

ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held in Ellesmere Town Hall on Monday 6th November, 2017 at 7.15pm.

PRESENT: Town Mayor (Chair): Cllr R Hartley
Councillors: B Reincke, G Elner, J Frost, P Goulbourne, Mrs E Peers,
I Ward, Mrs A Wignall and Mrs J Williams

Town Clerk: Mandy Evans
Assistant Clerk: Phil Smith

Unitary Councillor: 1
Members of the Public: 1
Press: 1
Police: 1
Guests: 0

Public Question Time The following question/issue was put to the Council:

- (i) Concern over reports that the Ellesmere Community Nursing Home is facing closure. It seems perverse that Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) will not provide funding for much needed care beds. Has the Town Council made any representations to the CCG about providing funding to keep the Nursing Home open?

137/17 **To Receive Apologies and Reason for Absence.**

RESOLVED - that the apologies received from Cllrs Mrs J Clayton – away, and Mrs M Lagoyianni – family commitment - be approved.

138/17 **Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests in Items on the Agenda**

None.

139/17 **Grant Dispersations**

None received.

140/17 **Response to Public Questions**

The Mayor reported that the Council had not been directly involved in any discussions regarding the future of Ellesmere Community Nursing Home. The news of its potential closure had only become public in the last couple of weeks, and there had not yet been an opportunity to discuss it. However, it could be discussed at the next meeting once further information was available.

141/17 **Police Matters.**

PC P Crump presented a report for October 2017.

A total of 7 crimes recorded as follows:

- 4 Assaults

- 1 Theft
- 2 Criminal Damage

There were 36 other reported incidents, none of which constituted a criminal offence.

Resources were a bit stretched with one of the CPOs being pregnant and confined to desk duties. However, he had managed to obtain some extra resources to help police the upcoming Remembrance Day Parade and the Winter Festival event.

142/17

Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Cllr Mrs A Hartley reported that much of the Council's focus at the moment was on the potential budget shortfall for next year, and managing the budget over future years.

The Council Leader, Peter Nutting, still had Ellesmere on his list of places to visit, but it was now likely to be early in the New Year. In order to prepare for the visit, she would like to work with the Town Council to identify key issues and development opportunities for Ellesmere –eg: waterways/boat yard, use of SC owned land adjacent to Tesco. During the ensuing discussion, it was noted that the Town Council also had key priorities in its Place Plan, and that perhaps a working group could be formed to prepare for the visit. It was **AGREED** that further discussion on the format of the visit and what issues needed to be highlighted should be delegated to the Planning & Infrastructure Committee.

Cllr Mrs Hartley also gave a brief update on Ellesmere Community Nursing Home. She confirmed that discussions with Shropshire CCG regarding funding care beds had been exhausted, and the Nursing Home would close. However, assistance was being given to the Trustees to at least maintain the building, and alternative uses for the upstairs rooms were being explored.

Cllr Mrs E Peers asked if any of the proceeds from the upcoming auction sale of the former Library building would be used to benefit the Town. Cllr Mrs Hartley advised that SC's financial rules meant that the proceeds would be ringfenced as capital receipts and therefore could not be used to support any additional revenue expenditure in Ellesmere.

143/17

Minutes

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

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the Town Council meeting on the 2 October, 2017 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor as a true record.

144/17

Planning & Infrastructure Committee

The draft minutes of the meeting of the Planning & Infrastructure Committee held on 31 October 2017 were received for information.

Cllr G Elner, Chair of the Committee, reported that the Shropshire Local Plan Review document and the Place Plan Review would come back to Members for further discussion.

145/17

Joint Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

Notes of a meeting of the joint Town Council/Ellesmere Rural Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan Working Group held on 20 October 2017 were received.

The Mayor reported that it had become apparent that Shropshire Council would not support a joint Neighbourhood Plan covering both the town and rural parish area, and therefore the Joint Working Group had recommended to both Councils that the proposal for a joint Neighbourhood Plan be no longer pursued.

It was moved by Councillor Mrs E Peers, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED – that the proposal for a Neighbourhood Plan for the Ellesmere Town and Rural Parish areas be no longer pursued.

146/17

Clerk's Report

The Clerk's report on correspondence circulated since the last meeting, future meetings/events, training, and planning decisions was received.

The report was noted.

