

# LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Leominster Town Council Meeting held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019 commencing at 19:00 hours in the Council Chamber, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillors Bartlett (Mayor), Thomas (Deputy Mayor), Mr P J Davies, Herschy, Marsh, Marshall, Murdoch, Norman, Rosser, Rumsey, Sutcliffe and Williams. (2 vacancies)

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Town Clerk.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Ward Cllr Stone, a member of the press and 12 members of the public.

Prior to the formal commencement of the meeting the Mayor thanked Members for their service over the last four years and for their support during her Mayoral year.

## **120/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Lacey (holiday) and Preece (work).

## **121/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Declaration of Interest was made:

- Cllr Murdoch: Allotments (personal)
- Cllr Bartlett: Leominster Area Polish Society (member)

## **122/18 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

No requests for dispensation had been received.

## **123/18 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were fourteen members of the public present. Two representations were received in support of the Climate Change motion. The following matters were raised:

- Councillors were urged to support the motion;
- Council was encouraged to lead by example to help address climate change and the reduce carbon emissions;
- Council was encouraged to be involved in developing energy reduction plans;
- Council was encouraged to continue to support public transport initiatives.

Council agreed to bring the Motion forward for consideration:

## **124/18 MOTION**

The Leominster Town Council Motion on Climate Change was proposed by Cllr Herschy and seconded by Cllr Davies.

Cllr Thomas proposed an amendment to the Motion to add the following paragraph – *f) To strongly encourage Herefordshire Council, as the Planning*

*Authority, to include a planning condition for all new development in Herefordshire, both residential and commercial, to fit solar panels.*

Cllr Sutcliffe seconded the amendment. Cllrs Herschy and Davies accepted the amendment.

The following principal points were raised in the debate on the substantive motion:

- It was noted that Councillors were supportive of the motion;
- It was important to encourage Herefordshire Council to include measures to address climate change through improved and innovative planning policy;
- Leominster Town Council would engage in the consultation to update the Herefordshire Core Strategy;
- Leominster Town Council recognised the urgent need for action within the next 12 years, to avoid a climate crisis and to protect Leominster people from the consequences of irreversible climate change;
- The need to make its due contribution to the international effort to cut carbon emissions.

The motion was put to the vote and was agreed unanimously:

For: 12     Against:     0     Abstentions: 0

Leominster Town Council **RESOLVED** to declare its recognition of the climate emergency and agreed to:

- a) Support Herefordshire Council in its work to reduce emissions in our area;
- b) Commit to an accelerated reduction of its own carbon emissions, with the aspirations to be carbon neutral by 2030; and to change its energy supply to 100% renewable source;
- c) Work with partners to produce a Carbon reduction plan, and an action plan;
- d) Focus on issues such as active travel, public and community transport, recycling, management of our open spaces to protect and enhance biodiversity, and others where we have a positive role to play;
- e) work with our community to enable them to take all possible measures to match or better our efforts;
- f) To strongly encourage Herefordshire Council, as the Planning Authority, to include a planning condition for all new development in Herefordshire, both residential and commercial, to fit solar panels.

## **125/18 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Leominster Town Council meetings held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2019 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

It was agreed to request the Police to attend the Annual Town Meeting on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019 if available.

## 126/18 CLERK'S REPORT

The following Clerk's Report was noted:

- (a) **Grant Request** – Council **RESOLVED** to provide a grant of £500 to help towards the cost of refurbishing the grave in the Leominster Cemetery by the Leominster Area Polish Society.
- (b) **NALC Response** – Council noted that response received from the CEO of NALC following the recommendation from Finance & General Purposes Committee to discontinue the HALC subscription. Following discussion, Council **RESOLVED** to renew its membership to HALC and NALC, subject to the decision being reviewed in March 2020.
- (c) **Purdah** – Council noted the information provided regarding Purdah, which had been drawn up by the Local Government Association.
- (d) **LANP** – Council noted the decision by Herefordshire Cabinet to adopt the Leominster area neighbourhood development plan and consequential updates to the countywide policies map.
- (e) **Grants & Projects Update** – Council noted the report submitted by the Grants & Projects Officer.
- (f) **Grange Open Space Master Plan** – Council noted that stakeholder meetings were being arranged. The current consultation would close on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2019 and it was agreed to promote the consultation on the Market on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

## 127/18 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- (a) **Committee Meetings** – Council approved the minutes of the following meetings held and ratified the decisions and recommendations made:
  - It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Planning & Highways Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> January, 11<sup>th</sup> February and 4<sup>th</sup> April 2019, and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein;
  - It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019, and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein;
    - It was **RESOLVED** to not to accept the recommendation from the Finance & General Purposes Committee to discontinue membership to HALC and NALC and to renew the Council's HALC subscription at a cost of £2,273.99 + VAT subject to reviewing the decision in 12 months time;
  - It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Communications & Events Committee held on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2019, and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein;
  - It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Environment & Services Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019, and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein.

## 128/18 FINANCES

- (a) **Accounts Paid Statement** – It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the payment of invoices for March 2019 amounting to £33,333.64, inclusive of VAT.
- (b) **Risk Register** – It was **RESOLVED** to amend the Council's Financial Risk Register as agreed, and delegate authority to the Finance & General Purposes Committee to formally approve it at its next meeting to be held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019.
- (c) **Public Works Loan Board** – Council noted that the PWLB loan for £200,000 had been drawn down. The interest rate for the 15 year loan period would be 2.1%

## 129/18 MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR ELECT

Nominations were invited for the Mayor Elect for the 2019/20 civic year.

Cllr Thomas was nominated by Cllr Rumsey and seconded by Cllr Marsh. There being no other nominations Cllr Thomas was formally appointed as Mayor Elect.

Nominations were invited for the Deputy Mayor Elect for the 2019/20 civic year.

Cllr Rumsey was nominated by Cllr Thomas and seconded by Cllr Sutcliffe.

Cllr Rosser was nominated by Cllr Williams. There was no seconder.

Cllr Rumsey was formally appointed as Deputy Mayor Elect.

The nominations would be subject to the results of the election on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019.

## 130/18 REPORTS

The following reports from Representative on Outside Bodies were received:

- (a) **Community Centre** – Council noted that the Community Centre was continuing with its fundraising initiative. To date it had raised by £10,000 of the £50,000 target it had set.
- (b) **Defibrillator Training** – Council noted that defibrillator training would be taking place at the Sports and Social Club week commencing 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019.
- (c) **LARC** – Council noted that negotiations were continuing with various bodies regarding the mortgage deficit. Business plan was currently being developed and consideration was being given to raising funds to pay off the mortgage.

Council received the following Ward Councillors reports:

***Cllr Stone – Leominster Rural and North***

**Council Budget 2019-2020** – This was approved in February and an increase of 4.9% in Council Tax agreed in March. This includes 2% ring-fenced for adult social care, the biggest budgetary pressure. A 2% increase raises about £1.6m in council tax receipts. Government rate support grant is only £ 625,000 this year compared with £ 60m in 2011 which is quite a gap to fill from business rates and council tax and helps explain the above inflation increases in recent years. In these circumstances Herefordshire Council has done remarkably well to produce balanced budgets and meet its statutory requirements. We await the results of the Fairer funding review which in theory should benefit rural areas like ours but we shall have to wait and see.

An additional £2m has been allocated from better than expected tax receipts and various grants to relieve a number of pressures. These include the deferral of £250,000 savings on the library, museums and archive service, help for children's centres, local drainage projects through the Lengthsman scheme and community transport.

**Leominster Library** – A £50,000 refurbishment of Leominster Library is due to start this week. This includes a full re-decoration, improved children's area, additional computers and a new gallery space for exhibitions. As a result, the main library will be closed between March 25 and April 6 but the foyer will remain open. From April 8 to April 24 the whole site will be closed to the public. Borrowing times will be extended during this period. There will be short term inconvenience but I am sure the improved facilities will be welcomed. The library is greatly valued in Leominster and the surrounding are so this investment is very welcome and follows similar work in Ross.

**Leominster Area Plan** – I was pleased with the referendum result on February 28 which saw overwhelming support for the Neighbourhood Development Plan in spite of a low turn-out. I joined fellow ward members and councillors in Corn Square the Friday before to remind residents of the important vote. Congratulations to all those who have worked so hard through the different stages of the process and did not give up in spite of the setbacks. All the parishes in Leominster North ward now have NDPs and Leominster's plan has now been made part of the statutory development plan for Herefordshire.

**Balfour Beatty** – Still no progress about the repair of the safety railings near the level crossing. The money for this has apparently been allocated in the 2019-2020 budget.

Colin Smith Locality Steward will be inspecting the A roads on April 4<sup>th</sup>, B roads on April 11<sup>th</sup> and priority C and U roads on March 27<sup>th</sup>.

We will miss Julie Debbage in Leominster but congratulate her on her appointment in Balfour Beatty as Localities Coordinator.

Litter and fly tipping continue to rear their ugly heads across Herefordshire. A recent litter pick in Brimfield and Little Hereford collected 20 bags of rubbish. Cans, sweet papers and fast food wrappers head the list. Litter picking along the A49 remains few and far between in spite of councillors requests.

**Canary Girls** – I joined other councillors at a special ceremony at the Records Office in Rotherwas to pay tribute to the munitions workers who played such an important part in the war effort in both World Wars, often at great cost to themselves. A plaque was unveiled and it is good that they have been given the recognition that they deserve after all these years.

**And Finally** – I have enjoyed working with the Town Clerk his staff and all town and ward councillors over the past 4 years and wish everyone well in the coming elections.

***Cllr Felicity Norman – Leominster West.***

Herefordshire Council meetings:

- February and March Full Council meetings
  - Planning meetings
  - Licensing sub-committee meeting
  - Corporate Parenting meetings
  - Children and Young People Scrutiny meetings 4 February and 11 March.
- As well as these public meetings, I have met with Health Watch, representatives of Herefordshire NHS and CCG. I have also taken part in two Task and Finish groups. The first was to consider another court ruling on Herefordshire Council's adoption process. The second was looking at provision for children with special educational needs (SEND). I also attend the Schools Forum.

***Other***

- Nmite (university) briefing/update
- Herefordshire Council Civic Service in the Cathedral
- Celebration of the Munitions Workers of Rotherwas at HARC
- Lugg Drainage Board meeting (Herefordshire Council trustee)

***Local issues:***

- Stall in Corn Square to talk to people about the referendum on the NDP
- Meeting with HC chief executive, Alistair Neill and other ward councillors about proposed new health hub for Leominster
- Meeting with Richard Ball and other ward councillors to discuss public realm improvements and transport strategy
- Stop the Drop steering group meeting, planning for the Great British Spring Clean

***Cllr Jenny Bartlett, Leominster East:***

- General Scrutiny Committee– Alternative Budget amendment
- Members Brief – Hereford Design Guide
- All Leominster ward members meeting with CEO and Director of Adults and Communities to discuss proposed New Build Health Hub and community health and wellbeing initiative.
- Environment Agency - Site Visit to discuss flood relief works on Cheaton Brook, behind Ridgemoor.
- Neighbourhood Plan - Market Stall to raise awareness of LANP Referendum.
- General Scrutiny Committee – Executive response to the LGA Peer Review and to consider the task and finish groups report into potholes and highway maintenance.

- Full Council – to set and agree the Parish precepts.
- Herefordshire and Archives Record Office - Unveiling of commemorative plaque by Lady Darnley to the 'Canary Girls' - the munitions workers at Rotherwas during WW2.
- Cabinet – Domestic Abuse Strategy (substituting for Cllr Marsh, Group Leader).
- Cllr Harlow – Broadband contract update for Leominster East Ward. Most of the residential areas are now able to access superfast broadband. The Gigaclear contract is the next phase roll out but it is currently behind schedule. They are working to catch up.
- 'NMite in the Making' Meeting with Professor Martha Guerrero and Shona Ashton. Together with Liz Womack we discussed Community Based Challenges that could be translated into projects in Leominster. These will form part of the work the student design cohort undertake as part of the development of the NMiTE Community modules students will complete. Liz Womack gave an excellent presentation on the Mapping Leominster's Youth project. Projects identified so far are:
  - (a) Improving mobility of people in and around town** (links to emerging Leominster Transport Strategy and Neighbourhood Plan).
  - (b) Improving air quality** (links to emerging Leominster Transport Strategy, Neighbourhood Plan and Herefordshire Councils Air Quality Management Strategy).
  - (c) The use of media to create, identity or to improve the different aspects of the town.** (links to Mapping Leominster's Youth and LEADER Signage project. Work will be with Leominster youth and Rural Media to develop this).
- General Scrutiny Committee – call in of Cabinet Member decision on the Herefordshire Transport Package Capital spend. (Committee meet on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019).

#### ***Cllr Marsh – Leominster South.***

- Involved with several issues including the McDonalds planning application.
- Cllr Marsh had seconded the Herefordshire Council motion on climate change.
- It was hoped that there would be a good turnout for the election on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019.

#### **131/18 MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS**

The following Mayoral appointments attended by the Mayor were noted:

##### **February and March:**

- Saverne Twinning Association Fundraiser at Stoke Prior Village Hall. A rather jaunty French swashbuckler 'Fan Fan La Tulipe'.
- Leominster Seed Swap at The Priory Church.
- Janet and Peter McCaull Trust fundraiser with 'Hobsons Choice' at The Forbury.
- Hereford Mayors Tea Party and Silver Room tour.
- Mayors Meeting at the Chairman's Office, Shire Hall Hereford. This was the last one for this civic year.

- Lord Lieutenants Cadets Awards Ceremony, Shire Hall. To celebrate the outgoing cadets achievements and appoint the new cadets for the coming year.
- Catcher Media 'Carousel Life through a Lens premier at The Courtyard. This is a compilation of memories and original footage of life in Herefordshire in recent history.
- Chairman's Civic Service for Carers at Hereford Cathedral.
- Leominster Cubs workshop with Liz Womack. What does the Town Council do? And the Grange Master Plan Consultation.
- Herefordshire Community Champions Awards Ceremony at the Town Hall.
- Leominster Community Centre Cabaret Fundraiser.
- Hereford Music Fund event at Hereford Sixth Form College (Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March).
- Leominster Dementia Centre fundraiser The Police Male Voice Choir at The Priory (Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March).

**Upcoming confirmed events in April:**

- Earl Mortimer Annual Awards Evening.
- SSAFA AGM at the Kindle Centre.
- Shrial Declaration and appointment of new High Sherriff.
- Leominster Medieval Pageant, the Priory.
- Bromyard Speed Festival.
- Mayor of Herefordshire Thanks Giving Service.
- Grange Heating, Leominster Enterprise Park open evening.
- Leominster Museum opening of the 2019/20 New Season.
- Easter Sunday service, the Priory.

**132/18 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

Council noted that an election would be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019. A period of Purdah will be observed until that date.

**Annual Town Meeting** – Council noted that the Annual Town Meeting would be held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019 due to the election being held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019. The meeting would commence at 7.30pm and be held at 11 Corn Square.

**The Mayor Making** - Council noted that the Mayor Making ceremony would take place on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2019 commencing at 7:00pm. It was **RESOLVED** to hold the ceremony at Grange Court.

**The follow-on Annual Town Council Meeting** – Council noted that the Annual Town Council meeting would be held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019 commencing at 7:00pm at the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

**133/18 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

As certain items were expected to include the consideration of exempt information Full Council **RESOLVED** that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during

the discussion of the matters referred to in the items listed below, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**134/18 STAFFING UPDATE**

Council noted the staffing report presented:

- The new Grounds & Environmental Supervisor had been appointed;
- The new Grounds Operative had been appointed;
- A temporary seasonal operative was currently being considered;
- A full report would be submitted to the Personnel Committee in due course.

**135/18 CIVIC AWARDS**

Following consideration of the nominations received, Council **RESOLVED** that the two nominees be presented with a Civic Award. The Civic Awards ceremony will be held prior to the Mayor Making meeting on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

There being no other business the Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9:00pm.

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**MAYOR**

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**DATE:**