

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**Meeting of the Recreation & Leisure Committee  
Held Virtually on Microsoft Teams  
At 6.00pm on Wednesday 25 November 2020**

**PRESENT**

Councillors K Pardy (Chair), Mrs G Burgess, N Green, Mrs K Halliday, I Jones, Ms J Mackenzie, Mrs P Moseley, A Mosley, K Roberts & D Vasmer & Mrs R Wall.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Amanda Spencer (Deputy Town Clerk), Gary Farmer (Head of Operations), Stuart Farmer (Projects Manager), Mike Cox (Outdoor Recreation & Asset Manager), Ruth Jones (Office Manager) & Carol Pullen (Committee Clerk).

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were none.

**16/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY & NON-PECUNIARY) IN ACCORDANCE  
WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Shropshire Councillors	Those twin-hatted members declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council.
Councillor N Green	Declared an interest in Item 15(iii) – Fees & Charges relating to the Indoor Market as his wife had submitted an application for a Market stall.

**17/20 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 30 September 2020 were submitted as circulated and read.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 30 September 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.**

**18/20 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**Minute 04/20 – Wildflower Meadows** – Members were reminded to make contact with Matt Wilcoxon, Countryside & Greenspace Manager if there were any areas they would like considered for wildflower planting as he was starting to plan for next year and depending on what the kind of mixes required would depend on when work needed to be done.

**Minute 08/20 – Play** – The Finance & General Purpose Committee had supported the recommendations of the Committee regarding priority for play and these would be put in the Capital Programme. Similarly, the Committee were supportive of pressing on with the work at Upton Lane ahead of Developer Contributions being forthcoming. The Deputy Town Clerk and Councillor Mrs Mosley were to sit on the Steering Group for the Cornovii Development so would be able to report back on likely release of funds.

**Minute 8/10 – Play** - Councillor Jones sought an update on the Kynaston Road Skateboard Ramp. The Town Clerk reported that the tender specification for replacement of the skatepark ramps was currently being developed and this formed one of a number of play facilities to be included. When it was ready to go out for formal tender she would liaise with Councillor Jones as the local Ward Member.

**Minute 10/20 – Team Shrewsbury** – The Town Clerk had written to Superintendent Lansdale regarding the closure of the Town Centre Police Station and had already forwarded her reply to all members of the Council. As confirmed in the Team Shrewsbury Report, space had been found for the Police to base themselves at the Guildhall.

**19/20 UPDATE ON OPERATIONAL DELIVERY IN LIGHT OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**

Members had received the Town Clerk's report on Council work undertaken since the last Full Council meeting in September 2020 and particularly in light of the current lockdown.

**Staffing** - Staffing currently remained a problem with 3 on long-term sick leave and 4 on shielding. A number of staff had been required to self-isolate as they or their family members had come into contact with COVID cases. Staff mental wellbeing remained a cause for concern throughout all tiers of the organisation with many staff having faced some significant personal issues which had been impacted by COVID. This had already been flagged to the Group Leaders. The latest lockdown had been a real dampener to staff morale. Senior Management Team were looking at measures that capacity and resilience could be improved to support staff

**Quarry & Dingle** - The Quarry continued to be a well-used facility and footfall was relatively high. The Dingle had been open during core hours with a one-way system in place and had generally worked well; this would continue through the winter.

No other events were scheduled for the remainder of the year. Parkrun had been suspended, albeit many still ran the course independently.

**Castle Grounds** - Staff continued to maintain the Castle Grounds. To date there was no progress on the installation of a path through from the Dana.

**Toilets** - All toilets had been revisited and revised COVID RA had been carried out with the assistance from external H&S consultants.

The following facilities were open:

- **Butcher Row** – only one unisex cubicle open. DDA toilet remained closed due to experience of past usage. Changing Places facility was available to those that genuinely needed it.
- **Lower Quarry** – Gents (1 cubicle/1 urinal); Ladies (1 cubicle) & Disabled open
- **Upper Quarry** – Gents (1 cubicle); Ladies (2 cubicles) & Disabled open
- **Abbey Foregate** – Gents (1 cubicle/urinal trough); Ladies (2 cubicle) & Disabled open
- **Sydney Avenue** – Disabled open by the café
- **Hills Lane** - had been closed pending transfer of lease to 10 & 6 on the condition of accessibility of public conveniences to anyone.

Cleansing operatives had seen a spike in drugs usage in all toilets during Lockdown.

