

## **ELLESMERE TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held virtually on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7.15pm.

<b><u>PRESENT:</u></b>	Town Mayor (Chair):	Cllr P Goulbourne
	Councillors:	Cllrs N Cull, A Devismes, R Hartley, G Hutchinson, G Elnor, J Frost, J Mowl, M Hancock, T Hunter and Mrs A Wignall
	Town Clerk and RFO:	Jo Butterworth
	Deputy Town Clerk and Deputy RFO:	Jean Hynes
	Unitary Councillor:	0
	Members of the Public:	0
	Press:	1
	Police:	0
	Guests:	2

**Public Question Time** No public were present.

119/20 **To Receive Apologies and Reasons for Absence.**

None received.

120/21 **Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

None requested.

121/20 **Grant Dispensations**

The Clerk advised that the view of the National Association of Local Councils was that all or most Members of a Parish/Town Council will hold a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting setting the Council's precept. Three years ago, in accordance with S.33 of the Localism Act 2011, all members of the Town Council were granted a dispensation to allow the precept requirements for 2018/19 **and for the following three financial years** to be discussed and determined (Minute 196/17). Noted.

122/20 **Youth Provision**

Gill Jones & Wayne Greenshields of The New Saints Foundation were welcomed to the meeting to report on the youth outreach project that had been completed throughout December.

They reported on the success of the project and the and the six scoping visits that had been conducted. At the initial meeting Wayne and his colleague Corey had met with Cllrs Hunter and Devismes as well as the local PSCO's to gain an overview of the current concerns of the town. During following meetings, they engaged with and gained feedback from lots youths of varying ages (but mainly 11 – 16 years of age),

families as well as other local residents and local business owners to enable them to build up a picture of what is needed by way of youth provision, some of the youths felt that the current youth club was slightly too young for them to attend. The team were very impressed by the level of positivity and support shown throughout the community at the possibility of seeing something developed for the youth of the town.

The visits have shown that Ellesmere does not have huge problems with youth, the main cause for problems within the town appears to be boredom. The feedback identified the following:

Residents and businesses in the main back the idea of youth activities aimed at the 12-to-16-year age group – with more freedom and less intervention-based youth work or prescribed youth work.

A weekly youth café or club would definitely enable the Town Council and the town to offer young people the opportunity to grow, develop and express themselves in a positive setting with peer mentoring available to all.

The Multi Use Games area or skate park idea aimed at older children was brought up by a lot of people. Our initial thoughts are that if this could be explored, it would support the youth agenda for the Town Council and would remove some barriers to engagement and causes of anti-social behaviour.

The police presence on the streets in Ellesmere is limited (due to limited resources), and young people are very aware of when the police will and won't be around. We wonder whether an event or series of events where the police and young people can come together could create a stronger, more harmonious relationship.

Finally, businesses and residents were very happy to talk to the team, and to interact – although of course, the time of year and the impact of Covid-19 restrictions has impacted on total levels of engagement.

Several questions were asked:

Q. Why stop at the age 16?

A. 16-18-year olds are difficult to engage with as they tend to be engaging in different activities and harder to reach. 11-16-year olds are more receptive and if they can have positive role models provided within these years, they have more chance of becoming young sensible adults.

Q. Did you speak to Ellesmere Rangers or the current weekly Youth club?

A. Not at this stage, we hope to engage with them during the next stage.

Q. You have suggested a youth café, however from our survey it was felt that kids did not want supervised activities.

A. Kids want and need structure, without too much supervision, the way we work is to allow them to do the activities that they want to whilst mingling with them so that we are there should they need to talk to anyone, this is the way we work our other youth cafes, and it is successful.

Q. Did you manage to engage with any of the Ellesmere Cadets?  
A. Yes, it is a good example of kids liking structure.

Gill Jones went onto to explain that although TNS is a Football Foundation they try to signpost children to different types of local activities dependant on their interests.

Based on the levels of engagement and feedback received to date, the plan is to use Stage 2 of the project to further to engage with young people 'on the streets', with local schools and youth clubs, and to supplement this with a pilot youth café/youth club provision.

123/20

**Police Matters.**

PC Crump submitted a report prior to the meeting which was read out. He confirmed that for the month of December, there have been 5 Recorded Crimes, broken down as follows:

- 2 x Theft (from a Vehicle and Business)
- 1 x Damage (to Motor Vehicle).
- 1 x Fraud (involving Scam)
- 1 x Assault (Known to each other)

Of those above, Police have active ongoing enquiries in 2.

There has been a problem with people throwing eggs, we are actively looking for those responsible. We are increasing foot patrol in the area and have spoken to some of the householders.

