

ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Town Council Meeting held in Ellesmere Town Hall on Wednesday 10th May, 2017 at 7.15pm.

<u>PRESENT:</u>	Town Mayor (Chair):	Cllr I Ward
	Deputy Mayor:	
	Councillors:	Cllrs Mrs J Clayton, G Elner, J Frost, P Goulbourne, R Hartley, Mrs E Peers, Mrs J Williams
	Clerk and RFO:	Mandy Evans
	Temporary Assistant Clerk:	Phil Smith
	Unitary Councillor:	1
	Members of the Public:	1
	Press:	1
	Police:	0
	Guests:	0

Public Question Time No questions were put to the Council.

The Mayor welcomed Members to the first meeting of the new Council following their re-election unopposed, and Cllr Mrs E Peers was welcomed to her first meeting.

Councillors were reminded that they needed to submit their election expenses form to Shropshire Council, even if it was a nil return.

1/17 Election of Town Mayor for 2017/18

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr Mrs J Williams, and

Resolved (unanimously) - that Cllr R Hartley be elected Town Mayor for the 2017/18 municipal year.

Cllr Hartley came forward to sign his declaration of acceptance of office in the presence of the Town Clerk and receive the chain of office, and was congratulated by the outgoing Mayor.

The rest of the meeting was chaired by the newly elected Mayor.

2/17 Election of Deputy Town Mayor for 2017/18

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr Mrs J Clayton, and

Resolved (unanimously) - that Cllr Mrs J Williams be elected Deputy Town Mayor for the 2017/18 municipal year.

Cllr Mrs Williams came forward to sign her declaration of acceptance of office, and accept her badge of office.

3/17 **Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

The Town Clerk reported that prior to the meeting all Members had completed and signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office to serve as Councillors for the next four years, and had signed-up to the Council's Code of Conduct.

4/17 **Apologies for Absence**

All Members were present.

5/17 **Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests in Items on the Agenda**

None

6/17 **Grant Dispensations**

None received.

7/17 **Response to Public Questions**

No questions had been received.

8/17 **Police Matters**

A report from PC P Crump was read by the Town Clerk.

During April, 11 crimes (9 of which were the subject of active enquiries) had been recorded as follows:

- Two cases of harassment (parties known to one another)
- Two thefts from vehicles in the Town Centre
- Five assaults (all involving persons known to each other)
- One nuisance communication
- One incident of criminal damage

More complaints about speeding had been received, and it was proposed to undertake some enforcement work in conjunction with the Safer Roads Partnership.

The report was noted.

9/17 **Shropshire Council Report**

Cllr Mrs A Hartley was congratulated on her re-election as the representative for Ellesmere Urban ward on Shropshire Council.

Cllr Mrs Hartley reported that following the retirement of a number of Members, a healthy intake of new Councillors had been elected to Shropshire Council. Decisions on the Leader of the Council, membership of Cabinet etc. had still to be made, and would be formally agreed at the Full Council meeting on 18 May.

Further to the issue of speeding raised in the Police Report, she stated that reducing vehicle speeds in the Town needed to be a priority. She had recently met with the West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner, who had said he was keen to get speeds reduced in rural towns.

In relation to the relocation of the Library to the Meres Day Centre, things were moving on apace with support from the Friends of the Library group. A consultation was being held on choosing a name for the new Community Centre. The Town Clerk added that consultation forms were available in the Town Hall foyer.

The report was noted.

10/17

Minutes

It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr I Ward and

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the Town Council meeting on 3 April 2017 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor as a true record.

11/17

Planning, Economic, Development & Land Committee

The draft minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19 April 2017 were attached to the agenda for information. There were no issues that needed a Council decision.

The draft minutes were noted.

12/17

Clerks Report

The Clerk's report on matters arising from previous meetings, correspondence circulated since the last meeting, planning matters and future meetings/events had been circulated with the Agenda.

The report was noted.

