

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Meeting of Council**  
**Held in the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Shrewsbury at**  
**6pm on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

**PRESENT**

Councillors E Roberts (Mayor), B Bentick, M Davies, P Gillam, N Green, K Halliday, C Lemon, A Mosley, A Phillips, D Vasmer, B Wall, A Wagner & R Wilson.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Amanda Spencer (Deputy Town Clerk), Gary Farmer (Head of Operations), Andy Watkin (Head of Resources), Michelle Farmer (Committee Clerk); ten members of the public and two members of the press.

**63/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**RESOLVED:**

**That apologies be accepted from Councillors R Dartnall, J Dean, P Moseley and K Pardy.**

**64/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Shropshire Councillors	Twin hatted members declared personal interests in matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council
Councillor Alex Phillips	Personal interest in Greenfields Recreation Ground as ward member Councillor Philips' father was a member of the Shrewsbury & Telford Hospitals Trust and would abstain from voting on any matter relating to the Health & Wellbeing Hub. Councillor Philips was employed by the Security Industry Authority and would absent himself from any discussions about Security in the Quarry and Town Centre as any Company and/or Security Staff used would be regulated by the Security Industry Authority.

**65/22 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL**

The minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 27 June 2022 were submitted as circulated and read.

Councillors Phillips referred to Min 46/22 in which he stressed at the meeting he was in favour of housing and a hotel and requested the minutes be changed to reflect this.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Minutes of the Full Meeting of Council on 27 June 2022 be approved and signed as a true and accurate record upon the inclusion of Councillor Phillips amendment to minute 46/22.**

**66/22 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no Matters Arising.

## **67/22 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **67.1 MAYORAL ENGAGEMENTS**

Details of the Mayor & Deputy Mayor's engagements for the period 1 July 2022 to 3 September 2022 were circulated and noted.

The Mayor reported that since the last meeting she had a full diary and had attended a number of events including the Shrewsbury Flower Show, the Multi-Cultural Community Fun Day and a Ceremony for the Admission of Freeman held at the Castle. Afternoon teas with the Mayor at the Castle had also been a success with many people turning up each week.

The Deputy Mayor also commented that she had attended events during the period including a visit to Adcote School — Adcote Speech Day and Shrewsbury Colleges Group Science and Technology Challenge Day.

### **67.2 TOWN CLERK ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Clerk had a number of events that she made Council aware of; these included the Battle of Britain Service that would take place in the Quarry on 18 September. Invitations had been sent out by the Mayor's Secretary. Remembrance Sunday would be held on Sunday 13 November and invitations would be sent out shortly.

## **68/22 PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

The Town Clerk reported that standing orders had been followed in seeking questions ahead of the meeting, but she had accepted questions up until 4pm on the day of this meeting.

The following questions had been received:

### **Mr Crosse: Shrewsbury Town Council (STC) Treatment of Complaints**

The Redfern Inquiry was because findings at a court case involving Shropshire Council (SC) indicated failings of Shrewsbury Town Council governance. Shrewsbury Town Council had a chance to belatedly correct its failings without being taken to court. The Shrewsbury Town Council attitudes and behaviours that so astonished Redfern had not developed solely to antagonise Greenfields Community Group. Witness the Q&A at Council on 25 April 2022. Those were not actually published until well after the Redfern Report was entered onto the website (6 June under Greenfields Recreation Ground) and it enhanced the 25 April answers raising supplementary questions.

Redfern discovered a Complaints Procedure but observed that it was "unfit for purpose and in any event was not followed".

**1. Is that why STC has not yet answered the request to know the process by which Church Road Recreation ground complaints will be treated?**

***Answered by Councillor Alan Mosley, Leader of Shrewsbury Town Council***

Shrewsbury Town Council was not aware of any outstanding complaints in relation to Church Road Recreation Ground.

**2. The issues underlying Church Road Recreation ground complaints had reached the stage where an independent investigation seemed appropriate. Are they now to wait until they**

would be considered properly by (an 'ad hoc committee' or other) independent process following the reforms?

***Answered by Councillor Alan Mosley, Leader of Shrewsbury Town Council***

Shrewsbury Town Council was not aware of any outstanding complaints in relation to Church Road Recreation Ground.

