

Minutes of the monthly meeting of Much Wenlock Town Council held in the Guildhall on Thursday 1 November 2007 at 6.30 pm

Present: The Mayor, Councillor E W Humphries, in the Chair.

Councillors: Mrs A Dugdale, Mrs L Durbin, D M J Gibbon JP, M Grace, M Green, B Harper, N Mitchell, S Ross and P M Whiteman OBE.

In Attendance: The Town Clerk Mrs A Downes
District Councillor John Yeats

Local Joint Committee: Prior to the official agenda for the meeting, the Mayor welcomed District Councillor Jean Jones of Broseley and Karen Bradshaw Lead Officer of Shropshire County Council.

Karen Bradshaw spoke of the Local Joint Committee covering Broseley and Barrow Parishes. It is a pilot project and trials activities and ways of operation under the new Unitary Authority. There are five such pilot projects in Shropshire. Broseley and Barrow is the smallest and is made up of elected members from each of the Councils (County Councillor Jean Jones, Broseley Town Councillor Ian Pickles, a representative from Bridgnorth District Council and a representative from Barrow Parish Council). The aim is to bring the three Councils and their decision making process much closer to the community. Each pilot scheme has been given a sum of money (£20,000 for Broseley and Barrow), this money to be used to enhance facilities for the community (but not to replace other methods of funding). Informal meetings are held but it is a public decision making body spending public money and must give value for money and be accountable to the electorate.

Councillor Jean Jones said the pilot scheme had operated successfully so far and the four members have worked well together. The community is very happy and early meetings have focussed on young people's problems, and presentations have been given by the youth service, Brownies, Guides etc. It was decided to put £8000 of the money aside for young people's organisations. A small sub-panel of young people has been set up which makes recommendations to the main panel as to how the £8000 should be allocated.

The main panel is also a scrutiny panel and officers from the principal Councils and members of their administration can be invited to speak. Affordable housing has been discussed with Bridgnorth District Council officers. Money has been allocated for two environmental projects and it is hoped that more sustainable projects will be considered and that extra funding may be given to the youth club in Broseley.

Mrs Jones confirmed that the remit of the project is

- (1) Joint decision making
- (2) Bring the decision making down to local community level
- (3) Engage the local community in resolving their own problems and issues and help them to help themselves.

It is important that volunteer action should be engaged to solve local problems.

She confirmed that some pilot schemes would cover a larger rural area and that eg there were 14 members of the Market Drayton Pilot Scheme. It is anticipated that there may be 15 members on the Much Wenlock Pilot Scheme.

Karen Bradshaw confirmed that funding is allocated by the County Council based on population based categories but future funding may be different.

Councillor Mrs Jones said the pilot scheme served as a bridge between the local councils and the new unitary authority. It is a project to value-add and enhance facilities by bringing all Councils and other agencies together. The remit was laid down by the County Council and similar schemes have been undertaken in other areas of the country. The trials are for 12 months, finishing in April 2008, but may well continue for a further period. How it will develop remains to be seen - it will be a political decision. The project schemes are looking at how powers may be devolved down to parish councils and it is hoped more and more responsibilities will be handed down such as planning, road maintenance, housing, community safety funding.

The Mayor thanked Councillor Mrs Jones and Karen Bradshaw for attending the meeting and for the useful insight into how the pilot scheme at Broseley is working.

The Revd Stephen Lowe said prayers.

225 Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T Pinches (family bereavement).

226 Declarations of Interest:

Councillor Whiteman declared a personal interest in all matters relating to Bridgnorth District Council (District Councillor).

Councillor Harper declared a prejudicial interest in all items concerning the Lady Forester Nursing Home (resident of adjoining property).

Councillor Mrs Durbin declared a personal interest in the Friendly Bus (a member of the committee).

Councillor Gibbon declared a personal interest in all matters relating to Shropshire County Council (County Councillor).

Councillor Gibbon declared a personal interest in all matters relating to Joint Use as the Chair of the Joint Use Committee.

Councillor Gibbon declared a personal interest in matters relating to the Regional Spatial Strategy (member of the Panel).

Councillor Green declared a personal interest in planning applications concerning Wenlock Estates.

Councillor Mrs Dugdale declared a personal interest in planning applications 07/836 and 837 (car shares with applicants).

Councillor Ross declared a personal interest in planning applications 07/836 and 837 (car shares with applicants).

Councillor Grace declared a personal interest in all matters relating to Joint Use as a Governor representative on the Joint Use Committee.

227 Additional Business: The Town Clerk reported an additional letter in correspondence from Shropshire County Council concerning Much Wenlock Leisure Centre and in confidential business – quotation for new hedge at cemetery.

