

ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held in Ellesmere Town Hall on Monday 1st April, 2019 at 7.15pm.

<u>PRESENT:</u>	Town Mayor (Chair):	Cllr R Hartley
	Councillors:	Cllrs Mrs J Costa, Mrs J Clayton, G Elner, J Frost, P Goulbourne, D Lunn, Mrs A Wignall and Mrs J Williams
	Assistant Clerks:	Jo Butterworth and Phil Smith
	Unitary Councillor:	1
	Members of the Public:	4
	Press:	1
	Police:	1
	Guests:	1 (prospective Councillor)

Public Question Time

(i) Further to the questions asked at the February meeting, a resident of Tetchill Brook Road asked if the Council had heard anything further regarding the Section 106 Agreement for the promised play areas and open space associated with the Waterside View housing development. He also referred to a recent planning application for a new housing development that would be accessed via Tetchill Brook Road, and the concern among local residents about the impact of heavy construction traffic. It was also felt that residents had been misled about provision of the access road to the whole Marina development site.

(ii) A resident asked why an earlier meeting with the West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner was held in private? He would have liked to have put some questions to him.

265/18 To Receive Apologies and Reason for Absence.

Cllr Mrs J Williams announced that she was resigning from the Council with immediate effect, and left the meeting.

RESOLVED - that the apology received from Councillor B Reincke – illness - be approved.

266/18 Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests in Items on the Agenda

None received.

267/18 Grant Dispensations

None received.

268/18 Response to Public Questions

The Town Mayor and the Assistant Clerk reported that the letter the Council received from Persimmon (in response to the concerns conveyed by the Council

at the February meeting) had stated that they were in discussions with Pochins about progressing the Section 106 Agreement, but this was subject to Shropshire Council agreeing to vary some conditions. Enquiries had been made with Shropshire Council's Planning department, but a response had not yet been received. The planning applications referred to were being considered later in the meeting. While they related to land outside the town boundary, Shropshire Council had acknowledged that the Town Council should have been consulted because of the potential impact on residents of the town. They had therefore granted an extension to the consultation period to allow the Town Council to make any comments.

In relation to the meeting Councillors had with the Police & Crime Commissioner, the Mayor stated that, because neither of the larger rooms in the Town Hall was available on the agreed date of 1 April, it had not been feasible to hold an open public meeting. However, notes of the proceedings had been taken, and it was:

AGREED – that the notes of the meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner be made available to the public via the Council website.

269/18

Town Clerk

The Town Mayor reported that Mandy Evans, the Town Clerk, had resigned as of 31 March 2019 on ill-health grounds. Mandy had been with the Council for nearly ten years, and she would be greatly missed. She was also very well thought of in the town. On behalf of the Council, he wished her well for the future and for a full recovery.

The process for recruiting a new Town Clerk had commenced, and would be discussed later in the meeting.

Members agreed that, to mark their appreciation of her service to the Town Council, some kind of gift should be presented to Mandy.

270/18

Casual Vacancies

(i) One application had been received in response to the most recent advert for co-option to the Council. A copy of his application form had been circulated prior to the meeting. In accordance with Standing Order 1 (r)(viii), it was resolved to adjourn the meeting to allow the candidate to address Members and to answer any questions – in accordance with the Co-option Policy. Members of the public and press then left the room during this process.

After careful consideration of the application, it was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr J Frost and

RESOLVED – that Mark Hancock be co-opted to fill the casual vacancy on the Council.

Mr Hancock was congratulated on his appointment. Having signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office, he then took part in the rest of the meeting.

(ii) Since the last meeting, Mrs E Peers had resigned as a Town Councillor. The Town Mayor reported that he had sent a letter thanking her for her service to

the Council. The casual vacancy had been advertised with a deadline of 5 April for the request of a by-election. Noted.

The Assistant Clerk reported that the further vacancy following Mrs J Williams' resignation earlier would be advertised in the same way.

271/18

Police Matters

Sgt Claire Greenaway from the Safer Neighbourhood Team was welcomed to the meeting.

She reported that there had only been a few crimes recorded over the March period, although there had been a bit of a spike in shoplifting offences.

Further to the discussion at the last meeting, she had met with Ellesmere Chamber of Trade to discuss a potential Shopwatch scheme, and it had been agreed to send a letter to town centre traders/retailers to gauge interest in participating in such a scheme. In response to a question, she confirmed that it was Force policy not to respond to reports of shoplifting unless there was a value of over £200 or a risk of harm. However, the PCSOs did play a deterrent role, and in helping to identify culprits via CCTV images.

In relation to anti-social behaviour caused by some young people in the town, Sgt Greenaway advised that the Police worked closely with local schools, and a lot of information/intelligence was gathered as a result of visiting the schools. The Safer Neighbourhood team would have a presence in the town during the lighter evenings over the Spring/Summer.

