

## SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

### Meeting of the Recreation & Leisure Committee Held Virtually on Microsoft Teams At 6.00pm on Wednesday 31 March 2021

#### PRESENT

Councillors K Pardy (Chair), G Burgess, K Halliday, I Jones, J Mackenzie, K Roberts & D Vasmer & R Wall.

#### IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (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

Apologies were received from Councillor N Green & Amanda Spencer, Deputy Town Clerk.

#### 49/20 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 K Halliday	Declared an interest in the Item 5 as she works for a professional body with whom there is an affiliation to We are with You.

#### 50/20 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 27 January 2021 were submitted as circulated and read.

#### RESOLVED:

**That the minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 27 January 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.**

#### 51/20 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

**Minute 37/20 – Beavers** – the Countryside & Greenspace Manager had been having some conversations with both the Cheshire Wildlife Trust, who have Beavers, and also the new

Chief Executive of the Shropshire Wildlife Trust about how the project could be developed. He was also working on the specification for the works that would need to be done.

**Minute 43/20 – Quarry Management Plan** – there had been conversations with a couple of organisations that could undertake a management plan but due to current shortage of staff resources these had not progressed further yet.

**Minute 43/20 – CCTV cameras in the Quarry** – had all been upgraded and the contractor was sorting configuration to the main CCTV system this week. All of the new Monkmoor cameras were in and working from the local hard drive now covering all the key areas. There were also the three cameras that were still hooked up to the main system and members were asked for a steer as to whether they were content with keeping them on that system or whether they wanted them on the local system, the issue being real time monitoring or not.

**Minute 44/20 – Performance Quality Standards** – the first phase of the works looking at summer sports had been completed and the report received. All of the sites had come back as Standard or Higher and there was nothing in the report that the Team were not already aware of. There were some sites that needed further scarifying & fertilising. The Council had been offered the option of a second hand scarifier that would do the job so this would be progressed. The three major pieces of work were:

- The Boards at St Michaels Bowling Green – these were going to be done in the previous winter but the plans were shelved as Recreation Staff were needed to cover play inspections.
- Two Courts need resurfacing at Monkmoor which is in the new Capital Plan.
- Levelling of the Main Cricket Square at the County Ground. Funding from the Copthorne Barracks development would be used to address this.

The next phase would be work on the winter pitches. So far this had been a really useful exercise.

Councillor Vasmer said that regarding the CCTV, the key question was the ability to be able to view recordings quickly; there had been a recent incident where he had been unable to access the CCTV footage as quickly as he would have wished.

The Town Clerk said that in terms of accessing the back-office data for the main CCTV system, as with any other organisation the Council had to put in a request for it which could sometimes take a while. In terms of the localised system, to conform to data protection protocols the Council had to have a designated Officer and this was Stuart Farmer the Projects Officer and generally speaking he was available relatively quickly.

Councillor Vasmer was content with this and thanked the Town Clerk.

## **52/20 PRESENTATION – WE ARE WITH YOU**

The Chairman welcomed Sonya Jones, Service Manager and Safeguarding Lead for We are With You Shropshire, a national charity with the contract to deliver the young persons substance misuse service in the county. This is a public health funded contract under the umbrella of Shropshire Council. Ms Jones gave an update of the work of We are With You.

80 young people were currently receiving support from the service, which supported young people up to their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday or care leavers up to age of 21. The picture both locally and nationally is that currently the most commonly used drug is cannabis. There has also been a rise in alcohol referrals and many young people using alcohol do not understand that they have a problem with it or do not see it as a substance. Other currently used drugs include MDMA and cocaine. Many of the young people supported have mental health issues with many using substances to cope with anxiety and life in general. 60% of the young people supported by the team were experiencing living with domestic violence and some young people were living with parents who were substances users themselves including alcohol.

Ms Jones reported that substance use by young people can happen to any child regardless of their background. However there is a strong concern that those who abuse substances were also exceptionally vulnerable to sexual and criminal exploitation by adults.

