

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
Meeting of Council
Held in the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Shrewsbury at
6pm on Monday 25 September 2023

PRESENT

Councillors A Mosley (Chairman), B Bentick, M Davies, J Dean, P Gillam, N Green, K Halliday, C Lemon, P Moseley, A Phillips, E Roberts & R Wilson.

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Amanda Spencer (Deputy Town Clerk), Andy Watkin (Head of Resources), Stuart Farmer (Acting Operations Manager), Michelle Farmer (Committee Clerk), Mathew Mead (Shrewsbury Place Plan Officer) and seven members of the public.

As the Mayor & Deputy Mayor had both sent their apologies for this meeting, approval was sought from Council for Councillor Alan Mosley to stand in as Chairman for this meeting. This was agreed by Council.

37/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED:

That apologies be accepted from Councillors Dartnall, Pardy, Vasmer, Wagner and Wall.

38/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT

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| Shropshire Councillors | Twin hatted members declared personal interests in matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council |
| Councillor Alex Phillips | Interest in Greenfields as he is the ward member. |

Councillor Roberts joined the meeting.

39/23 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

The minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 26 June 2023 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Full Meeting of Council on 26 June 2023 be approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

40/23 MATTERS ARISING

Councillor Mosley enquired as to whether there had been any response to Councillor Lemons motion raised at the last meeting (ref 23/23), regarding the Future Fit/ Hospitals Transformation Programme. The Town Clerk confirmed that she had received no response to

date and would send a reminder to NHS Shropshire Telford & Wrekin, Shrewsbury & Telford NHS Trust, NHS Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit and NHS England.

41/23 ANNOUNCEMENTS

41.1 MAYORAL ENGAGEMENTS

Details of the Mayor & Deputy Mayor's engagements for the period 17 June 2023 to 30 September 2023 were circulated and noted.

As the Mayor and Deputy Mayor were not present at the meeting, the announcements were noted as presented.

41.2 TOWN CLERK ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Clerk had no announcements.

42/23 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.

Councillor Mosley would be answering the public questions as Leader of Shrewsbury Town Council.

Question One (Clive Crosse) Councillor Mosley informed council that Mr Crosse had sent a lengthy set of questions and statements. To fully understand what Mr Crosse was asking of the Council, Councillor Mosley suggested that Mr Crosse was contacted, and they would invite him to talk through his document and answer his queries that way. All members were in agreement with this proposal.

Question Two (Fay Easton)

"RESTORATION OF GREENFIELDS COMMUNITY PARK"

It is over 6 months since the Supreme Court ruling overturned the planning permission for housing on Greenfields parkland. The land was to be returned to community use and fortnightly updates were promised.

Could the Council please provide a target date for completion (with timescales) and honour the promised fortnightly updates.

Councillor Mosley replied stating that progress had been rather delayed due to holiday commitments. The Town Council had met with a representative of the landowner and received some preliminary estimates of their expectations regarding the costs of re-purchasing the piece of land. More details had been requested. They continued to consult with their contracted solicitor who was also dealing with other stakeholders. As was expected, the work was complex and was taking longer than they wished so there was nothing further to add at present.

However, their clear intention to re-purchase was in the ward-based newsletter which they were completing for distribution in the coming weeks. No discussions had taken place

regarding the maintenance or use of the land as it was not under the Town Council's ownership.

He assured the Greenfields Community Group that nobody wished to see the resolution of the matter more than himself and other members of the Council.

Question Three (Celia Macintyre):

“Question for the Full Council meeting re Greenfields Recreation Ground”

Please can you tell us what you can/will do to restore rightful access for the community to the piece of the recreation ground which was unlawfully sold and remains fenced off? We request access to be restored now, and not have to wait until the land is returned to public ownership.

Councillor Mosley replied stating that until the Council actually re-purchased the land, they were not in a position to undertake work on the site, although there was nothing to prevent residents making suggestions within the Council's annual budget preparations.

Six members of the public left the meeting.

43/23 MOTIONS FROM MEMBERS

There were no motions from Councillors.

44/23 PLACE PLAN

Mathew Mead, Place Plan Officer at Shropshire Council, joined the meeting to inform Council of the input into the Shrewsbury Place Plan.

Place Plans were Shropshire Council documents and were part of the Council's Local Development Plan. They provided evidence of the infrastructure needed to support the delivery of new housing and economic development land in the county. Shrewsbury Town Council was part of the Shrewsbury Place Plan which also included Town and Parish Councils in the surrounding hinterland around Shrewsbury, with the exception of Minsterley & Pontesbury which had their own Place Plan.

