

### Background

The existing beacon, created for the 2012 Diamond Jubilee, is stored outdoors and has been used for various events over the years. Due to its size and condition, the Town Council is advised to reassess its future use, storage and potential replacement.

Following the challenges involved with transportation and set up of the existing beacon during the D-Day 80 Commemorations the resolution below was passed on 27.6.24

**RESOLVED:- to receive the report from the meeting on 26.6.24 and approve the following recommendations from the meeting that .**

- **the Town Council does not pursue the idea of finding a permanent site for the beacon in the town.**
- **the Town Council continues to explore alternative temporary locations in the town to site the beacon.**
- **the Town Clerk investigates the cost of purchase of a gas fired beacon which is easy to install, transport and light.**
- **the Town Clerk seeks quotes from a structural engineer to undertake a structural inspection of the beacon.**

This report outlines the Clerks findings as per points 3 and 4 of the 27.6.24 resolution.

### Structural Inspection

Two companies have been approached for a quote to inspect the beacon and a response is awaited.

### Future Options

#### 1. Continue Using the Existing Beacon

- If the Town Council wish for the existing beacon to continue to be used, it is the advice of the Town Clerk that it is no longer safe or practical for the transportation, erection and lighting of the beacon to be managed using staff and volunteers. Therefore a company must be contracted to manage its transportation, setup, lighting and removal.
- This contract will involve specialised equipment (e.g., telehandler) and splitting responsibilities across contractors and there will be budget implications for this every time the beacon is used.

#### 2. Purchase a New Beacon

Options include:

- **VE Day 80 Generic Gas-Fuelled Beacon:** £549
- **VE Day 80 Generic Lamp Light of Peace:** £55
- **Bespoke Gas-Fired Beacon:** Designed for easier transportation and storage.

**Estimate for a bespoke design from the designer of Ellesmere's Beacon:**

- **Option 1:** Simple brazier-style beacon (4m height, lightweight, bolt-together design). **Cost:** £2,250
- **Option 2:** Bespoke design inspired by Wem's coat of arms (e.g., Phoenix imagery). **Cost:** £2,810

### Funding

- There is currently £519 in WSSA reserves, initially allocated for a fixing point at Wem Rec. These funds could be redirected for a new beacon or pay for the

structural inspection of the existing one. The one off capital cost of a new beacon could be taken from general reserves as it would then become a council asset.

### Considerations

- After VE Day 80 commemorations in 2025, opportunities for national beacon events may decrease.
- The structural inspection may identify work needed to existing beacon.
- Should a bespoke beacon be commissioned its design should seek to balance usability and cost.

### Decision Needed

1. Based on the quotes received, to consider whether to proceed with the structural inspection of the current beacon.
2. If the Town Council decide not to proceed with the structural report to consider whether to purchase a new, easily transportable gas-fired beacon.
3. If a new beacon is to be purchased to agree the type required.,
4. To request WSSA trustees to make earmarked funds available to offset costs of either inspection or purchase.

Wem Beacon



Ellesmere Beacon