County lines continued to be an issue in the local area, with drug lines mainly from the West Midlands and Merseyside. In recent years gangs had recruited local children en-masse. Ms Jones explained that these children were able to be exploited via debt bondage and this was a particular problem in Shrewsbury. Shrewsbury had recently featured in a Channel 4 news film where a father had spoken up about the experience his own family had suffered.

The Town Clerk thanked Ms Jones for her presentation and explained that she was a national expert on this subject. Articles she had written had been published in nationally read journals such as The Times.

Ms Jones said that a key factor in protecting young people from exploitation was engagement from adults such as youth workers. In Shrewsbury her team worked closely with Adam Purnell, the Youth & Community Manager, and his team. Young people needed spaces where they could go to be able to talk to adults they could trust because exploitation was built on lies that drew young people in and trapped them. They often were unable to tell their parents what was happening and this was where the Youth Team and her team could really help because they were independent. Although they were bound by confidentiality, in some situations they did have to call on colleagues for support and they did work very closely with the Police and the young person's family.

Councillor Mackenzie asked Ms Jones what prevention work was undertaken to educate children of the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

Ms Jones said that in relation to early intervention, there was a big gap. There were no early intervention workers in her team, and they were only able to become involved with the young person once they were heavily or actively using drugs. The Police did have a Youth Engagement Team which picked up on early intervention. In Shrewsbury there was fantastic collaboration between the Council, the Police and other agencies which really helped. The PCC had funded the CLIMB project which would be delivered by the Children's Society and was designed to focus particularly on early intervention and prevention

Councillor Mackenzie asked Ms Jones what support the Police were offering around county lines and how they were able to inform of the work of We are with You.

Ms Jones said that she sat on panels at various levels in relation to organised crime which looked at the activity of serious organised crime gangs in Shrewsbury and Shropshire so she

had an overview of what was going on and how many lines were operating. This varied between 16-25 at any one time. For one county line to operate between 30-50 children were recruited, so it would only be possible to get on top of this by coming together as communities.

The Chairman thanked Ms Jones for her attendance.

## **53/20 PRESENTATION – ATTINGHAM PARK**

The Chairman welcomed Helen Royall (Project Manager working at Attingham for past ten years) & Mark Agnew (General Manager for North Shropshire) from the National Trust, who appraised members of the 10-year vision for Attingham Park.

Mr Agnew provided some background to the Attingham Estate. It had been bequeathed by Thomas, the 8th Lord Berwick, upon his death in 1947, for public benefit and to continue their ambitions to restore the Mansion and Parkland. The Grade 1 listed mansion sits at the heart of grade II Repton designed landscape. The estate encompasses 4000 acres with only 200 acres of the estate open to public access (apart from rights of way). Most of the estate was declared in-alienable in 2011 which means that it is not saleable and should be used to promote nature and access. The park provided a green lung between Telford and Shrewsbury. One of the ambitions of the park was to look beyond its boundaries to work in partnership with and deliver benefits to the local community. Half of all the income that Attingham generates goes back to support other areas e.g. Wenlock Edge and the Long Mynd.

The challenges faced are:

- Climate change – the growing threat of flooding especially for the towns on the river in Shropshire and also the impact on food production
- Brexit – the impact on farm payments and the general economy
- Economic slump – following Covid and Brexit
- Culture wars
- Housebuilding – lots of new housing developments on top of the existing lack of access to green spaces
- Covid – the property has lost nearly £2 million in income, redundancies had to be made, and key conservation projects paused
- Capacity, audience, participation – due to redundancies does the core team have the capacity to deliver a stretching plan?
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Sustainability – ensuring the property continues to make money to support

Opportunities

- Working in partnership to deliver on a bigger scale. Something that has always been done, but now we need to do more of this to deliver. We want to do more and do it faster but need the resources and support.
- Make more of the fundraising and grant opportunities
- Responding to the growth of urban conurbations and the new housing developments and the growing need for people to access green spaces
- Being a better employer and volunteering ambassador for the local area. Supporting the local economy, through job creation, young people, and skills development