13/17

Notice of Uncontested Election

The Town Clerk reported that with only eight candidates standing for twelve seats, the election to the Town Council had been declared as uncontested. Where insufficient members were elected at an ordinary election and the Council had a quorum, the vacancies could be filled by co-option, without the need to advertise the vacancy.

The Council now needed to consider whether to co-opt to fill the four vacancies.

RESOLVED -

(a) that the vacancies be filled by Co-option.

(b) that a Public Notice advertising the Vacancies for Councillors and the procedure for co-option be published.

14/17

General Power of Competence

A briefing paper had been circulated with the Agenda.

The general power of competence was brought into force by SI. 961, The Localism Act 2011 (Consequential Amendments) Order 2012 on 28th March 2012. It gave local councils "*the power to do anything that individuals generally may do*" as long as they do not break other laws. In order to be eligible to adopt the general power of competence, the Council must pass a resolution to confirm that it meets the criteria relating to its electoral mandate and relevant training/qualification of the Clerk. It was confirmed that the Council was eligible in that two thirds of its Councillors (8 in number) had stood for election and that the Clerk had obtained the Certificate in Local Council Administration, including a pass for Unit 7 – the General Power of Competence.

It was moved by Cllr I Ward, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED (unanimously) – that the Council confirms that it meets the eligibility criteria for the adoption of the General Power of Competence, in that:

a) two-thirds of its Councillors stood for election in May 2017, and

b) the Clerk has obtained the Certificate in Local Council Administration, including a pass for Unit 7 – the General Power of Competence.

15/17

Local Council Award Scheme

The Town Clerk reported that, in meeting the criteria for the General Power of Competence, the Council was now able to qualify for the next level of the NALC Award Scheme – the Quality Award. It was proposed to submit the appropriate documentation and registration fees for this process.

The report was noted.

16/17

Town Council Documentation

RESOLVED – that documentation relating to the Town Council continue to be communicated primarily to Members by e-mail.

17/17

Adoption of New Committee Structure

The Town Clerk reported that the start of the new Council had provided an opportunity to review the Council's Committee structure. Currently, there were four Committees with one sub-committee attached to the Planning, Economic, Development & Land Committee. Although the overall functions and responsibilities of the Council had not significantly changed, it was suggested that the structure could be rationalised and streamlined to just two committees:

- Finance, Asset & Resources Committee with a Staffing & Governance sub-committee;
- Planning & Infrastructure Committee

Proposed terms of reference for the new Committees had been circulated with the Agenda.

Members supported the proposed changes to the Committee arrangements, which were seen as facilitating more efficient and effective governance of the Council's business.

It was moved by Cllr I Ward, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED –

(a) that a new Committee structure consisting of a Finance, Asset & Resources Committee (with Staffing & Governance sub-committee) and a Planning & Infrastructure Committee be approved and adopted;

(b) that the Terms of Reference for the new Committees, as shown in Appendix A attached to the Agenda, be approved.

18/17

Appointment of Committees

Nominations were invited for Members to serve on the two newly adopted Committees, each of which consisted of 7 members plus the Mayor and Deputy Mayor as ex-officio members. It was suggested that some vacancies be left for filling in due course by any new co-opted Councillors.

RESOLVED - that the membership of Committees for the 2017/18 municipal year be appointed as follows:

Finance, Asset & Resources Committee:

Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Cllrs G Elner, J Frost, P Goulbourne, Mrs E Peers + 3 vacancies

Planning & Infrastructure Committee:

Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Cllrs Mrs J Clayton, G Elner, J Frost, P Goulbourne, Mrs E Peers, I Ward + 1 vacancy

19/17

Confirmation and Appointment of Task and Finish Groups

Members considered the existing portfolio of Task and Finish Groups, and it was suggested that both the Ellesmere Dog Fouling Campaign and Town Hall Charges and Premises Licences Groups were no longer required for 2017/18. However, it was noted that these Groups could be reinstated at a future date if there was a need for them.

