

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, FRANKWELL QUAY, SHREWSBURY AT 6.00PM ON MONDAY 20 JANUARY 2020

PRESENT

Councillors P Gillam (Chair), Mrs G Burgess, Mrs H Fraser, N Green, Mrs K Halliday, I Jones, Ms J Mackenzie, Mrs P Moseley, A Mosley, P Nutting, A Phillips, K Roberts, D Vasmer & Mrs R Wall

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Gary Farmer (Operations Manager), Amanda Spencer (Deputy Town Clerk), Andy Watkin (Responsible Finance Officer), Carol Pullen (Acting Committee Clerk) & 4 members of the public.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors P Adams, J Dean & K Pardy

70/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Shropshire Councillors	Twin hatted members declared personal interests in matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council.
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71/19 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 4 November 2019 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 4 November 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

72/19 MATTERS ARISING

Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

The meeting was joined by Nicky Wilde, Director of Primary Care & Tom Brettell the CCG Locality Manager who gave an overview of GP services in Shropshire, particularly focusing on Shrewsbury.

Following the closure of Whitehall Medical Practice in September, capacity had been secured for all patients to continue to receive GP services at other practices across the CCG although latest figures indicated that over 600 patients had still not registered with a new GP. Marden Medical Practice and Belvidere Medical Practice had registered the highest with additional patients also registered by Marysville, Riverside, Severn Fields, Claremont Bank & South Hermitage. The CCG had supported practices with additional resources throughout the process.

A Primary Care Needs Assessment was carried out in 2017 to inform the development of a Primary Care Strategy, which was further enhanced by new national requirements. The Strategy was last updated in June 2019 and would be reviewed again post completion of a further needs assessment later this year.

Identified priority areas included:

- Development of Primary Care Networks (PCN)
- Prevention and addressing health inequalities
- Care Quality and Improvement
- Improving Access to Primary Care
- Ensuring a workforce fit for the future
- Technology and Digital enablers
- Primary Care Estate
- Optimising workflow and addressing workload pressures
- Communication and Engagement

Ipsos MORI on behalf of NHS England undertakes an annual national GP Patient Survey, which provides data about patients' experiences at their GP Practice. Using the 2019 survey results the CG used this to monitor patient satisfaction with access to GP practices. GP Practices in Shropshire compared favourably to the National averages and the CCG is working to ensure all practices continue to maintain or improve their results particularly:

- Ease of telephone access
- Online access to appointments
- Appointment times
- Additional workforce
- Workflow
- Estates

Improvements to the service include:

- Extended access covering period 6.30 pm to 8.00pm Monday to Friday
- Online consultations enabling patients to contact a GP over the internet.
- NHS England funding had been allocated to enable direct booking of GP appointments through NHS 111.

Workforce plans:

The CCG is working with all Practices on recruiting and retaining GPs and their staff and have awarded funding of around £25,000 to practices in Shrewsbury for a number of projects aimed at relieving the pressure on GPs and developing new services for patients. The CCG has been awarded funding from NHS England for 2020/21 to assist practices to become more resilient

and help practices retain their GPs and will be engaging with practices during February in order to develop a plan on how best to use this funding.

In addition, the CCG will be receiving funding to provide support to newly-qualified GPs in their first year in general practice. The Shrewsbury PCN is able to appoint a number of new posts with significant national reimbursement of salary costs to help deliver new services from April 2020. These posts are:

- Social Prescribing Link Workers
- Clinical Pharmacists
- Physician Associates
- First Contact Physiotherapists.

The Shrewsbury PCN has appointed two Clinical Pharmacists to date.

