

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

Meeting of the Finance & General Purpose Committee Held Virtually on Microsoft Teams At 6.00pm on Monday 7 December 2020

PRESENT

Councillors A Mosley (Chairman), P Adams, Ms G Burgess, Mrs H Fraser, Mrs P Moseley, A Phillips & D Vasmer.

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Amanda Spencer (Deputy Town Clerk), Gary Farmer (Operations Manager), Andy Watkin (Responsible Financial Officer), Adam Purnell (Youth & Community Manager), Ruth Jones (Office Manager) and Carol Pullen (Committee Clerk).

APOLOGIES

There were none received.

26/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Twin-Hatters	All twin-hatted Councillors declared a personal interest in all matters relating to Shropshire Council.
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27/20 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 5 October 2020 were submitted and circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 5 October 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

28/20 MATTERS ARISING

Minute 12/20 – Shropshire Pension Fund Investment – The Town Clerk reported that she had written to the Pension Fund as instructed but had not yet received any response.

Minute 25/20 – Policies & Procedures – The Town Clerk reported that she was still awaiting confirmation of membership. There would be a meeting in January. The Deputy Town Clerk had been looking at prioritising the policies that needed to be reviewed and she intended to share them out amongst the Councillors for member review.

29/20 COVID

The RFO reported on the financial implication of Lockdown 2 based upon the previous forecast for the year ended 31 March 2021, where the deficit impact of COVID would be in the region of £100,000.

The second lockdown ran for a 4-week period from Thursday 5 November to Wednesday 2 December 2020. As takeaway and essential shops could open and due to being later in the year, the impact on income was not as severe as the first lockdown per figures below for the 4 week period:

Financial costs:

Markets (indoor and Sunday)	£6,000
Sporting	£2,500
Investment properties	<u>£2,000</u>
	£10,500

Upon lockdown ending Shrewsbury had been placed under Tier 2 restrictions and this would be reviewed every 2 weeks, until March 2021. Under all tiers non-essential shopping and amateur sports could return, which would not impact the forecast. The impact would be on investment properties where the harder the restrictions the greater the monetary deficit.

RESOLVED:

- (i) **That the Report and costs of Lockdown 2 be noted.**
- (ii) **That Officers report on any further restrictions and implication at the next meeting**

30/20 PAYMENT SCHEDULES

Prior to the meeting, the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) circulated the Schedule of Payments for the period 26 September 2020 – 27 November 2020. No comments or concerns were raised.

RECOMMENDED:

That the schedule of payments passed for payment for the period 26 September 2020 – 27 November 2020 be approved.

31/20 WEBSITE

Councillor Mosley reported that the Website Tender process had been completed. There had been 21 submissions which were shortlisted down to 5 to give a presentation. This had taken place the previous week and the preferred tenderer was Web Orchard who provided the current website facilities. It had been the new functionality that they would bring to the site together with their ethical approach to climate change that were the deciding factors. Officers would work with them on design and Group Leaders would provide feedback. It was hoped that the new website would be up and running by 1 March 2021.

Members were asked to ratify the appointment of Web Orchard.

RESOLVED:

That Web Orchard be appointed to design and build Shrewsbury Town Council's new website.

32/20 EXTERNAL AUDIT

The RFO reported that the External Audit of the 2019/20 Annual Accounts had been completed and an unqualified audit received. The Full Annual Return had been uploaded onto the Town Council's website in accordance with the regulations to publicise such.

In proposing acceptance of the Accounts, Councillor Mosley congratulated the RFO on his work.

RESOLVED:

That the 2019/20 Annual Accounts be approved and published on the Council website.

33/20 INTERNAL AUDITOR

The RFO reported that the first inspection of the 2020/21 Accounts had been carried out remotely by the Internal Auditor. There had been no areas of concern, however it had been noted under Petty Cash that an independent review did need to be completed but this would be done at such time as it became possible for the Auditor to visit in person.

RESOLVED:

That the Internal Auditor's Interim Report for the 2020/21 financial year be noted.

34/20 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Members were in receipt of the Capital Programme update report and Councillor Mosley reported that good progress was being made.

The Town Clerk highlighted several areas:

- **Monkmoor River Bank Project** – all the landscaping had been completed and the gates were in, now awaiting some tree work to be done and the information boards to be installed.
- **Reabrook Country Park** – the interpretation boards and wayfinding markers were in.
- **Monkmoor Allotments** – Fencing had now been completed.