The Place Plans listed infrastructure in 3 categories A, B and Neighbourhood. A and B strategic infrastructure projects were linked directly to the delivery or support of new development. These projects were likely to be delivered by Shropshire Council or an infrastructure provider such as the Severn Trent, Network Rail or Western Power Neighbourhood projects were more locally based and reflected the wider pressures development places on an area. These projects would generally be led by a Town or Parish Council or community group and included things like community buildings, play areas public open spaces and rights of way.

The last major review of Place Plans took place in 2019, but due to the Covid pandemic no major review or engagement with Town and Parish Councils had taken place since then, so during 2023 a significant review of the Place Plans had taken place.

So far this year, discussions had taken place with all Shropshire Council departments on their key infrastructure requirements, evidencing links to strategic plans, policies and identified

need. Key departments included highways, education, culture and leisure and over 600 projects were identified in this part of the review. Around 100 of these projects were located in the Shrewsbury Town Council area.

A new IT system had been developed to record the Place Plan projects which would allow much more scrutiny and analysis of projects and support the allocation of resources to projects.

An engagement process with Town and Parish Councils to update them on the strategic projects identified through the internal review. The engagement has been supported by SALC with regular updates through their committee and meeting structures, which they would continue as the Place Plan review process continued.

Linking Section 106 projects to the Place Plans to better understand infrastructure need resulting from specific developments and to ensure spend was focused on these areas.

Working with the Strategic Infrastructure Network, through which key infrastructure they provided was added to the Place Plans and provided details of both short-term infrastructure needs but was anticipating future needs over the next 20 to 30 years. There had also been a review of completed projects over the last 3 years.

The initial review had identified around 100 A and B infrastructure projects in Shrewsbury which ranged from large scale projects such as the redevelopment of the riverside (Project 816) and development of swimming and leisure provision in Shrewsbury (project 819) to smaller projects linked to development such as an improved Puffin Crossing on the A458 Welshpool Road (project 207).

The Town Council owned, managed and maintained a range of infrastructure in the town. Whilst it was not necessary to add in every piece of infrastructure, any areas of infrastructure that needed improvements, investment and upgrading due to pressures from development could be included. These could include areas such as community buildings, parks and play areas, footpaths and green infrastructure. By including the projects in the Place Plan this could help show the wider development needs of an area and may help provide evidence for external funding applications in the future. These should be evidence projects with a clear purpose, rather than just aspirational projects. They were happy for community led neighbourhood projects to be included but would ask that they gained the support of the Town Council for their project who could nominate it on their behalf.

While the Annual Infrastructure Statement would be published in November, the Place Plans remained an active live document which they would keep under constant review and as new evidence, strategies and infrastructure priorities emerged these would be added to the Place Plans.

Mathew was happy to meet up with Councillors in their areas to review projects and had undertaken a number of these meetings with Councillors over the summer. Through the Town Councillors and Town Council staff they would like feedback on whether there were any strategic projects missing from this list provided to Councillors for this meeting.

Councillor Dean thanked Mathew for attending the meeting. He commented that the 20mph speed limit for Porthill was not showing on the list. He also commented that the Kingsland Valley was recognised as an eco-route but had no status, could this be recognised as

something more substantial through the place plan? Mathew confirmed that it could, and he would happily talk to Councillor Dean regarding his other queries.

Councillor Phillips supported the comment made regarding Kingsland Valley as it needed protecting. He queried the list as the new crossing on Ellesmere Road was showing twice on the list and had also been completed. Mathew explained that this was possible showing on the list twice as some of the project had been partially funded by S106 agreements.

Councillor Bentick stated that all Councillors needed to look at their own wards from the list provided and report any issues directly to Mathew. Mathew agreed with this as they needed to publish the annual infrastructure statement by November so now was the time to flag up any projects. If projects were not showing on the plan they would not be considered.

Councillor Mosley commented that there were large and small projects on the list, but no costings were shown so did they need separating and prioritising. Mathew confirmed that not all projects could be funded so there would be a need to prioritise.

Councillor Davies commented that S106 agreement timescales were a key element and Councillors needed to be aware of what the deadlines were. Mathew confirmed they needed to capture S106 information and make sure the money available was spent first and not use CIL money.

Councillor Mosley suggested a special meeting to arrive at a collective view and he proposed that there was a meeting in the new year to look at this in conjunction with the action plan.

RESOLVED:

That further meeting be arranged in the New Year to determine any Town Council inclusions in the Place Plan.

45/23 SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN

45.1 Draft Corporate Plan

Councillor Mosley firstly congratulated the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and other officers for their hard work in getting the Town Council to this position with the corporate plan as it showed the ambitions they had as a Town Council. He also requested that within the plan they changed the word 'accepting' to 'promoting'.