**Play Areas** - All play areas remained open and social distancing guidelines continued to apply.

**Sports Facilities** -The following facilities were closed under the new Lockdown Regulations

- Meole Brace Golf Course
- Grass and Hard Surface Tennis Courts
- Bowling Greens
- Croquet Lawn
- MUGAs
- Skateparks
- BMX Tracks
- Football Pitches (including changing facilities)
- Cricket Wickets (including pavilions)

Radbrook Recreation Ground had been handed back from the contractor and had its first cut in October. This was a priority area for feeding, aerating and mowing this winter to ensure it is playable by August 2021.

The delay in the start of the football season, exacerbated by the month-long delay in the season due to Lockdown 2 was likely to have significant maintenance implications in 2021 with the season unlikely to be completed until May/June at which time, grass growth is at a maximum and the summer sports (cricket, bowls, croquet) will have begun. Depending on the seasonal growth there may be a need to prioritise some of the low use areas to meet sports fixture requirements.

**Open spaces**

- All open spaces and Recreational Grounds remained open
- Monkmoor Recreational Ground is operating on Dawn-Dusk hours given significant ASB on site
- The Monkmoor River Bed project was nearing completion albeit awaiting for 2 structures to arrive. 1000 trees/hedgerow were to be planted in the autumn/winter period. A grant of £7000 had been awarded by the EA for landscape/hedgerow/tree planting further upstream. This would see 2500 trees being planted. The current arrangements were such that group tree planting sessions were unlikely to take place. This meant that staff and the current group of volunteers would be relied on to plant trees. If any members wished to help, their assistance would be greatly appreciated.
- The Tranche 2 of the Footpath works had started with Hillside Drive, Mousecroft and Summit Close (Reabrook) complete. This left White Hart & Kenton Drive and the Old Cana at Sundorne to finish. Staff had been impressed with quality of work and the level of finishing. There was about £20k of the £100k budget remaining. A further tranche of works was being prepped for tender.
- There were four parcels of development land that were due for transfer imminently.
- Hedge cutting and shrub bed maintenance had begun.
- It was intended to construct a drain between the Frankwell Carpark and the County Ground to prevent flood water run-off from the carpark and ponding in the car parking area in the County Ground.
- Winter bedding had now been completed
- The Information Boards for Reabrook had now been produced and would be installed over the Autumn/Winter period. This would hopefully be the first set of a number across the countryside estate.

**Ash Die Back** - All the Ash trees had been inspected and had been scheduled High-Medium-Low priority. The Tree Team had been working on the High Priority Schedule and would move onto less priority. Staff were also working on the next phase of the Action Plan and plans for replacement planting.

**Grass Cutting**

- Shropshire Council grass cutting was scheduled to finish at the end of September but teams were out cutting grass into October.
- Some high profile Town Council sites were still being cut as grass was continuing to grow.
- Rural Team had now reverted to Winter Tree Maintenance.

- Verges were being identified for locations to reduce cutting to improve the natural habitat. Rather than being completely left they would have a strip mown at the edge of paths and highway to keep sites tidy.
- Four locations were being found to prepare for wildflower management.
- Many residents were asking for various areas to be left. Officers were encouraging those residents to liaise with their local neighbours and their ward members to determine whether there was an appetite for change. Officers had previously reported that opinion on grass cutting was divided between those that wanted grass left and ones that wanted it cut.

**Cemetery** - Because of the mild autumn, grass was still being cut in the new part of the cemetery. The old cemetery was having its annual trim. Staff were being supported by two sets of volunteers; a regular friends group and a Probation Service Group of people and a supervisor doing 3 days a week.

**Bus Shelters** - Two bus shelters were being prepped for installation of sedum roofs.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Report be noted**

## **20/20 FOOTFALL**

Members received an update from the Projects Manager summarising footfall within the town. Geo-sensing counters were located in the Quarry x 4, Market Hall x 1 and The Square x 1.

Visitor numbers had started to rise at a steady pace since the easing of the first lockdown restrictions. The expected drop in visitor numbers had occurred since the second lockdown, with the exception of the Quarry figures which had remained stable over recent months and continued to track along 2019 non-event days.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Report be noted.**

*Councillor Green left the meeting*

## **21/20 MARKETS**

Members received an update report from the Outdoor Recreation & Assets Manager. From 5 November, the Indoor market had been affected by the second lockdown. Prior to that date it was operating at 100% utilisation.

All non-essential traders had been asked to close with only essential traders open for business. These included fruit and veg stalls, fish monger, bakers, butchers and food outlets providing a click and collect service.