- Supporting the development of Tourism in Shropshire through the creation of holiday accommodation and promoting Shropshire as a tourism destination
- Helping to mitigate the impact of climate change. We are already starting to work with the River Severn Partnership on flooding
- Building on the local repeating audience. Attingham is projected to reach 1 million visits by 2030, and we can now control capacity at the main site and we can look at the options on the wider estate

Looking to the future the park had followed an internal process called 'Experience Design' which is a process of master planning. This has involved nearly 18 months of thinking and collating data and research. Building on the previous successes, existing plans and mapping data including:

- 50 year landscape visions
- Estate Management Plans
- Previous 10 year plan which delivered the new commercial units on the main site
- Re-discovered a 10 year programme of conservation which included the £1.4million roofing scheme
- Shropshire Council and demographic information
- Internal audience insight
- Audience focus groups and sounding board

The proposition:

Attingham – a thriving and innovative estate that is full of life and locally loved.

- Connected
- Sustainable
- Evolving
- Accessible

Looking at the whole estate the park had identified an area to develop an outdoor activity site that will focus on the creation of:

- Multiuse trails to encourage entry-level and family cycling
- Play interventions
- Connections beyond the car park to the wider countryside
- Access to new activities through working with an educational outdoor activity provider
- Access for schools for day trips and overnight camping
- Areas for new large-scale events and shows to promote the local area

The site is:

- Almost completely flat ensuring its suitable for entry-level activity
- Brownfield – it is a former airfield site
- Historically interesting – on the edge of Wroxeter with a history from the iron age to the present day with remaining WWII buildings. This will allow us to preserve and enhance local history
- Ecologically not overly diverse due to intensive arable farming
- Easily accessible from main routes in and can be secured with barrier parking

The park had been thinking about how they could play our part in the activity of Shropshire and how it could benefit people on a wider scale by providing that lifecycle of outdoor activity.

Members welcomed the proposals and Councillor Pardy asked what measures could be used to control visitor numbers in the future.

Mr Agnew responded that this was something they were becoming ever more experienced at. As a result of the pandemic, Attingham now used a booking system so visitor numbers were restricted but it was proposed to keep this system in place to allow a cap on visitor numbers and spread them out throughout the day, which safeguarded the visitor experience. Different options for controlling car parking numbers were also being considered. Phase 1 would begin with a car park and basic cycle network and it was hoped to expand that over the 10 years to meet capacity and that some of the neighbouring estates might consider opening up their provision too.

The Town Clerk thanked Mr Agnew & Ms Royall for an interesting presentation and asked how they saw the Town Council being involved.

Mr Agnew said the Trust were always happy to get involved in local events and were happy to be involved with developing cycling networks, working with developers and considering sustainable transport. They were aware of the Big Town Plan and keen to feed into this in any way they could. They already offered discounted entry to those arriving on foot, by bike or by bus and were keen to promote this further. They worked with many volunteers and were always happy to provide manpower for local community projects if wished. Attingham was a very community based property.

The Chairman thanked them for attending.

## **54/20 UPDATE ON OPERATIONAL DELIVERY IN LIGHT OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC**

The Town Clerk reported that this week, as the latest phase of the Lockdown Roadmap had been lifted, there had been considerable impact in the Quarry. The amount of litter was increasing massively (the previous week four big wheelie containers had been collected and this week there had been ten). There had also been anti-social behaviour in the Quarry such as underage drinking. To try and combat this a security company had been procured to work as weekends and evenings. There had been a marked increase in public complaints about levels of litter, people not socially distancing and gangs congregating but staff were already at capacity in dealing with issues. The Town Council was working closely with the Police who had carried out a number of patrols. Weekend surveillance was in place until the end of May. In the short term the Town Council was funding this additional security but it was hoped that some of the Government's Welcome Back Funding received by Shropshire Council might be used for some of this. This funding was intended to maintain green safe for people to interact with others as the UK recovered from Covid. The Town Clerk was meeting with the BID Manager the following day to chat through proposals and was seeking support from this committee on the proposals put forward.

The Outdoor Recreation & Assets Manager would talk later in the meeting further about the pressure that the Town Council was under to accept bookings for events and fairs in the Quarry.