**3. By what mechanism is reform of the Complaints Procedure underway, with which that Policy must dovetail? How would compliance be assured?**

***Answered by Councillor Alan Mosley, Leader of Shrewsbury Town Council***

The Complaints Procedure was currently under review and would be presented to the Finance & General Purposes Committee on 26 September and Full Council in November.

**4. Has(will?) Redfern forwarded illustrations and suggestions to whomever was reviewing Shrewsbury Town Council Procedures and Duties and Enforcement i.e. who were responding to his observation that "there is a pressing need to redraft some of the Council's published practices and procedures and...?"**

***Answered by Councillor Alan Mosley, Leader of Shrewsbury Town Council***

The need to review policies was discussed and agreed during discussions at the Full Council Meeting on 8 June. The majority of those policies were currently under review and would be presented to the Finance & General Purposes Committee on the 26 September and Full Council in November.

**5. Can Redfern be asked to confirm that, in his report para 76(iv), "has" is not a misprint?**

***Answered by Councillor Alan Mosley, Leader of Shrewsbury Town Council***

Michael Redfern had released the report as the final version. No further amendments had been made. The quote as referred in Paragraph 76(iv) was a direct quote from the Judgement of the Court of Appeal.

**6. Will Shrewsbury Town Council identify the roles of the "two senior Shropshire Council officials not engaging with [Redfern's] investigation"?**

***Answered by Councillor Alan Mosley, Leader of Shrewsbury Town Council***

It would be entirely inappropriate to identify the roles of the two senior officials not engaging with the investigation.

**Questions from Alyson Lanning (Greenfields Community Group):**

**Q1. Please would Shrewsbury Town Council confirm that all information pertaining to Greenfields Recreation Ground was in the public domain. This is in the public interest and as such Shrewsbury Town Council must release the land valuations recently obtained as well as all other documents it holds.**

***Answered by Councillor Alan Mosley, Leader of Shrewsbury Town Council***

Shrewsbury Town Council had already confirmed to the Information Commissioner that all information pertaining to Greenfields Recreation Ground was in the public domain.

The recent valuation commissioned by Shrewsbury Town Council was to facilitate any future discussions with the landowner of land adjacent to Greenfields Recreation Ground. This was highly commercially sensitive and was in the best interests of the community that any purchase price was considered best value in terms of regulations and legislative frameworks and may not be as high as the price referred to in the evaluation. This was an exempt item on this agenda and would be discussed with members and that the public must withdraw from the meeting.

**Q2. Please confirm that Shrewsbury Town Council had an option for Compulsory Purchase Order and a further objection to any future planning applications. Could the status of the Compulsory Purchase Order be updated as well as Shrewsbury Town Council's position on future planning applications.**

*Answered by Councillor Alan Mosley, Leader of Shrewsbury Town Council*

Shrewsbury Town Council was not an 'authorised body' granted powers to acquire land compulsorily; this power vests with Shropshire Council, therefore any request would need to be sought of them.

Shrewsbury Town Council had always operated on the premise that a planning application should be approved unless the Local Plan or material considerations determine otherwise. Any transgression from this policy could render the Council pre-determined.

**Q3. In returning the land to the Shrewsbury Community can the timescale be updated, and the further consideration given to offering the developer other appropriate site(s) as an alternative?**

*Answered by Councillor Alan Mosley, Leader of Shrewsbury Town Council*

Shrewsbury Town Council was currently unable to commit to any updated timescales. No options at this moment in time had been taken off the table.

## **69/22 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

No questions had been received

## **70/22 GREENFIELDS RECREATION GROUND**

Councillor Mosley updated Council of actions that had been taken so far.

- (i) Means by which the site could be returned to public ownership and made available as a public amenity:
- An agent had been instructed to value the land based on outline permission for eight homes and the current permission for fifteen. They were advised that this wasn't a straightforward process and may take several weeks.
  - They believe that Shrewsbury Town Council is entitled to buy the land under S124 of the Local Government Act (1972). Any proposed purchase of the land must be compliant with regulatory, statutory and fiduciary standards that

Shrewsbury Town Council applies on behalf of and in the interests of all its residents. They had sought and were awaiting legal advice plus consideration from auditors on this.

- A meeting had been held with the developer and they would meet with the Greenfields Community Group.