There were normally 31 businesses operating, but currently open with 11. The early indications were that all traders were keen to resume business with some opting to operate on a Thursday to make up for lost trade and to cope with an increase in deliveries.

Attendance was down by two-thirds, this would also be reflected in the income for November.

There were currently seven potential traders on the waiting list, however some of these were currently not permitted to trade, not only due to the lack of available space but also to ensure compliance with the Trader Mix Policy. The Trader Mix Policy would be reviewed in January 2021

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Report be noted**

*Councillor Green rejoined the meeting*

**22/20 FISHERIES**

Members received the Town Clerk's report updating on activity on the Town's Fisheries. Both river and pond fishing were still open and operating to social distancing rules. All competitions had been cancelled. Membership was approaching 1000, a three-fold increase in 18 months. A considerable amount of peg work had been carried out this year with the help of funding from both the Angling Trust and the Environment Agency.

During 2020 much work had been undertaken including general maintenance of pegs, additional pegs, clearance of scrub land and low hanging tree branches in readiness for the start of the fishing season in mid-June and clearance works.

Planned works included replacement of flood damaged pegs at Sydney Avenue, improvements to access to the Emstrey fisheries, Landscaping at Monkmoor and replaces to access road at Monkmoor;

Youth Fishing would have a strong focus on 2020/21 with the creation of an Angling Academy for the young membership. This would tie in with the work of Young Shrewsbury and the Alternative Curriculum Work

It was hoped that the fisheries could look at angling for the disabled. There were already a number of Special Needs Schools who had shown great interest and the Angling Trust was keen to support this new initiative

Other Projects impacting on the Fisheries which the Town Council may need to use its role and influence to ensure the fisheries voice is heard included flood mitigation measures that were being led by Shropshire Council, the creation of a hydro scheme and work with Severn Trent in relation to combined sewer outflows.

A new website [www.shrewsburytownfisheries.co.uk](http://www.shrewsburytownfisheries.co.uk) had been created that allowed membership to be paid online. A new additional platform had been created that allowed carp fishing members at Oxon to book pegs online.

The Town Clerk emphasised how well fisheries were doing with membership now standing at 1000 adult members compared to 562 this time last year. This year there were very few tourist members (those members not residing in Shropshire) due to the COVID restrictions. The bulk of the increase had come from Shrewsbury and the surrounds.

The key to the success of the fisheries in Shrewsbury had been partnership working. The 11 bailiffs worked very closely with Town Council staff and ensured a very joined up approach to managing and maintaining the fisheries and the banks of the river. Working relations with the Angling Trust had been valuable as had the Environment Agency. Both national bodies had shown round their senior officers nationally just showing the esteem that was shown for the fisheries in Shrewsbury.

Finances were relatively strong, having benefitted from significant grant funding from both the Angling Trust and Environment Agency. The collaboration between the Bailiffs and Town Council operatives had brought excellent economies of scale and this year would see a return on investment.

Councillor Mackenzie was keen to have more information on fishing for young people and the need to encourage them and ensure fishing be all inclusive.

The Town Clerk reported there were currently somewhere in the region of around 80 juniors (12-16 years) and 40 under 12's. Young Shrewsbury's Youth & Community Manager, who was a keen angler, had often organised youth sessions around angling. On occasion anglers had donated kits to redistribute amongst young people and had been quite successful in getting a lot of the fishing related businesses to donate kit as well so this was all positive.

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the Report be noted.**

### **23/20 TEAM SHREWSBURY**

In presenting the report, the Head of Operations thanked Ruth Jones, Office Manager who was actively involved with Team Shrewsbury and had prepared the report. He handed over to the Town Clerk who appraised members of the situation in relation to child exploitation.

West Mercia PCC were funding a 2-hour training session which was available for all Shrewsbury restaurants, café, shops etc - around recognising the signs of CCE, CSE/CE, County Lines etc. Training was vital to raise awareness particularly for businesses, hoteliers, shops etc. and Councillors were being encouraged to attend training, details of which had been circulated to members.

Shrewsbury had recently been featured on Channel 4 News, featuring families of two youngsters in Shrewsbury who were caught up in the county lines aspect of the town and

the article really highlighted the impact that county lines was having on young people and their families and how once they were in that frame it was impossible to get out.

As members were aware the Council had worked with Young Shrewsbury to set up the alternative curriculum programme which was designed to engage with any young people who are on the verge of exclusion from schools as these were the youngsters more likely to be targeted for criminal exploitation. They had also worked quite closely with the Charity We Are With You and in particular Sonya Jones the local Team Manager & national Safeguarding Lead regarding exploitation.