272/18

Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Cllr Mrs A Hartley reported on the following matters:

- Re-organisation of Highways department – all posts in the new structure had been allocated. There had been some voluntary redundancies, but also some new officers recruited. There would be a new ethos of being more visible and public facing. All enforcement activities (eg car parking) would be brought back into Highways' operations.
- Planning Committees – the current Area Committee arrangement was being reviewed, with a possible outcome being the amalgamation of these bodies into just one Planning Committee for the whole county.

In response to questions about ongoing issues in the town, she agreed to look into the Section 106 Agreement for the Waterside View housing development, and arrange for a temporary sign to be located in the Sparbridge car park pending the pay and display machine being re-instated.

273/18

Minutes

It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Wignall and

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the Town Council meeting on the 4th March, 2019 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor as a true record.

274/18 **Planning & Infrastructure Committee**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2019 were received for information, and noted.

275/18 **Cemetery Working Group**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2019 were received for information, and noted.

276/18 **Vision Plan Working Group**

Unfortunately, Cllr B Reincke was not present to provide an update on the work of the Group. However, his notes of the meeting on 11 March 2019 had been circulated to Members. The Town Mayor reported that the Group had met Corrie Davies, Shropshire Council's new Place Plan Officer, and it had been a positive discussion. The next meeting of the Working Group would be on 10 April 2019 at 1.30pm at the Town Hall.

277/18 **Town and Deputy Mayor's Monthly Engagements**

The Town Mayor reported that he had attended the funeral of Kath Owen, former Councillor and Mayor, at St Mary's Church. He had also attended a site visit with the Assistant Clerk to meet with representatives of Shropshire Council and the Canal & River Trust with a view to finding a way to get the Tetchill Brook cleared.

278/18 **Action List from March's Meeting**

The Town Mayor reported that he, Cllr G Elner and the Assistant Clerk had met with representatives of Shropshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) on 26 March 2019 to discuss the potential designation of Birch Road Pond as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). SWT would like to include Birch Road Recreation Area within the designated area of the proposed LNR. It would not impact on the current use and maintenance of the Recreation Area, although the Trust had asked if some areas could be left unmown and additional trees planted. The LNR application process was quite involved, and advice would be sought on ensuring the Council's interests were safeguarded.

It was moved by Cllr Mrs A Wignall, seconded by Cllr J Frost and

RESOLVED - that the Birch Road Recreation Area be included within the designated area for the Local Nature Reserve.

There was then a discussion about a potential name for the Local Nature Reserve. It was moved by Cllr Mrs A Wignall, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED - that "Ellesmere Nature Reserve" be put forward as the name for the LNR.

In relation to the signs being commissioned to mark the centenary of Save the Children, the Town Mayor showed a couple of sample designs that had been prepared by Sigtists Ltd. Materials-wise, aluminium with a plastic coating was the most cost-effective.

There was a discussion about the design, and it was suggested that Signtists be asked to come up with a few different variations – with the wording also slightly changed to “The birthplace of” – which could then be emailed to Members for comments. It was moved by Cllr Mrs J Costa, seconded by Cllr Mrs J Clayton and

RESOLVED – that four signs (with the revised wording) be purchased from Signtists at a cost of £480, with the final design to be determined following further consultation with Members.

In relation to concerns about the appearance of the Town Centre Conservation Area that were discussed at the last meeting, the Town Mayor read out a letter from Ellesmere Chamber of Trade in response to the comments about the varied colour schemes of shop/business premises.

279/18

Residents’ Parking Permits

The Assistant Clerk reported that Wem Town Council had asked other town councils in the North Shropshire area if they were willing to write a joint letter of objection to Shropshire Council about the increases in residents’ off-street car parking permits. It was believed that Shropshire Council’s Scrutiny Committee would be reviewing the Parking Strategy in June 2019.

Members noted that Ellesmere residents had seen an increase from £75 per year to £192 per year for a permit, and there was concern at the impact of such a large jump in the cost – including the likelihood of more on-street parking.

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Wignall and

RESOLVED – that the request from Wem Town Council be supported, and that, as well as a joint letter of objection, Ellesmere Town Council also submit its own letter of objection/concerns about the parking charges.

280/18

Shropshire Council Consultation – Travel Assistance for SEND, Nursery and Post 16 Students

Shropshire Council were consulting on proposals to withdraw provision of transport for SEND nursery/pre-school aged students, and to increase the lower rate contribution for post 16 transport from £142.50 to £437.50pa - with SEND post-16 students also included. The changes would only effect new applications from 1 September 2019.

Members felt that the changes would have a particular negative and discriminatory impact on young people living outside the main towns in the county who wanted to continue their education at a Sixth form or College. Young people from Ellesmere had no choice but to travel to Oswestry, Wem, Whitchurch or Shrewsbury to gain access to further education, and such a large increase in the cost of travel could deter some students and impact disproportionately on less well-off families.

