

**SHREWSBURY IN BLOOM
VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 2ND DECEMBER 2021 AT 2.00PM
VIA ZOOM**

PRESENT

Keith Roberts (KR, Chairman), Beverley Baker (BB), Helen Ball (HB, Town Clerk), Gary Farmer (GF, Operations Manager), Margaret Thrower and Hilary Humphries (HH, Communications Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Kate Halliday, Jane Mackenzie, Pam Moseley and Alex Wagner.

49/21 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12TH OCTOBER 2021

Members discussed the minutes of the virtual meeting held on 12th October 2021.

AGREED:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12th October 2021 were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.

50/21 MATTERS ARISING

GF confirmed that he had spoken with Derek Furlong in relation to the roundabout at Meole Brace.

HH confirmed that she will liaise with Carol Pullen in relation to the new trophies for the Town of Flowers winners. Members agreed that the awards ceremony would be held in December in the greenhouse at Weeping Cross, which will enable social distancing between guests. MT suggested that this could be a good way to close 2021 and the PR for the 2022 competition could start in January. If the Mayor was not available, KR would be happy to hand the trophies out.

HB informed members that she will draft a letter of thanks on behalf of the Bloom Group to thank STC staff for all their hard work over the course of the previous twelve months, especially given the circumstances with Covid-19 restrictions.

Members discussed whether an article on Climate Change had appeared in the Shropshire Star following their photographer's visit to Weeping Cross and working with Matt Wilcoxon – HH advised members that nothing so far had been noted.

ACTION:

- **HH to liaise with Carol Pullen in respect of the Bloom trophies.**
- **HB to draft a Bloom Group letter and forward to KR for his signature.**

51/21 SPONSORSHIP OF TRAFFIC ISLANDS – TO CONSIDER SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL'S PROPOSAL TO PUT OUT ALL TRAFFIC ISLAND SPONSORSHIP TO A PROFESSIONAL MARKETING COMPANY

HB advised members that a report was presented to SC in July, which looked at roundabout sponsorship for the whole county. SC has identified 85 locations, 27 of which are utilised by SIB in Shrewsbury.

Projected income is approximately £100k per year over a four-year period.

SC's preferred PR company has identified the 27 SIB roundabouts which will be incorporated into one package for the whole county and has calculated that they can charge companies around £3k-£4k per roundabout per year. The scheme is looking to provide a 'unique sponsorship package' to attract large, national companies with generous advertising budgets.

SIB's sponsorship programme has attracted companies of various sizes, mainly local companies which take a great pride in the town and want to put something back for everyone. It is unlikely that the majority of these companies will want to take out sponsorship at the higher prices.

In the light of these new proposals, STC has re-examined its own sponsorship package and assets around the town. With 1.5m visitors to the Quarry, future options to consider can include adopting a tree, sedum roofs on bus shelters, tiered planters, etc. Members agreed that there was still a need to provide STC/SIB sponsorship packages within Shrewsbury.

Members agreed that SC's proposals would lose the support of local businesses putting something back in to the community and would also introduce 'clutter' with larger signs around the town. HB explained that with the initial planning application for the new roundabout signs, they had to be of a certain size, not detract from the Conservation Areas and interfere with traffic sight lines.

Members expressed concerns that SC's proposals will have a detrimental impact on roundabouts and Shrewsbury's use of 'the town of flowers' strapline.

Despite constructive talks with Derek Furlong, members agreed to delay any work on Meole Brace roundabout until the sponsorship issue has been resolved.

ACTION:

- **HB and KR to liaise on the Bloom Group response.**
- **HB to raise the issue at the next meeting of the F&GP Committee.**
- **HB to send the SC report to KR.**
- **HB to draft a Bloom response to SC's proposals.**

52/21 UPDATE ON SHREWSBURY IN BLOOM'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY PROJECT

HB updated members following her meeting with Robert Bland (Deputy Lieutenant) at Weeping Cross in October.

