

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Recreation & Leisure Committee
Held in Committee Room, Livesey House, 7 St John's Hill
At 6.00pm on Wednesday 6 September 2023**

PRESENT

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

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Stuart Farmer (Acting Operations Manager), Ruth Jones (Office Manager), Mike Cox (Outdoor Recreation & Asset Manager) Danny Powell (Acting Operations Manager), Michelle Farmer (Committee Officer) and Sarah Loeptien (Administrator).

38/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED:

Apologies received from Councillors Bentick, Lemon, Wagner & Wall be accepted.

39/23 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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40/23 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 5 July 2023 be submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 5 July 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

41/23 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

There were no matters arising for consideration.

42/23 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Town Clerk reported on the following:

- Quarry War Memorial – Contractors had been on site to agree the paint finish
- Kynaston Road Recreation Ground Infant Play – Currently awaiting a start date
- Kynaston Road Recreation Ground Drainage – Imminent start date

- Upton Lane Recreation Play Area – Contract had been awarded and were awaiting a start date
- County Ground – Currently meeting with the Cricket Club to discuss a way forward
- Radbrook Recreation Ground Changing Rooms – The tender for this was now live
- Monkmoor Recreation Ground Old Tennis Courts – Meeting on site had been agreed, which could include the ward member if necessary
- Beaver Project – Awaiting start date. A badger survey had been completed.

Councillor Vasmer welcomed the update on Monkmoor Recreation Ground.

RESOLVED:

That the Capital Programme report be noted.

43/23 FOOTFALL

Stuart Farmer, Acting Operations Manager, updated the committee on footfall in the town, providing comparison graphs. Quarry visitors had remained stable in July and August but were down on previous year's numbers. A meeting had been arranged for the end of September with the provider as there was a concern as to whether the counters were picking up the true numbers.

RESOLVED:

That the Footfall Report be noted

44/23 FISHERIES

44.1 Shrewsbury Town Fisheries

The Town Clerk and Outdoor Recreation & Asset Manager updated the Committee on Shrewsbury Town Fisheries.

A presentation had been shown to Councillors informing them of the work the Shrewsbury Town Fisheries did and what work had been done so far. There were multiple users of the river which meant balancing the needs of:

- Anglers
- Cyclists
- Walkers
- Dog Walkers
- Event Organisers
- Ecologists
- Rowers
- Sabrina
- Wildlife Specialists
- Residents

The Big Town Plan included making more use of the river and creating greener networks and footpath linkages to sites. The Fisheries dealt with the monitoring of the health of the river, along with river safety. The volunteer bailiffs dealt with any ASB issues they encountered

and worked alongside West Mercia Police. Fishing competitions, which were crucial to the town, had also increased visitor numbers to Shrewsbury including hotel stays as competitors stayed in Shrewsbury for a while during a competition, which benefited the town.

Since the Town Council took over the fisheries from Shropshire Council a lot of work had been done. A full audit had been completed seeing where the fish were, spawning areas etc. A minimal amount of tree works and grass cutting had been completed and new fishing pegs installed, some of which were DDA compliant, with funding from the Angling Trust and Environment Agency. There was more promotion on the social media pages and the Town Council website, and all permits were now bought electronically which was much easier for all involved and provided a fuller audit trail. The fisheries had around 1600 members, selling over 1500 day tickets per season. Links with fishing agencies had also improved. New signage had been installed across all sites providing all details to anglers, setting out the rules and contact details. There were 130 fishing pegs across the estate, of which some were made from recycled plastic. All pegs were numbered so it was easily identifiable to report any issues to the Bailiffs.

A fishing co-ordinator had been appointed to oversee the running of the fisheries. He did this role as a volunteer and was well respected in the fishing industry. He had significant knowledge of the river, its users and the impact on fishing. The co-ordinator holds very close links with the Environment Agency, Angling Trust & Severn Trent Water. He also sat on the Town Council's Clean River Working Group, providing input on the state of the rivers and the fishing impact on the Community.

The Shrewsbury Town Fisheries currently had 18 volunteer bailiffs across all fisheries. All were DBS checked and they also provided emergency cover for pools, particularly in the summer when oxygen levels were reduced. They were ambassadors for the Town and the eyes of ears of the Fisheries. All bailiffs were provided with a phone, radio link to CCTV and body worn cameras. They regularly liaised with local residents and worked with the out of hours team.

Shrewsbury Town Fisheries were also trying to encourage the next generation of anglers, encouraging families to fish by setting up activities. Sponsorship had also been received from Angling firms to help.

Shrewsbury Town Fisheries regularly liaised with Shrewsbury Town Council at meetings, agreeing on Capital Plans which included new pegs and fisheries related infrastructure. They had an agreement on annual maintenance which included vegetation clearance and regularly received support from the Countryside Team and Arbor operatives. There was a collaborative relationship with the Environment Agency and Angling Trust to promote fishing and regularly liaise with the Angling Trust on water quality. Mousecroft Pool was an example of the work that had been completed over the last five years by sorting out the vegetation, checking water levels, pathways and opening up the pond. Work had greatly improved the recreational enjoyment of the site for the general public.

Of all the recreational facilities offered by Shrewsbury Town Council, the fisheries were the only one that added to the budget and contributed to core costs.

The Outdoor Recreation & Asset Manager added that at present there was a problem at Radbrook pool regarding vermin. The Environment Agency had visited the site and advised

on pest control. It had been advised that the problem of vermin had now gone but this would be monitored.

