

ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held in Ellesmere Town Hall on Monday 4th November, 2019 at 7.15pm.

<u>PRESENT:</u>	Town Mayor (Chair):	Cllr P Goulbourne
	Councillors:	Cllrs N Cull, Mrs A Devismes, J Frost, M Hancock, R Hartley, G Hutchinson, D Lunn, Mrs J Mowl, B Reincke and Mrs A Wignall
	Town Clerk and RFO:	Jo Butterworth
	Assistant Clerk:	Phil Smith
	Unitary Councillor:	1
	Members of the Public:	0
	Press:	1
	Police:	0
	Guests:	0

Public Question Time No public were present

138/19 **To Receive Apologies and Reason for Absence.**

RESOLVED – that the apology received from Cllr G Elner – unwell – be approved.

139/19 **Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests in Items on the Agenda**

None received.

140/19 **Grant Dispensations**

None received.

141/19 **Response to Public Questions**

None received.

142/19 **Police Matters**

The Town Mayor read out the Police report for October, as follows:

“A total of 6 crimes recorded as follows:

- 3 assaults (all parties known to each other)
- 2 theft (shoplifting)
- 1 sexual assault

All the above were the subject of active enquiries. Whilst I appreciate that it is better to see an Officer at the meetings, this is not always possible, due to a number of reasons. If it means taking us off the streets when resources are low, then I’m afraid we cannot do this, as I’m sure you can understand”.

In relation to the latter statement, the Town Clerk reported that it had been hoped that one of the PCSOs would be in attendance at this meeting. Members referred to statements made previously by the Police & Crime Commissioner and the former Superintendent for community policing in North Shropshire that Officers should be able to regularly attend Council meetings to update Members and answer any questions/concerns. It was therefore **AGREED** to make further enquiries with the Police about this situation.

143/19

Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Cllr Mrs A Hartley reported on the following matters:

- Agreement had been secured for free parking in the town centre car parks from 2pm on 29 November 2019 for the Winter Festival event.
- The meeting of Shropshire Council on 12 December 2019 had been moved to 19 December due to the General Election taking place on the 12th. The Elections team was very busy preparing for the Election.
- Councillors had been receiving weekly updates on the preparedness for 'Brexit'.
- Notification had been received from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England that it was not looking to carry out a review of administrative and electoral boundaries in Shropshire. She understood that, subject to legal advice, Shropshire Council would seek to review all town and parish boundaries in the county, although this was unlikely to be until after the next local elections in May 2021. In the meantime, she suggested that the Town Council continue to hold discussions with Ellesmere Rural Parish Council with a view to reaching an agreed proposal.
- In terms of the budget, there were pressures facing Adult Services which was £9m overspent. There were also significant pressures on Childrens' Services – including the impact of 'County Lines' drug gangs. The latter was an issue across North Shropshire, and an awareness raising event was being held later in the month at the Marches School in Oswestry. It was **AGREED** that it would be useful for at least one Councillor to attend this event, and further details about it would be circulated.
- Following a recent further incident of flooding at Dairy Grove/Jebb Court, she had been continuing to press for action to resolve this long-running issue. The Town Clerk reported that she would provide an update later in the meeting.

144/19

Minutes

(i) Town Council Meeting – 7 October

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

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the Town Council meeting on 7 October, 2019 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor as a true record.

(ii) Planning & Infrastructure Committee – 15 October

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2019 were noted.

(iii) Finance, Asset & Resources Committee – 17 October

At minute FAR 11/19 there was a recommendation that a request from the Ellesmere Chamber of Commerce for a contribution of £1,000 towards the cost of the production and distribution of the annual Ellesmere promotional leaflet be agreed for the current financial year, but with no commitment to any further funding. Cllr B Reincke provided feedback on the Chamber meeting on 30 October 2019 which some Members had attended. The meeting had been addressed by a tourism consultant who had presented a number of proposals for attracting more visitors to the town. As reported at the Committee meeting, the Chamber Secretary had indicated that they would be asking the Town Council for further financial support to take these proposals forward. Concern was expressed by some Members at requests for funding that had not been budgeted for. The Town Clerk advised that there was enough money in contingencies/reserves to meet the cost of the leaflet production, but she was seeking a meeting with the Chamber to discuss issues of mutual interest in terms of promoting the town. Members agreed that consideration of any further requests from the Chamber for financial support be deferred until after the meeting with them and further information was available.

It was moved by Cllr B Reincke, seconded by Cllr R Hartley and

RESOLVED – that, despite the request not being submitted before the 2019/20 budget was set, a grant/donation of £1,000 to the Ellesmere Chamber of Commerce for the production of the 2019 Ellesmere leaflet be approved, but with no commitment to any further funding.

The remainder of the draft minutes were noted.

145/19 **Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor's Monthly Engagements**

The list of engagements attended was attached to the agenda, and was noted.