A meeting had taken place with representatives of the Greenfields Community Group. Minutes were yet to be agreed but would show that Shrewsbury Town Council were willing to attend further meetings on request.

A comprehensive evaluation had been undertaken and an assessment of the land values provided. This would be discussed as an exempt item later in the meeting.

They had sought and received legal advice from a planning barrister on a number of issues with a report to be provided under exempt items. However, they were given unequivocal advice that no mediation or discussion with the landowner should take place until after the publication and careful evaluation of the Supreme Court's outcome.

- (ii)** Following the recommendation in the Redfern report to establish a process for mediation as referred to in paras (e) and (f) of the report:
- Shrewsbury Town Council remained open to mediation, however initial inquiries indicated that other parties noted in the Redfern report may not become involved and that further investigation of opportunities was required.

Councillor Mosley commented that no further action had been taken at the current time.

- (iii)** The Town Council is finding an appropriate process for dealing with inadequacies in their policy and procedures recognised within the report:
- A working party was to be established of officers and members with a full report and recommendations brought to Full Council by the end of the year.
  - Advice and models were to be sought from NALC, LGA and peer councils.
  - Policies to be brought forward for assessment would include; Asset Disposal Policy (new), Community Engagement Strategy, Complaints Procedure (including Appeals), Vexatious Complainants Policy (new) and Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Model Publication Scheme).

Councillor Mosley reported that this was underway as part of a comprehensive review (Item 12 on the Council Agenda). The majority of the policies would come forward for consideration at Finance & General Purposes Committee on 26 September. They would then go forward to Full Council in November.

The final part is to establish an internal process, supported by expert advice, to identify those issues not dealt with in the report as noted in the Post-script to the report. Efforts were underway to appoint an independent support in HR, Planning and Legal matters to advise if further action was appropriate and necessary

Councillor Mosley stated that this was also underway and was private & confidential within the Council and was subject to an internal process.

Councillor Bentick wished to propose that Shrewsbury Town Council accepted the strong recommendation from Michael Redfern QC and that the Council created a detailed inventory of all its recreational sites, stating all land surrounding Town Council land must be checked.

The Town Clerk informed Councillor Bentick that all of this information was already available on the Shrewsbury Town Council website. In 2009 all sites were subjected to a vesting order and each site was visited to ensure that boundaries concurred with Land Registry plans.

Councillor Vasmer raised his concerns that it appeared to be 'delay after delay'. The meeting was held in June regarding Greenfields Recreation Ground and the matter was still not resolved. A resolution was needed quickly for the Community and the Town Council.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (i) That Report be noted;**
- (ii) That Group leaders continue to make progress as outlined;**
- (iii) That a detailed inventory of all recreational sites be undertaken and made available on the Town Council's website;**
- (iv) That a further discussion to held at Full Council in November.**

***Members of the public left the meeting.***

#### **71/22 VISIONING**

The Town Clerk provided Council with an update on proposals for the Autumn Visioning Exercise and Associated Consultation.

The report set out the plan to develop a Corporate Plan following a series of Visioning Workshops in September 2021. Members cancelled the scheduled sessions following concerns around the Omicron Variant of COVID. It hadn't been possible to undertake the sessions until this time given other pressing priorities that Senior officers had to attend to.

The Council undertook a Visioning Exercise after the 2017 Elections that was facilitated by an external consultant, but it failed to achieve the necessary buy-in from members. Following a discussion with Group Leaders it was agreed that the Town Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk would, pulling on their previous experiences, facilitate the Visioning Exercise in-house.

This would be done by a series of Workshops:

- Initial Group Leader Session looking at the basic Vision, Mission Statement and Values, SWOT analysis of the Council. This would provide a starting point for full member Workshops
- Sessions establishing the Corporate Priorities and Key Objectives of the Council
- Update Session on feedback from External Workshops and Officer/Staff Sessions
- More detailed Action Planning that would meet those priorities and objectives

Allied to those sessions, the Town Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk would facilitate:

- Staff Visioning Session to capture any thoughts and aspirations that the Council's employees have
- Stakeholder Session to capture any thoughts fellow stakeholders and partners have about how the Council could operate more effectively and efficiently in the future

It was recommended the following options were utilised:

- Commonplace was the primary information gathering tool
- [www.shrewsburytowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.shrewsburytowncouncil.gov.uk) would provide links to Commonplace
- Town Council Facebook & Twitter would be used to promote Commonplace as would the Town Council Electronic Newsletter & Noticeboards
- Copy can be provided to Councillors for their personal newsletters, and it was hoped that those Councillors with Facebook & Twitter would like and share Town Council social media posts to increase the spread.