Councillor Vasmer proposed that the Town Council arranged something on an annual basis for all of the volunteer fisheries staff as a thank you for their hard work. Councillor Gillam fully agreed and said that a yearly event should be organised to recognise their contribution. The Town Clerk agreed that this would be investigated further and reported back to a future R&L.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

44.2 Rowley & Fenemere Angling Association

Councillor Mosley informed the Committee that himself, Councillor Vasmer, The Town Clerk and Outdoor Recreation & Assets Manager had met to discuss the content of the draft Memorandum of Understanding that had been prepared. They continued to liaise with Rowley & Fenemere Angling Association and awaited feedback from the Association.

Councillor Mosley hoped the Committee were happy for himself and Councillor Vasmer to continue this work and that they hoped to reach a satisfactory agreement for all parties.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted

45/23 TEAM SHREWSBURY

The Office Manager provided an update on Team Shrewsbury activities. Over the past few months Anti-Social behaviour (ASB) issues were comparable. July saw a slight increase in 'alcohol related issues' which were in a number of locations around Town. Quarry Security, Town Rangers and Taxi Marshalls continued to engage with individuals on a daily basis and they had an understanding of the persistent issues. Regular reports were also received 'thanking the teams for their continued support'.

Councillors had previously asked about yearly comparisons. The Office Manager advised at the last Committee that the rangers had started in September 2022. With the Rangers reports there were far more incidents being logged, so currently the figures would not be comparable.

In regard to the Policing charter, responses to previous submissions had been circulated apart from one, which was still outstanding. The next quarter was required for October, these were currently being collated and would be submitted accordingly, however they would be presented to the Committee in November following submission in October. Members did need to provide as much information to the Police as they could. Where priorities had been made advising ASB / Drug dealing across areas, they needed to be specific with locations, times and what the ASB was.

Councillor Mosley commented that he had looked at other Council sites and Chester for example also had ASB problems the same as Shrewsbury. They were allowed to issue ASBO's, and the question was asked if the Town Rangers could also issue them. He also enquired as to how many PSPO's had been served and if they were effective. The Town Clerk stated that there had been around 370 issued since Covid.

Councillor Mosley asked if they could pursue with the Local Authority (Shropshire Council) that Town Rangers could be allowed to issue PSPO's around Shrewsbury.

RECOMMENDATION:

- (i) That the report be noted**
- (ii) That the Town Clerk contact Shropshire Council to investigate expanding the powers of the PSPO to Town Rangers**

46/23 SAFER STREETS 4 FUNDING

The Town Clerk updated Committee on Safer Streets 4 Funding. Quarry Security, Town Rangers and Taxi Marshals continued to be challenged by anti-social behaviour and much was the result of the need to maintain an alcohol or substance addiction. An ASB Task Force made up of senior officers from various partners had been established under Team Shrewsbury at the bequest of the Director of Public Health who also oversaw the Community Safety Partnership, and that group had its inaugural meeting on 4 September 2023. The Town Clerk had detailed the Safer Streets funding and work ongoing to prepare a collective plan for the continuation of the project. Home Office funding concluded at the end of September with various match funding taking the service to the end of the financial year.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

47/23 QUARRY

The Outdoor Recreation & Asset Manager updated the Committee on the Quarry Events for this year. He confirmed that events from the Summer would be returning next year. There had been various attendees for Lets Rock ranging from the UK, Isle of Man, Spain, Germany, Brazil, Qatar and Australia. Unfortunately, after having one of the driest starts to the year, it rained continuously during the build-up and during the event itself, but this did not dampen people's spirits. Some damage was done to the Quarry, but it was minimised by using matting on the arena. There was a similar situation with the Flower Show in regard to the weather and minimal damage to the park, but the Shropshire Horticultural Society were repairing any damage caused.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the Quarry Events report be noted.

48/23 RECREATION GROUND MATTERS

Danny Powell, Acting Operations Manager, provided a brief update to Committee regarding Springfield Recreation Ground. The Town Council had been approached by Mereside Juniors to lay two additional pitches. This had inadvertently interfered with the use of one of the Disc Golf pegs. An agreement had now been reached to relocate the peg and move the positioning of one of the pitches to allow for both facilities to be used at the same time.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted

49/23 COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT

The Town Clerk reported that she had continued to liaise with Officers at Shropshire Council about their Community Allotment process. The Town Council had received a proposal from a community group to utilise land at Rocke Street owned by Shropshire Council. Officers had commissioned soil samples which advised that any planting would have to be in containers with soil from off site. The Community Group had provided examples of where community garden had been carried out on equally contaminated land and asked that fruit tree planting be considered. Shropshire Council had asked that the Town Clerk send all necessary details to them for consideration, but no response had yet been received. The Town Clerk agreed she would keep the Committee updated.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

50/23 WORKING GROUPS

50.1 City of Sanctuary Working Group

The notes of the City of Sanctuary Working Group meeting held on 7 August 2023 were circulated as read. The meeting had not been quorate, so no decisions were made at the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the City of Sanctuary Working Group meeting held on 7 August 2023 be received and adopted

50.2 Clean River Working Group

The notes of the Clean River Working Group meeting held on 20 July 2023 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the Clean River Working Group meeting held on 20 July 2023 be received and adopted

50.3 Active Travel Working Group

The notes of the Active Travel Working Group meeting held on 20 July 2023 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the Active Travel Working Group meeting held on 19 July 2023 be received and adopted

51/23 COMMUTED SUMS

The 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. Developer has request early transfer, but certain works need to be completed ahead of 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

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

52/23 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.