227 Minutes: The minutes of the meeting of 4 October 2007, having been circulated, were taken as read and confirmed, subject to the addition that Councillors Mrs Dugdale, Green and Harper had abstained from voting on the resolution contained within minute 216.

228 Finance: The Town Clerk presented the monthly and petty cash accounts, and the financial statement as reported in the cash book, as follows:

Bridgnorth District Council	822.00
Cash	50.00
Salaries and Wages	2639.67
B L Corfield	980.00
M MacIntyre Read	21.90
Mr G Russell	40.50
Npower	502.52
ABBA	86.00
Much Wenlock Christmas Fair	350.00
Balfours	75.64
Mrs A Barnsley	159.30
Inland Revenue	718.36
Shropshire County Council	1546.63
Eon Energy	51.59
Bridgnorth District Council	2429.00
SALC	17.00
Npower	1189.47
Safetyshop	100.45
Norvid	23.50
G Banks	190.00
Cliveden Conservation	2566.20

It was

RESOLVED: The financial statement be signed and expenditure to the value of £14559.73 be approved.

Finance Committee: The draft minutes of the Finance Committee were circulated and would be discussed at the December meeting of the Town Council.

229 Correspondence: The following correspondence was reported:

Joint Use Arrangements: Letters from Bridgnorth District Council and Shropshire County Council. In view of the creation of the Unitary Council for Shropshire, it was agreed that early discussion and negotiation must take place between all three parties to the agreements for the Joint Use Centre at Much Wenlock. Discussions must also include the Gaskell Recreation Ground Board of Management and the Gaskell Recreation Ground Charity Trustee and the Charity Commissioners. Responsibilities must be clearly defined and laid down. These meetings and discussions would begin in January 2008.

Public Session and Participation: Mr R Weston had attended the October meeting of the Town Council to speak in the public session prior to the meeting. A letter had been received from him with his concerns on the length of time allowed and the rigid enforcement of Town Council rules. Under Standing Orders (item 70) three minutes are allowed for a member of the public or Town Council to speak, provided written notice has been given to the Town Clerk and at the discretion of the Chairman. Mr Weston will be informed of the Town Council procedures and thanked for his feedback from the meeting.

Unitary Authority: It was reported that Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council has given notice of an appeal into the formation of a Unitary Authority.

SALC: The Town Clerk reported changes to the Agenda for the AGM on 17 November at which increased affiliation fees are to be reported and discussed.

Shropshire Primary Schools: Falling pupil numbers in Shropshire means less funding coming to Shropshire for education and it is likely that some schools will have to be amalgamated and closed. Town Councillors considered that every option should be considered to prevent school closures and

RESOLVED: Much Wenlock Town Council supports the retention of all schools in Shropshire.

Shropshire Waste Partnership Annual Conference: This will be held at the Shirehall on 22 November 2008.

Regional Spatial Strategy: A consultation had been held on the final review of the Regional Spatial Strategy and a copy of the Much Wenlock Civic Society's response had been circulated to Town Councillors who were concerned that there should be a zone of restricted development between Telford and Shrewsbury to prevent speculative development pressure being experienced by such towns as Much Wenlock. Town Councillors will send their comments to the Town Clerk for a submission to be made to the West Midlands Regional Assembly.

Bridgnorth District Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Issues and Options Report: this will be considered by the Mayor and Councillor Grace who will formulate a response.

Remembrance Day Parade: An invitation to attend the Remembrance Day Service at Holy Trinity Church on Sunday 11 November 2007 at 11 am.

Items circulated around the table included: Much Wenlock Tree Forum; Unitary Update; Public Transport News, Neighbourhood Watch Newsletters; ITF November newsletter; Bridgnorth DC Aspire Cards; Shropshire Hills Annual Review 2006-7; CPRE Landscapes Autumn 2007.

230 Planning: It was resolved that planning applications be dealt with as follows:
FUL/07/525(Amendment)(4 Slade Lane) – The Town Council considers the garage is in a significantly detached location from the property and would be too large a scale causing concern of possible conversion into a house at a later date and is concerned that amended approval should be given only if there is a structural reason for the pitch to be altered.

FUL/07/547(Amendments)(Lady Forester Nursing Home) – The Town Council supports this application. Councillor Harper, having declared a prejudicial interest, left the room while this application was considered.

FUL/07/832 (Clovelly Cottage) – The Town Council leaves a decision on this application to the planning authority.

FUL/07/836&LBC/07/837 (23 Barrow Street) – The Town Council supports the principle of this building being used as a dental practice as a facility much needed in the town but expresses concern about the significant changes to the building. Bridgnorth District Council is urged to ensure that the integrity of the listed building is not compromised or significantly affected by this development.

