



**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
FULL COUNCIL
13 September 2020**

Agenda No 12

Responsible Officer: Helen Ball (Town Clerk)

Virtual Committee Meetings

Purpose of Report

- i) To update members on the current position regarding public meetings;
- ii) To set proposals to re-establish virtual Standing Committees meetings;

Local Authorities and Police & Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority & Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England & Wales) Regulations 2020

Government issued regulations to allow councils to meet virtually; these regulations remain in place until May 2021. Both the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks have issued advice about public meetings and wherever possible continuing to meet virtually is being recommended.

Full Council has previously met twice using Microsoft Teams at which the attendance was better than during any physical council meetings held in 2019 and 2020 and the June 2020 meeting was the first meeting having 100% attendance since June 2018. All members have mastered Microsoft Teams technology supported by the Office Manager.

During the May and June Meetings of Council officers have reported on any decisions made in accordance with revised Schemes of Delegation to deal with matters during this crisis, but there are a number of decisions that Council will need to make (particularly around the budget) that will need input from Standing Committees) which cannot be delegated to officers.

Below sets out a mechanism to establish a full Committee Cycle of Virtual Meetings pending guidance being available which encourages the re-establishment of physical meetings.

Full Council

Meetings have already been scheduled for:

Committee Date	Agenda Publication Date	Agenda Items
Monday 16th November 2020	9 th November 2020	TBC
Monday 25th January 2021	18 th January 2021	Budget Setting
Monday 22nd March 2021	15 th March 2021	TBC
Tuesday 11th May 2021	4 th May 2021 (Will be sent out to every candidate in the elections)	Annual Council Election of Mayor



Finance & General Purpose Committee

Has traditionally met bi-monthly between the months that Full Council meets. The following dates are suggested with various standing items that will need to be considered.

Committee Date	Agenda Publication Date	Agenda Items
Monday 5th October 2020	28 th September 2020	Quarter 1 Accounts Quarter 2 Accounts External Audit Conclusion Internal Audit Report Shropshire Pension Fund Investment Debate Update of Lease arrangements
Monday 7th December 2021	30 th November 2020	Setting of Budget Principles including Forecast Out-turns on current budget
Monday 11th January 2021	4 th January 2021	Quarter 3 Accounts Recommendation of Budget to Full Council
Monday 1st February 2021	25 th January 2021	Community Grants Councillor Grants Risk Management Counter Fraud & Corruption Policy Investment Strategy Internal Audit Report
Monday 12th April 2021	29 th March 2021	Quarter 4 Accounts Setting of Accounting Principles Review of effectiveness of Internal Auditor Annual Report

Other non-statutory updates include:

- Capital Programme
- Climate Emergency
- Payments Lists
- COVID related activity and finance



Recreation & Leisure Committee

Has traditionally met bi-monthly between the months that Full Council meets. The following dates are suggested with various standing items to be considered

Committee Date	Agenda Publication Date	Agenda Items
Wednesday 30th September 2020	23 rd September 2020	TBC
Wednesday 25th November 2020	18 th November 2020	Fees & Charges for recommendation to F&GP
Wednesday 27th January 2021	20 th January 2021	TBC
Wednesday 31st March 2021	24 th March 2021	TBC

Other non-statutory updates include:

- Capital Programme
- Events
- Markets

Planning Committee

Has traditionally met every three weeks to meet the 21 day consultation period. When the Parish Council consultation period was extended to 28 days, the 3-weekly meetings were continued reflecting the volume of planning applications to consider (it is not unheard of the Planning Committee to consider upwards of 60 applications every 3 weeks).

During lockdown the planning list has been extracted from the portal fortnightly with all applications being reviewed by the Planning Committee Clerk and the Deputy Town Clerk with recommendations on comments distributed to all members of Council on a Monday requesting feedback by the Friday. Planning Committee Chairman has been the arbiter of final comments.

Of late feedback from Members has been poor which elicited the Chairman of the Planning Committee to suggest the Committee returns to formal meetings. The Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk have observed a number of other Town Council Planning Committee Meetings and have a plan for how applications can be best presented which the Committee Chairman is happy with. The following dates are suggested.

Planning Committee Date	Agenda Publication Date	Planning Application Coverage
Tuesday 6th October 2020	29 th September 2020	17/09/20-25/09/20
Tuesday 27th October 2020	20 th October 2020	26/09/20-16/10/20
Tuesday 17th November 2020	10 th November 2020	17/10/20-6/11/20
Tuesday 8th December 2020	1 st December 2020	7/11/20-27/11/20
Tuesday 5th January 2021	29 th December 2020	28/11/20-25/12/20
Tuesday 26th January 2021	19 th January 2021	26/12/20-15/01/21
Tuesday 16th February 2021	9 th February 2021	16/01/21-05/02/21
Tuesday 9th March 2021	2 nd March 2021	06/02/21-26/02/21
Tuesday 30th March 2021	23 rd March 2021	27/02/21-19/03/21
Tuesday 20th April 2021	13 th April 2021	20/03/21-09/04/21



RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That Committee Meeting Dates as set out above be approved;**

- (ii) That Officers begin to investigate the potential for physical meetings as and when regulations allow**