HB confirmed that SC has ordered a tree for each Parish in the county, and that STC is looking at having one tree in each of the seventeen Wards – a project along similar lines to marking the 100th anniversary of the end of WWI. There was a need to ask Councillors for suitable locations with entries to be registered on the Queen's Green Canopy website.

KR enquired as to cost for STC trees in each Ward, with HB confirming approximately £150 per tree and plaque.

Whilst funds have been received from various government organisations for this project, there has been a problem identifying suitable locations within the town. There is a need to look at how many sites can accommodate trees to maximise the tree-planting initiative.

The Platinum Jubilee events runs throughout 2022 and any tree planted during this year will qualify for registration on the Queen's Green Canopy website.

HB advised members that STC has doubled the size of its existing tree nursery and is also advocating the recycling of trees – e.g. where people don't want existing trees or have transplanted self-setting trees from their back gardens. There is a need to tag the origin of trees from these sources. MT raised the issue of honey fungus, which is spreading, although this, and any other matters, would be looked at by the tree teams.

53/21 TO VIEW THE INITIAL DESIGN OF THE NEW SHREWSBURY IN BLOOM WEBSITE

Members viewed the completed pages for the new Bloom website and made the following comments:

- GF would like to see:
 - o Old/historical photos of Shrewsbury
 - o How Bloom has progressed over the years
 - o What has been achieved under the Bloom banner
- BB felt that it would be a good idea to have features that promotes the town as a tourist destination.
- HB would like:
 - o To have a page which featured reflections on what competitions have been entered and how people felt about winning
 - o The making of the BBC2 Britain in Bloom programme – including all the additional work involved
 - o Quotes from judges and celebrity gardeners
- MT would like to see:
 - o A page dedicated to Percy Thrower and the work he did in the town
 - o Notes about features including the Shoemakers' Arbor and the Hatchery, where old tools were stored and previously sited where Sabrina is before it was demolished.
 - o Then and Now photos

ACTION:

- **HH to resend the link to members for their input in to the new website.**
- **HH to begin compiling content for the new website.**
- **MT to source old photos of her late father and the avenue of lime trees.**

54/21 SHREWSBURY IN BLOOM'S INVOLVEMENT IN DEVELOPING PROJECTS FOR THE WELCOME BACK FUND

Members agreed to convene a meeting with key partners as soon as possible before Christmas, to enable plans to be formulated to ensure that the funding pot of £70k is utilised before the end of March 2022. Members were advised that both STC and BID have contributed an additional £10k each to the Fund.

Members also agreed to organise a small group to be formed to feedback ideas and suggestions to the larger group.

ACTION:

- **HB to make the necessary arrangements for the meeting to discuss plans for projects to be funded from the Welcome Back Fund.**

55/21 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- GF advised members that collaborative work is being undertaken with the Barnabus Project. STC has delivered spring plants and bulbs for planting. PM is working with the Abbotswood Day Centre and Judith Butts Allotments.

- GF informed members that STC has provided plants for the planters at the Flaxmill and that Councillors Bentick, Wall and Moseley have requested bulbs for planting in their respective Wards.
- KR enquired about the progress with volunteers from Shrewsbury School. HB and AS will liaise with the school. Can there be a regular group of volunteers from the school to help with dead-heading in the summer. HB and AS can raise this issue. KR is happy to help organise a twice weekly group during term-time.

56/21 NEXT MEETING

The following meetings are confirmed:

Tuesday 8 February 2022 at 2pm
Tuesday 22 March 2022 at 2pm
Tuesday 26 April 2022 at 2pm
Tuesday 7 June 2022 at 2pm
Tuesday 5 July 2022 at 2pm
Tuesday 19 July 2022 at 2pm
Tuesday 27 September 2022 at 2pm

The following event has been confirmed:

Greenhouse Open Evening – Thursday 9 June 2022 at 6pm