147/17

Ellesmere Town Council Land and Buildings

(i) Main Hall Floor, Ellesmere Town Hall

The Town Clerk reported that there was £3k set aside in the Reserve Fund to re-varnish the Main Hall floor. Three quotes had recently been obtained, all of which were in excess of the amount set aside.

AGREED – that the cost for re-varnishing the floor be included for consideration in the 2017/18 budget deliberations.

(ii) Water Chlorination – Ellesmere Town Hall and Cross St Toilets

The Town Clerk reported that the risk assessment reports had not yet been received, and therefore this item would be deferred to the next meeting.

(iii) Town Hall Maintenance Plan

The Town Clerk reported that it was intended to draw up a document that would bring together all the contracts and inspections etc in relation to the maintenance of the Town Hall. It was noted that that a Task and Finish Group might be established to oversee this.

(iv) Play Area Inspections

The Town Clerk reported that it had been recommended that the play areas and equipment should be inspected fortnightly. Although the checks had been done informally in the past, it was felt that to provide assurance the arrangements now needed to be formalised and carried out by fully qualified persons. Two quotes had been received for this service, and details were given to Members.

Members felt that this was a good preventative measure that could be provided for a relatively small cost.

RESOLVED - that the quote from Shropshire Council for the provision of fortnightly play area inspections be approved.

(v) Beech Grove Goalposts

The Town Clerk reported that the recently installed goalposts had been checked by RoSPA who had not found any issues. Noted.

(vi) Cricket Club Land and Birch Rd Recreation Area

Further to the report at the last meeting, the Drainage Engineer had written to Severn Trent Water regarding the maintenance of the watercourse into which the Mere culvert drains. Severn Trent had acknowledged the request, but it was not clear yet what, if anything, they intended to do. In the meantime, further investigations would be carried out, including an inspection of the water levels in the culvert under Wharf Rd/Dairy Grove. Noted.

(vii) Tree Survey

The Town Clerk advised that the Survey Report had now been received, and there were recommendations for minor remedial works to four trees. Quotes would be obtained for the works. Noted.

148/17

General Data Protection Regulations

Two Councillors were required to work with the Clerk to ensure that all the requirements of these impending new Regulations were met in relation to policies and information held by the Town Council.

AGREED – that Councillors R Hartley and P Goulbourne work with the Clerk on compliance with the Regulations.

It was noted that the Town Clerk and Cllr Goulbourne were attending a training event on this issue later in the week.

149/17

Christmas 2017

The Town Clerk reported that the method statement and risk assessments for installing the overhead decorations in the town centre had been received from Acorn Lighting, and work would start this week. There was a problem with one of the festoons in Cross St, and this would be repaired.

In relation to the Tree of Light, ETC Sawmills were no longer able to supply a tree. However, Winston Farm at Tetchill had agreed to step-in and provide and erect a tree free of charge. Members thanked Winston Farm for their generous donation of the tree, and **AGREED** that a letter of thanks be sent to ETC Sawmills in recognition of their donation of a Christmas Tree to the town over many years.

The switch-on of the Christmas lights would be at 6.15pm on Friday 24 November 2017 as part of the Winter Festival event.

150/17

Expenses Policy

The Town Clerk reported that, at the Councillors' training session on 18 October, a question had been asked about whether Members could claim expenses for travel etc when undertaking duties on behalf of the Town Council. It was confirmed that the current Expenses Policy did not include provision for Councillors. There was a discussion about whether it was appropriate for Members to claim expenses, and it was **AGREED** that the Town Clerk obtain information from other Town & Parish Councils locally about their policy on Members' expenses, as well as the view of the Shropshire Association of Local Councils. The issue could then be discussed again at a future meeting.

151/17

Assistant Clerks Hours and Days of Work

The Town Clerk reported that she had met with the Assistant Clerks at the end of the three month trial period for the new "job share" arrangements. The postholders felt that the arrangement was working well, with a good communication system for the handover of information. It was therefore recommended that the "job share" arrangements be made permanent. Phil Smith was working some additional hours to provide minute taking at Town Council and Committee meetings, but was finding it difficult to take time off in lieu within his contracted hours. It was therefore recommended that he be paid for any additional hours worked in excess of the contracted 10 hours per week.

RESOLVED -

(a) that the job share arrangements for the Assistant Clerk post – Jo Butterworth 20 hours per week and Phil Smith 10 hours per week – be approved on a permanent basis with immediate effect;

(b) that Phil Smith be paid for any additional hours worked in relation to the minuting of meetings, with immediate effect.