The Council were are also receiving demands from football clubs who wanted to use pitches until late June. The Committee had previously agreed to keep pitches open until 23 May but it was not possible to keep them open any longer as it would impact on preparations for the start of the new season.

The Operations Manager echoed the Town Clerk's words regarding the Quarry and added that whilst it was appreciated that more people were using the greenspaces, operationally these added pressures were putting enormous strain on the staff. It was demoralising for them to have to constantly tidy up vandalism, litter and detritus. Added to this was the costs of disposal which the Town Council had to pick up as well as complaints, conflicting demands from users and a duty of care to safeguard staff had not yet been vaccinated. It was a difficult balance.

Councillor Roberts enquired if staff had powers to enforce littering offences. The Town Clerk reported that she had frequent conversations with colleagues at Shropshire Council. It was felt that public tolerance was getting low and the Environmental Maintenance Team at Shropshire Council were experiencing similar issues so there collaborative working was being considered with regard to trying to address issues and collectively have joint messages and enforcement regimes. It was hoped that having the presence of security staff for longer periods of time would help. The Town Council did not have enforcement powers but did have a number of staff who could issue environmental crime reports which then went to Shropshire Council who could issue Fixed Penalty Notices.

The Town Clerk reported that more guidance was expected from Government on the Welcome Back Fund and how it would filter down to Shropshire Council. There had been conversations with colleagues in the Economic Growth Team at Shropshire Council who would be administering the fund which would support activities around creating a safer, cleaner, greener environment. As part of the Recovery Task Group a sum of money had been allocated to promote and market the town but it was felt the biggest issue was to address those around a safer, cleaner, greener environment.

The Operations Manager praised colleagues at Shropshire Council with whom the Town Council regularly liaised. He stressed that to serve Fixed Penalty Notices was a mammoth box ticking exercise and, although the staff would try to see it through, they had vast areas to cover and particularly in the current climate were dealing with many day to day issues.

Councillor Vasmer expressed his appreciation of all that staff were doing at the present time and proposed that the Council's thanks be recorded. He supported Officers in putting a formal proposal to the Welcome Back Fund to support additional measures in the Quarry and other recreation areas within the town if necessary.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That this Council recognises the current situation staff find themselves in and records its thanks for all their work.**
- (ii) That this Council backs action in apply for Welcome Back funding to support pressures within its green spaces.**
- (iii) That the Report be noted.**

## 55/20 FOOTFALL

The Projects Officer presented the Footfall Report and pointed out that at present there was an issue with the counter in the Market Hall which was being investigated, so the usual visitor reports had not been included.

Talks between the supplier of the counters and officers from Shropshire Council were ongoing with the view to extending the scheme town wide.

The Town Clerk emphasised how important the data was in understanding how facilities were run, who came (whether they are new or regulars), when they came and how long they stayed. The Project Officers data was reported to the Recovery Taskforce on a fortnightly basis.

She also reported further on proposals to extend the Geosense counters across the town. There were currently three counters in the Quarry, one in the Square and one at the Market Hall. The Big Town Plan Partnership had sought proposals to extend the counters across the town centre adding a further seven counters (Frankwell, Castle Street, Welsh Bridge/Victoria Quay, St Marys Wyle Cop/Dog Pole, Pride Hill and Rousehill/Ravensmeadow). These would be synchronised with Town Council counters to provide a comprehensive understanding of how people use the town. The Partnership had agreed to cover the capital costs of the system which would be around £15k and it had suggested that the Town Council, the BID and Shropshire Council share the additional revenue cost of around £6k, so she asked if this Committee would be mindful to recommend to F&GP that this be considered. For a town that was preparing for Phase 2 Roadmap opening on the 12 April, time was critical.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the Report be noted.**
- (ii) That Officers continue expansion talks with Shropshire Council.**
- (iii) That the Recreation & Leisure Committee request that the Finance & General Purposes Committee consider making an annual contribution towards the maintenance of additional Geosensing counters.**

## 56/20 MARKETS

The Outdoor Recreation & Assets Manager reported that since 5 January 2021 the indoor and outdoor market had continued to be open for essential retail only. From 12 April, if the Lockdown Roadmap allowed, they planned to welcome back non-essential traders and from the 17 May cafes hoped to accommodate seated customers, subject to guidelines. Many of the non-essential traders had been in replenishing stock and having a rethink of the layout of their particular stall, so the signs were promising for a full return.