The CCG has commissioned a series of “Personal Resilience” training events for GPs attended by 80 doctors with excellent feedback. A similar event is being held in March for Trainee GPs. Various training courses have also been delivered for a range of staff in general practice including:

- Practice Managers
- Clerical and Administrative Staff
- Community and Care Coordinators
- Nurses
- Health Care Assistants
- Clinical Pharmacists

The CCG is supporting a range of self-care programmes to help relieve pressure of general practice

There are plans to accommodate new developments. Core principles include:

- Linking health development to community development and community infrastructure
- Integrate planning and development for housing and health
- Collaborate across all public sector organisations - OPE, STP LEF
- Deploy capital funding to support integrated service models, maximize the sharing of assets and dispose of unwanted or underutilized estate
- Integration with PCNs – work ongoing- detailed utilisation study and dashboard for all practices which will be complete by April 2020

Strategic approach to Shrewsbury Town:

The most significant impact of housing developments in the county will be on the Shrewsbury practices, with around 8,625 new homes (potentially 20,000 new patients) planned for the town. The strategy can be considered in relation to four separate geographical areas:

- Shrewsbury North: Severn Fields premises has sufficient capacity to serve the population in the North of the town, with capacity for further expansion if required.
- Shrewsbury Central: Work has begun on the Tannery site which will allow relocation of Riverside Medical Practice. The new building allows for expansion to meet increased demand centrally.

- Shrewsbury South East: Significant growth as part of the South East Shrewsbury Urban Extension presents opportunities for premises developments.
- Shrewsbury South West: Significant growth as part of the South West Shrewsbury Urban Extension presents opportunities for premises developments.

Members then presented questions:

Councillor Mackenzie expressed concerns about hard to reach groups accessing the online appointments booking service.

The Director of Primary Care confirmed that this was simply a trial and all other methods of contact were still available to patients. Care Co-ordinators were present in all but one practice and through their patient lists were able to identify and engage with vulnerable patients who had a need for care close to home.

Councillor Mackenzie expressed her hope that in considering additional facilities for the growing population of Shrewsbury, local Ward Members could be involved in discussions.

Councillor Fraser wondered whether there was a specific catchment area for each practice and whether there were any standards on what distance a patient should expect to travel.

The Director of Primary Care stated that there was currently no guidance on travelling distance, but it was expected that patients had the choice of two practices to register with, therefore catchment areas did overlap.

Councillor Halliday wondered how patients could have their say on matters within the Medical Practice.

The Director of Primary Care confirmed that all practices should have a Patient Participation Group that operates to the Primary Care networks key performance indicators.

Councillor Vasmer felt that in view of Belvidere now having put in a planning application to extend, it highlighted that there had not been enough provision to accommodate Whitehall patients and he felt that the PCG had not initially shared the information.

The Director of Primary Care responded that the extension plans were to accommodate new housing subsequent to the Whitehall closure. The Whitehall discussions had been solely about accommodating the Whitehall patients and not the wider community.

Councillor Roberts reported that some years ago Radbrook Green Surgery had been given planning permission to extend but this had never happened. He was aware of an already enormous strain on the practice and was concerned that with an additional 750 houses planned in the West, this would only get worse.

The Director of Primary Care confirmed the CCG had not received any request for help from Radbrook Green.

Councillor Fraser enquired whether the CCG had a statutory duty to plan for GP provision in the same way the Local Authority had a statutory duty to plan for education.

The Director of Primary Care advised that the CCG is a commissioner of services. It is the practice responsibility to ensure premises are fit for purpose and they undertake financial planning for the next 10 years.

There being no more questions, the Mayor thanked Nicky Wilde and Tom Brettell for attending and they subsequently left the meeting.

Councillor Jones joined the meeting

Ref Min 58/19 Tim Pritchard – Shrewsbury Programme Manager – The Town Clerk reported that Tim was working on all of the issues raised and would respond shortly.

Ref Min 59/19 Local Electricity Bill – The Town Clerk reported that Council’s resolution had been registered. The organisers were keen to see publicity and engagement with MPs.

73/19 ANNOUNCEMENTS

73.1 Mayor & Deputy Mayor’s Engagements - Details of the Mayor & Deputy Mayor’s engagements for November and December were circulated to members.

RESOLVED:

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

73.2 Announcements from the Mayor and Town Clerk

The Mayor gave members a brief update on some of his recent engagements including a recent meeting between Mayors & Town Clerks of other Shropshire Councils. This had been a positive meeting with climate emergency high on the agenda.