Exploitation Tools during their awareness week had been issued to schools & resources were available on We Are With You [social media platform](#)

Key recommendations presented to the Cross Parliamentary Group to consider:

- Urgent need for a national strategy for Child Criminal Exploitation – national approach
- Local authorities to have a better approach criminal & exploitation profile
- Greater and better collaboration with Police and Local Authorities
- Greater understanding of the national referral mechanism
- Emphasising the link to Cannabis

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uG7Kbg83bTM&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0gzkhw-PN8-5DRfdmNmQ3UgDFh6nepQo8xKb8b76s4GUJor53xfWQ3s>

The Early Day Motion issued 21 Sept required 100 MP signatures to progress.

The Town Clerk reported that details had been sent out to members and to the local MP's researcher to see whether he could encourage Mr Kawczynski to support the motion. She had made contact with other Town Clerks around the country and their feedback indicated that it was happening in their areas too so sadly was becoming more and more common. She urged members to support the need to take action and lobby the MP. Sonya Jones had offered to do some awareness training with members and the PCC were doing some exploitation training and had offered to do a session for Town Council Officers and Members to raise awareness and highlight the channels needed to access some assistance.

There was a Partnership exploitation meeting taking place 8 December as particular concerns had been highlighted around Kynaston Road and Quarry.

Police were liaising with partners regarding a joint approach in patrolling in the Quarry to identify & educate individuals with a view to reducing the risk of exploitation. Progress would be reported through the Tactical meeting.

The TREES newsletter (Together Reducing and Ending Exploitation in Shropshire) which had been circulated to members provided updates on the latest information regarding exploitation in the local area – including useful links and resources.

Councillor Jones expressed concerns about areas within his Ward of Harlescott where exploitation was becoming an issue and asked if the Town Council could include some



information to highlight the dangers to parents within its next newspaper wraparound or newsletter.

Councillor Mackenzie stressed her concern that this was becoming a real issue throughout the town and urged Members to take the training. She had been pleased to see that Shropshire Council were starting to put together some prevention work with school children, which she felt was much needed.

Councillor Parry enquired if the Council were aware of any helplines. He felt it would be helpful to invite Sonya Jones to attend a member briefing so that everyone was fully aware of what to look for and whom to report concerns to.

The Town Clerk confirmed that there were helplines available and that it maybe prudent to put together a pack for members to provide them with more information of what and how to access these. She took Councillor Jones' suggestion and said that although the Admag was not currently being printed it was intended to produce a virtual newsletter that would be available on the Town Council website so she would include some information in the December issue.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (i) That the Report be noted;**
- (ii) That officers look to organising an Exploitation Training Session open to Councillors and key officers to attend;**
- (iii) That Council supports the Early Day Motion and makes representations to the MP to sign.**

## **24/20 RECREATIONAL GROUND MATTERS**

### **(i) Church Road Recreation Ground**

Councillor Burgess and the Town Clerk had met with representatives of Trinity Church to discuss their plans to develop the Glebe Field which had recently been transferred to the Church as part of a land swap with the Diocese. The Church undertook two consultation sessions which were attended by both the Town Clerk and the Councillor Burgess' predecessor. Car parking was limited to disabled parking on site therefore much of the Church's discussion had focussed around traffic and parking issues and the potential for increased parking on Church Road Recreation Ground. Councillor Burgess pointed out that whilst the Church was keen for additional parking there were equally a number of residents locally that objected to the current level of parking on site. Highways needed to be part of any ongoing discussion as the area was also a pinch-point for traffic congestion. This had been flagged with the Assistant Director of Infrastructure but no response had yet been received.

The Town Clerk reported that there were some funds available from the former LJC which would enable Councillor Burgess to do some consultation work with her residents before any decisions were taken.

Cllr Burgess outlined more of the background detail. The Church were offering over a strip of land to enable much needed improvements to the road where it was very narrow and part of the camber had fallen away at the side. Currently there was parking on the Church Road field, which was an asphalt area, part of which was a basketball court. Residents recognised the success of the Church, which held many large and successful events, but because there was not sufficient hardstanding for parking, this led to parking in local residential streets and restricted the ability to get emergency vehicles into the area. Residents opinion was divided with a lobbying group that wanted to see the Church Road field to be retained for recreational purposes.