Police are continuing to receive a lot of calls/emails regarding COVID. We are working closely with Shropshire Council Licensing and other Agencies to resolve these issues in the best interest of all concerned. Licensees have been very welcoming when visits are conducted. A COVID Fine has been issued. Extra COVID patrols have been put in place throughout the period.

124/20

**Shropshire Council Report.**

Shropshire Cllr A Hartley had forwarded her apologies, the Clerk read a report that Cllr Hartley had provided for council which was as follows.

Our latest figures for infection are. 238/100,000. This is double the rates at Christmas. We are still the lowest in the West Midlands. Telford and Wrekin rates are 350/100,000 and some areas in the WM are 500/100,000. We have a problem with WM People increasingly visiting Shropshire for shopping and leisure walking. We are actively pursuing the Police and Regulatory Services to act on this.

The next national review of Tiers is due on 5th January; however, indications are that the Government are reviewing rates daily and won't hesitate to immediately

move an area to a higher tier if the area is showing cause for concern.

Our local MPs are chasing Ministers and our Chief Executive is chasing NHS on a local level regarding the perceived slow pace of rolling out vaccinations in Shropshire. Also, re the lack of response from the NHS to organise the many sites, that we are offering for mass vaccinations. We will continue to push for more centres in Shropshire.

We have been looking at the impact of Brexit on Shropshire, especially our farming and livestock industry. We recognise we need to offer support where we can.

We have also asked Government for urgent clarification around increased financial support for local businesses during the pandemic and increased funding required for additional work the Council will be undertaking around infection prevention, contact tracing, and enforcement of restrictions. As they have been all through the pandemic, our emergency support and Community Resilience Teams are there to help anyone in our communities who need assistance. Contact 0345 6789028 or go on the Shropshire Council Website.

125/20 Town **Public Participation Session**

None received.

126/20 **Minutes**

**(a) Town Council Meeting – 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

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

**RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Town Council meeting on 7th December 2020 be approved and signed by the Town Mayor as a true record.**

**(b) Planning and Infrastructure Committee – Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

The draft minutes for Planning and Infrastructure Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020 were noted.

127/20 **Finance/Contracts**

**Final 2021/22 Budget**

The Finance, Asset & Resources Committee had looked at the 2021/22 budget proposals in detail on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020, and the draft minutes of that meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Committee had made several recommendations for consideration by the Full Council. The Town Clerk reported that since that meeting, a rounding adjustment had been made to the figures which meant the precept requirement (with a 1% council tax increase) was £232,680.30

(equivalent to an increase of £1.55 for a Band D property per year and 0.03 pence per week)

The following information had been circulated to Members:

- Final Budget estimates for 2021/22.
- Budget notes document.
- Earmarked Reserves.
- Outstanding loans.
- Bank Balances.
- Detailed Income and Expenditure by Projected Heading.
- Ellesmere Town Council Tax Base Figures

Cllr Wignall declared a personal interest, being on the Friends of Ellesmere Library group and asked if it was too late for Shropshire Council apply for library funding. Members informed her that they had missed the opportunity for the next financial year and would need to apply in October 2021 for the 2022/23 budget, she was also informed that the remaining £1,250 in ear marked reserves from 2020/21 was to be moved back into general reserves.

The Clerk informed members that since the FAR meeting she had received confirmation from Shropshire Council that the Town Council would be receiving 2020/21 Neighbourhood fund monies of £11,416, which will be earmarked as the previous year's amounts had been. She also explained that she had suggested the £65,000 for an ear marked reserve called Town Hall Capital Reserve to be created incorporating the monies from the current Town Hall Roof & Maintenance reserves and grouping them together.

It was moved by Cllr G Elner, seconded by Cllr N Cull and

**RESOLVED –**

**(a) that the total Town Council expenditure for 2021/22 be reduced to £277,758.**

**(b) that the following variations to the draft budget estimates and ear marked reserves be approved;**

- **Salaries allow for annual necessary annual increments & 2% increase.**
- **Staff Training be increased to £1,150.**
- **Computer Expenses increase to £1,500.**
- **Licences to include £280 to pay for Zoom licence.**
- **Councillors Training Expenses to £650.**
- **Street Lighting Electricity to reduce by £3,485 to £1,405.**
- **Street Lighting Maintenance be reduced from £2,500 to £1,570.**
- **Christmas Lighting to increase to £7,000.**
- **Gardening additional costs increase to £2,500.**
- **Youth Provision budget be set to £3,250.**
- **Grants budget to be set at £1,400.**

- Market Charter Event budget £250.
- TH Licences reduced to from £1,500 to £1,000.
- Uniforms doubled the budget to £200.
- Cleaning Materials budget £800.
- TH Building Maintenance £7,000.
- TH General Maintenance £7,000.
- Town Hall Wages & ER's Pension Contributions.
- Cemetery Working Group Salaries additional 2%.
- CWG Printing & Photocopying £200.
- CWG Expenditure reduce from £7,000 to £3,000.