Councillor Wilson and Councillor Mosley welcomed the Town Clerk's report and commented there was now a clear plan for the future. The Visioning exercise and Community engagement programme should be agreed and that members of Full Council commit to participating in the exercise.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the contents of the report were noted and agreed.**

**72/22 HR POLICIES**

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that the following HR Policies had been considered by the Joint Consultative Committee and the Personnel Committee:

- Absence Management Policy
- Adoption Leave Policy
- Alcohol & Drugs at Work Policy
- Dignity and Respect at Work Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Induction and Probation Policy
- Job Share Policy
- Leave Policy
- Maternity Leave Policy
- Officers' Code of Conduct
- Parental Leave Policy
- Redeployment Policy
- Redundancy and Compensation Policy

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that Council, as an employer, Shrewsbury Town Council had a number of HR Policies. They were all in the process of being reviewed and the policies shown at this meeting were the first tranche they were looking at. The policies had been circulated to all staff and members of the Joint Consultative Committee, which included Union representatives, for comments. The policies were reviewed and agreed by the Personnel Committee on 3 August.

**RESOLVED:**

**That all HR Policies as presented be adopted**

**73/22 CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURE RECOVERY POLICY**

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that there was a draft climate Change and Nature Recovery Policy which had been considered at the Climate Change Committee. As part of the Climate Change Action Plan, which was overseen by the Climate Change Committee, they had agreed to produce a Climate Change and Nature Recovery Policy. This had been drafted and circulated to relevant officers as well as being presented to the Climate Change Committee on 21 July. All comments had been taken into account in developing the final version presented to Council for adoption.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Climate Change & Nature Recovery Policy as presented be adopted**

**74/22 PROPOSAL FROM HEALTH & WELLBEING HUB WORKING GROUP**

Councillor Halliday presented a motion on behalf of the Health and Wellbeing Working Group, Shrewsbury Town Council.

Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin ICS had proposed that a new health and wellbeing hub was considered for South Shrewsbury. The new facility, which could open in summer 2025, would involve 6 existing medical practices moving into a new site, with their current locations closing to the public. It was proposed that the following medical practices would move into the new hub:

- The Beeches Medical Practice
- Belvidere Medical Practice
- Claremont Bank Surgery
- Marden Medical Practice
- Marysville Medical Practice
- South Hermitage Surgery.

All the GP surgeries due to move were rated 'good' or 'outstanding' by the CQC. The ICS had announced that the preferred location being next to Shrewsbury Town Football Club, Otley Road. Following a meeting of Shrewsbury Town Council on 24 January 2022, it was suggested that a working group was established to engage with the ICS (formerly the CCG) further on their plans for a Health & Wellbeing Hub in Shrewsbury. The working group was established and had met 3 times, and attempted to engage with the ICS on two occasions, However, both meetings had been cancelled at short notice by the ICS. The Shrewsbury Town Council Health and Wellbeing Hub working group had a number of concerns about the proposed health and wellbeing hub including:

- The consultation process; this represents a major change to health services and it was unclear whether or not the public would be adequately consulted about these changes (including being offered a choice of options, including 'no change'). It was also unclear



whether the ICS had actively considered other options other than those suggested to them by the public

- No clear evidence had been provided for the claims of benefits that the ICS was suggesting (e.g improved recruitment, reduced health inequalities)
- Travel to and from the proposed hub; there are no direct bus routes to the hub for large sections of the population for whom the hub was proposed to serve. There appeared to be no plans for the ICS to improve transport provision to the hub. The 40,000 patients who would attend the proposed hub would promote a large increase in car journeys in South Shrewsbury, and would increase in traffic on Otley Road. Otley Road was not a good example for active travel, with cycling and walking routes being unattractive. Problems in traveling to the hub may deter people who have been used to being a few minutes' walk away from their current surgeries from attending
- Carbon emissions were likely to increase as a result of the increase in car journeys, and also in the building of the new hub, together with the inevitable demolition / renovation of the existing premise. This was at odds with Shrewsbury Town Council and Shropshire Councils' declaration of a climate emergency
- Health inequalities; the proportion of the population who would have difficulties in attending the new hub (because of reliance on public transport) were the group who were most likely to experience health inequalities. The hub may have a detrimental effect on health inequalities
- The ICS was suggesting that they would save £3.3 million with the creation of the hub but do not appear to be considering reinvesting this back into staffing at the hub, or on transportation to the hub
- Will continuity and quality of care be maintained