He reported that he had been working closely with Energize Shropshire to develop an ‘Active Mayor’s’ week in April and he hoped to encourage others to get active. During the week he intended to walk or cycle to engagements and would also be undertaking a Skydive to raise money for Shrewsbury Samaritans.

The Town Clerk introduced Amanda Spencer, who had recently taken up the position of Deputy Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk reported that a Working Group was looking to develop a programme of activity to commemorate VE weekend 8-10 May. This was likely to be a large event involving the BID, the Military, the Armed Forces Covenant as well as business and community groups.

74/19 PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

No public questions or comments had been received.

75/19 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

There were no questions received from members of the Council.

76/19 PLASTIC FREE SHREWSBURY

(i) Presentation my Plastic Free Shrewsbury

In the absence of Lottie Glover (Plastic Free Shrewsbury), the Town Clerk gave members a brief overview on the growing desire for Shrewsbury to become a Plastic Free Town and the initiatives the group would need to complete to achieve such accreditation.

(ii) Supporting the accreditation as a Plastic Free Community

The Town Clerk reported as part of the Plastic Free Community accreditations, towns were required to show support from the local Council, including a commitment to cease using single use plastics and encourage others to do likewise.

RESOLVED:

That Shrewsbury Town Council recognises the devastating effects that single-use plastic can have on the environment and that only through concrete, collective, positive action can we be able to stop the flood of plastic pollution from overwhelming the world.

This Council supports Plastic Free Shrewsbury in its journey to achieving Plastic Free Community Status and will undertake the following:

- (i) Remove single-use plastic items from its premises;**
- (ii) Encourage local plastic free initiatives, promote local campaigns and support local events;**
- (iii) Elect a Councillor to represent the Town Council on the Plastic Free Shrewsbury Steering Group.**

Members agreed that Shrewsbury Town Council support the motion for Shrewsbury to become a plastic free town and they would encourage other partners to join them in supporting this initiative.

2 members of the public left the meeting

77/19 FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meetings held on 2 December 2019 & 13 January 2020 were submitted as circulated and read.

Ref Min 48/19 Sunday Market Tender – the successful tenderer had been notified and the feedback from traders had been good. A Licence was being prepared for both parties to sign imminently.

Ref Min 50/19 Electoral Review – this had not yet been progressed due to Elections but on speaking to the Executive Director of Place, Mark Barrow who had attended the last F&GP Committee meeting, it was hoped that he would be in a position to progress this.

Ref Min 53/19 Mount House – Members expressed disappointment that following the presentation from Mr Marchant about his plans for Mount House, there appeared to have been no engagement with the Council or the local community.

Councillor Mackenzie reported that the Mount House Steering Group were still meeting and were hopeful of a way forward to ensure the future benefit and public access to Mount House for the community and visitors to the town.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meetings held on 2 December 2019 and 13 January 2020 be accepted and approved.

Councillor Mrs Burgess left the meeting

78/19 RECREATION & LEISURE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 4 December 2019 were submitted as circulated and read.

Ref Min 54/19 Climate Emergency – The Town Clerk reported that she had been asked to write an article for the SLCC national publications and take part in the NALC Policy Committee on ways to lobby Central Government about Climate Emergency for Parish & Town Councils.

Ref Min 62/19 Charter for Walking Neighbourhoods – The Ramblers Association had developed their Charter following discussions with the Town Clerk. They now have created a Charter for signing and the Town Council would look to tie this in with promoting footpath improvements and new footpath signage.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 4 December 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

79/19 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 19 November 2019, 10 December 2019 & 7 January 2020 were submitted as circulated and read.

Ref Min 70/19 Greenfields Recreation Ground – the Town Clerk reported that the Village Green Status application had been declined and the Judicial Review had been dismissed.

Ref Min 71/19 BT Kiosks – Town Council comments had been submitted to Shropshire Council including suggestions for additional removals.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 19 November 2019, 10 December 2019 & 7 January 2020 be accepted and approved.

80/19 YOUTH SERVICES COMMITTEE

Ref Min 13/19 Alternative Curriculum Work – Councillor Mosley reported that the Youth Worker (Alternative Curriculum) was now in post and had started to work with identified vulnerable young people, some youngsters that had already been excluded from school and some at risk of exclusion.