The Church were proposing that they had a certain amount of disabled parking on the Glebe field area but were reluctant to have more parking on that area because it was restrained by trees which they did not want to remove and they wanted to keep the area for recreational purposes. What they were looking for was to have a part time additional 30 spaces on the Church Road Recreation Ground by way of perhaps grasscrete where the parking would be available purely for large events to deter parking in the surrounding residential streets. A formal proposal from the Church was awaited and once this was received Councillor Burgess was keen this go out for consultation. There was the issue of the basketball court and options on having it located elsewhere were being explored. It was considered that on the whole the proposal was to be welcomed and would enhance the area in the long term but there was a considerable amount of detail to sort out and it did require partnership working.

Members were asked to consider what they would like to see particularly around the Church Road Recreation Ground.

Members were aware that some consultation work had been undertaken during Councillor Burgess' predecessor's time and they expressed concerns at the length of time this had been going on. They sought assurances that once a formal proposal was received a wide and thorough consultation be undertaken and that the cost of any works not be borne by the Council. They would not support the loss of any recreational ground or the current football pitch.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the update be noted.**

**(ii) Radbrook Recreation Ground**

The Town Clerk reported that the levelling and reseeded had been completed and following a period of routine maintenance by the Contractor, the site had been handed back to the Town Council. There was preparatory work that would be required to ensure the site was playable by the start of the football season in August 2021. This would include feeding, mowing, white line marking and installation of goal posts.

**RESOLVED:****That the update be noted****(ii) County Ground**

This site had been highlighted in the Capital Programme for development both for the play surface and landscaping which would be funded from s106 Developers Contributions in relation to the Copthorne Barracks Development but also expansion to the Pavilion which was to be funded through CIL Neighbourhood Fund.

Work on the Pavilion had been put on hold pending a review of changing facilities in light of COVID. No Council changing facility had been open and operating since the Lockdown in March.

The Beacon Cricket Club were understanding of the delay and were seeking the view of the English Cricket Board as to provision of changing facilities.

In the meantime, works were required to make the site safe and usable for the 2021 season. This facility was badly impacted by the flooding which saw unprecedented high flood levels causing far more damage than usual flooding episodes. Works included:

- Replacement of 11 windows with PVC
- Work to Roof including fascia, soffits and guttering
- Remedial works to the shower
- Stairs
- New Decking
- Scaffolding & External Decoration

Works had been initially costed at £20k, but this would not be wasted as the existing building would be retained and the works would be required as part of the extension plans in any event.

Members were asked to agree the budget allocation for more detailed tender costs being received and works undertaken and give officer delegation to proceed.

**RESOLVED:****That officer delegation be given to proceed with essential works required on the County Ground Pavilion.****(iv) Abbey Gardens**

The Head of Operations reported that he had been working with Councillor Fraser to undertake a consultation to determine local wishes for any refurbishment to the Abbey Gardens. A sum of £20k had been allocated in the Revenue Budget for improvement works. A consultation had been undertaken in the area by way of a pamphlet and through social media. Currently 73 responses had been received reflecting views on the future of the Abbey Gardens and it was clear that this was an important and well used venue to many people. Operational staff had contributed

to this and their views were broadly similar to those of the public, identifying a serious drainage problem, dead-wooding, resurfacing in some areas, improved landscaping and seating. There were a lot of architectural features within the area and this also linked to providing some promotional information boards. The Head of Operations would liaise with Councillor Fraser on the results and priorities identified by both staff and public and report back to the Committee with a more detailed plan. He thanked the public for their contribution and said that as the capital programme was progressed in other areas it was intended to give the public more opportunity to have their say on how these valued areas be improved.

Councillor Mosley stressed the need to bear in mind that a substantial amount of people from Castlefields, Underdale and Monkmoor also used Abbey Gardens and as such it was important to include them in any consultation.

Councillor Vasmer made observation on the drainage issue and when the river was high, the flooding of part of the path that made it impassable without climbing up the bank and wondered if there was a need to consider an alternative path higher up.

The Head of Operations confirmed this was a key point brought up by residents and it had been suggested that steps or a ramp be created to enable access through until the flooding reached such a level that would prevent any access.