- **Heathgates Allotments** – the Shed had been ordered and was due for delivery and installation in the new year.

Councillor Fraser commended the addition of interpretation boards in the Reabook Country Park, which she felt really enhanced the area. She noted that due to its flatness and ease of navigation this was a well-used park but expressed some concern at the condition of some of the paths. Whilst there were some quite well-defined paths, in other parts where the paths were not so defined, she had noticed of late they had become quite muddy and wondered if these areas could be improved in some way.

Councillor Mosley said that in readiness for the 2021/22 budget members were asked to contribute their ideas to a whole number of initiatives for consideration within the Capital Programme and suggested that Councillor Fraser put this item forward for consideration.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

35/20 CLIMATE EMERGENCY

(i) Climate Emergency Advisory Group

The Deputy Town Clerk updated members on the current position regarding the climate emergency initiatives taken by Shrewsbury Town Council.

The Climate Emergency Advisory Group had met for its second meeting on 22 October 2020 and the minutes of that meeting had been circulated to members. The next meeting was scheduled to take place in January 2021.

The draft Climate Emergency action plan had been circulated to members and the main topic of discussion at the meeting had been the draft Climate Emergency action plan and defining an action plan for the next three years. As members were aware a fund of £250,000 had been established to put towards climate emergency initiatives. Some initiatives would come at no cost and some with a cost so these had been ranked in terms of what type of impact they would have particularly in terms of carbon emissions and members were asked to feed in any ideas they might have and would like considered.

In addition to the new actions under discussion within the working group, Shrewsbury Town Council were currently undertaking a number of initiatives from the previously agreed capital plan which came under the remit of Climate Emergency. The Committee was therefore asked to agree to the commitment of funds from the Climate Emergency budget as follows:

Project	Total Cost	Original Budget Allocation	Proposed commitment from CE Budget
Solar Lighting Project in the Quarry	£72,710	£45,000	£27,710

Replace Street Light heads with LED	£138,671	£95,000	£43,671
Explore electric Vehicle options for fleet (Electric Mule purchased – a fuel one would cost around £12,000)	£16,704	None. Would come from capital budget.	£4,704 (the difference in cost between electric and fuel)
Installing electric vehicle charging points at the Weeping Cross Depot	£2,200	None. Would come from capital budget.	£2,200
Improve pathways and encourage walking & cycling	Phase 1 £26,581 Phase 2 tbc	Phase 1 £26,581 Phase 2 £48,269	Phase 1 £2,658 (10%) Phase 2 10% of final spend
500 British native tree whips to grow in Nursery	£500	£0	£500
TOTAL proposed commitment			£78,785

Members were keen to ensure that priority be given to projects that were most effective with regard to use of the climate emergency budget and that overspends on other capital projects not just be mopped up from the climate emergency fund. It was recognised that projects such as the solar lighting in the Quarry and the replacement LED street lights were projects that had been started prior to the Council declaring a Climate Emergency, but these projects also met the climate emergency agenda.

Councillor Mosley suggested that Group Leaders meet ahead of the of F&GP Committee meeting in February and together with the Climate Emergency Advisory Group put together clear proposals and costs and report back to that meeting. He thanked the Deputy Town Clerk for her work in preparing the action plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) That the Report and including the Climate Emergency Advisory Group minutes be noted.**
- (ii) That any budget allocations from the Climate Emergency budget be considered by the Climate Emergency Advisory Group**

(ii) Hydro-scheme at the Weir

The Town Clerk appraised the Committee on discussions to review the potential for a Hydro-Scheme for the Weir. Members were asked to consider the Council's involvement in such a scheme and to consider part-funding feasibility work alongside Shropshire Council.

Members were aware that there had been previous proposals for the development of a Hydro-Scheme at the weir. These proposals were being progressed by a private Community Interest Company at the time when Feed-in-Tariffs were available. The project had never proceeded as the return on investment for an investor was not viable enough.

Things had changed since. Both Shropshire Council and Shrewsbury Town Council had declared Climate Emergencies and registered their commitments on carbon neutrality and in so doing had developed plans for carbon reduction, including energy production.

The Town Clerk has had a number of conversations with the Climate Emergency Taskforce Leader at Shropshire Council and more recently the three Group Leaders and Town Clerk were invited to a meeting with the Leader of Shropshire Council and the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change to discuss an approach to developing a Hydro Scheme on the Castlewalk Recreation Ground. Unfortunately, only Councillor Vasmer and the Town Clerk were able to attend due to the other Group Leaders having other commitments and connectivity issues.

