

LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Leominster Town Council Meeting held on Monday 30th September 2019 commencing at 19:00 hours in the Council Chamber, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Rumsey (Deputy Mayor), Bartlett, Davies, Herschy, Marsh, Murdoch, Norman, Preece, Rosser, Rumsey, Smith-Winnard, Sutcliffe and Williams.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Town Clerk & Grants & Projects Officer

ALSO PRESENT: Ward Cllr Stone and three members of the public.

55/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Thomas (holiday).

56/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Declarations of Interest were made:

- Cllr Herschy: Trustee of LARC
- Cllr Norman: Trustee of LARC
- Cllr Sutcliffe: Trustee of LARC

57/19 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No requests for dispensation had been received.

58/19 CO-OPTION

Council noted that one application had been received for the vacancy in South Ward. Following consideration. Council **RESOLVED** to co-opt Ms Elspeth Parris on to Leominster Town Council.

59/19 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were three Members of the public present. The following matter was raised:

(a) Leominster Festival – Council received an update on the Leominster Festival. The following items were noted:

- The Festival would be held from 7th to 9th June 2020;
- The Street Quiz would take place on 6th June 2020 in Broad Street;
- The Family Fun Day would take place in the Secret Garden, behind 11 Corn Square;
- The Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra would be attending;
- The Festival's AGM was being held on 24th October 2019 at the Community Centre at 6pm. All were invited;
- Awards for All funding had been secured to help develop the Festival and develop the volunteer base;
- The Festival was having difficulty attracting volunteers and Council was requested to support the Festival in identifying possible new volunteers;

- A Winter Festival was being held in 2019 with a talk on the Polish War Graves in Leominster Cemetery on 23rd November 2019 at a cost of £10 including food.

The Council extended its thanks to the Leominster Festival Committee for all it was doing and for continuing to develop the Leominster Festival.

60/19 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Leominster Town Council meetings held on 26th July 2019 be agreed and signed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of Cllr Marshall, who had been in attendance.

61/19 CLERK'S REPORT

Council noted the following Clerk's Report:

- (a) **End of Year Accounts** – Council noted that these had now been signed off. The External Auditor Comments would be reviewed by the Finance & General Purposes Committee at its next meeting.
- (b) **Transition Leominster** – Council noted that the next meeting of Transition Leominster was being held on Monday 7th October at 7pm in the Community Centre. An Energy Descent Action Plan was being developed.
- (c) **Open Spaces Hire Agreement Revision** – Council noted the amended agreement and agreed to adopt it subject to further review by the Environment & Services Committee.
- (d) **Marches Family Network AGM** – Council noted that an invitation had been received to attend the 2019 AGM and Awards Evening to be held on Wednesday 6th November 2019 from 5.30pm to 7.30pm at Grange Court.
- (e) **Hester Clark Charity Almshouses** – Council noted that two Councillors were required to sit on this Charity. Formal appointments would be made at the November Council meeting.
- (f) **LANP Review** – Council noted that a workshop had been arranged for Parish Councils in order to provide an opportunity to find out more about the process of reviewing the Core Strategy and an understanding of how to review neighbourhood plans. The event would be held on Wednesday 6 November at the Shire Hall in Hereford between 16:30 and 18:30. It was agreed that Cllrs Bartlett and Herschy would attend.

62/19 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD

Council approved the minutes of the following meetings held and ratified the decisions and recommendations made:

- Cllr Rosser, Chair of the Planning & Highways Committee, presented the minutes. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Planning & Highways Committee held on 5th & 19th August, 9th September 2019, and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein;

- Cllr Murdoch, Vice-Chair of the Communications & Events Committee. presented the minutes. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Communications & Events Committee held on 17th September 2019, and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein
- Cllr Murdoch, Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee. presented the minutes. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 2nd September 2019, and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein.
- Cllr Herschy, Chair of the Environment & Services Committee. presented the minutes. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Environment & Services Committee held on 16th September 2019, and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein

63/19 FINANCES

- (a) **Accounts Paid Statement** – It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the payment of invoices for September 2019, as outlined on the payment statement provided, amounting to £38,434.98 inclusive of VAT.
- (b) **Revised Financial Regulations** – Following consideration, it was proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Preece and **RESOLVED** to formally adopt the revised Financial Regulations as recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Committee [Minute FG18/19(c)].

