

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Wem Town Council held on Thursday 30th January 2025
at 7pm in the Town Council Meeting Room, Wem Library, High Street, Wem

Present: - Cllrs D Parry (Mayor), R Barker, P Broomhall, R Dodd, R Drummond, R Gascoigne, C Granger, D Hill, M Hoffmann, P Johnson, M Meakin.

Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).
1 member of the public present.

839/25 To note apologies for absence received

Apologies were received from Cllrs Glover, Towers and Soul.

840/25 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests.

a) To receive any disclosure of pecuniary interest - Members are reminded that they must not participate in the discussion or voting on any matter in which they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

The following interests were declared

Councillor	Item	Dispensation
Cllr Broomhall	Twin-hatted member declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council	Dispensation to allow participation and voting on all matters relating to Shropshire Council
Cllr Drummond	Item 852/25 Trustee of WSSA Item 853/25a Millennium Green Volunteer	
Cllr Meakin	Item 852/25 Trustee of WSSA	

b) To consider any applications for Dispensations under s33 of the Localism Act 2011. An application was received from Cllr Drummond to speak and not vote on any items relating to Wem Sports and Social Association (WSSA)

RESOLVED:- to permit Cllr Drummond a dispensation to speak but not vote on any matters relating to Wem Sports and Social Association for the Council term.

841/25 Public Participation - a period of 15 minutes will be set aside for residents of Wem Town to speak- no matters raised.

842/25 Council Minutes - to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 19.12.24 and Budget Meeting 23.1.25.

RESOLVED:- to approve as a correct record the minutes of the ordinary meetings of the Town Council held on 19.12.24 and 23.1.25 and they were duly signed by The Mayor as a correct record.

843/25 Progress report - To consider the Clerks progress report on decisions made at previous meetings.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

844/25 Planning Applications

a) to note the recent planning decisions.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

b) To consider the following planning applications

25/00062/FUL: 82 Station Road, Wem, SY4 5BL

Proposal: Proposed outbuilding shed extension to the rear of the existing detached shed/garage.

RESOLVED:- not to comment.

25/00152/FUL - 12 Bailey Close, Wem, SY4 5UR

Proposal: Erection of side/rear extensions and erection of a detached garage following removal of existing garage and conservatory, and other associated works

RESOLVED:- not to comment.

845/25 Finance and Accounts for Payment (copies to follow).

a) Budget report – to consider.

RESOLVED:- to note the report.

b) Internal Control checks – to note.

The Clerk reported that the December checks were to be carried out next week.

RESOLVED:- to note.

c) Accounts for payment - to approve accounts for payment.

RESOLVED:- to approve the following payments.

Direct Debits and payments made prior to meeting

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	BACS no
Shropshire Council	Salaries	£6,538.84		£6,538.84	BACSPAY ROLL
	HMRC	£2,861.15		£2,861.15	BACS HMRC
	Pensions	£2,124.17		£2,124.17	BACS LGPS
Unity Trust Bank	Manual handling December	£9.90	£0.00	£9.90	DD 75.24
Unity Trust Bank	Transaction charges	£12.30	£0.00	£12.30	DD 76.24
West Mercia Energy	Car Park Toilets Energy 1.11.24 - 31.11.24	£189.80	£9.49	£199.29	DD 77.24

Business2 Business	Telephone/Broad band	£108.47	£21.69	£130.16	DD 78.24
Lloyds Bank	Credit Card Balance	£3.00	£0.00	£3.00	DD 79.24
EE	Mobile Phones	£28.04	£5.61	£33.65	DD 80.24
WaterPlus	Car Park Toilet Water 8.12.24 - 8.1.25	£46.45	£0.00	£46.45	DD 81.24
Waterplus	Allotment Water 12.12.24 - 12.1.25	£38.47	£7.69	£46.16	DD 82.24
West Mercia Energy	Car Park Toilets Energy 1.12.24 - 31.12.24	£227.24	£11.36	£238.60	DD 83.24
Unity Trust Bank	BACS charges	£17.68	£0.00	£17.68	DD 84.24
Total DDs / Early Payments				£12,261.35	

Credit Card Payments (for Information only)

Lloyds Bank	Monthly Charge	£3.00	£0.00	£3.00	CC20.24
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Payments