From those present there was an appetite for the Town Council to be an active partner in a scheme with Shropshire Council being the lead partner. Discussions included the need to liaise with the EA both in relation to the scheme but also the proximity to the Fish Pass. Use of Town Council land was discussed and it was felt that the land should remain in Town Council ownership. There were initial discussions on financing and apportionment and the potential of ring-fencing the revenue receipts to support other environmental projects in the town once any borrowing had been repaid.

There would be a need to commission feasibility work to take the project from concept through planning and to delivery and it was felt that a jointly funded commission might be the most appropriate route.

The Town Clerk has had further discussions with the Climate Change Taskforce Leader since to begin to scope out the works and costings.

Work would need to include:

- Technical Feasibility
- Technical Design Review
- Ecology Survey
- Heritage impact
- Formal engagement with EA
- Waste/Public Protection Engagement
- Planning proposals and submission of application to the Planning authority

Ball Park figure for the works was between £30-40k

Councillor Vasmer welcomed the report but pointed out that it had been previously discussed that should there be any profits from the scheme these should be of benefit to the community, although it was recognised this was very early stage but

he hoped it would be noted for consideration in the future should the scheme progress.

Councillor Fraser was aware that a lot of feasibility work supported financially by the Council had been carried out previously and enquired whether there was benefit from these reports or if the work had to be redone.

The Town Clerk confirmed that all the reports previously done had been provided and nothing was being duplicated. Reports were being commissioned around understanding the context of any site and structural surveys going into more detail. There was feasibility work being done on the kind of models that were now available.

Councillor Mosley felt it would be worth making clear that although the Council were happy to part fund the feasibility study 50-50 it would not go so far as to commit to funding the actual construction 50-50.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) That the report be noted;**
- (ii) That the Town Council confirms its active interest in the development of a Hydro-Scheme at the Weir in partnership with Shropshire Council;**
- (iii) That a sum of £20k is set aside from the Climate Emergency Fund to jointly commission necessary feasibility works;**
- (iv) That the Town Clerk continues to work with the Climate Change Taskforce Leader, keeping the Group Leaders and the Committee informed of progress.**

(iii) Combined Sewage Outflows

Prior to the meeting members had received various reports detailing the impact of Combined Sewage Overflows on the River Severn and in particular, effects on Town Council Operations and they were asked to consider any further action to be taken.

The Town Clerk's report had detailed along the river bank within the town centre there were 10 Combined Sewage Outflows; one of which discharges directly into the townside fishpass at the Weir. These are Overflow Tanks holding raw sewage and storm water. Combined sewer overflow refers to sewer systems without separate components for storm water and wastewater. In effect, storm water and wastewater all flow through the same system (combined) to a wastewater treatment facility. Water Authorities are granted licences to discharge its sewers (untreated sewage) directly out into the river particularly during storms. This ensures that there will never be any backing up of sewerage into properties.

The discharge from these Overflows had been brought to Officers' attention particularly this year, both during the floods and the summer period where the river levels were low, the flow of the river was quiet and the overflows were most visible.

After the floods subsided it was noticeable the amount of sanitary products that were residual in the foliage along the river.

During the summer months the scale and volume of the discharges from these overflows had been very visible. Traditionally the sewerage would discharge into the bed of the river and disperse as the pipe is usually below the river line, but as the levels have reduced the sewage had been visible on the surface of the river and was taking longer to disperse. This had become a problem to anglers for not only were they catching sanitary products in their lines, the fish become very unsettled by this level of pollution.

The Severn is the daily venue for rowing clubs, canoeists [individuals and a growing number of commercial operators], anglers, bankside walkers, increasing numbers of swimmers enjoy the waters, riverboat trips, paddleboards, otter spotters and casual visitors. Riverside pubs are more resilient thanks to their location and despite the challenges of this year to the visitor economy the Severn is and always will be fundamental to the quality of that experience.

There are a growing number of individuals and organisations who were flagging this as a concern not just Shrewsbury Town Council and anglers through Shrewsbury Town Fisheries; this has been raised by the Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Sabrina River Boat Company, Telford Angling Association, partners at the EA, local residents, community river groups and other NGOs such as the Severn Rivers Trust.

Officers have raised this through the Council's national membership of the Angling Trust who are not only following the effects of CSOs along the River Severn in Shrewsbury, but in Ironbridge and Bridgnorth and further afield along water courses in Ilkley, Mold and Windrush in the Cotswolds. The Trust is keen to work with organisations locally to seek pressure on those to change the licencing system.