Traders were still doing deliveries, and no doubt this would continue as lockdown eased however, from the end of June, it was anticipated most stalls would resort to focusing on business within the market. Some staff and no doubt customers would still be wary of

returning to the indoor market. As the lockdown eases and there is an increase in footfall and difficulties in maintaining social distancing, this could give the perception of the facility being unsafe, especially for those who had been self-isolating.

Government Guidelines would continue to be followed as well as advice from the National Association of British Markets Authorities and National Market Traders Federation to ensure that we are acting appropriately and that any concerns are minimised.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the update be noted**

## **57/20 FISHERIES**

The Outdoor Recreation & Asset Manager reported that the last twelve months had proved to be challenging with respect to Covid-19. The Fisheries had followed the Government Guidance by closing the fishing and opening as lifting of lockdown restrictions had allowed. This was vitally important for the health and wellbeing of local anglers.

Despite the interruptions, the Shrewsbury Town Fisheries had flourished as a sport and membership had grown massively to 1200 members to date. In July, Oxon Pool had opened after a period of development with an additional website and permit booking system to add control. This had proved to be successful and was now generating income with 47 new members to date.

Works, improvements and fishery maintenance had continued where it had been safe to do so. The Bailiff team has grown to 13 personnel who work together to protect and maintain the fisheries. They have excellent working relationships with the Countryside Police Unit and the Environment Agency Enforcement/Fisheries Team.

Pollution of the Severn and its tributaries had also been a cause for concern for the Fisheries Co-ordinator and the Bailiffs. By working with Peter Lambert of the Shropshire Wildlife Trust, the Environment Agency, the Severn Fisheries Group for the whole of the Severn, Action for Rivers and many other key individuals, the need to stop this pollution is vitally important to wildlife and fish habitats. With Salmon and coarse fish in serious decline everything must be done to reverse this trend and quickly. The dumping of sewage in Shrewsbury in the Severn and the Reabrook is significant. The Severn is a key focal point of Shrewsbury and may look well above the surface, but is quite poorly below surface.

Members of public had appreciated the work that was being done with junior member development and some anonymous donations had been received to contribute towards equipment. There had been problems at Oxon Pool with fencing around the periphery and it was hoped this would be resolved soon.

Nationally the EA were concerned about the number of salmon coming back to spawn in the rivers. In the past there have been byelaws that allow people to catch salmon and remove one fish but they are looking at stopping people moving fish altogether until the fish stocks have improved. People are being encouraged to take part in the consultation process and this has been uploaded onto the Fisheries website. Andy Jones who manages the town's fisheries has been discussing the issue with the salmon fishermen. There were other

environmental issues affecting the spawning grounds as well so it was hoped that the consultation exercise would identify the impacts of these and that the results from this in depth consultation would be for the benefit of all.

Details of the consultation can be found at <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/west-midlands/river-severn-net-limitation-order-and-byelaws/>

**RESOLVED:**

**(i) That the Council supports the EA consultation on extension of Salmon Byelaws.**

**(ii) That the report be noted.**

**(iii) That the Fishing Co-ordinator and Bailiffs be thanked for their work.**

**58/20 TEAM SHREWSBURY**

The Operations Manager reported that operational meetings continued virtually via Teams on a fortnightly basis with tactical meetings virtually via Teams on a monthly basis.

Operation Sceptre (a national knife campaign) would take place from 26 April–2 May. Knife arches and two hand held metal detectors will be purchased for utilising across the County. Knife bins will also be located at the Police Station. Funding is currently being sought for the Steer Clear project for developing workshops to assist children who have been identified as being at risk of harm & to deter individuals from carrying knives.

The Youth Alternative Curriculum programme resumed on the 8 March. Schools have been advised of current availability. West Mercia Police Youth Engagement Team & Intervention Prevention Officers also liaising with Schools and identifying issues at an early stage.

