

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE GUILDHALL, MUCH WENLOCK ON THURSDAY 26 JULY 2007 AT 7.00 PM

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

Councillors: Mrs L Durbin, D M J Gibbon JP, B Harper, T Pinches, S Ross and P M Whiteman

The Town Clerk Mrs A Downes

The Mayor's Chaplain, the Revd S Lowe, said prayers.

172 Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs A Dugdale (holidays), Councillor M Grace (another commitment), Councillor M Green (holidays) and Councillor N Mitchell (another commitment).

173 Declarations of Interest:

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

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

Councillor E W Humphries declared a prejudicial interest in planning application FUL/07/574 (electrical contractor carrying out work for the applicant).

Councillor Whiteman declared a prejudicial interest in works to be carried out at Harley Bank (adjoining landowner).

174 Additional Business: The Town Clerk reported the following additional business – Matters arising (letter from DEFRA concerning flytipping); correspondence (letter from Shropshire CC concerning the Museum, consultation by the Ambulance Service, Health meeting 24.7.07 (notes of meeting), William Brookes School stakeholders meeting in September; in confidential business a quotation for works at the cemetery and to the coat of arms at the Guildhall.

175 Minutes: The minutes of the meeting of 5 July 2007, having been circulated, were taken as read and confirmed and signed.

176 Matters arising from the Minutes:

Flytipping – a letter from DEFRA concerning flytipping in response to complaints made to our local Member of Parliament. Although the incidence of flytipping has increased since the introduction of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 it is unlikely that Bridgnorth District Council will re-introduce the skip service.

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

Mrs D Whitfield	132.00
E W Humphries	601.65
B L Corfield	1073.80
D L Rozier	65.00
The Friendly Bus	6.00

Cash	50.00
Mrs D Whitfield	467.00
A Firmstone	476.68
ACR and FL Pugh	10.00
Norvid	23.50
UHY Hacker Young	646.25
ST Water	395.41
N H Shuker	355.00
RDS Electrical	99.93
Staples	37.91
Oce Imagistics	24.62
Npower	1106.45
SALC	17.00
Bridgnorth DC	2437.00
P G Jones	156.00
A Marlow	829.00

It was

RESOLVED: The financial statement be approved and signed.

Audit 2006-7: The Town Clerk had received the External Auditor's report and she presented this to the Town Council. It was

RESOLVED: The External Auditor's Report be noted and it will be ensured that alternative expenditure powers to Section 137 will be used in future.

Finance Committee: The minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee held 19 July 2007 had been circulated and were noted.

Fuel Supplies: The Town Clerk reported that investigations had been made into obtaining cheaper supplies of electricity and gas. The supplies for Town Council properties could be obtained at a small reduction. However, alternative quotations for the unmetered supplies for the street lighting and the maintenance of the street lighting equipment had proved difficult to obtain. After due consideration it was

RESOLVED: That no further action be taken at the present time but regular checks be made on the cost of fuel.

In view of the above it was

RESOLVED: The agreement for unmetered electricity connections with E-on Central Networks be approved and signed.

178 Correspondence:

Parking Restrictions – letter from a resident of Much Wenlock, a copy of which had been circulated, which was noted by Town Councillors.

Dangerous Road Access – an anonymous letter from 'a resident of Much Wenlock' which was noted.

Waiting Restrictions in Much Wenlock – a copy of the traffic regulation orders which came into operation in Much Wenlock on 6 June 2007.

Village Speed Limits – a letter from Shropshire County Council seeking the views of the Town Council on proposals to introduce 40 30 and 20 mph speed restrictions in Shropshire. It was decided to wait until the traffic study for Much Wenlock is received before consideration of these proposals.

BDC Draft Street Scene Strategy Consultation Document and Dog Control Orders. All problem areas should be reported to the Town Clerk to send to Bridgnorth District Council.

Unitary Authority – letter from Bridgnorth District Council which was noted.

Review of Shropshire Registration Service – the changes to the service will not affect the Bridgnorth District.

Notice of Part Confirmation of The Shropshire County Council (Parishes of Barrow, Acton Round, Much Wenlock, Broseley and Buildwas) Modification Order 2006.

Open Space Interim Planning Guidance (Adoption) – this was formally adopted by Bridgnorth District Council on 20 June 2007 and provides additional guidance on the provision of open space as part of new housing development.

Claverley Parish Plan Supplementary Planning Document – this was formally adopted by Bridgnorth District Council on 20 June 2007 and now forms part of the Bridgnorth District Local Development Framework.

Bridgnorth District Local Plan Policy H10 – consultation on lowering site thresholds (5 dwellings or 0.2 hectares). No change in Much Wenlock.