Philip Dunne, MP for Ludlow is the Chairman of the Environment Audit Committee and has submitted a Private Members Bill on this subject. Peter Lambert from the Shropshire Wildlife Trust has sent representations to the MP raising matters locally.

Councillor Fraser said it was widely recognised that this was a problem not just in Shrewsbury but in many towns across the country where it had become one of the biggest killers of fish and was one of the most common pollution incidents. She expressed her support for the Town Council doing anything it could to add weight to addressing this problem.

Councillor Mosley supported the comments made by Shropshire Wildlife Trust and suggested that a member of Shropshire Wildlife Trust be invited to a future F&GP Committee meeting to explain further how the Council could support any campaigns.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) That the Council supports the concerns of the Shropshire Wildlife Trust regarding CSOs;**

- (ii) **That a member of Shropshire Wildlife Trust be invited to the next meeting of F&GP Committee to explain further.**

36/20 YOUTH

Councillor Mosley welcomed Adam Purnell the Youth & Community Manager to the meeting; he updated members on the current position regarding the activities undertaken by Young Shrewsbury since the Summer. Previously as Youth provision had been established and in order to take the work forward and support the Youth Team, Council had set up a Youth Committee but it had been decided that as the service was now so established that instead of a separate Committee, a report would be provided to each F&GP Committee meeting.

The Youth & Community Manager reported that it had been difficult to continue to engage with the numbers of young people they had become used to working with across due to COVID restrictions, and in many cases it had been necessary to totally re-evaluate the way in which the youth workers worked. This had meant trying different ideas to find out which most suited the needs and interests of young people.

Given the increased risks that lockdowns and restrictions brought to young people, a decision was made to give priority to the most vulnerable young people. Whilst it had not been possible to deliver open access youth clubs, for a short time (before further restrictions came into place) there were some specific activities in place of these sessions. In some cases these have been fairly well attended but are not necessarily appealing to the most vulnerable young people. However more of these young people were given access to the Alternative curriculum and online cooking and craft activities.

The service had been successful in a COVID emergency funding bid to the Youth Endowment fund submitted in the summer, which had now been released and projects were underway. The funding totalled £42,000 and was to be used to help to continue to work with the most vulnerable young people innovatively throughout the pandemic. It was specified in the criteria of the bid that the project had to continue to run for the 12-month period regardless of changes to COVID restrictions. The funding has allowed the Council to develop the following:

- Alternative Curriculum lead to be taken from 25 hours per week to full time, enabling another 2 full days of the programme and increased numbers of participants by up to 16 more young people
- Costs of the extra staff needed to support the alternative curriculum additional sessions
- Costs of hiring The Grange for an extra two days per week
- Costs of an extra two detached sessions per week
- Costs of ingredients and resources for a weekly cooking and craft activity delivered via YouTube for 30 families per week at £10 per family
- Staffing costs to plan, coordinate and deliver ingredients and materials to 30 families
- Cost of van hire for deliveries each week.

So far the project has been a great success, the service is at full capacity with the alternative curriculum and 25 families have been taking part in the weekly YouTube activities cooking and craft activities. The online sessions are delivered in real time, but pre-recorded and uploaded prior to the ingredients and materials being delivered on a Friday. Once families

have their delivery, they then watch the tutorial and take part in making whatever has been set out for that week.

This element of the project has brought a great deal of value to the young people, their families and also to the Youth Workers who have managed to maintain contact with young people, and engage with them positively through these difficult times.

The additional youth endowment funding received has allowed the service increase detached sessions, and currently Youth Workers are out 4 nights per week and have been since the end of the first lockdown. Areas of focus included Kynaston Road and surrounding Grange area, Monkmoor, Ditherington and The Quarry.

Some open access sessions ran for a short period of time from September until mid-October, but closed during lockdown 2. Restrictions on numbers mean such sessions are not currently viable.

Staff are currently supporting the set-up of a new Management Committee for the Community Centre on Kynaston Road which has been empty for over two years. Having a group of residents in place as the committee is key to the success of the centre, as they all live within eyeshot of it and are keen to take on the responsibility and ownership that it requires to be run successfully once again.

Councillor Mosley suggested that it may be pertinent to consider spending some of the Community Grant fund to assist with the project and asked that the Deputy Town Clerk attend one of the Committee meetings and bring back to this committee some proposals for consideration.