It was noted that the Ethical Standards clause wording had been requested from HALC and it was understood to that it was currently being developed.

- (c) **Budget Development 2020/21** – It was noted that Cllrs Bartlett, Davies and Murdoch had been appointed to sit on the Task & Finish Group overseeing budget development. No other Councillors wished to sit on the Group.
- (d) **Radio Controlled Switch On System** – Council considered the purchase of a radio controlled lights switch on system. Following discussion, it was agreed to defer the consideration of such a system until 2020 when there may be potential grant funding available.
- (e) **Code of Conduct Training** – Council noted that this training event would take place at 6pm on Monday 25th November 2019 prior to the Full Council meeting.
- (f) **Review of the Council's Banking Arrangements** – Council noted that a number of quotations had been requested to enable the Town Council to consider updating its current banking arrangements.
- (g) **Updated Calendar of Meetings** – Council noted the updated meeting calendar. Due to her commitments, Cllr Williamson formally resigned from the Communications and Events Committee.

64/19 REPORTS

There were no reports presented by Representative on Outside Bodies.

Council received the reports from Herefordshire Council Ward Members:

Cllr Stone – Leominster Rural and North

Reviving Historic High Streets

I am delighted that Leominster is one of 69 towns in England to receive a share of the £95m Heritage Fund to revive historic high streets. Many congratulations to our Town Clerk and everyone else involved in submitting the successful expression of interest in July. The support from many local businesses and organisations must have helped too. It will be a great opportunity for the town not only in making the most of our historic assets but enhancing retail and leisure facilities and it is encouraging to hear that the funded schemes will begin in April 2020. Very good news for Leominster.

Herefordshire Council consultation

The Council is in the process of putting together a new Corporate Plan for the next 4 years, 2020-2024. The consultation is open to all Herefordshire residents and over the next 3 weeks pop up consultation stands will appear across the county. It will be Leominster's turn this Friday October 4th with the pop up stand in Corn Square from 10am to 2pm. Residents are encouraged to take part and list their priorities. The closing date for responses is October 21st. All this will be before the formal budget consultation starts. I hope to be in Corn Square on Friday between 11am and 12pm.

Balfour Beatty update

I reported to the Planning and Highways committee in August the further delay in the replacement of the railings in Mill Street. It is very frustrating. According to our locality steward Colin Smith, the delay is due to the need for prior Network Rail approval for traffic management arrangements in relation to the rail crossing. It is all approved. It is just a matter of getting all parties coordinated. Meanwhile I continue to pursue Balfour Beatty over the lights on the pelican crossing in Bridge Street and the broken fence near the football pitches. I will report again next time!

There has been extensive clearance of weeds and debris on the footway and cycle way between the Stockton Cross turning and Hay Lane. I have not seen the footway looking so tidy for years and it will be safer for cyclists and pedestrians. I also applaud the Slow Down and Stay Safe campaign in the Hereford Times following the recent spate of horrific crashes on the A49 and other roads.

Leominster Warehouse Fire

9 fire engines tackled the dramatic fire at Pugh's self-storage just off the B4361 last Wednesday. The Fire Service commander said it was one of the biggest fires in Leominster for years. The retained firefighters on the on-call system were praised for their prompt response. It again shows how important it is to keep our local fire stations open. It was ironic to see it reported the following day that false fire alarms attended by the Hereford and Worcester Fire Service reached their highest level in 5 years, nearly 3,500. Many calls were made in good faith or alarms were accidentally set off but the number of malicious calls is disturbing. They use up resources and increase response times to real emergencies. Our Fire Service deserves the highest praise for their commitment, expertise and keeping us safe.