Ref Min 14/19 Youth Consultation – The Town Clerk reported that discussions had taken place with Shropshire Council regarding plans from 1 April 2020. Likely paper to Cabinet on 27 January and plans for Central Area explained. No further funding for open access sessions would be forthcoming from 1 April but the Town Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk had met with the Early Years Team at Shropshire Council to look at ways of complementary working across Shrewsbury.

The minutes of the Youth Services Committee meeting held on 20 November 2019 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Youth Services Delivery Committee meeting held on 20 November 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

81/19 BUDGET 2020/21

Councillor Mosley set out details of the draft 2020/21 Budget as recommended by the Finance & General Purpose. In proposing the budget he outlined the following:

That the precept be increased by 20% for the 2020/21 budget to be made up of:

- 10% for growth, inclusive of inflation (currently around 3%) and
- 10% ring-fenced for climate emergency mitigation initiatives.

The 10% increase for growth would be used for the following activities:

- to further enhance the network of footpaths
- to improve the standard of maintenance of green spaces
- to provide additional support for programmes of festivals and events throughout the town

- to implement any prioritised projects (either cross-town developments or individual ward-based projects; members had fed in priorities in their Wards, these would be reviewed and projects outlined).
- to facilitate the Knife Angel being displayed in the Town.

The 10% ring-fenced for climate emergency mitigation initiatives would be enhanced by additional funds from reserves to provide a dedicated budget of £250,000 to be drawn down, as and when, over the next three years. Officers would be asked to provide a more detailed action plan outlining the Council's response to the Climate Emergency to be submitted to the April 2020 meeting of the F&GP. This would likely include:

- purchasing land for tree planting
- solar panels
- purchase of electric tools & vehicles
- addressing the impact of Ash Die Back

As part of this Climate Emergency process, the Council would establish a Climate Emergency Standing Advisory Group, reporting to F&GP, comprising of Councillors, Officers, representatives of pressure groups, Young Shrewsbury and professionals which would meet on a quarterly basis.

In addition to these two key areas of work, it is important to move forward to provide a permanent base for Town Council headquarters staff. Hence, the Senior Management Team be asked to draw up a needs analysis and seek to identify appropriate premises for conversion to provide reception, office and meeting facilities in or near to the town centre.

Changes to the Council's Precept Levy would generate £258k equating to £60.25 for an average Band D property (less than the £71 average in the county). With 55% of properties being a Band A/B their increase would be no greater than £7.81 for the year; at £46.86 less than £1 a week.

Councillor Phillips presented a counter budget on behalf of the Conservative Group. Whilst content with the 10% increase in the precept to be allocated for climate emergency, they felt the fund should be spent in the next 12 months. They proposed an additional 2% for inflationary increases with reserves being utilised for any additional increases in the revenue budget.

Councillor Nutting in seconding the Conservative Group counter-proposals enquired of the levels of reserves for which the RFO provided a breakdown. Cllr Nutting felt there was sufficient money in reserves to limit the level of precept increase.

The RFO explained that reserves had been increasing over the past 2 years due to changes in accounting regulations and reporting of Neighbourhood Funds and CIL which totalled £1.2 million at year end 31 March 2019 which inflated the reserves balance where previously they were shown as deferred income on the balance sheet until spent.

Councillor Vasmer supported the proposals as set out by Councillor Mosley, reiterating the importance of investing in climate change and the need to invest in the town and contribute to the Big Town Plan.

Councillor Fraser was also in support, stating that the Town Council was not only in a position to take forward climate change but should be funding the ambition to improve the town with projects such as better connectivity, air quality, health & fitness and capital projects for the benefit of residents.

Councillor Jones did not support either Councillor Mosley's or Councillor Phillips proposals and would prefer the precept to remain unchanged thereby not putting undue pressure on the electorate.

Members voted against Councillor Phillips counter proposal.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the revenue expenditure budget for 2020/21 be set at £3,726,281.**
- (ii) That a precept levy of £1,517,035 be levied against the ratepayers of Shrewsbury for the financial year 2020/21.**