#### **RESOLVED**

**That the report be noted.**

### **25/20 SHROPSHIRE PLAY PITCH STRATEGY**

The Play Pitch & Outdoor Sports Strategy for Shropshire had now been adopted by Shropshire Council. The Strategy work in line with the Local Plan Review providing a snapshot of provision in 2020 and the likely requirements at the completion of the Local Plan period in 2038. The link to the Strategy had been forwarded to members ahead of the meeting together with the Town Clerk's report outlining the salient points within the report and highlighting the key areas and the recommendations for individual sports and the analysis of Town Council sporting sites. Operational staff had looked at the recommendations and the Town Clerk had highlighted their comments in red within the report. Generally speaking, Town Council sites were maintained to a good standard given the level of resources, general topography of some of the land including the propensity of a number of these parcels of land to flood and their ability to drain and also the demands on usage. She stressed that all the sporting facilities operated by the Town Council were subsidised which barely covered the cost of running these assets.

The Strategy did set out some of the key points and priority areas, namely the County Ground and its ancillary facilities, getting Radbrook Rec back to a playable surface, both of which had already been spoken about within this meeting and upgrades such as Silks Meadow for which there was S106 monies. It also emphasised the need to look at certain areas where there was little or no provision, such as the West of the town where the bulk of the future developments were planned. The report stressed the need to protect assets as they would be needed to meet the demands of 2038. It was important to ensure identified needs be factored into both the Capital Plans and fed into the Place Plan. Some of the

information within the report referring to Town Council assets was incorrect so needed to be erased but it did raise certain things that Council needed to think about in terms of pitch provision.

Councillor Halliday stressed how vital she felt it was to maintain and increase playing field capacity at a time when Shrewsbury had a growing population. Although not within the Town Council's remit, playing fields were seeming to be lost. She was interested to know how the Town Council assessed demand for the pitch facilities within its remit. She was keen that all pitches should be maintained to a good standard.

The Outdoor Recreation & Assets Manager confirmed that he liaised with local leagues who informed of demand. Some clubs moved from their local pitch depending on sponsorship deals but some could not play in a certain location because the surface was not suitable enough to play on but if improvements were made they would be able to return.

Councillor Mosley expressed concerns over the loss of the former Wakeman Playing Fields, which remained closed off and asked if Council were aware of any update on their future.

The Town Clerk reported that officers were regularly in conversation with colleagues at Shropshire Council regarding the future of the former Wakeman Playing Fields and the Town Council had registered interest in those fields and their hope for them to be retained for recreational use.

Councillor Vasmer reported that he had also had discussions and been consulting people about the fields. He was aware that the ground was quite poor and may not be suitable for converting into playing surfaces. However, he did feel the land should be available for community use and agreed that the Council should pursue this to ensure it was not forgotten as it formed a key part of the riverside area.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- 1. That the Report be noted;**
- 2. That the publication of the Shropshire Play Pitch & Outdoor Sports Strategy for Shropshire be noted;**
- 3. That Officers convey comments to Shropshire Council as to its recommendations;**
- 4. That Officers investigate the viability of the Town Council carrying out its own Performance Quality Standard and in so doing ensure a uniform standard across all recreational facilities;**
- 5. That all Bowling & Tennis Facilities be retained;**
- 6. That all existing Football facilities be retained and any additional site be added only when demand dictates;**
- 7. That the following site be identified as PRIORITY SITES**
  - a. Frankwell County Ground**
  - b. Springfield Recreation Ground**
  - c. Monkmoor Recreation Ground**

**d. Radbrook Recreation Ground**

**8. That the following sites be investigated further**

- a. Upton Lane Recreation Ground**
- b. Greenfields Recreation Ground**
- c. Shorncliffe Recreation Ground**

**9. That the Ward Wish lists be updated;**

**10. That the Capital Programme be updated;**

**11. That the Place Plan be updated.**

**12. That Council investigate the status of Wakeman Playing Fields with a view to their availability for use as a recreational facility**

**26/20 COUNCIL EVENTS**

**(i) Remembrance**

The Town Clerk reported that a very scaled back Remembrance Sunday event had taken place with focus being on Wreath Laying. The COVID Risk Assessment was signed off for minimal civic dignitaries to lay wreaths to be observed by users of the park. It was estimated about 500 people watched the event all following social distancing rules.

The events were broadcast live and watched by people across the country and from as far as Finland.

**(ii) Christmas Lights**

The Town Clerk reported that as a publicised Light switch on had not been able to take place this year, the lights had been switched on earlier in the week by the Mayor. This had been livestreamed on Facebook and had been viewed 42,000 times.

This year was a mix of old lights and new lights from the new scheme. Lockdown 1 had restricted construction capacity and supply of materials. The revised scheme had been agreed and costs had been amended to reflect this change. The new design would commence fully from November 2021 for 3 years.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the report be noted**

**27/20 BONFIRES**

The Town Clerk reported that Officers work collaboratively with the Police & Fire Service to ensure the most effective way of dealing with unauthorised bonfires. This involved having a crew on duty during the evening, Youth Workers on detached and staff available the following working day to make good any areas.