RESOLVED – that the following Task and Finish Groups be retained on their existing terms of reference for the 2017/18 municipal year, and that the membership of the Groups be appointed as shown below:

Land at Rear of Berwyn View – Cllrs Mrs J Clayton, G Elner, J Frost, R Hartley and Mrs J Williams;

Centenary of World War 1 – Cllrs Mrs J Clayton, P Goulbourne and Mrs E Peers;

CCTV – Cllrs G Elner, J Frost, R Hartley and I Ward

The Mere – Cllrs J Frost, P Goulbourne, R Hartley, I Ward and Mrs J Williams;

Heritage at Risk/Public Realm – Cllrs Mrs J Clayton, J Frost, I Ward and Mrs J Williams;

Asset Group – Cllrs J Frost, P Goulbourne, R Hartley, I Ward and Mrs J Williams;

Town Hall Roof – Cllrs G Elner, J Frost, P Goulbourne, R Hartley and I Ward;

Accident Reporting/Safety Group – Cllrs Mrs J Clayton, P Goulbourne and Mrs J Williams

20/17

Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The Town Clerk reported that the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were required to be reviewed annually. It was not proposed to make any changes to either document.

In accordance with the Financial Regulations, the Council had to pass a resolution every two years to confirm that salaries/wages continue to be paid by BACS, and the Personal Identification Number and other passwords for access to the Council's records (in the absence of the Town Clerk) were handed to the newly-elected Mayor in a sealed, dated envelope. It was noted that the envelope could only be opened in the presence of two other councillors.

It was moved by Cllr I Ward, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED -

(a) that the Council's existing Standing Orders and Financial Regulations be confirmed for the 2017/18 municipal year.

(b) that salaries/wages for Town Council employees continue to be paid by BACS.

21/17

Review of Arrangements with Other Local Authorities and Membership of Local Authority Associations

(i) Shropshire Association of Local Councils

The Town Clerk reported that the total affiliation fee for 2017/18 was £1340.59, including NALC affiliation fee, Area Committee fee and an administration fee.

The report was noted.

22/17

Review of Inventory of Land and Assets

A copy of the Council's updated Inventory of Land and Assets, including buildings and office equipment, had been circulated.

The updated Inventory was noted.

23/17

Review of Insurance Cover

The Town Clerk reported that the Council's cover in respect of all insured risks had been updated to include all recent purchases.

The report was noted.

Membership of Outside Bodies/Working Groups 2017/18

The current list of outside bodies that the Council was represented on was reviewed, and it was agreed to delete Triathlon, Youth Champion, and Executive Group for the Shropshire Borderlands (Northern Shropshire) Visitor Economy Strategy, and to add The Boathouse Contract Group.

Representatives were also required for joint working groups with Ellesmere Rural Parish Council.

RESOLVED - that the Council's representatives on Outside Bodies for 2017/18 be appointed as follows:

Local Joint Committee – Town Mayor (Substitute – Deputy Mayor);

The Mere at Ellesmere Advisory Board Committee – Cllrs J Frost, R Hartley and I Ward;

SALC North Shropshire Area Committee – Town Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Cllr P Goulbourne;

Ellesmere In Bloom Committee – Cllr J Frost + one vacancy;

Ellesmere Festival Committee – Cllr Mrs E Peers + one vacancy;

Chester – Shrewsbury Rail Users' Association – Cllr I Ward;

Joint Emergency Planning Group – Cllrs J Frost and P Goulbourne;

All Together Ellesmere – one vacancy;

Shropshire Helicopter Liaison Group – Cllr J Frost;

Flood Forum – Cllr J Frost + one vacancy;

Meres & Mosses Landscape Partnership – Cllrs P Goulbourne and I Ward;

Oswestry Area Committee – Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor;

Boathouse Contract Group – Cllrs R Hartley (or Cllr J Williams) and I Ward.

Working Groups with Ellesmere Rural Parish Council:

Ellesmere Joint Parishes Burial Committee – Cllrs Mrs J Clayton, G Elner, J Frost, P Goulbourne, Mrs J Williams + one vacancy;

Neighbourhood Plan – Cllrs G Elner, P Goulbourne and R Hartley

Community Infrastructure Levy – Cllrs G Elner, P Goulbourne and R Hartley

Review of Policies and Procedures

Members were asked to review the Council's Press/Media Relations Policy, Complaints Procedure, and Procedure for Handling Requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998.

