

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
FULL COUNCIL
29 SEPTEMBER 2025**

Officer: Helen Ball – Town Clerk

COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR MEOLE

Purpose

To advise Members of a request from Councillor Bernie Bentick and the Meole Estate Community Association (a newly formed Community Interest Company) for Shrewsbury Town Council's support in principle for the construction of a new community centre on Mary Webb Road, and to seek approval for the reallocation of existing funds and consideration of future funding opportunities.

Background

Shrewsbury & Atcham Borough Council developed a community centre on Mary Webb Road. This was destroyed by fire approximately 20-25 years ago. The site of the Community Centre can still be seen on the map adjacent to the Play Area.

Since that time, the Meet Place facility on Maesbrook Road has been used as the primary community venue on the estate. This is compact and does not have the capacity for high attendance numbers.

Prior to COVID, the Town Council previously allocated £50,000 to the refurbishment of the Meet Place. This sum was supplemented by a similar sum from Trinity Church and Severnside Housing. Initial plans were developed but the cost of refurbishment never gave the necessary return on investment or potential to increase capacity.

The Meole Estate Community Association (MECA) has been an un-incorporated Community Association who membership comes from the area. At the time of discussions around redevelopment of the Meet Place it was recommended that the group would need to seek some level of incorporation. This they now have done through the development of a Community Interest Company. The Meole Ward Councillor has always been a member of the Group and Councillor Bentick is a trustee of the CIC.

Meole Estate Community Association (MECA) has maintained a long aspiration of delivering a new purpose-built community centre on Mary Webb Road and their incorporation provides the potential of them seeking both local and national funding to build a facility, but it requires the Town Council's support.

Their proposal includes the following:

1. Approve in principle the use of Town Council-owned land on Mary Webb Road for the construction of a new community centre, this ultimately being formalised through a lease agreement.
2. Reallocate the £50,000 currently earmarked for Meet Place refurbishment towards commissioning an architect to prepare a business case and RIBA stage design plans in order to support a planning application.
3. Consider a future possible contribution from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Neighbourhood Fund to support delivery of the project.
4. Support an application by MECA to Shropshire Council for CIL Local funding to secure capital investment for the build.

MECA are keen to develop this project but require some support from the Town Council in developing those plans. Progress is dependent upon securing the necessary funding to develop initial proposals to ultimately seek planning consent and sufficient capital funding for delivery.

Expediency of this Report

The Community & Environment Committee has the overall remit for the development of Community Facilities within the town. This report has come ahead of the next Committee meeting to meet various meeting timescales of MECA to begin to develop those plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Town Council:

- 1. Approves in principle the use of Town Council-owned land on Mary Webb Road for the purpose of constructing a new community centre.**
- 2. Agrees to reallocate the £50,000 currently allocated to Meet Place refurbishment towards the commissioning of an architect to prepare a business case and RIBA stage design plans.**
- 3. Agrees to consider contributing from its CIL Neighbourhood Fund to support the capital build.**
- 4. Agrees to support an application by MECA to Shropshire Council for CIL Local funding towards the project.**