There had been two bonfires on Town Council land, Kynaston Road Recreation Ground and Wingfield Gardens. Both sites had required a fire crew and Police attendance. A lot of anti-social behaviour had been reported at both sites and there had been damage to both residential property and Council gates and fencing.

The Head of Operations reported that there had been a significant amount of debris left on site, the result of inappropriate material being burnt. This had resulted in a trailer load of material had been taken from the site and disposed of. He thanked Shropshire Council for issuing the special tickets required to dispose of the waste. The areas were now clear although there was still scorching of the surfaces which would be reinstated. It had also been noted that two bollards around the perimeter had been removed and these would be reinstated and also some damage that was caused by the tread of the tractor tyres which had to be used to remove debris from the site.

Councillor Jones reported having been down to Kynaston Road on the evening of 5 November and seen crowds congregating. He had tried to contact the Police but had been unable to get through on the 101 number. The following morning he had visited the site and seen the debris that was left. He felt that the problems in the area were not only occurring on bonfire night and needed addressing by the Police but in recent years, with the reduction in Policing many of the issues had come to the surface again.

Councillor Pardy acknowledged that the problems of anti-social behaviour were not exclusive to Councillor Jones' Ward and proposed that the Police Inspector be invited to a future meeting to enable members to voice their concerns.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (i) That the report be noted**
- (ii) That the Safe Neighbourhoods Police Inspector be invited to a future meeting.**

**28/20 CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

The Town Clerk reported that during the last two months, work had continued to be proactively carried out on Town Council sites and advantage taken of areas where there had been reduced footfall during the lockdown periods.

The following works had been undertaken since Lockdown:

- Improvement works to bus shelters in the Oxon, Gains Park, Radbrook area of town.
- Ash Die Back Risk Assessment are complete and work to High Priority Trees is underway
- Climate Emergency Advisory Group has been set up and met twice
- Bowbrook Open Space works to improve access

- Sweetlake Play Area completed
- Upton Lane Recreation Ground – Town Clerk & Deputy Town Clerk have had meetings with Cornovii to discuss potential developer contributions
- Barge Gutter Japanese Knotweed on the September schedule of treeworks.
- Structural Surveys to Barge Gutter and Quarry Depot
- Heathgates Allotments Shed works commissioned
- Monkmoor Allotments fencing works commissioned
- St Marys Church gate works commissioned
- Tranche 1 of Footpath improvements completed
- Tranche 2 of Footpath improvements commenced
- Solar Lights for the Quarry installed
- Mardol Quay resurfacing completed
- LED Streetlight conversion project completed
- Monkmoor Riverbank Country Park Project nearing completion
- Castlewalk Topographical works completed and specification for levelling commenced

A number of capital items had been suspended pending further review of the impact of COVID on these projects. These included toilet refurbishment in the Quarry and the Pavilion improvements at the County Ground. Officers had spoken to the Beacon Cricket Club who were supportive of the need to review plans. That said there were a number of improvements that needed to be made to the Pavilion to allow it to be useable for next year. These however would not be wasted as the existing pavilion shell would be retained. Works had been costed out at approximately £20k.

Proposed works for the next quarter included:

- BMX Resurfacing
- Completion Monkmoor Riverbed Project
- Tender Specification Work
  - Castlewalk Ground Levelling
  - Barge Gutter Demolition
  - Mary Webb Play Area & Fencing
  - Upton Lane Play Area
  - Upton Lane BMX
- Sedum Roof Trial on Bus Shelters
- Ash Die Back Year 1 Tree works
- Installation of Interpretation Boards

In relation to Ash die back, Councillor Jones sought clarification on whether the Council's insurance policies would cover any potential damage on injury that may be caused due to this disease.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the Council had public liability insurance which covered all Town Council assets. The extent to which Ash die back was a mitigating circumstance, it must be shown that all reasonable measures had been taken to ensure that the disease had been addressed.

The Head of Operations added to this that the tree team were ahead of the game with their inspection regimes and programme maintenance so the measures were in place to mitigate any claims.



