

## SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

### Meeting of the Climate Change Committee Held via Microsoft Teams At 4.30pm on Thursday 31 March 2022

#### PRESENT

Councillors D Vasmer (Chair), R Dartnall, J Dean (Mayor) and A Mosley

Chris Bainger (Environment Agency), Kevin Oubridge (Shropshire Climate Action Partnership), Dan Wrench (Shropshire Council), Tom Endacott (Gfleet Services)

With: Mark Holleran (Commonplace), Mark Fermor (Shropshire Cycle Hub) and Anna Morris (Shropshire Cycle Hub)

#### IN ATTENDANCE

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

#### 39/21 APOLOGIES

That apologies from Councillor B Bentick, Councillor C Lemon and Councillor A Wagner be accepted.

Apologies were also received from Alan Leaman (Friends of the Earth), David Sharpe (AECB) and Michael Dineen (Shrewsbury Civic Society)

#### 40/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Shropshire Councillors	Twin hatted members declared personal interests in matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council.
------------------------	---

#### 41/21 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Climate Change Standing Committee meeting held on 13 January 2022 were submitted as circulated and read.

#### RESOLVED:

**That the minutes of the Climate Change Standing Committee meeting held on 13 January 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.**

#### 42/21 MATTERS ARISING

There were no Matter Arising for consideration that were not already included in the agenda.

#### **43/21 COMMONPLACE**

Mark Holleran, a representative from Commonplace attended the meeting to demonstrate the software to the committee. Commonplace provides an interactive website to comment on specific projects.

Mark explained that Commonplace was a useful tool to allow understanding around the feeling of an issue within an area. Live time data is provided so you can see both the demographic and location of people commenting. Timescales for each project are set on a project-by-project basis.

The Town Council have worked with Commonplace for the Big Town Plan and are currently running a commonplace map on the movement in the Town Centre. Shropshire Council are using Commonplace for consultation works for the Riverside. All of these interactions have worked well.

The Town Clerk explained to the Committee that she has been in talks regarding the potential of joining forces with colleagues at Shrewsbury BID and Shropshire Council to share licences. There is currently a package on offer for ten projects for the cost of three individual ones. She explained that this was an excellent engagement, interactive and valuable tool.

There was support from members of the Climate Change Standing Committee to go ahead with the purchase of ten Commonplace Licences for the cost £18,000 (as opposed to the usual £6,000 per licence per project). Funding would come from the Climate Change budget in the first instance and then costs reallocated to specific projects/external organisations.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That a recommendation to purchase ten Commonplace licenses be presented to the next Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting.

*Mark Holleran left the meeting.*

#### **44/21 SHROPSHIRE CYCLE HUB PRESENTATION**

Anna Morris and Mark Fermor from Shropshire Cycle Hub gave a presentation to the Committee regarding a proposal for Shrewsbury Town Council to assist with costs for an eCargo Bike Library and rental service for the town.

The eCargo bike library would be designed to provide people in Shrewsbury with affordable access to electronic cargo bikes. These electronic bikes are designed to carry large loads with a range of both in-built and attachable trailers and boxes, ideal for deliveries used by local businesses and organisations, and the normal load carrying that local residents currently expect to need a car for.

A range of eCargo bikes in different sizes to suit all variety of goods would be offered and the proposal has been developed to meet a wide variety of user needs, to help Shrewsbury address the climate emergency. The Shrewsbury Cargo Bike Library will be operated and managed by Shropshire Cycle Hub. Following the initial free month, additional use will be charged at rates sufficient to cover ongoing costs and help to achieve a sustainable financial model for long term operation of the service. Reductions to these fees will be offered to

certain users where appropriate, including use by allotment societies, food banks and other charitable organisations.

All of the proposed vehicles have a 250W electric motor powered from rechargeable batteries to help with heavy loads and hills. Ecargo bikes have been trialled on Wyle Cop to confirm they are capable of the steep hills.

The objective of this scheme is to help Shrewsbury promote itself as a visitor and shopping destination, to encourage the shift towards active travel, to reduce car, van and traffic on the shopping streets and improve the Town Centre environment.

The total funding required for this proposal is £55,000 and the Cycle Hub are seeking 50% funding from the Town Council which equates to £27,500. They propose to deliver monthly reports and quarterly reports on progress during the first 12 months with a final report on the service and what has been achieved after 12 months. If the Town Council were to be on board with this concept, this would help to get other sponsors on board.

Councillors were generally agreed that this was a good project and good for changing attitudes in Shrewsbury. However, a number of concerns about the Town Council sponsoring the scheme were raised.

Several questions/points were raised:

- Would continuing rental be more sustainable than purchasing?
- Have they maintained ecargo bikes before?
- Where would the bikes be stored?
- The Climate fund is in place to reduce the Town Council carbon footprint, not the Town, so how would this help to reduce the Town Council footprint?
- More details are required on safety
- Why only 5 bikes and not more?
- The proposal should be heard at the Active Travel Working Group to gain their views and input.
- What would the affordable rental price be?
- How would it be marketed?
- It is a very large amount to ask for and don't feel there is a correct business plan in place for the amount of money asking for.
- Can evidence be seen of the community engagement before a decision is made?
- Is Sponsoring a bike an option?

#### **RESOLVED:**

The Committee support the principle of the proposal but request that it goes to the Active Travel Group and to a future Finance & General Purposes Committee with a fully costed business case before a decision could be made.

*Dan Wrench, Mark Fermor and Anna Morris left the meeting.*

#### **45/21 CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN 2020-2024**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided an update to the Committee regarding the Action Plan.

Since the last meeting, the Extension of solar lights within the Quarry has been completed. This has received very good feedback from the public.

With regards to the Mini Holland bid, there will hopefully be some developments soon so the Committee can be updated.

With regards to electric vehicles the Town Council now has the new electric Mayoral Car and an electric van for Operational use is due to be delivered shortly.

The Town Council are currently launching a bike purchase scheme for all employees in early April. This would be a salary sacrifice scheme and then it can extend to how staff use vehicles getting to work and around work.

A new Mayors Award has been launched for Climate Emergency actions.

The Deputy Town Clerk asked the Committee to consider if the current action plan would allow the Town Council to reach their objective of carbon neutrality by 2030 and it was suggested that this be discussed at a future meeting. Tom Endacott suggested that they decide what carbon neutrality in 2030 looks like and work backwards from there.

**RESOLVED:**

It was agreed that Committee would look into action plan in further detail at the next meeting.

**46/21 CLIMATE CHANGE OFFICER**

The Deputy Town Clerk explained to the Committee that the job description is almost ready and apologised for the delay.

**RESOLVED:**

The Deputy Town Clerk will circulate the job description to all Members as soon as possible.

**47/21 CLIMATE CHANGE BUDGET**

The Deputy Town Clerk informed Members that the Climate budget started at £250,000 and there is currently £166,000 remaining. It was agreed that the budget would be a regular item on the Agenda so Members can see where and how much the Committee is spending.

**RESOLVED:**

The Deputy Town Clerk will circulate the current budget figures to all Members.

**48/21 NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman suggested the Committee meet in person for the next meeting on 7 July 2022. This could be preceded by a tour of the Weeping Cross Depot for anyone who was interested. Councillor Dartnall commented that there was a Shropshire Council meeting already scheduled for this date.

**RESOLVED:**

It was agreed that the Committee Clerk would look at a new date for the next meeting.