In presenting the motion Councillor Halliday reported that this had cross party support and reflected multiple resident concerns that all Councillors affected by the changes had received. It was believed that planning was at an advanced stage and it appeared the public at large were being consulted at a late stage.

Councillor Bentick reported in discussions with the ICS & PCN which focussed on engagement. It was stressed at that meeting that this was not a done deal, other locations were being looked at, there were potential hybrid options of retaining existing practices locations and accessing services within a new hub. Full consultation which had been scheduled for October 2022 had been postponed.

Councillor Lemon felt that regardless of some back peddling, there was still a requirement for a public meeting. It was important to show the level of public feeling. There was a issue of trust in that what Council were told in January wasn't necessarily the case.

Councillor Mosley expressed concern about the Cavell model of hub being an experiment and whether it was fit for purpose. Councillors in the north of the town likened this to the development of Severn Fields Practice and the continuing inability of residents to access services. This practice catered for 17,000; a new hub in the south was likely to cater for three times more patients.

**RESOLVED:**

**That Shrewsbury Town Council:**

- (i) Call an Extraordinary Meeting to discuss concerns with the public about the Health Hub proposal and invite the ICS Chief Executive Simon Whitehouse and other ICS staff; also from Shropshire Council Leader Cllr Lezley Picton, Chief Executive Andy Begley, Portfolio Holder Simon Jones and Director of Public Health, Rachel Robinson;**
- (ii) Invite to a Town Council Extraordinary meeting the following to give their view on the proposal for a Health Hub in Shrewsbury and the consultation they propose or have been involved in: a. Healthwatch, b. GP surgery staff, c. GP based patient participation groups;**
- (iii) Consider financing legal advice to ascertain whether the consultation process fulfils the requirements when such a significant change to local health services as is proposed;**
- (iv) Write to the GP surgeries affected asking them to a. outline their plans to engage all of their patients, and b. explain how they were proposing to feed comments into the consultation, c. encourage patients, including GP-based participation groups, to attend the extraordinary meeting, and d. send a representative to the meeting.**

Councillor Philips wished it to be noted that he abstained from the vote as his father is a member of the Shrewsbury & Telford Hospital Trust.

***Members of the press left the meeting.***

## **75/22 EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY**

The Town Clerk provided Council with information on Shropshire Council's proposed Empty Homes Strategy 2022 which was a live consultation at present.

The Draft Empty Homes Strategy set out four key objectives:

- Maintaining relevant, accurate and current information relating to empty homes in the area
- Bringing empty homes back into use through encouragement, advice and assistance
- Having appropriate measures in place if all encouragement measures failed
- Raising awareness of the strategy with others including residents, dwelling owners and Town & Parish Councils.

As a percentage of the total number of houses, the number of empty homes, and in particular those empty over six months, were less than the West Midlands average and the national average and the numbers had reduced over the years. They were generally spread across county so there were no real hotspots, but there were lots of reasons for empty properties:

- Hard to sell/let
- Renovation
- Lack of funds/skills to manage the property
- Repossession
- Probate/inheritance issues

- Owners in care
- Viability of investments

The policy sets out various measures including developing a website to facilitate reporting and information gathering policies on providing support, procedures on compulsory purchase as well as increase in Council Tax premiums. Legislation was going through at present.

There was a role to play in terms of Town & Parish Councils, in them notifying the Council of any properties they were aware of.

The Town Clerk asked Members if there were empty properties within Shrewsbury and whether there were any hotspots locally and if any consequential effects on the Community including Anti-social behaviour/impact on local housing that they needed to be aware of.

Members agreed with the Empty Homes Strategy and commented that there should be a way that residents could report empty homes easily and to be kept updated. Communication and social media platforms should be used.

The issue of security was raised in relation to probate and that an empty home under probate should not be made public until the issue was resolved.