Councillor Vasmer asked about the fencing at Monkmoor Allotments that were being commissioned. The Town Clerk reported that this was perimeter fencing adjacent to the road where there had been problems with youths getting onto the site and causing anti-social behaviour. The Allotment Management Committee had assisted with removing all material to enable the work to be carried out and the Head of Operations confirmed that the fencing work was in progress and not far off completion.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the report be noted.**

## **29/20 BUDGET 2021/22**

The Town Clerk reported that Finance & General Purpose Committee would be considering the budget in their December and January meetings and this would then be agreed by Full Council at its meeting later in January. The Responsible Finance Officer had e mailed members asking if they had any projects they would wish to be considered as part of the budget preparations but so far had received no response. Members were reminded to let the RFO know of any projects they would like considered before the F&GP meeting in January.

The draft Fees & Charges for 2021/22 had been circulated to members ahead of the meeting. Although inflation was up and down at the moment these had been increased with a blanket 2% across the board.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (i) That the update be noted.**
- (ii) That the Fees & Charges for 2021/22 be approved as part of the 2021/22 budget process.**

## **30/20 SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL CONSULTATIONS**

Members had been sent links to the Shropshire Community & Rural Strategy and the Vibrant Shropshire Cultural Strategy, both of which were out for consultation.

In giving a brief overview of the two consultations, the Town Clerk suggested that it may be pertinent for this Council to make representation. Whilst the Community & Rural Strategy focussed more on the agricultural and rural hinterland, it was recognised that Shrewsbury being the County town still had its rural links and would wish to promote those links.

She felt that the Cultural Strategy was important for Shrewsbury, although a broad subject, given the number of heritage buildings within the town that added to the culture and dynamics of the town.

Councillor Mackenzie expressed her disappointment that the Cultural Strategy appeared to make little reference to Shrewsbury and its surrounding cultural heritage. She had found no reference to Shrewsbury Castle, Charles Darwin or his legacy, the Flaxmill or the nearby

Roman City of Wroxeter or indeed the industrial history such as links with Ironbridge and Coalbrookdale. She considered this to be a lost opportunity and hoped the Council would make representation with a strong message.

Councillor Halliday reiterated Councillor Mackenzie's opinion but also noticed there was little mention of parks or any concept of play as part of culture. She felt the strategy appeared to be heavily dominated on tourism and bringing visitors into Shropshire and whilst she recognised this was important, she also considered that culture was important for the people who lived within Shropshire as well and so asked that this be reflected in the Council's response.

It was agreed that the Town Clerk draft suitable representations and circulate these to members for comment ahead of submission.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Town Clerk draft suitable representations to be circulated to members of the committee for comment ahead of submission.**

**31/20 COMMUTED SUMS**

- (a) **Copthorne Barracks Play and Open Space** – offsite contributions to play (£30,498 - £20498 for Shorncliffe Drive & £10000 for Silks Meadow – to be paid on 75% occupancy) and open space (£115,000 for sports pitches & associated facilities at County Ground – paid on 50% occupancy)
- (b) **Barratt Homes/Bovis Homes – Mytton Oak Road** – scheduled adoption Autumn 2020 – costing for snagging list agreed by developers, awaiting sign-off & legals
- (c) **Shrewsbury South Urban**
  - i. Sutton Grange site – ongoing – likely transfer in 2021
  - ii. Bellway Homes site – discussion on land adoption and adoption of acoustic fencing
  - iii. Galliers site – early discussions on land adoption
  - iv. Community Centre – location on the site
- (d) **Ingleby Way** – Adoption & Maintenance of open space – now ready for adoption – with legals
- (e) **Holgate Drive** – Adoption & Maintenance of open space - now ready for adoption – with legals;
- (f) **Belvidere Paddocks/Hillside Drive** – Adoption & Maintenance of open space – now ready for adoption – with legals;
- (g) **Arlington Way** – Adoption & Maintenance of open space – Land transferred – awaiting £60k transfer S106 money from Shropshire Council;

- (h) **Sweetlake** – Development of play area and future adoption of open space – Play Area currently in construction. Developer working through snagging list. Legal teams in discussions;
- (i) **Crowmoor House** – s106 agreement for offsite play & open space contribution to be used for Upton Lane & Monkmoor Recreation Ground – two-staged payments on trigger on percentage occupied properties. Council to bankroll work at Upton Lane Rec

**RESOLVED:**

**That the update be noted.**

**32/20 CLOSING REMARKS**

In closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked Councillors for attending and taking part in this virtual Town Council meeting and also thanked the staff involved in this meeting. He thanked members of the public for logging in. All papers relating to this meeting could be found on the website [www.shrewsburytowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.shrewsburytowncouncil.gov.uk) and the minutes would appear in draft on the website within the next month.