AGREED – that the comments as outlined above be submitted to Shropshire Council.

281/18

Annual Joint Dinner

Further to minute 255 at the last meeting, the Town Mayor reported that Ellesmere Rural Parish Council had indicated they would like a Joint Dinner this year. Three potential venues had been identified, and they would now be approached to see what they could offer. There was a further discussion about a potential date, and it was suggested that the preferred date for the Dinner be Friday 7 June 2019.

282/18

Correspondence

(i) Items for consideration

The following items of correspondence had been circulated for noting:

West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner Newsletter.

SALC Information Bulletin March 2019.

Keep Britain Tidy – Great British Spring Clean – confirmation from Tesco that their Spring Clean will take place on Thursday 4 April at 2pm. Councillors have been invited to take part.

Healthwatch Shropshire – Have your say on the future of the NHS in Shropshire.

Care Choices – launch of newly designed website to support people who are looking for care and support.

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

Mere Advisory Board meeting – 4 April. Cllrs J Frost, R Hartley and Mrs A Wignall to attend on behalf of ETC.

Shropshire Council Consultation – Reduction of Local Bus Service Subsidies – views were sought on proposed reductions in the public transport budget. This would impact on the level of bus services provided and increase fares on the Shrewsbury Park and Ride. For Ellesmere, the only proposed reduction related to the 208 Town Service, with the removal of the last journey of the day and one late morning journey.

AGREED – to inform Shropshire Council that there should not be any further cuts to bus services serving small market towns.

NALC Newsletter & Chief Executive's Bulletin. Noted.

Shropshire Council Employment Service – payment of salaries. The Assistant Clerk reported that Shropshire Council were implementing a new integrated HR, Payroll and Finance system from 1 April. This meant that the Town Council could no longer reimburse Shropshire Council for the payment of salaries etc by cheque. A couple of options had been suggested. It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr Mrs J Clayton and

RESOLVED – that option a) to make payments by the BACS system be approved.

2019/20 Council Tax Precept Payment – notification from Shropshire Council confirming that the 2019/20 precept would be paid to the Town Council on 26 April 2019. Noted,

NALC Annual Conference 2019 – 28/29 October. Noted.

Planning**a) Planning Applications For Consideration**

19/00187/REM – Approval of reserved matters (layout, scale, appearance, landscaping and access) pursuant of 14/04047/OUT for the mixed residential development of 50 dwellings – Proposed Marina, South of Canal Way, Ellesmere

While the main part of the application site was outside the Town boundary, the Council had now been consulted because of the impact on residential areas off Canal Way. Representations on behalf of residents of the Waterside View development had been heard earlier during the public participation session. Members welcomed the commencement of the first phase of the Marina development, and did not have any objection to the proposed layout, scale and appearance of the development. However, there were significant concerns about the proposal to access the site from Tetchill Brook Road, and the detrimental impact this would have on residents' amenity and highway safety. When the original masterplan for the Marina development was approved, the expectation was that a new access road between Oswestry Road and Canal Way would be constructed before any development commenced.

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED – that the Council objects to the application on the grounds that the proposed access via what is currently an unfinished housing estate road is inadequate for construction traffic, and will have a significant detrimental impact on the amenity of local residents. There are also concerns regarding highway and pedestrian safety arising from the increased volume of vehicles that will be using this access road.

The Town Council supported the outline application for the whole Marina development, but recommended that the infrastructure, main access, spinal roads and implementation of the flood risk management measures were put in place at the first stage of development. It was believed that this was broadly reflected in the conditions that were attached to the outline planning permission. Furthermore, the Planning Statement submitted by the applicant at that time stated that "while the marketing was taking place, a Reserved Matters planning application would be submitted for the provision of the access road and associated infrastructure". Therefore, the presumption was that the access road between Oswestry Road and Canal Way would be constructed as part of the first phase of development.

18/05815/VAR – Application to vary conditions 5 (link road infrastructure), 6 (landscaping scheme), 11 (environmental management plan) and 13 (construction traffic management plan); all pursuant of 14/04047/OUT (mixed development with associated infrastructure) to allow for submission of documents at Phase 2 Reserved Matters stage – Proposed Marina, South of Canal Way, Ellesmere

This application was linked to the previous application in terms of relaxing the conditions for the whole Marina development, and particularly the infrastructure requirements before any development commenced. Members reiterated their earlier comments in relation to the support that was given to the outline planning application on the basis that the new access road and associated infrastructure would be included in the first phase of development.

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED – that the Council objects to the application, particularly in relation to the variation to condition 5 for the link road infrastructure. The effect of the proposed variations in wording of the conditions are too vague, and do not provide any real clarity as to when the access road and infrastructure etc will be built. Relaxation of condition 5 will also enable the access to the first phase of development via Tetchill Brook Road - something that was never envisaged as part of the original masterplan.