Councillor Phillips stated the document was good and thorough. He requested that hyperlinks were put in place on the online version for people to understand topics further i.e. The Big Town Plan.

The Town Clerk commented that all the amendments received had now been captured. They were now looking at how they would consult and how long they would be consulting for. The Deputy Town Clerk requested that any final comments be sent to her by Wednesday 27 September.

45.2 Arrangements for consultation with the public and wider stakeholders

Councillor Mosley said there should be social media and website promotion and asked when this would be available. The Town Clerk confirmed that they could start on social media posts

and add a page to the Town Council website that would hold all information and links etc. She asked if Councillors would help promote via their social media platforms, newsletters, noticeboards etc.

Councillor Wilson suggested a possible open morning at the Town Council offices at Livesey House to promote.

RESOLVED:

- (i) **That promotion of the corporate plan can begin including the set up of web page and social media posts;**
- (ii) **That an open day at the Town Council offices be arranged.**

46/23 ADOPTION & MEMBERSHIP

The Town Clerk introduced three proposals for accreditations as recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

- (i) **Civility & Respect** - This was an initiative that was being jointly promoted by both the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)

The Civility and Respect Pledge was introduced because there was no place for bullying, harassment and intimidation within the sector and this was any behaviour affecting councillors, clerks and staff. The pledge was easy for councils to sign up for it would enable councils to demonstrate that they were committed to standing up to poor behaviour across their sector and to driving through positive changes which support civil and respectful conduct.

In signing the pledge, the council would commit to:

- put in place a training programme for councillors and staff
- have signed up to the Code of Conduct for councillors
- have good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a dignity at work policy
- seek professional help at the early stages should civility and respect issues arise
- calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happened
- continue to learn from best practices in the sector and aspire to be a role model/champion council through for example the local Council Award Scheme
- Supporting the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.

So far 1328 Councils across the country had signed up to the pledge so you could see the strength of feeling within the sector.

- (ii) **White Ribbon Accreditation** - White Ribbon was the UK's leading charity engaging men and boys to end violence against women and girls. This had been a key theme for the Town Council with the Ranger Project and Safer Streets.

The reality was that most violence against women was committed by men. The Charity's mission was to prevent men's violence against women and girls by addressing its root causes — harmful and dominant masculine norms. Through the Safer Streets funding they had collectively been able to promote some of that bad behaviour and promote equality and respect.

They strived to change long-established attitudes, behaviours and systems around masculinity that perpetuate gender inequality and men's violence against women. White Ribbon UK's work was preventative, they wanted to end violence before it started. They worked to make sure all men realised that they could take responsibility for thinking about their own actions, promote equality and respect, and were prepared to call out harassing, sexist and violent behaviour when they saw it in others.

As an organisation the Council could show its commitment to ending men's violence against women by becoming a White Ribbon Supporter Organisation. It would agree to take actions that would raise awareness and show that it was working to end violence.

These actions would include:

- encouraging all staff to make the White Ribbon Promise to never use, excuse or remain silent about men's violence against women;
- recruiting at least one volunteer man White Ribbon Ambassador (or woman Champion if there were no men staff who could undertake this role)
- holding at least one awareness and fund-raising event or activity a year
- ensuring that women who were experiencing violence knew where to get help.

There was an annual fee of £150 to become a White Ribbon Supporter Organisation.

- (iii) **SANDS Embrace a Culture of Inclusion Covenant** - SANDS (Safe Aging No Discrimination) was a Shrewsbury based charity which took a targeted approach to increasing LGBT+ inclusion, challenging discrimination, promoting accessibility and equality of opportunity for LGBT+ people ageing in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin. They worked with the LGBT+ community and service providers to develop inclusive practice in general, while focussing on the particular experiences and needs of LGBT+ people.

As part of SAND's Campaign to EMBRACE A Culture of Inclusion, the Council would be encouraging health & social care providers and other organisations, groups and services which people may need or want to access as they age – to make 'pledges'.

These 'pledges' were practical actions to ensure their service was welcoming and inclusive. These pledges would take the form of a Covenant, to be revisited and celebrated.

The 5 Commitments

1. Commit to providing the best possible quality services for older and old LGBT+ people.

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2. Commit to learning what life can be – and has been – like for different LGBT+ people.
 3. Commit to vocally and visually supporting groups working with and for older and old LGBT+ people.
 4. Commit to creating meaningful opportunities for LGBT+ people and groups to ‘influence’ what you do.
 5. Commit to assess and evidence change, including work carried out to engage LGBT+ people (within the group/organisation and outside it)

The Town Clerk stated there were common themes running throughout all these initiatives and that was around Civility and Respect and Inclusivity, and they were strong statements that say that Shrewsbury Town Council does not and will not tolerate behaviour that marginalises anyone in society as everyone had a valuable role to play.