#### **RESOLVED**

**That Shrewsbury Town Council welcomes the Empty Homes Strategy as being consulted on and requests the Town Clerk to notify Shropshire Council of such.**

#### **76/22 STREET TRADING POLICY**

The Town Clerk reported on Shropshire Council's proposed review of the Street Trading policy 2023-2028.

Officers had previously discussed the Street Trading Policy with Licensing Officers, when they first set out the consolidated policy at Local Government reorganisation.

Shrewsbury had always had street trading prohibition within the boundary of the Shrewsbury Conservation Area. There were exceptions, including the Quarry, where street trading was authorised as part of the Park's events programme. The Square had always been a licenced street allowing markets to run there.

There have in the past been inclusions (St Chad's Terrace, Priory Road, Porthill Bridge, Frankwell car park (as part of Quarry events) and St Mary's Closed Churchyard to facilitate events in the church) to facilitate events.

The Policy also allowed street trading as part of entertainment activity as part of the town centre premises licence in places in the town centre, so that events like Christmas light switch-on and Carols in the Square could operate.

The policy also allows for delegation of street trading licensing to Town Parish Councils under S101 Local Government Act 1972. Only Ludlow Town Council had taken advantage of this delegation. In the past this council had resolved not to pursue delegated authority given the Council's level of influence of the County Policy already and positive engagement with licensing officers. Members appreciated the complexity of such licencing activity and the fact that specialist licensing officers approve and regulate the policy. Such a request for delegation

needs to be taken very seriously to determine the capacity of the Council to operate such a policy.

In the past the only difficulties had been around the charges incurred by seeking permission. Charges were set out in Shropshire Council's fees and charges. This new policy allows for licenses for specific events which would circumvent this.

The Town Clerk recommended that Council did not pursue delegation of this policy in the current circumstances.

No comments were raised by Council regarding the Policy.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the report be noted;**
- (ii) That the Town Council accepts Shropshire Council's Street Trading Policy as being consulted on and the Town Clerk to notify Shropshire Council of such.**

**77/22 FUEL POVERTY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY SCHEME**

The Deputy Town Clerk provided a report to Council with a view to creating a Fuel Poverty and Energy Efficiency Scheme with the Marches Energy Agency (a charity set up to support the community with energy saving advice and measures), which was first raised by Councillor Dean following a similar scheme being established with Oswestry Town Council. Initial proposals were presented to the Climate Change Committee in July and there was overwhelming support for such a scheme.

In order to address the fuel poverty concerns this winter, it was proposed that Shrewsbury Town Council provide access to up to £75,000 of funding to be utilised to address issues of energy efficiency for Shrewsbury householders.

Government data had highlighted that there were properties in Shrewsbury that did not have loft insulation and other basic energy efficiency measures. The project would see the Town Council work with Marches Energy Agency, a local non-profit making charity which specialises in this work, to draw down any funding available from the Government and energy industry and help these families heat their homes this winter. Marches Energy Agency would carry out visits, inspections etc on approximately 50-100 properties across the town. Having access to grants, MEA would look for the financial assistance available. This would provide a huge contribution towards both improving energy efficiency and addressing fuel poverty across the town.

It was proposed that any household in a Council tax band A -C property in Shrewsbury was eligible to apply for this scheme.

Initially, the MEA would draw down on funding from central Government, available via Shropshire Council. This was via the National Grid and Community Interest Company, Affordable Warmth Solution who have established a £150m national **Warm Homes Fund** designed to support local authorities, registered social landlords and other organisations working in partnership with them, to address some of the issues affecting fuel poor households. Any funding the Town Council could offer would then be used top this up.

Householders in the town can access the funding via the Keep Shropshire Warm partnership either via the internet or a freephone telephone number. Keep Shropshire Warm is a partnership between Shropshire Council and Marches Energy Agency. The scheme provides free and impartial energy advice to local residents through an advice line, home visits and community events, as well as funding for energy efficiency measures.

To qualify for support through the project, householders would need to be in a privately owned or rented property without a recognised central heating system, typically be low income and either be in receipt of certain qualifying benefits and/or vulnerable.