Meetings

I attended the recent Parish Council Summit in which the review of the Core Strategy was discussed. 67 Neighbourhood Development Plans have so far

been adopted. I also attended a briefing on Waste management services. Both waste contracts end in 2023 and there will be a new waste strategy. Three possible options were discussed. A very interesting morning. I shall be attending the Climate Emergency Day on October 21 with the Cabinet's new target to reach zero carbon for the Council's own operations by 2030. Herefordshire Council has a good record on reducing carbon emissions but the new target will be very challenging.

Schools

Congratulations to Hereford 6th Form College on its successful A level results and to Herefordshire schools in general for above national average GCSE results, which says a lot for our students, their supportive families and especially their teachers. There is a new Principal this term at Earl Mortimer College and we wish her success. I am still on the governing body there and at Kimbolton Primary School.

Councillor Felicity Norman, Ward Member – Leominster West

- Attended Leominster Country Tourism AGM. Inspiring presentations from Herefordshire Wildlife Trust about Queenswood, and from tourism guru, Heidi Chamberlain Jones.
- Meeting with Bill Wiggin to discuss health issues, and matters concerning Adults and communities and Children and families.
- Meeting with NMiTe representatives to hear how plans are progressing for the new university, buildings for learning/working and for student accommodation.
- Attended the ECHO AGM in Leominster, as ever an inspiring and entertaining evening.
- Attended the Homestart AGM in Hereford. Another a wonderful organisation, offering support and friendship to families suffering stress.
- Cabinet support for Anti-Slavery declaration, addressing trafficking, child and adult exploitation, domestic slavery etc.
- Cabinet response and support for the resolutions about the Climate Emergency passed unanimously in March and July.
- Attended Herefordshire Council's Parish Summit in Hereford – a well-attended event where the cabinet presented their new corporate plan. Those attending were asked to discuss the ideas in groups and to give their approval or otherwise for the main proposals. They were also asked to contribute their own ideas for improving things in the county.
- Further consultation is being rolled out to the market towns and larger villages, as well as on the Council website, and residents are encouraged to indicate their support or otherwise for the proposals.
- Congratulations to Leominster in Bloom and all their volunteers and partners, on once again winning Gold, and also on being awarded the Queens Award for Voluntary Service. Both well deserved and a credit to the town.
- Well done to all involved in organising and supporting the Food Fair which was well attended by stall holders and visitors. A successful and enjoyable day.
- I have been told by planning officers that the delay on making a final decision on the poultry house application at Stagbatch, and on the McDonalds application near Morrisons is due to the high levels of

phosphates in the River Lugg. This has caused Natural England to pause any development until further information is available.

- I understand that a decision has been made about the much needed pedestrian crossing over the Monkland road to the Barons Cross estate and that work is likely to start in a matter of weeks. An ongoing concern about a lack of signs blocking HGV access to Ginhall Lane and Green Lane through Pierrepoint road also has yet to be resolved.
- Fencing blocking a footpath across the fields behind Mappenors Lane has finally been removed, after BBLP PROW officer intervened.
- The Community Protection team has served an order on the landowners of the Barons Cross Camp site demanding that they remove the huge amounts of waste and rubbish which has been building up for years. Stonewater have at last removed a rubbish build up behind houses in Portna Way.

Leominster South Ward report – Cllr Trish Marsh

Things have been very busy as an incoming Cabinet member with wide ranging responsibilities. Mine covers Economy, Environment and Skills, also broadband, tourism and the climate emergency, so it's quite a portfolio.

A few days ago I went through quite a stretch of it, which I've detailed below to give you a glimpse of the extraordinary range of services Herefordshire Council provides. The ubiquity of the internet is a recurring theme.

I started at Leominster Industrial Park celebrating the arrival of full fibre broadband to local businesses. This coverage will extend over the whole of Leominster town in the next year or so which is excellent news. Now there is no need to choose between a fast connection and a lovely place to live we hope this will help attract digital companies to locate in our attractive town. Then on to the library to publicise Get Online Week (14-20th Oct), encouraging everyone to take up the free sessions our library service offer to help us all feel confident and safe online. The internet is such a valuable tool for keeping in touch with family and friends, wherever they are in the world!

