

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
Meeting held at University Centre Shrewsbury, Shrewsbury
At 7.00pm on Monday 29th April 2019

PRESENT

Councillors P Nutting (Mayor) Presiding, P Gillam (Deputy Mayor), P Adams, J Dean, N Green, Ms K Halliday, I Jones, N Laurens, Ms J Mackenzie, Mrs P Moseley, A Mosley, K Parry, A Phillips, K Roberts, D Vasmer & Mrs B Wall.

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Gary Farmer (Operations Manager), Andy Watkin (Responsible Financial Officer), Clare Evans (Key Accounts & Investment Manager – Shropshire Council), Sgt Simon Morris (West Mercia Police) & 29 residents.

1/19 MAYOR'S WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed those present to the Annual Town Meeting of the Parish of Shrewsbury to raise any issues of interest or concern regarding the town. He pointed out that this meeting was purely for the residents of Shrewsbury and where residents lived in the outlying parish council areas, they too were holding similar meetings and that was their route to raise local issues.

2/19 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 14th May 2018 were circulated as read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 14th May 2018 be approved and signed as an accurate record.

3/19 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

In commending the Annual Report to the meeting, Councillor Alan Mosley, Leader of the Town Council gave an overview of the work of the Town Council, focussing on the following areas:

- The Town Council had made a number of representations on many key areas of consultation and in particular carparking charges, Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Plan, Local Plan Review, Park & Ride, Bus Service Cuts and retention of the Quarry Pool in the town centre;

- The Town Council had been an active contributory to the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan process alongside Shropshire Council and the Shrewsbury Business Improvement District. All parties had committed to invest heavily in the project over the next three years to ensure this would not be a plan that sat on a shelf;
- The Town Council was working through a £1.7m Capital Programme of projects designed to benefit the whole of the town. These projects included improvements to the Frankwell Pavilion, Improvements to community facilities, new toilet facilities, LED street light replacement, and footpath improvements;
- The Town Council had declared a Climate Emergency and was working to develop an action plan to see the Town Council carbon-neutral by 2030;
- The Town Council had continued to give to good causes through both its Community Grant Scheme but also the Councillor Grant Scheme.

The Leader thanked staff for their commitment, hard work and conscientious attitude as they go about their activities.

The following matters were raised.

- The total amount of CIL money that had been raised in Shrewsbury and what percentage of the £1.7m was from developer contributions. The RFO advised that £850k had so far been transferred to the Town Council as their 15% Neighbourhood Fund Contributions and 40% of the current capital programme was being funded through this route.
- Concerns were expressed that the North West Relief Road would drain CIL contributions from other much needed infrastructure. The meeting was assured that CIL was not funding the relief Road.
- How was the council tax spent – Cllr Mosley advised that the local members are instrumental in determining the priorities for spend locally.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Report of Shrewsbury Town Council be approved.

4/19 CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Councillor Mosley, Leader of the Council reported on the Resolution that the Town Council passed in March declaring a Climate Emergency and committing to develop an Action Plan to ensure the Town Council's carbon neutrality by 2030. He reported that he had tasked Officers to prepare a Draft Plan to be presented to the Finance & General Purpose Committee in June with a final plan being signed off in July. He welcomed people's comments. The following comments were made:

- It was hoped that once the Action Plan was agreed the Town Council would publicise and celebrate the fact.
- How many Town Councillors had watched David Attenborough's recent documentary on Climate Change?
- Marches Energy had offered to do a basic Carbon Audit of the Town Council's operations.
- There were many things the Town Council could do to improve their carbon footprint in their day to day operations, including
 - Ecological projects
 - Stop printing Meeting Papers
 - Stop using throw away cups
 - Have recycling bins by the waste bins
- The Council can't manage what it hasn't measured
- Why the Hydro Scheme never materialised
- Better management of trees and increase in planting of street trees
- Sustainable Policies as there seems a disconnect between policy and Development Control
- Needs to be a balance between natural and manicured cultivation
- Reference was made to Shropshire Council's Climate Change Guide to the Community and in particular the impact in changes to extreme weather (heat, rain, flooding)
- Education is key
- Transport and planning is essential to reducing the carbon footprint
- Need to review the bus service cuts proposals as this would force people to make more car journeys
- Rollout solar panels on all council buildings
- Introduction of electric buses – it was reported that Shropshire Council are investigating Hybrid Buses, Hydrogen Cell operated vehicles and Autonomous Vehicles
- Monitoring of Air Pollution Hotspots – it was reported that are 77 units monitoring air quality in Shrewsbury and 2 exceed the national standards (Station Hotel & Chester Street Bridget)