152/17

Christmas 2017 Joint Meeting

A note of a meeting held on 19 September 2017 with representatives from the Chamber of Commerce and Ellesmere Rotary Club were tabled for information.

In response to questions, the Town Clerk reported that a quote from Gala Lights for the wrapping of lights on the Tree of Light was still awaited, but the costs of the Tree lights themselves would be met by the Rotary Club.

The report was noted.

153/17

Correspondence

(i) Items for consideration

The following items of correspondence had been circulated and were noted:

Mere Cottage Lease - Shropshire Council to advertise for new occupancy from 1st January, 2018.

Shrewsbury North West Relief Road – Public Consultation

Joining People with Places: A Practical Vision for Travel in Shropshire.

Local Commissioning of Youth Activities – Proposals for consultation on changes to the funding of targeted geographical provision.

Shropshire Council Economic Growth Strategy

The Code of Conduct, Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Member/Officer Roles - presentation slides from Parish Training 2017, Shropshire Council.

Ellesmere Rangers Football Club - thank you letter for the donation towards the defibrillator and outdoor case.

Tenancy at Will Agreement relating to Ellesmere Market Hall between Shropshire Council and All Together Community Interest Company - expiry 24th March, 2023. Copy kept on file.

Road Closure 18th December, 2017 for 5 days (9am – 5pm). Ellesmere Road end of - to start of Birch Road. BT to upgrade existing network to fibre to the door. CASS (Cable & Splicing Services Ltd).

Shropshire RCC Community Council of Shropshire - Annual General Meeting 2017 - 17th November, 2017 at 2.00pm (arrival 1.30pm). Shrewsbury University Centre, The Guildhall, Frankwell, Shrewsbury.

North Shropshire Reinforcement Project

The Council had been invited to send up to two representatives to a consultation event on 22 November 2017 organised by Scottish Power regarding the proposals for re-inforcing electricity power supplies in North Shropshire. It was AGREED that Councillors P Goulbourne and B Reincke attend on behalf of the Town Council.

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

Mere Advisory Board

Notification had been received of a meeting of the Mere Advisory Board on 9 November 2017. Councillors Frost, Hartley and Ward were the Council's representatives on the Board.

Journeys to Hospital

Healthwatch Shropshire were asking older people from Shropshire to share details of the difficulty they have in getting to and from hospital appointments, as part of a 'Painful Journeys' campaign being run by Age UK calling for an urgent government review of essential transport services. Noted.

St Mary's Churchyard

Further to the report at the last meeting, permission had now been received from the Diocese Archdeacon for the repairs to the Churchyard wall to be carried out. The Town Clerk added that she was speaking to the Conservation Officer at Shropshire Council about whether planning permission was needed for the works. Noted.

Campaign for 20mph speed limits in Shropshire

All Councillors had been invited to attend a public meeting on 25 November 2017 in Shrewsbury to discuss a campaign for a 20mph speed limit on every residential street and road in Shropshire. Noted.

154/17 **Planning**

There were no planning matters for consideration.

155/17 **Grant Applications**

The Town Clerk reported that six applications for a grant/donation in 2017/18 had been received by the deadline of 31 October 2017. It was suggested that further consideration be given to the applications as part of the budget planning process for next year.

RESOLVED – that consideration of the grant applications be deferred for inclusion in the 2017/18 budget planning process.

156/17 **Finance**

(i) Payments for September 2017

The payments made during September 2017 had been circulated with the Agenda. It was moved by Cllr Mrs A Wignall, seconded by Cllr I Ward and

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

(ii) General Reserve Policy

The Town Clerk advised that she would be reviewing the Policy.

(iii) Budget/Precept Deliberations 2017/18

The Town Clerk reported that she was currently timetabling the budget planning process for setting the 2017/18 budget/precept, and dates would be notified to Councillors. Noted.

157/17 **Remembrance Day Parade and Church Service**

The arrangements for the Parade and Church Service on Sunday 12 November were noted, along with the two minute silence on Saturday 11 November 2017 at 11am outside the Old Town Hall.

158/17 **Date of Next Meeting**

Monday, 4th December, 2017

The meeting closed at 8.24 pm

Mayor:

Date:

DRAFT