall.

14/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Shropshire Councillors	Twin hatted members declared personal interests in matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council.
Councillor Jones	Declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 17 – Housing Plus Merger Consultation as he is a Severnside tenant.
Councillor Phillips	Declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6 – International Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons as he holds Serco shares, which operates early warning detection equipment to protect against nuclear attack.

15/19 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 20 May 2019 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 20 May 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

16/19 MATTERS ARISING

16.1 Paperless Council Meetings

Following the resolution taken by the Finance & General Purposes Committee at the meeting on 3 June *'That the Council progress towards paperless meetings'* (ref: Min 7/19 iii), no paper copies were circulated but the Agenda and supporting papers had been provided electronically ahead of the meeting and were also to be available on the screen during the meeting. A discussion ensued, whereby some Members expressed they had expected the transition to paperless meetings to be more gradual. Others felt there would always be a need for some documents to be available in paper form. It was agreed that in the interim, paper copies would be reinstated and based on Councillors concerns the Finance & General Purposes Committee would reconsider this item at their next meeting.

- 16.2 Ref: Min: 11/19 Membership of the Council to Outside Bodies – Berwick Almshouses** – Councillors Mrs Moseley & Ms Mackenzie had been trustees since 2013 but during Ms Mackenzie's year as Mayor she had held an ex officio position and Councillor Parry had taken her place as a trustee. However Ms Mackenzie had wished to remain on this Committee so Councillor Parry had agreed to step down and membership would revert back to the Mayor (ex officio), Councillors Mrs Moseley & Ms Mackenzie. All were in agreement with this and the Trustees would be notified of the change

RESOLVED:

That membership of the Trustees of Berwick Almshouses for 2019/20 will be the Mayor (ex officio), Councillors Mrs P Moseley & Ms J Mackenzie.

17/19 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 17.1 Mayor & Deputy Mayor's Engagements** - Details of the Mayor & Deputy Mayor's engagements for April, May and June were circulated to members.

RESOLVED:

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

17.2 Announcements from the Mayor and Town Clerk

The Mayor invited Members and their guests to attend several fundraising events for his Mayoral Charity, Samaritans Shrewsbury.

- (i) A Summer Lunch to be held in the Members' Marquee at the Quarry on Sunday 11th August. Tickets are £22.50 each and available from the Mayor's Secretary.
- (ii) His main fundraising event will be a Beatles Weekend over the weekend of 21-22 September. There will be a variety of ticketed events taking place at Theatre Severn, The Hive and possibly other venues around the town. All are welcome.

The Mayor reported that on 10-11 October he would be hosting a visit from the Mayor of Olmue in Chile, Mrs Macarena Santelices together with a small delegation from the Chilean Embassy. They will be visiting Shrewsbury to commemorate the 185th anniversary of the visit of Charles Darwin to Chile. It is planned to arrange a programme of events based around Charles Darwin during their time in Shrewsbury.

Councillor Phillips left the meeting

18/19 PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

18.1 Members considered a request from Mrs D Harmer for the Town Council to sign the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. They felt the implications of this were far greater than the remit of the Town Council and therefore were not mindful to sign up at this time.

RESOLVED:

That the letter from Mrs D Harmer be noted and no further action taken.

Councillor Phillips re-joined the meeting

19/19 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

There were no questions received from members of the Council.

20/19 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 08 April and 03 June 2019 were submitted as circulated and read.

Councillor Mosley gave a brief update on the progress of current capital projects.

He thanked the RFO for his work in preparing the End of Year accounts which had all been approved.

Good progress was being made in progressing climate emergency and he was grateful for the co-operation and engagement of the group that had been set up.

The Town Clerk reported that the Council was currently trialling an electric vehicle. Whilst this was going well, it did pose technical problems over recharging. There needs to be infrastructure in place to provide a charging point. Shropshire Fire & Rescue were currently trialling the same vehicle and had allowed the Council to use their super fast (3 hour) charging point.

Installation has commenced on upgrading Town Council lamp columns.

Extinction Rebellion are taking over the World War 1 bed in the Dingle and have come up with design plans promoting recycling and ideas on sustainable planting.

Next climate change workshop planned for September.

Councillor Dean wished to thank staff for the work done so far. With the success of the climate change meetings, it had become apparent that there was a lot of expertise within the local community and this could be really helpful going forward.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 08 April and 03 June 2019 be accepted and approved.

21/19 RECREATION & LEISURE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 03 April and 29 May 2019 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 03 April and 29 May 2019 be accepted and approved.

22/19 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 02 April, 23 April, 14 May, and 04 June 2019 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 02 April, 23 April, 14 May and 04 June 2019 be accepted and approved.

23/19 JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 10 April were submitted as circulated and read.

Councillor Mosley reported that the two main topics were Job Evaluation and Health & Safety in the Quarry. The Finance & General Purposes Committee had resolved to seek the removal of the greenhouse but due to it being in a conservation area, good reason had to be provided for its removal.