Shropshire Recovery Partnership (SRP) clinics continue to run including face to face, virtual or walk & talk appointments. Naloxone training has taken place.

There had been a recent increase in ASB/vandalism within the Quarry & Claremont Hill area. S34 notice was scheduled to be in place 26–28 March with additional patrols. Mobile Police station will also be present in the Quarry on an ad-hoc basis. As discussed earlier Shrewsbury Town Council were considering security on Friday & Saturday evenings to assist with alleviating the issues. Security staff would patrol the Quarry and surrounding areas and liaise with the Police regarding any issues.

**RESOLVED**

**That the Report be noted.**

## 59/20 QUARRY MATTERS

The Outdoor Recreation & Assets Manager reported that as lockdown restrictions were imposed, Council had cancelled all bookings for the 2020 events season and all organisers had been notified. This position was revisited by this Committee in January this year when it was resolved not to formalise any bookings until 1 July 2021. This was predominantly on the basis that throughout COVID the park had been a crucial location for exercise and, when restrictions had allowed, socialising. Footfall had remained exceptionally high throughout the pandemic. Following the meeting in January, the Outdoor Recreation & Assets Manager had notified all event organisers with provisional bookings before the 1 July of the decision. Some had cancelled and others had deferred their event to a later time in the year in the hope that restrictions would be lifted.

Currently the country was working towards a tiered reopening under the new Lockdown Roadmap. Discussions have taken place with both Public Health and Safety Advisory Group about the future of events. It should be noted that the roadmap of suggested dates is not set in stone and will only be confirmed 7 days in advance. Locally there will be a requirement for risk assessments to be signed off by both Public Health & SAG. Details are on Shropshire Council's website.

A number of events planned have already cancelled due to contractual issues with sponsors or suppliers, and others have revised dates later in the year just in case they are unable to go ahead early in the year.

The Shrewsbury Flower Show is the latest casualty, however they have asked to reserve the dates in the Quarry for this year as they may try to arrange some small activities or displays for the public. The Town Clerk and Operations Manager have kept in regular contact with the Horticultural Society and officers are supportive in facilitating activities in the park as the Road Map allows.

Officers have been under increased pressure from some organisations wishing their event to go ahead, as they believe that they can operate a COVID safe event following the guidelines set by their national governing bodies, interpreting national guidelines to meet their events. These requests have been declined citing the Council's wish to retain the park as a large open space free for all allowing the public opportunities for exercise and a place to relax in the open air. Members are therefore asked to review the position they took in January with regards to keeping the park as free from incumbrances as possible.

The Quarry continues to be considered a safe-haven for people to go out and enjoy fresh air in a large, safe open space, however this in itself has caused problems with users falling out amongst themselves.

It was reported that we have seen an increase in dog related matters, complaints about no social distancing within the park, signs being removed in front of staff who have just erected the signs, blatant disregard to guidelines and abuse of staff. This has resulted in a Police presence and fines being issued. Of late there has been an increase in youth ASB at night after park staff have left; this has resulted in significant damage to barriers, the bandstand and unnecessary smashing of bottles on pathways and the play area. The town centre is currently subject to a S34 Dispersal Order and an increased Police patrol presence. Additional security has been commissioned to enforce a zero tolerance on such ASB.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the report be noted**
- (ii) That this Committee re-affirms its commitment to not hosting events until 1 July 2021.**
- (iii) That the Committee supports events taking place after 1 July 2021 on the condition that:**
  - a) The Lockdown Roadmap allows**
  - b) They receive signoff from Public Health & SAG**
  - c) The event does not unnecessarily restrict the use of the park by the public at large**
- (iv) That the Committee supports the commissioning of security personnel to address ongoing ASB issues.**

**60/20 SHREWSBURY IN BLOOM**

The Operations Manager reported that due to COVID restrictions there would be no Heart of England judging in person this year. The judging would focus solely on an annual portfolio demonstrating all year-round activities. The criteria had been streamlined to focus on three main areas which are then subdivided into core areas:

- Horticultural Excellence on the basis of Design, Maintenance & Plant Quality
- Environmental Responsibilities
- Community Participation (year-round activities)

The Committee had agreed to enter the Heart of England Large Town/Small City category. Work had already commenced on producing the portfolio which would demonstrate all year-round activities and projects. A virtual tour of Weeping Cross Nursery would be produced for the new Council website demonstrating the bloom work and behind the scenes preparations for the summer floral displays.

