

**SHREWSBURY IN BLOOM
VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 4TH MAY 2021 AT 2.00PM
VIA ZOOM**

PRESENT

Keith Roberts (KR, Chairman), Beverley Baker (BB), Helen Ball (HB, Town Clerk), Gary Farmer (GF), Kath Owen (KO), Margaret Thrower (MT) and Hilary Humphries (Communications Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Pam Moseley and Jane Mackenzie.

11/21 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2ND MARCH 2021

Members discussed the minutes of the virtual meeting held on 2nd March 2021.

AGREED:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd March 2021 were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.

12/21 MATTERS ARISING

There were no Matters Arising.

13/21 UPDATE ON COUNCIL PLANTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2021

GF advised members that everything is proceeding well with the summer bedding for 2021. Delivery of the plug plants is underway and STC staff are planting on.

GF has been in discussions with the BID in relation to hanging baskets, and it has been agreed that both STC and BID will offer them to business premises this summer. HH has done the STC letter and application form and updated the website. The BID are also contacting their members.

GF was mindful that there may have to be a plant allocation for SC's road closures and social distancing measures this summer.

The work at the nursery is on schedule.

As the Committee is unable to host a greenhouse Open Evening again this year, Members discussed the possibility of having a virtual tour instead, which can be posted both to Facebook and the Town Council's website.

Members agreed that there should be regular updates from the greenhouse posted to social media.

The design for the Castle Carpet Bed celebrates the 100th anniversary of the Royal British Legion.

ACTION:

- **GF and HB to provide social media updates from the greenhouse.**

14/21 TO CONSIDER THE RHS THEME OF 'GROW SOCIAL' FOR 2021

The RHS introduced the theme of 'Grow Social' in 2020 before Covid-19 restrictions were imposed, with the aim of combatting social isolation and connect communities.

Members discussed the possibility of engaging with the Barnabus Centre, which would fit the criteria of the scheme.

ACTION:

- **GF to liaise with PM to find out more information and if the Committee can help.**

15/21 ENTRY INTO THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES

15.1 Heart of England in Bloom Small City Category

HH advised Members that work on the Portfolio is progressing, although the changes to the content required more consideration than in previous years.

HB suggested liaising with Mark Bowen and Pete Jenks for an article on their considerations for plants and their location, whilst Matt Wilcoxon can be contacted about wildflower seeds they use for the verges.

Members discussed the inclusion of a number of areas, including:

- Tree stock and the need to use locally sourced trees to remove the threat of importing disease
- Different planting regimes for different locations
- Long-term sustainable planting schemes, especially in new areas coming under STC management
- Sedum roofs on STC bus shelters
- The new tree and shrub nursery and the collaboration with SC, including funding for the new irrigation system

Members raised the issue that the entry form for the Small City category needs to be submitted online by 28 May 2021.

HH raised the issue of a lack of photos of the town throughout the year.

ACTION:

- **HH to ascertain the date for deadline for submission of the portfolio.**
- **HH to work with Clear Design for the portfolio.**
- **HH to liaise with Matt Wilcoxon about wildflower seeds used around the town.**
- **GF to take photos of the progress made with the tree nursery.**
- **Photos of the town and its floral features required for the portfolio.**

16/21 TO CONSIDER CREATING A SHREWSBURY IN BLOOM WEBSITE

HH advised members that STC holds the shrewsburyinbloom.co.uk domain name and pays £25 every two years to maintain ownership.

STC has a new website to take advantage of updated technology and RJ suggested enquiries be made about the cost of a basic, stand-alone Bloom website. With an initial cost of around £1,200 and a £250 annual service charge, Members discussed the benefits of having a website.

Members agreed that it would help to promote the independence of the Bloom group and help to encourage more Bloom events in the town. It would also give Bloom more freedom and flexibility to promote the Bloom ethos, engender community resilience and local enthusiasm as well as incorporating local community groups.

GF raised the issue of attracting sponsorship to help with some of the costs.

Members felt that it would be a good idea to pursue a website.

ACTION:

- **HB to clarify what the costs cover and to develop a brief for the website and report back to the Members at the next meeting.**

17/21 UPDATE ON THE 2021 TOWN OF FLOWERS COMPETITION

HH advised members that discussions needed to take place with Debbie Entwistle regarding the logistics about holding the Town of Flowers competition this year and that Members would be updated at the next meeting.

ACTION:

- **HH to ensure that press coverage is distributed along with posts on social media and the STC website.**

18/21 TO CONSIDER THE SUGGESTION FROM SHROPSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION OF INTRODUCING POLLINATOR FLOWERS TO THE TOWN COUNCIL'S PLANTING SCHEMES

GF advised Members that Matt Wilcoxon is helping to promote additional pollinator flowers through new schemes and existing wildflower meadows. STC staff are also introducing more pollinator flowers in the planting schemes, although this is a long-term project. GF advised Members that STC staff are undergoing training to leave some areas of parks and highways and what they need to look out for whilst working in those areas as part of a proactive plan to improve the areas for pollinator plants.

HB raised the subject of sedum roofs on bus shelters, which will provide more pollinator plants in the town and Matt Wilcoxon has given over some of the Countryside Unit land to beekeepers in areas where there are plenty of plants for them.

Members felt that more people accept the need to leave some areas of verges.

ACTION:

- **KR to liaise with Matt Wilcoxon for more information and respond to the Shropshire Beekeepers Association.**

19/21 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- HB advised Members that she had received Tony Bywater's resignation from the Bloom Group, and that he is happy to help and support Shrewsbury in Bloom in any way he can.
- With Local Council Elections set for 6 May, HB advised Members that KR and JM were Councillor appointments. As both were standing down, there was a need to establish whether they wished to stay in the Group or to stand down. KR stated his desire to retain his connection with the Bloom Group.

- HB confirmed that the design for the Castle Carpet Bed this year was the 100th anniversary of the formation of the British Legion. ALS will be undertaking a commemorative display in the Quarry on 14th May, ready for the anniversary on 15th May.

ACTION:

- **HB to liaise with JM to see if she still wishes to be a Member of the Bloom Group.**
- **HH to liaise with ALS in respect of press coverage and social media posts.**

20/21 NEXT MEETING

The following virtual meetings were confirmed for 2.00pm via Zoom:

Thursday 6 July 2021