Supplier	Service	Net	Vat	Gross	Chq / BACS No
DW Evans	Grave digging Dec.	£1,032.00	£0.00	£1,032.00	210.24
ISM IT	IT Support	£124.59	£24.92	£149.51	211.24
Security Wise	CCTV Call Out	£98.00	£19.60	£117.60	212.24
Healthmatic	Car Park Toilets 17.12.24 - 16.1.25	£783.25	£156.65	£939.90	213.24
PG Skips	Swimming Pool Skip	£170.00	£34.00	£204.00	214.24
PG Skips	Cardboard Bin	£16.44	£3.29	£19.73	215.24
PG Skips	Cemetery Bin	£52.50	£10.50	£63.00	216.24
PG Skips	Rec. Bin	£65.76	£13.16	£78.92	217.24
Shropshire Council	Office rent / service charge Jan-Mar 25	£3,835.50	£0.00	£3,835.50	218.24
A Roberts	Expenses Oct- Dec	£45.76	£9.04	£54.80	219.24
M Fitton	Bus shelter cleaning	£75.00	£0.00	£75.00	220.24
Wem ADOS	Reimbursement (Photoboard)	£88.80	£0.00	£88.80	221.24
Screwfix*	Sundries	£26.69	£5.34	£32.03	222.24
Screwfix*	Workwear (groundsman)	£30.82	£6.17	£36.99	223.24
Screwfix*	Black paint	£18.32	£3.67	£21.99	224.24
Screwfix*	Sundries	£16.23	£3.25	£19.48	225.24
Screwfix*	Hardware	£51.39	£10.28	£61.67	226.24

Josh Higgins	Christmas Tree Removal	£200.00	£40.00	£240.00	227.24
SALC	Training	£35.00	£0.00	£35.00	228.24
Screwfix*	Sundries	£100.39	£20.08	£120.47	229.24
Screwfix*	Sundries	£19.22	£3.84	£23.06	230.24
Screwfix*	Paint	£16.66	£3.33	£19.99	231.24
J Ralphs	Train Tickets LAMMA	£38.19	£0.00	£38.19	232.24
Sign & Poster	Allotment Signs	£30.00	£6.00	£36.00	233.24
A Roberts	Train Tickets NABMA	£15.70	£0.00	£15.70	234.24
Shropshire Council	LEAP Licences	£120.00	£24.00	£144.00	235.24
Highline Electrical	Streetlight repair	£492.40	£98.48	£590.88	236.24
Timber Direct	Timber	£120.98	£24.20	£145.18	237.24
Healthmatic	Car Park Toilets 17.1-16.2	£783.25	£156.65	£939.90	238.24
Total New Payments				£9,179.29	

846/25 Finance Committee Meeting 17.1.25 to receive draft minutes from this meeting and consider any recommendations contained within.
It was reported that the majority of the recommendations from the meeting had been approved at the meeting on 23.1.25.

RESOLVED:- to receive the draft minutes from the Finance Committee meeting on 17.1.25 and to approve the recommendation under item 6c.

847/25 Health and Safety and Human Resources External Support- to consider quotes received.
The Clerk's report was discussed along with the four quotes received. The Clerk explained that having met with 3 out of 4 of the companies she would prefer a company that offered both Health and Safety Advice and HR Advice.

RESOLVED:- to enter into a 60 month contract with a 3 year break clause with Worknest to provide Health and Safety Compliance and Employment Law and Human Resources Support from 1.4.25 at a cost of £3,375 per annum.

848/25 Events

a) Events Liaison Group 2024 Christmas Festival Review Meeting 16.1.25 – to receive a report from.

RESOLVED:- to receive the report and in principal support the establishment of a Midsummer Market on 21.6.25 and to delegate authority to the Events Liaison Group to discuss this at a future meeting.

b) VE 80 Commemorations - to discuss whether to organise an event to mark this anniversary.

RESOLVED:- to agree to organise commemorations for VE80 in Wem and delegate authority to the Events Liaison Group to consider the options and report back to the February meeting.

c) Beacon – to consider report

The Clerk stated that she had approached 3 companies for a quote to undertake a structural inspection of the existing beacon but had only been able to secure 1 quote of £575 to undertake a visual structural inspection. Following a lengthy discussion it was

RESOLVED:-

- **Not to proceed with a structural inspection of the existing beacon and to cease to use it for any future beacon lighting events due to its age and ongoing issues with transportation, erection, lighting and removal of the beacon.**
- **To delegate authority to the Events Liaison Group to consider options concerning the purchase of a new beacon.**
- **To request that WSSA Trustees make the earmarked reserves for the beacon available for the purchase of a new beacon if deemed appropriate.**

849/25 Town Council Office relocation – to discuss.