The Town Clerk reported that there had been a minor wording amendment to the Press/Media Relations Policy, a copy of which had been circulated with the Agenda.

RESOLVED - that the following policies/procedures be approved:

Press/Media Relations Policy

Complaints Procedure

Procedure for Handling Requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998.

26/17

Programme of Meetings 2017/18

There was some discussion about whether to change Town Council meetings to a different day, but the Town Clerk advised that due to the bookings already in the diary for use of the Town Hall in the year ahead it would be difficult to find an alternative. The Mayor suggested that the matter could be revisited for future years, and once the vacancies for Councillors had been filled.

RESOLVED - that the Programme of Meetings for the 2017/18 municipal year, as shown below, be approved:

05.06.17	7.15pm	Ellesmere Town Hall
03.07.17	7.15pm	Ellesmere Town Hall
04.09.17	7.15pm	Ellesmere Town Hall
02.10.17	7.15pm	Ellesmere Town Hall
06.11.17	7.15pm	Ellesmere Town Hall
04.12.17	7.15pm	Ellesmere Town Hall
02.01.18	7.15pm	Ellesmere Town Hall
05.02.18	7.15pm	Ellesmere Town Hall
05.03.18	7.15pm	Ellesmere Town Hall
05.04.18	7.15pm	Ellesmere Town Hall
09.05.18	7.15pm	Ellesmere Town Hall

27/17

Bank Account – Authorised Signatories

It was noted that since the Council's payroll operation had been outsourced to Shropshire Council, there was no longer a need for signatories for BACS payments for salaries.

(i) Council Bank Accounts

It was noted that transfers over £10,000 must be signed by one of the authorised Councillors and the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED - that Cllrs G Elner, J Frost, P Goulbourne and R Hartley be authorised as signatories for the Council's Bank Accounts.

(ii) Monthly Bank Reconciliations

It was agreed to defer this item until after the Chair of the new Finance, Asset & Resources Committee had been appointed.

(iii) Internal Checker

RESOLVED - that Cllr I Ward be appointed as Internal Checker for 2017/18.

28/17

Audit and Risk Management

There were a number of documents/reports that had been circulated with the Agenda that needed to be reviewed. The Town Clerk reported that the procedures/lists had been updated where appropriate. The Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit had been carried out, and there were no areas of concern to report.

RESOLVED -

(a) that the following documents be approved:

**Risk Assessment & Management 2017/18
Internal Audit Plan
List of Approved Contractors**

(b) that the Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit be noted.

29/17

Council Aims and Objectives

A report had been circulated with the Agenda outlining the Council's aims and objectives relating to the development of the town, Council services and assets.

The Mayor suggested that in the forthcoming year the Council should look at the future use of its landholding at the rear of Berwyn View, Ellesmere.

RESOLVED - that the Council's Aims and Objectives as set out in the report, with the addition of looking at future uses for the land at the rear of Berwyn View, be approved.

30/17

Road Safety Policy

The Town Clerk reported that an e-mail had been received from Shropshire Council's Highways Engineer (North) to indicate that the reduction of speed limits in Ellesmere Town Centre and along the Mereside was being examined with a view to including it as a scheme in next year's Programme. Members welcomed this development.

In relation to current highways/road safety issues, concerns were expressed at excessive vehicle speeds on Swan Hill and along Birch Road.

RESOLVED - that speeding on Swan Hill and along Birch Road be added to the Road Safety Policy list.

31/17

Meetings Attended During the Month

There were no reports.

32/17

Correspondence

(i) Items for consideration

Working in Partnership to Safeguard Children & Young People

Members noted this conference taking place in London on 20 June 2017.

(ii) Other Correspondence received after the Agenda being sent out

Section 106 Public Realm Funding

Further to minute 270/16 at the last meeting, confirmation had been received from Shropshire Council that the projects for the Town Hall and the Market Hall met the criteria for Section 106 expenditure. The Town Clerk reported that for the Town Hall project, an Expression of Interest form and draft A3 project summary document had to be submitted by 18 May.