In supporting the proposal Councillor Vasmer thanked Adam for the excellent report and asked whether there was any potential for expanding the Alternative Curriculum to meet the increasing demand.

The Youth & Community Manager reported that although there was a waiting list, groups needed to be 4-5 maximum and grouping the individuals needed to be carefully considered. The success of the project relied hugely on the personal relationship between the individual and the youth worker so it would be difficult to easily upscale. There was also the issue funding, staffing and space. The Youth Endowment Fund had enabled an extra day and a half per week in the short term but in order for this to continue, further funding would need to be sought and although he was continuing to look for funding, this was quite labour intensive and difficult to do alongside the day to day work.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the report be noted.**
- (ii) That a Vote of Thanks be given to the Youth Team on the excellent work being done.**
- (iii) That the Deputy Town Clerk attend a meeting of the Kynaston Road Community Centre committee and report back to this Committee with proposals for assistance.**

37/20 2021/22 BUDGET

(i) General principles, implications and assumptions

The RFO outlined the current position in preparation of the draft 2021/22 budget which would be presented to F&GP Committee meeting on 11 January.

Members had received a copy of the draft tax base for Parish & Town Councils which may be subject to change before being approved by Shropshire Council later in December. There was a 142.23 increase in the Shrewsbury Taxbase which represented a 0.5% increase in the precept on a band D rate of £60.25.

Overall the precept raises about a third of the Town Council's income which equates to £1.5m so if it remains the same would generate an additional £8,500. For comparison Shropshire average was £78.73 and National average was £71.29. Large Councils ie those over £1m charge £159.50 so Shrewsbury was considerably less.

The revenue side of the budget was split into two areas, income and expenditure. Costs were going up by roughly circa 2%. The SLA which was increased by RPI was currently at 1.5% but it was hard to know which way the indices were going to go. The implication of Brexit was that inflation may go up and this would no doubt impact on the accounts.

In terms of Covid it was hoped that there would be a return to some normality in the Spring of 2021 and that income from Markets and sporting income would not be adversely affected. Events were diarised for June onwards so provided they were able to go ahead with normal attendance numbers, then normal revenue would be expected. Interest rates had dropped to virtually zero so income on interest rate for this year would not meet the budgeted figure of £25,000 and was not expected to next year either so would need to be considerably lower. Income on the property fund was anticipated to be less.

The new contract on the Livestock Market was budgeted to bring in slightly less so a negative compared to budget. Revenue would be pretty static but expenses were budgeted to increase so taking a general 2% which was the target for Bank of England, a 2% increase had been applied to most costs, except utilities which would be higher.

It was noted in the spending review recently that staff pay would be frozen. However, those who earned under £26,000 would receive £250 and as the vast majority of staff were within that level of salary, it would represent a minimum 1.14% increase for those staff. There was a slight under-budget provision in the current budget so that would also impact on expenditure. All these expenditure pressures going up with static income made setting the budget more difficult.

On the capital side there were a number of commitments, continuing to put capital into the climate change fund, Ash Die Back and the bus shelters as well as well as the usual earmarked funds such as the Elections and the Splash park and a small amount of machinery replacement. It was hard to add too many additional revenue items

into the budget but it would be possible to consider other projects and expenditure utilising the funds that were available.

Referring to the cost of Utilities, Councillor Phillips enquired whether having invested in solar and LED lights, there had been any savings from greener energy.

The RFO reported that the Council had invested in greener electricity which was a fraction more costly but had not invested in green gas as this would represent an increase of around 35%. Whilst the LED lights had generated a saving, areas such as the markets and sporting facilities had increased due to demand and usage, it was the non-commodity charges which are causing the increase in cost per unit.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

(ii) Proposed Fees & Charges

The draft Fees & Charges for 2021/22 had been circulated to members ahead of the meeting and had also been presented to the Recreation & Leisure Committee who had recommended approval at their meeting of 25 November. Although inflation was up and down at the moment these had been increased with a blanket 2% across the board.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Fees & Charges for 2021/22 be approved as part of the 2021/22 budget process.