Councillor Nutting suggested that further discussions were required over the future of the pool complex, which may include some of this area.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 10 April be accepted and approved.

24/19 YOUTH SERVICES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Youth Services Committee meeting held on 15 May were submitted as circulated and read.

The Town Clerk reported that discussions were taking place with Meet Place users. If it were to be extended there was considerable cost. She had now met with the Assistant Director of Housing Plus to see if they would consider contributing. Monies had already been pledged by STC and Trinity Church. Housing Plus are keen to provide community facilities but not necessarily in the Meet Place.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Youth Services Committee meeting held on 15 May 2019 be accepted and approved.

25/19 PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Personnel Committee meetings held on 11 June and 18 June 2019 were submitted as circulated and read.

Councillor Jones proposed that the Personnel Committee meet annually in order that members are kept up to date with staff issues.

Councillor Mosley reported on the recommendation to proceed with evaluating a Deputy Town Clerk's position.

Councillor Phillips questioned the need for a Joint Consultative Committee and a Personnel Committee as there appeared to be an overlap. Councillor Mosley clarified that the JCC was not a decision making committee, but gave an opportunity for staff to bring any matters to the attention of Councillors.

RESOLVED:

(i) That the minutes of the Personnel Committee meetings held on 11 June and 18 June 2019 be accepted and approved.

(ii) That the Personnel Committee meet annually.

26/19 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

The minutes of the Annual Town meeting held on 29 April were submitted and circulated as read.

The Town Clerk set out the main points from the meeting. Many of the issues required action by Shropshire Council and the Town Clerk asked members if they wished her to contact Shropshire Council to make Officers aware these issues.

Councillor Mrs Moseley requested an update on the Dana Footpath. Councillor Mosley had been in conversation with officers at Shropshire Council but due to a change in the Project Officer and the involvement of different Shropshire Council contractors, different landowners and the need for Listed Building Consent he had not yet been able to establish what the delay was. He had now written again to Officers and copied in the Leader of the Shropshire Council and was awaiting a reply.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Annual Town meeting held on 29 April 2019 be noted.

27/19 INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT

Copies of the Internal Auditor's report had been circulated ahead of the meeting. The Auditor signs off Section 2 of the Annual Return before submission of the entire Annual Return & Governance Statement Part 3, to the external Auditor. The RFO reported that no issues had been highlighted during the recent internal audit.

RESOLVED:

That the Auditor's Report for 2018/19 be adopted.

28/19 END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS & SUPPORTING STATEMENTS

28.1 The End of Year Accounts

The Responsible Finance Officer had prepared the End of Year Accounts in accordance with the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2011, which were discussed and approved by the F&GP committee. Since this meeting the only change has been that the Internal Auditor has signed off the Internal Audit Report.

The Responsible Finance Officer summarised the current position of the accounts and circulated the reports prior to the meeting.

A question had been raised by Councillor Phillips at the meeting on 3 June (ref: Min: 5/19) Judicial Review for Greenfields Recreation Ground and whether a provision should be included. The Town Clerk reported that she had explored IAS37, which governs accounting practice for contingent liabilities. This stated that a provision would only be made if a payment is probable and the amount can be estimated reliably. As it had already been flagged up in Assertion 8 there is no need to put it into the main accounts.

Councillor Phillips thanked the Town Clerk for her clarification.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Annual Report for the financial year 2019/19 be adopted.**
- (ii) That the Statement of Accounting Policies for the financial year 2018/19 be adopted.**
- (iii) That the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year 2018/19 be adopted.**
- (iv) That the Income & Expenditure Account for the financial year 2018/19 be adopted.**
- (v) That the Statement of Movement of Reserves for the financial year 2018/19 be adopted.**
- (vi) That the Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2019 be adopted.**

28.2 Annual Return

Members approved the Annual Return for 2018/19 which will be signed off by the Mayor, Town Clerk & RFO and forwarded to the Town Council's External Auditor before 01 July. At this point the accounts and Annual Return will be made public. The External Auditors report is expected by 30 September 2019.

RESOLVED:

That the following sections of the Annual Return for the financial year 2018/19 be adopted:

- (i) Section 1 – Annual Governance Report for 2018/19 and the Mayor & Town Clerk sign the appropriate page of the Return.**
- (ii) Section 2 – Annual Accounting Statements for 2018/19 and the Mayor and Responsible Financial Officer sign the appropriate page of the return.**

29/19 HOUSING PLUS MERGER CONSULTATION

The Town Clerk presented Members with a report on the proposed merger between Housing Plus Group and Stafford and Rural Homes about the potential to create a bigger group offering excellent housing and support services to customers across Staffordshire and Shropshire.

There is an opportunity to comment or give feedback up to 5 pm on 9 July. Members were asked if they wished to respond.

There was a general discussion during which Members expressed concerns about the merger creating a large and impersonal authority. They felt that since the merger between Severnside and Housing Plus Group, the amount of community support had diminished and the level of service offered to tenants had reduced.