In addition, Shropshire Council Highways had indicated that they would be replacing the traditional style blue lighting columns in Ellesmere and elsewhere across the County, and had asked whether the colour of the new units should be blue or black. Members felt that blue would be preferable, and also asked that the Town Council be consulted on the design for the replacement street lights and columns.

It was moved by Cllr I Ward, seconded by Cllr G Elner and

RESOLVED –

(a) that the Expression of Interest Form for S106 Public Realm Funding for the Town Hall entrance/access be submitted;

(b) that Shropshire Council be informed that the Town Council's preferred colour for the replacement traditional lighting columns is blue.

New Name for the Community Centre in Trimpey St, Ellesmere

It was noted that a consultation exercise was currently being undertaken by Shropshire Council to find a new name for Centre, and further information and voting forms were available in the Town Hall foyer.

Ellesmere Summer Festival/Classic Car Show

It was noted that permission had been sought from the organisers to hold a Classic Car Show on the land at New Wharf Head on Sunday 13 August.

Police & Crime Commissioner Newsletter April 2017

This document had been circulated, and was noted.

Change to Town Council Meeting Days/Nights

A request had been submitted from Cllr Mrs J Clayton, but the matter had already been discussed earlier in the meeting (see minute 26 above).

Public CCTV Managers Association

To consider a request for the Council to join this Association.

RESOLVED – that the Council becomes a member of the Public CCTV Managers Association.

33/17

Planning

(i) Planning Applications Received After the Issue of the Agenda

17/017711/FUL – 13 Swan Hill, Ellesmere – erection of first floor extension and detached garage.

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr Mrs J Clayton and

RESOLVED – that the application be supported with no comments.

17/01307/FUL – 10 Sycamore Crescent, Ellesmere – erection of 1.5 storey extension to side elevation to include insertion of bay dormer window.

It was noted that this was an amendment to an application that had been considered at the last meeting. It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr I Ward and

RESOLVED – that the application be supported with no further comments.

34/17

Finance

(i) Payments for March 2017

The payments made during March 2017 had been circulated with the Agenda. It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr I Ward and

RESOLVED - that the payments for March 2017 be approved, confirmed and signed as a true copy.

(ii) Receipts/Payments/Income & Expenditure Reports for Final Quarter 2016/17

These documents for the fourth quarter of the 2016/17 financial year had been circulated with the agenda. It was moved by Cllr I Ward, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED - that the receipts, payments and income & expenditure reports for the final quarter 2016/17 be approved and confirmed.

(iii) Write Off of Old Debts

The Town Clerk reported that it was proposed to write off old debts amounting to £135.50 going back to 2015. In response to a question, she stated that they mostly related to Town Hall bookings. It was moved by Cllr I Ward, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED – that the debts as reported be written off.

35/17

Caretakers' Hours

Further to minute 274/16 at the last meeting, the Town Clerk reported that in response to the increased usage of the Town Hall, the caretakers' hours were being increased from 28 to 35 hours a week for a trial three month period commencing on 1 May 2017. The situation would then be reviewed at the end of the trial period. Appropriate changes had been made to the Caretakers' contracts.

The report was noted.

36/17

Date of Next Meeting

Monday, 5th June, 2017

37/17

Exclusion of Press and Public

It was moved by Cllr I Ward, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED - that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and Section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1992, the public and press be excluded for the remainder of the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Acts.

38/17

Exempt Minutes

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2017 were circulated.

It was moved by Cllr I Ward, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED – that the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2017 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor as a true record.

39/17

Assistant Clerk – Return to Flexible Work Request

Members considered a request from the Assistant Clerk for flexible working on her return from maternity leave.

RESOLVED – that the Town Clerk set out the Council's response to the request in a letter, and circulate as a draft prior to dispatch.

The meeting closed at 8.53pm

Mayor:

Date:

DRAFT