The Town Council supported the outline application for the whole Marina development, but recommended that the infrastructure, main access, spinal roads and implementation of the flood risk management measures were put in place at the first stage of development. It was believed that this was broadly reflected in the conditions that were attached to the outline planning permission. Furthermore, the Planning Statement submitted by the applicant at that time stated that "while the marketing was taking place, a Reserved Matters planning application would be submitted for the provision of the access road and associated infrastructure". Therefore, the presumption was that the access road between Oswestry Road and Canal Way would be constructed as part of the first phase of development. The Highways report on the outline application stated that "it is considered wholly unreasonable that Canal Way should bear the brunt of construction traffic for the duration of the development".

b) Planning Decisions

The following decisions were noted:

19/00182/VAR – Variation of condition number 2 attached to planning permission 18/04874/FUL dated 20 December 2018 to allow amendments to the approved plans – 5 Diksmuide Drive, Ellesmere
Decision: Grant permission

19/00606/OUT – Outline application for the erection of one detached dwelling (all matters reserved) – land south east of The Woodlands, Elson Road, Ellesmere
Decision: Grant Permission

c) Planning Applications received after the Agenda was sent

19/01378/FUL – Alterations to existing vehicular access including 2no level access kerbs and 1no transition kerb and extension of existing tarmac driveway – 1 Windlass Drive, Ellesmere

It was moved by Cllr Mrs J Costa, seconded by Cllr J Frost and

RESOLVED – that the application be supported.

284/18

Finance

(i) Payments for January and February 2019

It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Wignall and

RESOLVED – that the payments for January and February 2019 be approved, confirmed and signed as a true copy.

(ii) Grounds Maintenance Contract Update

Further to the award of the Grounds Maintenance Contract for 2019-22 at the last meeting (minute 258vii), the Assistant Clerk reported that the successful tenderer had recommended a variation in the specification from 14 to 16 cuts per annum. This would result in a small increase in the cost of the contract. Details had been previously circulated to Members and agreement to the variation had been given. The contract had now been signed, and the first cut had been satisfactorily completed. Noted.

(iii) Street Lighting Maintenance Contract

The Assistant Clerk reported that interim arrangements were needed for the continued maintenance of the existing street lights, pending the procurement and fitting of the new LED lights. The existing contractors, E:on, had suggested a couple of options for an interim arrangement, and these were reported. It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr Mrs J Clayton and

RESOLVED – that, from 1 April 2019 until the fitting of the new LED lights, the repair/maintenance of street lights be carried out and charged for by E:on on a job-by-job basis.

(iv) New Town Hall Entrance

The Assistant Clerk reported that Shropshire Council Property Services, as project managers for the scheme, were now having to re-tender the contract for the works. She would be meeting with Property Services shortly to get a further update. Noted.

(v) Gardening Services Contract & Town Hanging Baskets/Planters

In relation to the renewal of the Gardening Services contract and the provision of hanging baskets, the Assistant Clerk reported that only one response/quote from the current contractor/providers had been received. There was an increase of £400 to £12,400 for the 2019/20 Gardening Services contract due to the inclusion of a shrub bed in Talbot Street. There was a 4% increase on last year's figure for the Hanging Baskets/Planters, now totalling £1,393.03 plus VAT. As these were a specialist contract/service that no-one else was willing to quote for, an exception to the financial/contract procedure rules was admissible. The current contractor/provider both provided a good level of service.

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

RESOLVED –

(a) that the quote of £12,400 from Barry’s Gardening Services be approved for 2019/20;

(b) that the quote of £1393.03 from Eastwick Garden Centre for the provision of hanging baskets for 2019/20 be approved.

(vi) Shropshire County Pension Fund

The Assistant Clerk reported that notification had been received that the Council’s deficit lump sum payment to the Pension Fund for 2019/20 was £1,500. Noted.

285/18

Finance – Cemetery Working Group

(i) Receipts and Payments for January and February 2019

It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr J Frost and

RESOLVED – that the receipts and payments for January and February 2019 be approved, confirmed and signed as a true copy

286/18

Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, 9th May, 2019 - Annual Meeting

287/18

Exclusion of Press and Public

It was moved by Cllr Mrs J Clayton, 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 involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Acts.

288/18

Exempt Minutes

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2019 were circulated.

It was moved by Cllr P Goulbourne, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Wignall and

RESOLVED – that the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2019 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor as a true record.

289/18

Town Clerk

A report and recommendations of the Staffing & Governance Sub-Committee regarding the recruitment of a new Town Clerk and the interim arrangements

(including the appointment of an Acting Town Clerk & RFO) was received and agreed.

The meeting closed at 10.02 pm

Mayor:

Date:

DRAFT