146/19 **Action List from October's meeting**

An updated list had been circulated, and was noted.

147/19 **Town Clerk's Report**

The report was noted.

148/19 **Youth Engagement**

The Town Mayor and Cllr Mrs A Devismes (Council Youth Representative) reported on recent visits they had made to the Ellesmere Youth Group at the Market Hall and Ellesmere Primary School. Both visits had been very positive, and the young people had given their views about the town and what sorts of things they would like to see or be involved in – eg: combating climate change. It was proposed to keep in contact with the Youth Group and the School, and the list of suggestions/ideas made by the young people would be circulated to Members.

149/19

Climate Change

The Town Clerk reported that she had attended a public Climate Change meeting in Wem on 11 October 2019, which included information about the initiatives being taken by Wem Town Council to reduce carbon emissions etc – eg: setting up a Wem area forum. There had also been a presentation from Marches Energy about ways to reduce energy consumption, and it was suggested that it would be useful for them to engage with the Climate Change Working Group. A meeting of the Working Group would be arranged for later in the month. Marches Energy had previously worked with the Council in 2009, and a low carbon communities report had been produced at that time which would be circulated to Members for information.

The report was noted.

150/19

National Tree Charter Day

Further to minute 120/19 at the last meeting, the Town Mayor reported that the Country Parks Officer at The Mere had recommended a eucalyptus tree for planting in Cremorne Gardens to mark National Tree Charter Day on 30 November 2019. The cost of the tree and planting would be £50. There would be a small ceremony for the planting, and it was agreed that young people from the Primary School/Youth Group etc be invited.

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

RESOLVED – that the purchase and planting of a eucalyptus tree in Cremorne Gardens at a cost of £50 be approved.

151/19

Community Governance Review

Further to minute 123/19 at the last meeting and the update from Shropshire Councillor Mrs A Hartley earlier in the meeting, the Town Clerk reported that she had spoken to the Clerk at Ellesmere Rural Parish Council (ERPC) about further discussions on any potential boundary changes, and had been informed that there was unlikely to be an opportunity for a meeting until the New Year.

In the meantime it was proposed to establish a Task & Finish Group to continue to put forward the case for a Community Governance Review and to explore further with ERPC.

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

RESOLVED - that a Community Governance Review Task & Finish Group consisting of Cllrs N Cull, G Elner, P Goulbourne, M Hancock and R Hartley be established.

152/19

West Mercia PCC – Rural Crime Strategy Consultation

The West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner was consulting on a Rural Crime Strategy which set out his vision for tackling and preventing rural crime, as well as addressing the concerns of local communities. The full document had been circulated to Members.

Responses to a short series of questions about the Strategy and its aspirations were discussed and agreed.

153/19 **Birch Road Local Nature Reserve (LNR)**

Further to minute 94/19, Cllrs G Elner, P Goulbourne and R Hartley along with the Town Clerk had met with representatives of Shropshire Wildlife Trust to discuss the proposed management plan for the LNR. A copy of the finalised Management Plan for 2020 to 2022 had been circulated. Natural England required formal agreement of the Plan as part of the LNR application process.

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

RESOLVED – that the Ellesmere Local Nature Reserve Management Plan 2020 to 2022 be approved.

154/19 **Open Watercourse, Old Dairy Site**

Further to Minute 126/19 at the last meeting and the update from Shropshire Councillor Mrs A Hartley earlier in the meeting, the Town Clerk reported that Shropshire Council had written to the riparian owners/stakeholders of the land with the overgrown watercourse requiring them to take action to clear the watercourse within 28 days. She added that McCarthy and Stone were also pressing Shropshire Council for action to be taken following recent incidences of flooding at their development at Jebb Court and its impact on residents.

The report was noted.

155/19 **Ellesmere Winter Festival**

The Town Clerk reported that notification had been received that the town centre roads would be closed between 4pm and 9pm on Friday 29 November 2019 for the Winter Festival.

As in previous years, the Town Christmas Lights would be switched-on on that evening, and a number of Councillors volunteered to help with the switch-on.

156/19 **Correspondence**

i) A list of items of correspondence that had been circulated during the month was appended to the agenda for information.

(ii) Correspondence for Discussion

Ellesmere Sculpture Initiative – request for a letter of support for their proposed ‘Labyrinth’ project to celebrate the work of Eglantyne Jebb and the centenary of her founding of the Save the Children Fund.

It was moved by Cllr J Frost, seconded by Cllr G Hutchinson and

RESOLVED – that a letter in support of the ‘Labyrinth’ project be sent to Ellesmere Sculpture Initiative for use in their applications for funding for the project.

Shrewsbury – Chester Rail Users’ Association – request for support for their campaign for the reinstatement of the 09:43 northbound train at Gobowen station.

It was moved by Cllr Mrs A Wignall, seconded by Cllr D Lunn and

RESOLVED – that the Council support the lobbying campaign for the reinstatement of the above train service.