- Britain in Bloom Campaign should introduce more wildflowers, use less pesticides and plant more pollinators
- Would the Town Council transition from Diesel to Hybrid Vehicles
- Need for more cycle paths, dry cycle parking and better road crossing points to encourage more walking and cycling.

The Leader thanked everyone for their contribution and invited anyone who was interested to provide their contact details so that they can attend a further public meeting.

5/19 SHREWSBURY BIG TOWN PLAN

Claire Evans & Helen Ball detailed some of the work of the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan from original outline concept discussions through to the major public consultation exercise to the more detailed master planning work. This had developed the Big Town Plan Masterplan. Work was now underway in developing projects to meet those overarching objectives.

Officers from both Shropshire Council, the town Council and the Business Improvement District had collectively worked on Shropshire Council's bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government Future High Streets Fund. This was an ambitious bid and it was hoped the town would be successful to go through to the next Stage.

The following comments were made:

- How would Climate Emergency feature in the Big Town Plan – It was reported that despite this being published ahead of the Climate Emergency Declaration, much of the content was designed to improve the environment, reduce the impact of inappropriate vehicle journeys and create better connectivity.
- How would the Big Town Plan connect with other departments on Shropshire Council – It was reported that much of the work so far had been around engaging with multiple departments to ensure the concept was understood and the BTP overarching themes were reflected in service delivery plans

6/19 POLICE

Sgt Simon Morris briefed the meeting on the work of West Mercia Police in the community. Much of the community engagement was done through the Safe Neighbourhood Teams and he along with his colleague Sgt Becky Thomas managed all of the SNTs across the town, with him being based permanently in the town centre.

He detailed the kinds of activities that he and his team were part of:

- Dealing with Rough Sleepers alongside colleagues from the Ark and the Homeless Outreach Street Triage Team (HOST)

- Monitoring drugs activity in the public toilets
- Facilitating and assisting people in need
- Being an active member of Team Shrewsbury, the town's Integrated Community Management Partnership
- Overseeing river safety
- Installation of Throwline Boards and training for partners and stakeholders
- Installation of Defibrillators
- Working with the Shop Watch & Pub Watch Partners
- Educating people on the dangers of Drugs Misuse and County Lines
- Licensing of Premises and Events
- Dealing with Missing and Vulnerable People

Sgt Morris advised that contact details for him and his staff were readily available on the West Mercia Website.

The following comments were raised:

- The poor service and in particular the lack of local knowledge of the 101 Switchboard at Worcester – he would feed this back
- Concerns about the Police & Crime Commissioner's wish to take over the Fire Service
- The role of influence in the Licensing System – Police still had considerable influence in the system and this meant that Shrewsbury was one of the safest and best engaged area in the region for the night time economy
- The number of Rough Sleepers in the Town Centre – currently there were 15 people sleeping rough in and around Shrewsbury. Not all engaged with the authorities and the Police role was to encourage them to do so. Many of those sleeping rough locally weren't local people; they travelled to Shrewsbury from elsewhere as they were attracted by the services provided

7/19 PUBLIC FORUM

The following comments were raised:

- What has happened to the Local Joint Committees – It was understood that these had been phased out at the same time as the Community Enablement Team had been phased out. The Annual Town Meeting would continue and the Town Council would be happy to convene meetings on specific themes
- Is the recently laid roadway on Town Walls to be dug up again to facilitate gas works – it was not known to be the case but enquiries would be made
- Signage in the Town for the Roadworks was confusing – this would be communicated to the Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Team
- When would the Dana Footpath be completed – It was hope it would be completed at the same time as the railway footbridge is completed.
- Why is Gains Park the only residential estate with a 40mph speed limit – this would be referred to Highways

8/19 NEXT MEETING

Monday 27th April 2020 at 7.00pm