#### **Ear Marked Reserves**

- that TH Roof & TH Maintenance headings and the sum of £65,000 be combined under the new heading Town Hall Capital Reserves.
- that £2,250 for election costs be ear marked as agreed under minute number FAR 24/19 in 2019.
- that the remaining £1,250 in the library ear marked reserve be moved back to general reserves.

All other ear marked reserves will remain the same.

128/20

#### **Council Tax Precept Request 2021/22**

Further to the discussions and recommendations at minute 127 above, it was moved by Cllr G Hutchinson, seconded by Cllr P Goulbourne and

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (a) that a precept request of £232,680.30 be approved.
- (b) that the Band D Council Tax increase is 1.0% from £155.45 to £157.00 – equivalent to 0.03p per week.

129/20

#### **Payments for November 2020**

The payments made during November 2020 had been circulated with the Agenda.

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

**RESOLVED –** that the payments for November 2020 be approved, confirmed, and signed.

130/20

#### **Cemetery Working Group**

#### **Payments for November 2020**

The payments made during November 2020 had been circulated with the Agenda.

It was moved by Cllr N Cull seconded by Cllr G Elner and

**RESOLVED** – that the payments for November 2020 be approved, confirmed, and signed.

131/20

**Old Workhouse Cemetery, Swanhill**

The Clerk reported that she had attended a meeting of the Cemetery Working group in November where members had expressed a wish for the Town Council to acquire the Old Workhouse land from Shropshire Council and for them to manage it as they do Ellesmere Cemetery. The Clerk explained if the Town Council were to acquire the asset, that for it to be managed by CWG the asset would need to be split 50/50, with a 60/40 financial split as the Cemetery is and that it would require funding from both Town and Ellesmere Rural Parish Council. The Clerk advised the working group that the Town Council had not shown a desire to take the asset over in the past and recommended that before any action take place that CWG ask if ERPC would be happy for them to pursue the line of enquiry. She further highlighted to the group that for the Town Council to consider the request evidence would need to be show that residents from both parishes are happy to fund the land.

Following the last ERPC meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> December correspondence had been received from Melanie Joyce, Clerk to ERPC to confirm that her recommendation was not to progress any motion to take over the Old Workhouse Cemetery in its current condition, ERPC Cllrs asked her to write to the Unitary Cllrs, in an attempt to get SC to tidy it up. If/once this has been done, they may wish to progress a take-over.

The Clerk's report was noted, and members discussed whether the land could be used to promote tourism in the town due to its history. Cllr Elner suggested that a letter in support of ERPC's letter be sent to Shropshire Council.

Cllr Hartley did not think that Shropshire Council would have the money to spend to maintain the land.

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

**RESOLVED: to write a letter to Shropshire Council asking them to bring the Old Workhouse into a good state of repair.**

Cllr R Hartley abstained from the vote.

132/20

**2021 Census**

The Clerk reported that The Office of National Statistics (ONS) will carry out the 2021 Census on 21st March 2021. The Census will provide a picture of England and Wales, revealing the size and characteristics of the population and providing valuable information that will be used to inform policy development, funding allocations and future service planning. The 2021 census will be predominantly an online Census with paper forms made available to people that are unable to take part online.

Each household in Shropshire will receive a postcard during the 22nd-27th February 2021 raising awareness of the 2021 Census, followed by an initial contact pack

(during the 3rd-12th March 2021) requesting each household to complete the Census questionnaire online or by requesting a paper questionnaire. A reminder phase begins after the 22nd March 2021 for non-respondents involving reminder letters and finally visits from field staff. Completing the Census is a legal requirement and as a last resort ONS have the option of taking court action against non-respondents. Local people will be recruited as field staff and the job vacancies will be advertised once information is received. Noted.

133/20

**Electrical Vehicle Charging Points.**

Ellesmere has been nominated to receive 4 Electric Vehicle Charging points, these will be located in Cross Street carpark. Noted.

134/20

**Progress Report**

Noted.

117/20

**Future Meetings**

Town Council – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021.

The Clerk reported that following the earlier meeting of the Planning & Infrastructure Committee and additional meeting will be required in January, date TBC. Noted.

The meeting closed at 20.35pm.

Mayor: .....

Date: .....