Citizen’s Advice Shropshire – invitation to their AGM on 21 November 2019 at 5.30pm at Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury. Noted.

(iii) Correspondence received after the Agenda being sent out

Thanks and appreciation from Reverend Philip Edge, former Vicar of St Mary’s Parish Church, for his retirement card from the Town Council and the comments and kind words he received.

E-mail from Shropshire Council Streetworks team in response to concerns raised at the last meeting about the damage caused to the verge at Elson Road following recent utility works – reinstatement of the verges found to be compliant, although an inspector would be asked to take another look, and request made to Scottish Power to donate 100 daffodil bulbs to replace those that may have been disturbed by their works.

Shropshire Council Waste Management – information about the Refill Scheme – an award-winning grassroots campaign to prevent plastic pollution at source.

AGREED – to refer consideration of the Refill Scheme to the Climate Change Working Group.

157/19

Planning

a) Planning Applications For Consideration

19/04738/TCA – 19 Church Street, Ellesmere – Fell 1no eucalyptus tree within Ellesmere Conservation Area.

It was moved by Cllr D Lunn, seconded by Cllr G Hutchinson and

RESOLVED – that the application be supported.

b) Planning Decisions – Recent decisions to grant planning permission for change of use of 31 Cross Street to A3 restaurant, an extension at Sandycroft, Birch Road and extension over garage at 20 Diksmuide Drive were noted.

(c) Planning applications received after the issue of the Agenda

None received.

158/19

Budget Deliberations 2020/21

The Town Clerk reported that 8 applications had been received for a grant/donation in the next financial year, and these would be considered in the first instance by the Finance, Asset & Resources Committee along with any further requests for financial assistance by the Chamber of Commerce. Noted.

159/19

Finance/Contracts

(i) Payments for September 2019

The payments made during September, 2019 had been circulated with the Agenda. It was moved by Cllr R Hartley, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Wignall and

RESOLVED - that the payments for September 2019 be approved, confirmed and signed as a true copy.

(ii) Detailed Income & Expenditure (second quarter)

The income and expenditure accounts for the second quarter (July – September 2019) had been circulated. It was moved by Cllr R Hartley, seconded by Cllr G Hutchinson and

RESOLVED - that the income and expenditure accounts for the period July to September 2019 be approved and confirmed.

(iii) Insurance Premium

The Town Clerk reported that there would be a small reduction in the cost of the Council's contract with Peninsula for HR/Employment services due to VAT no longer being charged on the insurance policy that underpinned the contract. Noted.

(iv) VAT Implications of Planned Town Hall Projects

Further to minute 130ix at the last meeting, the Town Clerk read out correspondence received from the SLCC's VAT Specialist which included the potential cost for providing advice to the Council. As the projects were now unlikely to be delivered until the next financial year, it was proposed that a sum for such advice be included in the draft budget estimates for 2020/21. Noted.

(v) LED Street Lighting Conversion

Further to minute 10/19 at the last meeting of the Finance, Asset & Resources Committee, the preferred contractor had carried out a survey of the Town Council's street lights. A small number of the existing columns had been identified as needing remedial works, and an updated quote for the conversion and the repairs to existing columns had been submitted. The additional cost could be funded from the loan that had been approved earlier in the year by the Public Works Loan Board. The contractors had also recommended that the majority of the new LED lights be set at a 20 watt output

It was moved by Cllr G Hutchinson, seconded by Cllr J Frost and

RESOLVED – that the revised quote from the preferred contractor for the street light conversion and associated repairs in the sum of £16,916.39 be approved, and that the tender be awarded to the preferred contractor.

160/19

Finance – Cemetery Working Group

(i) **Payments for September 2019**

The payments made during September, 2019 had been circulated with the Agenda. It was moved by Cllr N Cull, seconded by Cllr G Hutchinson and

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

161/19

Date of Next Meeting

Monday, 2nd December, 2019 at 7.15pm.

162/19

Exclusion of Press and Public

It was moved by Cllr Mrs A Wignall, seconded by Cllr G Hutchinson 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 may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Acts.

163/19

Exempt Minutes

(i) The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2019 were circulated.

It was moved by Cllr B Reincke, seconded by Cllr N Cull and

RESOLVED – that the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2019 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor as a true record.

(ii) The exempt minutes of the Finance, Asset & Resources Committee meeting on 17th October 2019 were circulated for information

(iii) The exempt minutes of the Staffing & Governance Sub-Committee meeting on 22 October 2019 were circulated for information.

164/19

Planning Enforcement

The Town Clerk reported on a notification received from Shropshire Council regarding a planning enforcement case.

The report was noted.

165/19

Town Council Staff

Recommendations from the Staffing & Governance Sub-Committee were received and discussed.

166/19

Town Hall Staff

An update was received.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

Mayor:

Date: