



MINUTES OF A MEETING

held on

Wednesday 11 July 2007

at

The Guildhall, High Street, Newport

PRESENT: **Cllrs:** Glyn Gratton – Town Mayor
Adam Stanton – Deputy Town Mayor
Daniel Ashley
Eric Carter
Brenda Flowers
Tony Forrester
Adrian Meredith
Roy Scammell
Bob Unwin
Siân Walker

IN ATTENDANCE: D. L. Halliday – Town Clerk

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Cllrs Phil Norton and Arthur Radcliffe.

66/07-08 SUSPENSION OF MEETING

There being no members of the public present at the commencement of the meeting it continued without suspension.

67/07-08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

68/07-08 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. A list of the Town Mayor's & Deputy Town Mayor's engagements is **attached at Appendix 'A'**.
- b. A copy of arrangements for attending the Code of Conduct Training was circulated to members, **attached at Appendix 'B'**.
- c. A letter from Telford & Wrekin CVS was circulated, **attached at Appendix 'C'**. Members expressed their concerns at the use of the phrase "Rural Telford" excluding the designated Wrekin term.

- d. Copies of ASHTAV News 2007 Issue No. 2 were tabled.
- e. Members were informed that the 2008 edition of the Town Guide is in the process of being prepared. Any amendments are required by 24 August 2007. Copies of the current guide were circulated.
- f. Members were circulated with the Consultation Paper on service changes to the Wrekin Connect bus services **attached** at **Appendix 'D'**. They considered that additional stops to the town route be considered to cater for those living on the town outskirts, for example Boughey Road/ Longford Road/ Farm Grove. These options will be passed to TWC.

69/07-08 MINUTES

The Minutes of meetings held on 13 June and 20 June 2007 were approved as a true record.

FINANCE

70/07-08 Finance Statement

The Finance Statement for June 2007, **attached** at **Appendix 'E'** and the payments therein, were approved/ratified.

71/07-08 Thank You Letters

Thank you letters for grants awarded have been received from:

Newport P's & Q's
 Telford & Wrekin Arthritis Support Group
 Relate
 County Air Ambulance
 Friends of St. Nicholas Church

AUDIT 2006/07

72/07-08 Association with External Auditor

All members present confirmed they have no form of association with the External Auditors, Hacker Young of Vittoria Street, Birmingham.

73/07-08 2007 Annual Returns – Important Practical Points

Members noted the Instruction Sheet issued by Hacker Young on the means to deal with important practical points relating to the formulation of end of year returns.

- 74/07-08 Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control**
- Members examined the measures in place to effect the system of internal control regarding the council's finances. The staffing structure, random council signatories for cheques, monthly finance statements and the detailed Financial Regulations forming an Annex to the Standing Orders of the Council were considered appropriate for effective internal control.
- 75/07-08 Review of Internal Audit Procedure**
- Members examined the instructions laid down governing the internal audit procedure for the Town Council at Appendix 1 to the Financial Regulations and found them appropriate for purpose and not necessary of change.
- 76/07-08 Internal Auditor's Report**
- Members considered the Internal Auditor's Report for the Audit Period 2006/07 and accepted comments detailed at **Appendix 'F'**.
- 77/07-08 Year End Bank Reconciliation**
- Members noted and approved the Year End Bank Reconciliation detailed at **Appendix 'G'**.
- 78/07-08 End of Year Accounts for Audit**
- Members **RESOLVED to approve the End of Year Accounts 2006/07 for submission to Hacker Young, detailed at Appendix 'H'**.
- 79/07-08 External Auditor's Supplementary Governance Information**
- Members noted and approved the contents list of Supplementary Information required by Hacker Young **attached at Appendix 'J'**.
- 80/07-08 Annual Governance Statement**
- Members considered, formulated and **RESOLVED to submit the responses to the Annual Governance Statement as detailed at Appendix 'K'**.

81/07-08 Authorisation by Town Mayor and Town Clerk

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the signing off of the 2006/07 Accounts and Annual Return by the Town Mayor and Town Clerk.

82/07-08 Appointment of Internal Auditor

It was **RESOLVED** to reappoint Mr R. E. Bennett as Internal Auditor to the Town Council.

SHROPSHIRE ASSOCIATION / NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (SALC / NALC)

83/07-08 Local Council Review (LCR) – July 2007

Members acknowledged receipt of the newsletter.

84/07-08 Training Courses

Members were informed of two training courses being run by SALC on the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Budgets & Precepts Setting. Any courses which members wish to attend should be booked through the Town Clerk.

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL (TWC) MATTERS

85/07-08 Working with Telford & Wrekin Council

Members considered a letter from the Leader, Cllr Andrew Eade, **attached** at **Appendix 'L'**. They welcomed the declarations for closer working partnerships and designated avenues for passing on comments. They continue to support the Wrekin Area Parish Forum as a suitable general conduit for working between the Unitary Authority and Parish and Town Councils. The Town Clerk was directed to bring these comments to the attention of the Leader.

86/07-08 Child Protection

As part of TWC "Every Child Matters" strategy, a briefing note has been issued to Parish and Town Councils advising them to incorporate child protection measures in their grants application procedures. The briefing note is **attached** at **Appendix 'M'**.

Since the procedure suggested is not mandatory and the Town Clerk has received no similar national level advice, she sought the views of the council on how it wishes this matter to be handled.

She has arranged a meeting with Mr Peter Beer who works as part of the Youth Team to discuss the appropriateness of the proposals particularly in the proposed links between the Designated Person and the Parish /Town Council for sharing concerns. He was unaware of this advice paper.

Members shared these concerns and are reluctant at present to change the current grant system, particularly as this may deter more adults for volunteering to work with clubs where children may be present. The Town Clerk will prepare a written brief following the meeting with Mr Beer for members to consider further.

87/07-08 Public Toilets, Stafford Street Car Park

The Town Clerk reported to the meeting that she had as yet received no formal reply to her follow-up letter sent on 18 June 2007 although it is known that TWC are actively looking at possible options.

RESOURCES & ADMINISTRATION

88/07-08 Emergency Committee – August Recess

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint the following members to form the **Emergency Committee to deal with matters on behalf of the council during the August recess:**

**Cllr Brenda Flowers
Cllr Glyn Gratton
Cllr Roy Scammell
Cllr Adam Stanton**

89/07-08 Staffing & Resources Sub-Committee

It was **RESOLVED** to appoint the following members to the **Sub-Committee to look at administration / resources prior to the first full Budget Meeting scheduled for 24 October 2007:**

**Cllr Adrian Meredith
Cllr Phil Norton
Cllr Bob Unwin
Cllr Siân Walker**

COMMUNITY SAFETY

90/07-08 Community Safety Committee Meeting – Minutes

Members noted the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2007 **attached at Appendix 'N'**.

91/07-08 Car Parking Facilities

Cllr Tony Forrester introduced this topic by stressing his concerns that increased development of Brownfield sites in the town without provision for additional parking presents problems for businesses. Newport is a rural market town with a large hinterland of smaller villages whose residents should be encouraged to use the town as their retail centre, including the special market days; but can only do this if there is no rural bus service, by using cars and needing parking facilities. Already Newport's residents are primarily commuters and shop where they work and we should not put off others from using the town. He expressed particular concern that with the forthcoming free bus travel for the over 60's this could encourage people from the rural hinterland to drive into Newport, leaving cars parked up, whilst they avail themselves of buses to other locations.

Members welcomed the opportunity to debate this topic. A very full discussion looked at issues of short stay and long stay parking for shoppers and workers and the numerous vehicles parking up all day in car parks more appropriate for shoppers. It was agreed that whatever measures were put into place, they would only be successful if suitable monitoring was included. It was acknowledged that it was a problem for all the district centres and TWC must be included if there is to be a sensible solution. Improved and enhanced town buses could reduce the need for local residents to bring cars into town. Cllr Eric Carter agreed to raise this issue with TWC.

LEISURE & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (L&ES)

92/07-08 Cemetery

The Town Clerk updated members on the damage resulting from the recent severe weather. The Scots Pine which was uprooted by the high water table has now been removed from site and the remaining crater has been pumped dry and refilled with top soil. Fortunately damage to the old headstones in the vicinity was minimal.

93/07-08 Newport Cemetery Wildlife Enhancement Plan

Members welcomed the letter from the Shropshire Wildlife Trust **attached at Appendix 'P'** and the suggestions for improving wildlife areas in the Cemetery. The Town Clerk will oversee an implementation plan and bring any future revenue costs for consideration at the L&ES Committee Budget Meeting.

94/07-08 Future of Heart of England in Bloom (HEIB)

Members noted the correspondence concerning the future of the Heart of England in Bloom competition as a result of the Heart of England Tourist Board ceasing to trade at the end of the current financial year, **attached at Appendix 'Q'**.

95/07-08 CPRE Countryside Voice – Summer 2007

Members noted receipt of the magazine.

96/07-08 Connexions for Youth

Members noted an invitation to attend the Finale of the New Roots Project on Monday 16 July 2007 at 7.00 p.m. at Trinity Church Hall, Wellington Road, Newport.

97/07-08 Bench Naming

Members considered a letter received from Mrs Eva Allan **attached at Appendix 'R'** and **RESOLVED to place an appropriate plaque on the new bench to be sited at Masons Place.**

PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

98/07-08 Planning & Economic Development Committee Meeting – Minutes

Members noted the minutes of the meeting held 13 June 2007.

Signed

Dated