

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Climate Change Committee
Held via Microsoft Teams
At 4.30pm on Thursday 13 January 2022**

PRESENT

Councillors D Vasmer (Chair), B Bentick, R Dartnall, J Dean (Mayor), C Lemon, A Mosley and E Roberts.

Chris Bainger (Environment Agency), Kevin Oubridge (Shropshire Climate Action Partnership), David Sharpe (AECB), Dan Wrench (Shropshire Council), Tom Endacott (Gfleet Services) and Alan Leaman (Friends of the Earth).

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Amanda Spencer (Deputy Town Clerk), and Michelle Farmer (Committee Clerk).

29/21 APOLOGIES

That apologies from Councillor A Phillips be accepted.

30/21 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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31/21 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Climate Change Standing Committee meeting held on 7 October 2021 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Climate Change Standing Committee meeting held on 7 October 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

32/21 MATTERS ARISING

There were no Matter Arising for consideration.

33/21 ACTIVE TRAVEL WORKING GROUP

The minutes of the Active Travel Working Group meeting held on 2 December 2021 were submitted as circulated and read.

The Town Clerk provided Members with an update from the Active Travel Working Group which has been looking at walking and cycling initiatives in the Town.

The Liveable Neighbourhoods Consultation – The consultation closed in November 2021. Generally, the appetite for a Liveable neighbourhood was an even split with a slight majority not in support of proposals. The next step was to look at an alternative approach possibly including a 20mph zone, School Street, Travel Plan and additional crossings. They hope to consult early this year.

The Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan - City Science has been appointed to develop the LCWIP with specific sections for Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth, Church Stretton, Ludlow, Whitchurch, Oswestry & Market Drayton. There will be a workshop in Shrewsbury on 17 January for which a large invite list has gone out, which would include members of this Committee.

Mini Holland Bid – The Town Council put in a bid in the late summer of 2021 and hoped a decision would have been reached by the end of 2021. The Department for Transport has been in contact with Shropshire Council to inform them that a decision has not yet been reached but this will hopefully be early on in 2022.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Active Travel Working Group meeting held on 2 December 2021 be noted.

34/21 CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN 2020-2024

The Deputy Town Clerk provided an update to the Committee regarding the Action Plan. Some of the additional actions suggested by members of the Committee had been added to the plan and some actions consolidated. A meeting was held in November, where items were discussed with Officers throughout the Town Council which had allowed some more detail to be provided on specific actions. The meeting had proved very helpful, and the Deputy Town Clerk suggested that this group continue to meet and report back to the Climate Change Committee.

Nearly half of the actions on the plan have been achieved to date; the plan has been in place since 2020 and will run to 2024. Good progress has been made and the deadlines had been made more realistic.

It was commented that there is an action in the plan which relates to a Climate Emergency Grant Fund and investing in funding opportunities. Councillor Dean informed the Committee that it had been suggested to him about the Eco Schools project, which is a national charity that gets schools involved in climate change issues. There is an accreditation process to go through where you get awarded a green flag. Councillor Dean suggested the Committee offers local schools a grant to undertake this programme. It was suggested by Members that some schools may already be part of this programme.

Alan Leaman asked the Committee a question at this point in the meeting with regards to a possible event being held in Shrewsbury regarding the Energy Price Cap. This is due to be

lifted in April, which would lead to prices rising by 30%. He asked if this would be an opportunity to hold an event in the town, to show residents how to become more energy efficient and to help them with the increases they will face. The Deputy Town Clerk agreed that she would talk to Shropshire Council as they had done work on this already, and to liaise with them to see what they have planned in the Town regarding energy efficiency, and to see if we can participate.

Kevin Oubridge asked Committee about a previous enquiry he had raised regarding the use of the Dingle as a showcase of Shrewsbury's commitment to combat climate change; and asked if this was included in the action plan. It was confirmed that it was included, and once the area in the Quarry which holds the greenhouses is demolished, it would be an opportunity to create a contemporary garden and put interpretation boards in place to highlight climate change. It was also suggested that other areas like Becks Field and Castle Walk could be ideal to promote how climate change is addressed.

The Town Clerk commented on a proposed walking and cycling map that is being produced by Shrewsbury BID. The BID had received grant money from the Government to develop a walking/cycling map and it was confirmed that City ID had been appointed to complete this task. This is the same company who produced the wayfinding boards in the town centre, and they had been commissioned to do an overview of all existing cycling/walking routes, planned routes and how they all connect, and from this information they would develop a map. They have £10,000 to do the commission but they are looking for funding to print the maps. The Town Clerk asked if the Committee would be happy to contribute £5,000 towards the printing, and this would be a joint Town Council/BID initiative. A working party will be set up and if any members of Committee would like to be part of it, the BID could be informed. It was also asked if external Members of the Committee could assist with the distribution of the map to the residents of Shrewsbury.

Councillor Bentick raised a question of whether an initiative by Priory and Meole Brace School for active travel in the last week in April may attract some funding. The Chairman commented that proposals need to be put together and then sent to the Deputy Town Clerk to look at further.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That Officer meetings are to continue, and the Deputy Town Clerk would report back to each meeting with relevant updates.
- (ii) The Deputy Town Clerk is to liaise with Shropshire Council regarding a possible event for Energy Price increase and will report back to Committee with her findings.
- (iii) Kevin Oubridge to liaise with the Town Council with regards to activity in the Dingle and to get some senior grounds staff involved to see what can be achieved.
- (iv) Chairman of the Committee agreed with the proposed funding for the BID to help print a walking and cycling map of Shrewsbury. The Town Clerk will progress this item.
- (v) The Deputy Town Clerk will liaise with Shropshire Council education Department regarding the Eco Schools project to determine which schools are already partaking and if any schools would be interested and come back with a report to Committee.

35/21 OFFICER ROLE

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that Shropshire Council already have a Climate Change Officer role already in place, so there is a need to be cautious that no roles are being duplicated between the Town Council and Shropshire Council.

The Town Council is keen to look at apprenticeships and the Deputy Town Clerk has been talking to Shropshire Council to see how this could be done. The decision is that, rather than having a dedicated Officer for Climate Change, they would like to have an apprenticeship role which would be part administration and part Climate Change, until such time we know exactly what is needed for the role. A job description is currently being drafted.

Kevin Oubridge commented that Generation Zero, which is part of Zero Carbon Shropshire, although a small group, have connections with larger Young People groups in Shropshire who may be able to assist with circulating the job description.

RESOLVED:

The Committee largely agreed with the idea of the post being an apprenticeship. The Deputy Town Clerk has started on the Job Description and agreed to circulate the draft copy so Members can look at and input. It will be brought back to this Committee in March for comment and it can then be taken to Finance and General Purposes for approval.

36/21 CLIMATE CHANGE BUDGET

The Deputy Town Clerk Informed Members that there is currently £160,000 remaining in the budget but there were a lot of big items on the action plan remaining which would use a large amount of this budget.

RESOLVED:

The Chairman accepted the above and requested that the Deputy Town Clerk provides a more detailed budget report that will be available for the next meeting.

37/21 COMMONPLACE

The Town Clerk explained that Commonplace had been funding from the Government at the start of the Covid pandemic. Shrewsbury had its own Commonplace map where the public could raise any concerns around Highways, Road safety and this would be fed back to Shropshire Council Highways regarding road closures and social distancing.

The Town Council have worked with Commonplace for the Big Town plan and are currently running a commonplace map on movement in the Town centre. Shropshire Council are also using Commonplace for consultation on works for the Riverside.

The Town Clerk agreed to send a link to Members of the Manchester Commonplace map as this is a really good example and holds a lot of information. If Shrewsbury could have the same in place, having a good informative map which would inform and engage with the community and highlight community decision making. The Town Clerk asked if the Committee would consider using some of their budget to contribute towards this initiative.

RESOLVED:

Members would like a demonstration to know more about Commonplace and to ensure it is accessible to all members of the public. The Town Clerk will send links to Members and try to set up a demonstration meeting. She will talk to Commonplace and see what is best and report back to Committee with proposals at the next meeting.

38/21 NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Climate Change Standing Committee would be held on Thursday 31 March 2022. Members were informed that the Committee Meeting Planner for 2022/2023 is currently being finalised and will be sent out to all Councillors as soon as possible.