Councillor Dean commented that Members at Finance & General Purposes Committee were all happy to support. He also requested that a message of congratulations was sent to Shrewsbury Pride.

Councillor Phillips was in full support and stated that Shrewsbury Town Council should be looking at good practice elsewhere as well, encouraging services for the LGBT+ community, especially older residents and he informed council of a retirement scheme as what was described as the UK's first retirement community celebrating LGBT+ people was set to open in London.

RESOLVED:

- (i) **That the Council would sign up to the NALC/SLCC Civility and Respect Pledge;**
- (ii) **That the Council would apply for White Ribbon Accreditation;**
- (iii) **That the Council would sign the SANDS covenant to embrace a culture of inclusion;**
- (iv) **That a message of congratulations will be sent to Shrewsbury Pride from the Town Council.**

47/23 FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 24 July 2023 and 11 September 2023 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meetings held on 24 July 2023 and 11 September 2023 be received and adopted.

48/23 RECREATION & LEISURE COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee held on 5 July 2023 and 6 September 2023 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meetings held on 5 July 2023 and 6 September 2023 be received and adopted.

49/23 PLANNING COMMITTEE

49.1 The minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 27 June 2023, 18 July 2023, 8 August 2023, 29 August 2023 and 19 September 2023 were submitted as circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning Committee meetings held on 27 June 2023, 18 July 2023, 8 August 2023, 29 August 2023 and 19 September 2023 be received and adopted.

49.2 Planning Appeals Procedure

Councillor Moseley, as Chairman of the Planning Committee, asked Members to adopt the Planning Appeals Procedure as recommended by the Planning Committee. The Committee had established a process whereby they ensured that they made separate representations to the Planning Inspectorate where they had objected to a planning application which subsequently went to appeal, using the recent Hencote application as an example.

RESOLVED:

That the Planning Appeals Procedure be adopted.

50/23 CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE

50.1 The minutes of the Climate Change Committee held on 17 July 2023 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Climate Change Committee held on 17 July 2023 be received and adopted.

Councillor Dean asked for an update regarding the Marches Energy Agency project. The Deputy Town Clerk informed the Committee that the project had been officially launched, and a commitment of £75,000 was pledged to the project by the Town Council. She reported that four households had already been helped from this fund.

50.2 Name change Approval.

Councillor Dean as Chairman of the Committee requested the name change of the Climate Change Committee to the Climate Emergency & Nature Recovery Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee name change to the Climate Emergency & Nature Recovery Committee be accepted.

51/23 WORKING GROUPS

51.1 JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 12 July 2023 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 12 July 2023 be received and adopted.

51.2 ACTIVE TRAVEL WORKING GROUP

The minutes of the Active Travel Working Group meeting held on 19 July 2023 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Active Travel Working Group meeting held on 19 July 2023 be received and adopted.

51.3 CLEAN RIVER WORKING GROUP

The minutes of the Clean River Working Group meeting held on 13 September 2023 were circulated as read.

Councillor Mosley commended the working group and the work they had undertaken to date.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Clean River Working Group meeting held on 13 September 2023 be received and adopted.

51.4 CITY OF SANCTUARY WORKING GROUP

The minutes of the City of Sanctuary Working Group meeting held on 7 August 2023 and 18 September 2023 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the City of Sanctuary Working Group meeting held on 7 August 2023 and 18 September 2023 be received and adopted.

52/23 END OF YEAR AUDIT

The Head of Resources reported that the External Auditor had made him aware of a number of challenges submitted to the End of Year Audit which had delayed its completion. He believed the external auditor confirmed details and information which had previously been provided to the challenger. The Council had now received its unqualified audit and the Head of Resources confirmed he would publish the documents and notice of conclusion on the Town Council website the next working day.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Town Council acknowledges receipt of the Unqualified Audit for the 2022/23 Financial Year;**
- (ii) That the RFO publish completion of the Audit on the Council's website.**

53/23 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 Chairman advised that live streaming of this meeting would now stop. He thanked members of the public for logging in. All papers relating to the meeting could be found on the website www.shrewsburytowncouncil.gov.uk.

54/23 GREENFIELDS RECREATION GROUND

Members were provided with an update on the re-purchase of Greenfields Recreation Ground and its interim maintenance. Further information was required from all parties to be able to proceed with re-purchase.

55/23 CLOSING REMARKS

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