Councillor Mrs Dugdale, having declared a personal interest, did not vote on this application.

FUL/07/841&842 (36 Barrow Street) – The Town Council objects to this application – permission has already been given for a much smaller property on this site which is much more in scale and keeping with surrounding properties.

FUL/07/850&LBC/07/851 (Brook House Farm) – The Town Council has no objection but would urge Bridgnorth District Council to ensure that the new layout, materials used and landscaping is carefully controlled to protect the quality and integrity of the listed and original farm buildings. Concern was expressed that the use of gravel is not appropriate and would be easily spread on to Queen Street from this sloping site.

FUL/07/853 (2 Kingswood Close) – the Town Council objects to this application on the grounds that the conservatory would be constructed in UPVC materials which are not appropriate in a conservation area.

LBC/07/867 (43 High Street) – The Town Council has no objection.

TCA/07/107 (Holy Trinity Church) – The Town Council supports this work which will prolong the life of an attractive tree in the centre of the town.

TCA/07/110 (32 Barrow Street) – The Town Council has no objection to this work being undertaken.

TPO/07/112 (Lady Forester Nursing Home Site) – The Town Council has no objection provided the integrity of the trees is not harmed.

Councillor Harper, having declared a prejudicial interest, left the room whilst this application was considered.

231 William Penny Brookes Award: It was agreed that this item be considered at the December meeting of the Town Council.

232 2012 Olympics: Councillor Grace, as the Town Council representative on the 2012 STW Olympic Group, had circulated a paper setting out the activities in Shropshire and Telford and the progress made on attracting tourism initiatives to the county, including Much Wenlock. Town Councillors supported the proposal to form a Much Wenlock Group as an opportunity to develop priorities for the town leading up to 2012, made up of representatives of the Town Council, Wenlock Olympian Society, local schools, and other organisations in the town. It was agreed that Councillors Grace, Green and Mitchell would arrange a date for a meeting with these representatives and that all Town Councillors would be invited to attend.

233 Traffic, Parking and Environment Committee: The draft minutes of the meeting held 28 October 2007 had been circulated and were noted. The Traffic Study prepared by Shropshire County Council should be available in January/February 2008.

234 20 mph speed restrictions in Much Wenlock: Councillor Mitchell suggested that new legislation enabled 20 mph speed limits to be introduced in town centres and Councillor Gibbon reported that Shropshire County Council is considering the introduction of a 20 mph speed restriction in High Street/Barrow Street/Sheinton Street and King Street, advisory limit outside William Brookes School on the A4169. However, Town Councillors considered that a 20 mph zone should be introduced within the town centre to reduce traffic speed and make it safer, and to discourage traffic from the town centre. It was

RESOLVED: Shropshire County Council be informed that the Town Council suggests a 20 mph speed restriction zone be introduced within the whole town centre of Much Wenlock and seeking a meeting with officers to discuss implementation of this suggestion.

Councillor Mrs Dugdale left the meeting at 9.30 pm.

235 The Gaskell Recreation Ground Board of Management: The draft minutes of the meeting held 13 September 2007 had been circulated. Progress was being made on applying for an Access Grant from Bridgnorth District Council to provide a hard surfaced path into the Play Area. A tree planting scheme had been prepared and it was

RESOLVED: The Town Council agree in principle to trees being planted around the play area subject to detailed approval by the Gaskell Recreation Ground Board of Management at its meeting on 8 November 2007.

Councillor Gibbon abstained from voting on this resolution.

The Town Council considered the setting up of a Repair and Renewal Fund for future replacement and renewal of the Play Equipment.

236 Flooding of Much Wenlock: The Town Clerk reported that the Environment Agency had organised a Drop In session to be held at Priory Hall from 3 pm – 8 pm on Wednesday 21 November 2007 at which representatives from the Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water, Shropshire County Council and Bridgnorth District Council would be present.

237 Confidential Business: In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was

RESOLVED: The press and public be excluded from the meeting pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

238 Hedge at Cemetery: A quotation for the supply and planting of a replacement beech hedge between the cemetery car park and 12 Oakfield Park had been received and it was

RESOLVED: This quotation in the sum of £125 be accepted by the Town Council, the work to be undertaken when conditions permit.

239 Disability Access to the Play Area: In order to meet the specification for works to enable a grant to be applied for, the quotations for the pathway had had to be amended and would now cost over £1200. It was

RESOLVED: The Town Council meet the shortfall (estimated to be just over £500) to enable a new hard surfaced pathway to be provided to the children's play area, this money to be taken from the enhancement fund in the rate precept for 2007-8.

Signed Chairman
6 December 2007