Councillors were in agreement that in the current climate this was a good scheme.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the report be noted;**
- (ii) That the Council supports the principle of the scheme and approves expenditure of up to £75,000 from the Climate Change budget to support the scheme, subject to more detailed criteria be established on priority households;**
- (iii) That responsibility to draw up a full agreement for the scheme with MEA be delegated to the Deputy Town Clerk with detailed criteria being presented to the next Finance & General Purposes Committee for further consideration.**

**78/22 MOTIONS**

**Warm Rooms**

Councillor Lemon presented the following motion:

“We know that many of our residents were facing a financial crisis this winter with the huge increase in fuel bills coupled with general inflation which hits those on low incomes hardest. Often these same residents would also struggle with social isolation. It was clear that the help being provided by the government was not enough to enable families on low incomes to keep their homes warm.

In recognition of this, a number of Councils were setting up ‘Warm Rooms’; a project pioneered in Bungay, Suffolk, which offers free, warm spaces in the town for people to spend time in. The project allows them to save money on their heating bills and also guard against loneliness. Other places were making the offer of warm rooms with activities including Mother and Toddler groups or games mornings. Pressure had also been mounting on government to provide funding for such initiatives.

Shrewsbury Town Council does not have any suitable sites of its own for such a project, but we would welcome a such an initiative in our town. We ask Town Council officers to take the initiative to set up discussions with local hospitality businesses, community and voluntary sector organisations and officers representing key Shropshire Council sites in the town (including the Library, the Museum and Shirehall) with a view to establishing a similar project and with the aim to offer a range of sites, activities and times across the week during the coming Winter. We agree to commit £5,000 to help publicise and resource such a project.

We further call on Shropshire Council to lead on and support initiatives to provide warm and welcome spaces for those struggling to keep their homes warm due to the price of energy during the coming winter across the county.”

Councillors fully supported the motion but raised the question of whether this should primarily be a matter for Shropshire Council and twin-hatted members raising this as a question to Shropshire Council Cabinet. Members saw the Town Council’s role more in publicising activities in Shrewsbury or facilitating others to undertake activities be it through subsidised use of facilities or grant funding.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That Shrewsbury Town Council supports the principle of Warm Rooms in supporting those unable to heat their homes this winter;**
- (ii) That twin-hatted members of Shrewsbury Town Council raise matter with Shropshire Council;**
- (iii) That the matter be raised at the next Finance & General Purposes Committee for further discussion.**

**79/22 SAFER STREETS 4 FUNDING**

The Town Clerk had previously reported on the Safer Streets Funding application. This was a collaborative bid put together by the Problem-Solving Hub at West Mercia Police and submitted to the Home Office by the Police & Crime Commissioner. This was one of four bids submitted for the Shropshire area totalling £1,774,964. This was a short-term funding proposal covering this and the next financial year and there were various timescales on drawdown of funding and also where the funding could be used. The Problem-Solving Hub had asked that the Town Council lead on the lighting of Throwline Boards and Lifebuoy Stations give a large majority were on Town Council Land and the expansion of the existing Quarry Security into the evening which would then allow the security staff on duty to providing a Taxi Marshalling function into the late night and early mornings during the weekends. Because of operational expediency and the profiling of funding officers had begun to operationalise the various elements of the bid that the Town Council was to lead on, and they would continue to report to the Recreation & Leisure Committee on progress and monitoring.

£548,000 was a lot of money and it was imperative that the funds were utilised well and all the projects meld together to derive the maximum benefit. As outlined the Town Clerk’s report the focus of the funding was to address violence against women and girls and has looked at VAWG related matters within the public realm. This intensity of resource had already identified VAWG issues on Town Council land and in the town centre and a good reporting mechanism had been developed to address the issue particularly around:

- (i) Raising awareness of VAWG**
- (ii) Supporting victims**
- (iii) Developing partnership working to combat the issues**
- (iv) Bringing perpetrators to justice**

Prosecure, the security company appointed, had taken this initiative very seriously and the capacity, competence and skillset of the team they had developed was exemplary. They were engaging well with staff and stakeholders, they were building up a rapport with young people but they were streetwise enough and had backbone to address issues creating greater resilience within the Town Council and its partners without reliance on the Police as their resources were stretched. In the short space of time that funding had been available, some of the issues that had been uncovered and raised had been startling and a couple of issues were so significant that they had been referred to the police for investigation.