(iii) Revenue & Capital expenditure items from members for consideration into budget preparations

Prior to the meeting members had received a report on revenue expenditure items for consideration into budget preparation. Councillor Mosley reported that the Group Leaders had met to look at the commonality particularly around climate emergency; improvements to the environment and beautification of areas beyond the town centre; active travel and engaging with nature and this was a combined list of proposals. These had been shared with Senior Management Team and they had provided additional commentary. There were also recommendations from the Recreation & Leisure Committee and recommendations of the Senior Management Team. Councillor Mosley gave an overview of the list including:

- Wildflower Planting – identifying ley locations for planting being mindful that this has a revenue implication
- Benches – in strategic locations. Councillor input is required
- Bus Shelters – looking at those shelters that are heavily used and developing a programme for upgrade
- Paths – continue the work on improving footpaths and connectivity
- Planting – look for areas for positioning planters in community hubs and key routes into the town centre. Councillor input is required
- Signage – improving and upgrading signage that still publicised SABC

- Wakeman Fields – improve accessibility to the site for the public including pathways and suitable planting
- Abbey Gardens Improvements - to mirror the standards in the Quarry
- Nature Trails – creating environmental stations and flora/fauna interest points; engaging with the community and schools
- Community Activity Days – designed to stimulate community events and engagement hopefully once the risk of COVID subsides
- Toilets – improvements to facilities particularly in the Quarry
- Removal of the Redundant Greenhouses and the potential for a contemporary garden in its place
- Guides to footpath trails and walks both in paper format and on the website
- Support for a Cycle Day
- Prioritisation of play improvements
- Looking at a priority list of works in the Quarry to maintain the fabric of the park
- Looking at solar lighting elsewhere
- Moston Road Plans – work needed on developing a vision for the site
- Greenfields Recreation Ground improvements following public consultation
- Office Accommodation – commitment from members to purchase and convert a property, this subject to office property availability in the town centre, the need for remote working and discussions with staff

Councillor Mosley opened it up for comment or additional items that members may wish to add.

Councillor Fraser was keen for additional wildflower planting to be considered. There had been many positive comments about the planting on Robertson Way and she had been approached by some residents in Belvidere who were keen to explore the possibility of having verges in their area planted which they could potentially maintain themselves although she was aware that some small patches were not suitable.

The Town Clerk reported that the Countryside & Greenspace Manager was regularly contacted by residents wanting to put wildflowers outside their properties but opinion varied widely between residents so it was important to get a general consensus among a neighbourhood and perhaps in the first instance those ideas should be put to the elected members. It would then need to be discussed with the Highways Authority as a licence to cultivate would be necessary if residents were to take over grass verges so it was not a simple process. However, the Council could provide residents with some guidance.

Councillor Mosely suggested caution as during a recent public consultation that she had been involved in, opinion on what to do with an area of open space had attracted a whole spectrum of opinion and should too many small pockets of wildflowers be planted, the Countryside Team could become bogged down in trying to resolve issues among residents which could put a strain on staff resources.

Councillor Fraser expressed her desire that the Town Council consider taking a stronger role in advocating cycling within the town and perhaps have an officer with cycling within their remit to publicise existing routes, map out routes, consider more cycle stands and generally make Shrewsbury more cycle friendly.

Councillor Mosley pointed out that the Town Council Officers had been heavily involved in the Recovery Task Force and had a major input into the post Covid active travel encouragement schemes. He was also aware there were quite a few people around the town who were looking at this and trying to get active funding. The practicalities and budgetary implications for the Council needed to be borne in mind. There had already been improvements to footpaths and more were planned.

Councillor Vasmer supported Councillor Fraser and thought there was certainly a bigger role for the Town Council to play in encouraging cycling.

Councillor Phillips expressed his support in making the approaches to the town more attractive with floral blooms which could improve the environment for residents and visitors alike. He suggested it may be appropriate for consideration within the environmental budget.

Councillor Mosley reported that the solar lights in the Quarry had been a huge success and whether there was a desire to extend them from Kingsland Bridge to Porthill Bridge.

Councillor Phillips referred to Greenfields Recreation Ground and the need to ensure that a full consultation was carried out with residents ahead of any final plans for the area.

The Town Clerk confirmed that this was the intention. The proposals were a culmination of suggestions raised by residents in the past and officers. Greenfields Rec was deemed to be suitable as a multi recreational use venue and within the Local Plan review there was potential land allocations not far from the site so Council were keen to ensure sustainable links from those sites through to the Town Centre.

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) That the report be noted**
- (ii) That the Group Leaders review the projects to be considered in conjunction with officers and present a report to the F&GP meeting on 11 January.**

38/20 CLOSING REMARKS

In closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked Councillors for attending and taking part in this virtual Town Council meeting and also thanked the staff involved in this meeting. He thanked members of the public for logging in. All papers relating to this meeting could be found on the website www.shrewsburytowncouncil.gov.uk and the minutes would appear in draft on the website within the next month.