Bridgnorth District Local Development Framework – revised Local Development Scheme, Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document and Sustainability Appraisal Report – representations can be made until 24 August 2007.

Tree Forum – a letter from Mr J Tuer that a Tree Forum be set up in Much Wenlock to advise and give expertise whenever tree issues arise. It will be suggested to Mr Tuer that an article be placed in the Wenlock Herald asking for interested people in Much Wenlock to join the Forum.

Severn Hospice – an invitation from The Severn Hospice to attend their Open Day on Friday 31 August 2007. Town Councillors to let Town Clerk know if interested.

Shropshire County Council Local Highway Maintenance Plan 2007-8. Details of works in Much Wenlock had been circulated to Town Councillors.

Much Wenlock Museum and Visitor Information Centre – a letter from the Assistant Director, Learning and Culture, Shropshire County Council with details of the review of operations at the Museum following a new staffing structure. Many improvements to working conditions have been carried out but single staffing is still operated and the Museum and VIC closes for 30 minutes at lunchtime. Double staffing will take place at bank holidays and busy times during the summer weekends. Ongoing analysis and review will continue.

West Midlands Ambulance Service – letter and consultation document concerning the changes to be made to how the Emergency Operations Centres will operate. It is intended to close the Emergency Operations Centre at Shrewsbury and Shropshire will in future be covered by Brierley Hill EOC. Town Councillors were concerned that operators at Brierley Hill would have little knowledge of a rural area like Shropshire and ambulance response time in an emergency would increase and it was

RESOLVED: The Town Council objects to these changes.

William Brookes School Redevelopment – a meeting of users/community stakeholders of the leisure facilities and Gaskell Recreation Ground is to be held in September.

Health Services – notes of the meeting held 24 July 2007 were circulated.

Items circulated around the table included Support and advice for community and voluntary groups in Bridgnorth, Sports events during the summer holidays, CPRE

Landscapes, Bridgnorth DC LDF Newsletter No 1, Public Transport News July 2007, ITF Newsletter July 2007, Bridgnorth DC Members Bulletins June and July, Neighbourhood Watch Newsletters, Broadcast.

179 Planning: The following planning and a tree preservation order were considered:

FUL/07/568 (42 High Street) – The Town Council has no objection.

FUL/07/574 (Stokes Barn) – The Town Council has no objection, provided the visual amenity and rural character of this area of Wenlock Edge is safeguarded and

- Appropriate signing is provided to enable campers to walk to Much Wenlock via Blakeway Hollow footpaths rather than walking on the A458 which has no footpaths and is dangerous for pedestrians
- All footpaths in this area be improved, easy to use and access
- In order to protect the local environment, visual display boards be erected advising campers of the importance of the adjoining Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- It be made clear to the applicant that no caravans will be allowed on the site now or in the future.

FUL/07/596 (34 Barrow Street) – The Town Council has no objection.

TPO 142 (2 High Causeway) – The Town Council objects to the making of this Tree Preservation Order and recommends that in the interests of the safety of pedestrians and the adjoining property the tree be felled and a more appropriate specimen planted.

FUL/07/308 (Lady Forester Nursing Home) – copy of letter received (circulated to Town Councillors for information).

180 Health and Safety Report 2007: The Health and Safety Check for 2007 had been carried out. Various recommendations were made as follows:

- (1) Loose tiles at Cemetery Chapel – quotation to be obtained for approval.
- (2) Loose gravestones in cemetery – assessment to be carried out.
- (3) The Pound – Shropshire County Council are investigating and will be rebuilding the wall to the culvert, recently washed away in the flooding. A report on the installation of a safety rail between the road and the wall and the costs involved will be obtained.
- (4) Bus shelter – a report and quotation will be obtained for the replacement of shingles.
- (5) The Square – the area of the Square under the responsibility of the Town Council is in fair condition but the area maintained by the owner needs attention. This will be brought to his notice.
- (6) Corn Exchange – the Conservation Officer will be asked for advice.
- (7) No action to be taken as there is no problem.
- (8) Guildhall – transformers will be disposed of.
- (9) Light bulbs have been replaced and low energy type bulbs will be used in future.
- (10) Cracked basin will be replaced when works are undertaken at the Guildhall.
- (11) Old ladders will be disposed of (presently locked away) annual inspection will be made of ladders at end of month.
- (12/13) Linden Lodge – quotation is awaited for repairs.

(14/15) The Museum – the attention of Shropshire County Council will be brought to the recommendations regarding use of upper rear space and position of gas meter.

(16) No further action required.