With COVID restrictions, a new approach would be promoted with the annual Town of Flowers competition. This would be focussed on residents, businesses, community groups and partners and instead of personal judging as in previous years, entrants would be invited to send in photographs in the following categories: residential gardens (front and rear), businesses, horticultural projects and good environmental horticultural practices. The full criteria including key dates will be advertised on the website & advertised on social media.

Discussions were currently taking place with the BID regarding the availability of hanging baskets for commercial properties in the Town Centre. This was constantly under review due to COVID guidelines.

Progress to date:

Grass cutting of verges and open spaces had commenced.

Plant production was progressing with cuttings and seedlings for all floral displays for:

- The Dingle
- Castle grounds
- Town Square
- Floral Sponsored Islands
- Floral Infrastructure (tubs, baskets, tiered planters)
- Schools
- Community Groups

Over 3,000 new trees were planted during the Autumn/Winter period.

A DEFRA funded tree nursery development is in progress with our partners at Shropshire Council. This will increase tree production capacity at Weeping Cross.

COVID restrictions have inspired more (social distanced) community groups to enjoy the outdoor space and assist with litter picking and environmental clean-ups. Bloom has provided support and assistance.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the Report be noted.**

## **61/20 RECREATION GROUND MATTERS**

The Town Clerk reported that she had one issue to raise but was a very sensitive one and she sought permission for the press and public to be excluded and this item to be deferred to the end of the Agenda.

**RESOLVED:**

**That Recreation Ground Matters be deferred to the end of the Agenda to enable exclusion of the press and public due to the sensitive nature of the item to be reported.**

## **62/20 CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

Member had received the Town Clerk's update report and there were a couple of points of note:

- Sweetlake Play Area – land ready for transfer
- Monkmoor Riverbank Project – finished and cheaper than envisaged so some extras being considered to release all of the funding
- Heathgates Allotment Shed completed
- Monkmoor Allotment fencing completed
- First Sedum roof on a bus shelter completed
- Barge Gutter demolition work has been commissioned
- Final footpath 2 works that had been halted due to ground conditions have started this week

- Lots of tender work being done for the next programme

The Town Clerk reported that in terms of works for next year, she had started to prepare a chart so that we can track the new projects.

## RESOLVED

**That the report be noted.**

## 63/20 COMMUTED SUMS

- (i) To receive an update on outstanding developer discussions/negotiations:
- (a) **Copthorne Barracks Play and Open Space** – offsite contributions to play (£30,498 - £20,498 for Shorncliffe Drive & £10,000 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 – Sign-off of Phase 1, paperwork exchanged, awaiting formal transfer; Snagging Phase 2/3 commenced.
  - (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 – Transferred;
  - (e) **Holgate Drive** – Adoption & Maintenance of open space – Transferred;
  - (f) **Belvidere Paddocks/Hillside Drive** – Adoption & Maintenance of open space – Transferred;
  - (g) **Sweetlake** – Development of play area and future adoption of open space – Play complete. Sign-off of Phase 1c,1b,1c, paperwork exchanged, awaiting formal transfer. Developer working through snagging list.
  - (h) **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.
  - (i) **Harlescott Infants/Juniors site** – Offsite contributions to sport.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the update be noted.**

**64/20 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.

**65/20 RECREATION GROUND MATTERS**

The Town Clerk reported that there had been a defacing of public property at Church Road Recreation Ground and the culprit was known to them. Members were asked to consider how they wished to pursue this.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the incident be logged and Officers investigate the cheapest options for making good the damage.**
- (ii) That Officers and staff do not engage with the individual in question.**
- (iii) That a strongly worded letter be sent to the individual.**

**66/20 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. 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.