RESOLVED:- to establish a working party comprising of Cllrs Gascoigne, Drummond, Parry, Barker and Broomhall with the following remit:

- **To review previously considered locations for a Town Council office.**
- **To consider any new locations.**
- **To report any findings back to the Town Council.**

850/25 Town Council Elections 2025 – to consider holding two drop-in information sessions in February / March to encourage people to stand for election.

RESOLVED:- to approve the organisation of two new councillor information sessions on 20th February 2025 and 6th March 2025 and to promote the elections at the Annual Town Meeting in March.

851/25 Streetlighting

a) 2024-25 Column Replacement Programme – to consider quote and lights selected.

RESOLVED:- to approve the 16 concrete columns selected for replacement with steel columns and the quote submitted by Highline Electrical to undertake the works as part of the streetlighting maintenance contract.

b) PCC Commissioners Community fund – to consider submitting an application for the supply and installation of a solar street light on junction of Oak Avenue and Jubilee Square.

RESOLVED:- that subject to receiving permission from the landowner to approve the submission of grant application to the Police and Crime Commissioner to supply and install a solar street light in Oak Avenue near its junction with the Jubilee Square and contribute £500 from the Neighbourhood Fund to this project.

852/25 WSSA Working party – to consider report from Cllr Barker outlining the findings of the group.

Cllr Meakin left the room and took no part in discussions.

The recommendations outlined in the report were considered and a lengthy and detailed discussion took place. The following decisions were made with regard to the individual recommendations detailed in the report:

RESOLVED:- That, with regard to Recommendation (1): to note the recommendation; and instruct the Town Clerk that approximate figures on the cost of staff time spent on the management and maintenance of Wem Sports and Social Association assets are to be provided as part of all future annual budget discussions. In addition, the Town Clerk will ensure that all new Town Councillors are briefed on the relationship between the Town Council and Wem Sports and Social Association.

RESOLVED:- That, with regard to Recommendation (2): the Town Clerk will submit the request of the Working Party to the trustees, and report back their response to a future meeting.

RESOLVED:- That, with regard to Recommendation (3): it be requested that the WSSA Annual Report is tabled as an agenda item for the Town Council to consider by 31st October each year.

RESOLVED:- That, with regard to Recommendation (4): the Association should be asked to consider ways to raise its profile within the community, and, in so doing, better acknowledge the relationship between the Town Council and the Association.

Thanks were recorded for the work of the working party on this matter.
Cllr Meakin returned to the meeting.

853/25 Correspondence

a) Millenium Green Trust - to consider request for additional funds.
Cllr Drummond left meeting and took no part in discussions.

RESOLVED:- to turn down the request as the Town Council has increased its annual contribution to the Millennium Green Trust for 2025-26 by £300.

Cllr Drummond returned to the room.

b) Garden Party Nominations – to consider submitting a nomination.

RESOLVED:- to nominate Liz Mayer for her significant contribution to Wem Town Hall.

c) Strengthening the standards and conduct framework consultation – to consider submitting a response to the survey.

RESOLVED:- that due to the short timescale for responses to delegate authority to the Mayor to respond to this survey on behalf of the Town Council.

d) Green Spaces & Active Travel Fund SALC Wellbeing Benches - Expression of Interest.

RESOLVED:- not to submit an expression of interest.

854/25 Reports

a) to receive written reports from the Council's representatives to other bodies.
None received.

b) to receive a written report from Shropshire Councillors Broomhall and Towers.

RESOLVED:- to note the reports.

855/25 Dates of future meetings – to note the date and time of February meeting

RESOLVED:- to note that the February meeting will be held at 7pm on 27.2.25.

856/25 Exclusion of Public and Press

To resolve that as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the meeting in accordance with Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

RESOLVED:- to exclude the press and public.

Staffing matter – to discuss.

RESOLVED:- to

- **confirm the permanent employment status of the Facilities and Services Officer.**
- **approve an incremental pay rise to scale point 14, for the Facilities and Services Officer as per the terms of the contract, effective from 1 April 2025, to reflect their proven capabilities and contribution to the team.**

Meeting ended 20.45

Mayor.....