181 (a) Natural Play Area: Councillor Mrs Dugdale had prepared a paper setting out proposals for a Natural Play Area at the railway line adjacent to the Gaskell Recreation Ground, owned by Bridgnorth District Council and within a few hundred yards of the existing play area. She had included ideas for the area and possible partners for funding, risk assessment, health and safety, wood working skills etc. Funding may be available from Bridgnorth District Council who wishes to support the encouragement of children to use areas for 'natural play'. This report was noted at this stage.

(b) Children's Play Area: Councillor Mrs Durbin reported on the progress made on the improvements to the children's play area on the Gaskell Recreation Ground.

(1) The equipment on this play area needs refurbishment

(2) In order to access funding it is necessary that the future maintenance of new equipment is guaranteed – there is already an amount in the budget of the Joint Use Management (£620 ring fenced) and funding for future maintenance has been agreed in principle by the Joint Use Management Committee subject to the submission of a detailed report on cost of future maintenance/possible vandalism/health and safety reports etc.

Councillor Mrs Durbin confirmed that she is preparing a detailed report for submission to the Joint Use Management Committee.

Councillor Whiteman confirmed that the Community Improvement Committee at Bridgnorth District Council had approved an application for £200,000 to the Big Lottery, £20,000 of which would be available to Much Wenlock for improvements to the playground.

It was suggested that the area could be protected from vandalism by CCTV camera coverage.

182 The Gaskell Recreation Ground: The draft minutes of the recent meeting had been circulated. These were noted. It was reported that damage caused over the weekend of the Olympian Games would be repaired when the insurance had been sorted out.

Councillor Pinches left the meeting at 9.05 pm.

183 Memorial to William Penny Brookes: The Project Group had prepared a brief and report on funding, timescale and progress (circulated) and now asked the Town Council to confirm their support the Project, to take responsibility for the future ownership and maintenance and to take on the Project as the town's input into the Bicentenary celebrations of the birth of William Penny Brookes, and the 2012 Olympics in London. Due to the uncertainty of future maintenance and insurance, and the number of memorials already in the town, it was
RESOLVED: With regret, the Town Council cannot support this Project.

184 Flooding of Much Wenlock: It was reported that costs of the floods in the town on 25 June and the following weeks were extremely high. It is known that 63 properties were flooded including those at Farley, and many more at risk. Repairs to the culvert are required. It is likely that in the future flash flooding will result in flooding of the town due to the topographical nature of the area. Bridgnorth District Council has received £50,000 Government support and each household in Much Wenlock affected by flooding will receive £250. Councillors Ross, Pinches and District Councillor Yeats are to meet and discuss contingency plans in the event of flooding in the future. In the meantime, a meeting will be arranged with Shropshire County Council (Emergency Planning), Bridgnorth District Council and the Environment Agency to discuss the problems. Letters from the Much Wenlock Civic Society and from Philip Dunne MP were reported and noted.

185 Town Repairs and Refurbishment: No problems were reported.

186 Reports of Representatives on Shropshire County Council and Bridgnorth District Council:

County Councillor Gibbon reported that Shropshire County Council will not be carrying out any amendments to the road at Beggarhill Brook. Blocked drains on Bourton Road are to be investigated by Shropshire County Council and drains in Stretton Road are to be repaired. Harley Bank is to be closed for five weeks before the winter to enable urgent repair works to rocks and trees to be carried out. Councillor Whiteman reported that from 1 April 2008 all residents who are disabled or over 60 will be entitled to a bus pass for free travel all over England. To those who prefer, cards and tokens will still be available. He reported that two automatic toilets are to be provided on St Mary's Lane Car Park and one at Queen Street.

187 Reports of Representatives on Outside Bodies: Councillor Mrs Durbin had attended a recent meeting of 'The Friendly Bus'. She had sent passenger details for 2006-7 to the officers of Shropshire County Council who are carrying out a traffic survey in the town.

188 Any Other Business: A number of Town Councillors had received a letter from a resident of Homer regarding helicopter noise. This was noted.

189 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.

190 Hedge at Cemetery: A quotation to carry out works and plant hedging at the Cemetery was reported. It was

RESOLVED: Works to remove the old hedgerow and rubbish, rotovate the area and leave ready for planting be carried out at a cost of £172.50.

47/07

Councillor Gibbon will endeavour to obtain hedging plants free of cost to plant in the Autumn.

191 The Guildhall: A conservator had been to examine the coat of arms in the court room at the Guildhall and his report was given with a quotation for necessary repairs. It was

RESOLVED: The quotation of £1822 plus vat for works be accepted, plus £362 for additional works to determine earlier decorative schemes.

Additional costs include scaffold tower access to be arranged by our surveyor. The money for this work will be taken from the Cooke Charity Account as agreed previously.

Signed Chairman

6 September 2007