Councillor Phillips wished it to be noted that he absented himself from any voting as he was employed by the Security Industry Authority.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the report be noted;**
- (ii) That Officers continue to report on progress to the Recreation & Leisure Committee.**

**80/22 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 11 July 2022 were circulated as read.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 11 July 2022 be received and adopted.**

**81/22 RECREATION & LEISURE COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee held on 6 July 2022 were circulated as read.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 6 July 2022 be received and adopted.**

**82/22 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 28 June, 19 July, 9 August and 30 August 2022 were submitted as circulated as read.

Councillor Phillips asked the Chairman of the Planning Committee if a response had been received in respect of the Freedom of Information request that was submitted to Shropshire Council in February 2022, for the proposed Hencote development. Councillor Green confirmed that this had been received and reported to the Planning Committee on 17 May 2022.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 28 June, 19 July, 9 August and 30 August 2022 be received and adopted.**

## **83/22 CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the Climate Change Committee meeting held on 21 July 2022 were circulated as read.

### **RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Climate Change Committee meeting held on 21 July 2022 be received and adopted.**

## **84/22 WORKING GROUPS**

### **84.1 YOUTH WORKING GROUP**

The minutes of the Youth Working Group meeting held on 14 July 2022 were circulated as read.

Councillor Mosley enquired about the South Shrewsbury Youth Partnership which had been set up by Councillor Bentick and that Councillors had only been made aware of this partnership after the first meeting had taken place. He wanted to know why the partnership had been set up and asked why only certain Councillors were invited to attend.

Councillor Bentick replied that it was an informal partnership for the South of Shrewsbury and some officers of Shrewsbury Town Council and Shropshire Council Youth Services were invited. The plan was not to involve all at Shrewsbury Town Council and Shropshire Council.

Councillor Mosley informed Councillor Bentick that the Town Clerk should have been made aware of the partnership set up and should have been involved along with the Officers running Young Shrewsbury.

Councillor Bentick responded stating that the partnership was formed independently, and they didn't need the Town Council or Shropshire Council. It was not meant to be a competition and the issue was that the South of Shrewsbury were not aware of what was available for Young people.

Councillor Halliday reported that only certain ward members had been invited.

### **RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Youth Working Group meeting held on 14 July 2022 be received and adopted.**

### **84.2 JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

The notes of Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 13 July 2022 were circulated as read. These weren't formal minutes of the Committee as the meeting was inquorate.

Councillor Mosley commented that this was the second meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee that was not quorate with Councillors. Complaints had been received from staff as the meetings had not been quorate. He asked that Councillors on the Committee attend the future meetings.

Councillors Vasmer and Phillips apologised to Members for the non-attendance and asked if it would be possible to move the times of the meeting as it is an early start.



The Town Clerk reported that the meeting times and always been in the early mornings due to the working times of the operational staff. If it was later, it would affect the logistics of the staff in terms of planned workload, returning vehicles to various bases and clocking off.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) **That the notes of the Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 13 July 2022 be noted.**
- (ii) **The Town Clerk would look into the potential of moving the start time of the Joint Consultative Committee to 9.00am**

**84.3 HEALTH & WELLBEING WORKING GROUP**

The minutes of the Health & Wellbeing Working Group meeting held on 6 July 2022 were circulated as read.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Health & Wellbeing Group meeting held on 6 July 2022 be received and adopted.**

**85/22 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:**

**That in accordance with s1(2) Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960, members of the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following items being considered involve the disclosure of confidential information.**

The Mayor advised that live streaming of this meeting would now stop. She thanked members of the public for logging in. All papers relating to the meeting could be found on the website [www.shrewsburytowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.shrewsburytowncouncil.gov.uk)

**86/22 PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 27 June and 3 August 2022 were circulated as read.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 27 June and 3 August 2022 be received and adopted.**

**87/22 GREENFIELDS RECREATION GROUND**

Members received a verbal update from the Leader of the Town Council with regards to the valuation of land at Greenfields Recreation Ground and Counsel's Opinion. Members were unable to make an informed decision given there being a number of matters raised by members that needed clarification from both the Valuer and Counsel.

**RESOLVED:**

**That matters be deferred to the Finance & General Purpose Committee pending the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk seeking clarification on matters pertaining to the Land Valuation and Counsel's Opinion**

**88/22 CLOSING REMARKS**

The Mayor thanked members and staff for their attendance and closed the meeting.