I went on to the Local Enterprise Zone board meeting at Rotherwas. Among other things the subject of bats came up, as several species live in a copse adjacent to the site. Our responsibility is to ensure they will continue to thrive as new businesses arrive on site: ecological monitoring is ongoing.

Next stop a briefing on the council's responsibilities for keeping children safe, a major part of our responsibilities. This included some recent scenarios our social work teams have faced, giving us a vivid picture of the challenges in deciding what will be the best way forward. Considerable staff time is now being saved as staff can now dictate their notes to their computers after each visit, rather than waiting to get back to the office.

Finally a discussion on animal licensing with our environmental health team. The new rules on kennels are much more process and policy driven, which is a challenge for many longstanding businesses – and our inspectors. Another manifestation of how more and more things depend on being online.

At the end of this week I'll be at an event where several major IT providers are looking ahead at what the internet can offer to help sustain public services over the next decade or so. I'm sure it will be fascinating. Things have changed so much already in our lifetimes.

I'm pleased to say the new administration is putting considerable emphasis on the environment and climate emergency, responding especially to the strongly expressed views of our young people. Last Thursday Herefordshire Council adopted a target of zero carbon by 2030 for both the county and the council's own carbon emissions. This is a major challenge - but one forced on us by the global reality of climate breakdown. It is important that we play our part here and I look forward to a wide partnership, working with many voluntary groups as well as farmers and businesses both in the town and across the county.

A consultation on Herefordshire Council's draft aims for the next four years is now open at herefordshire.gov.uk/ambition – please take a few minutes to have a look and make your input to the next four year plan for Herefordshire. There will also be a pop up at Leominster Market on October 4 from 10-2pm with staff to speak to.

Leominster East Ward report Cllr Jenny Bartlett

It has been a great couple of months for Leominster. I was really proud to see Leominster in Bloom receive another gold medal as well as the Queens Award for Voluntary Service. We have also got our Heritage High Street money confirmed, investment which is so desperately needed in our town centre. Not forgetting the cherry on the top, another really successful Food Festival. Well done to everyone who organised and took part.

Food has been a theme and together with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Cllr John Stone we went to lunch at Waverley House to meet the staff and participants. This is a great little communal room which has a lot of potential. A good meal, chance to chat and quite often a spot of entertainment. So if anyone knows of someone who would benefit from a chance to get out and enjoy a home cooked meal with others, then get in touch with Mandy at Waverley House.

Another great initiative is the new Community Kitchen up and running at the community centre. This uses surplus food donated by supermarkets. Open to everyone and you pay what you like so there is no stigma about being short of money. The next one is on Wednesday 9th October between 1.30 and 5.30. Do spread the word.

In August I attended a similar launch in Hereford with Cllr Norman. The wellbeing café set up by a couple of young entrepreneurs was again using surplus food donated by supermarkets.

The garden at SHYPP is now finished and looks fantastic. They held a garden Party and BBQ to thank everyone who helped and I echo that thank you to everyone supported of my mayors charity.

Much of my time has been taken up with Adult and Wellbeing Scrutiny committee, of which I am vice chair.

As well as work programme meetings, (what we think we need to look at), we have held meetings with Healthwatch and the CCG to track what is happening and what is coming up. A Scrutiny chairs protocol meeting to make sure we work consistently and we have also had a peer review to look more closely at how we are doing in adult and wellbeing.

Other meetings:

- Met with Lee Fishwick, our new BBLP Location steward to look round problems in my ward and in the town centre.
- Highways England A49 North meeting to discuss ward issues adjoining the A49 between Shropshire border and Hereford City.
- HCLLH Affordable Housing workshop
- Visit to Skylon Park and the Hereford Enterprise Zone to look at how it is progressing
- Understanding Herefordshire Facts and Figures and interpreting statistics.
- Cabinet meeting, which included the Climate Emergency motion response
- Budget setting briefing
- Waste Services briefing
- HALC Climate Emergency workshop for parishes.

65/19 MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS

Mayor's Engagements

Apart from attending quite a number of committee meetings I have attended the following as mayor:

- John Thomas funeral at the Priory church on 20th August
- I represented the town at the NILS AGM at Tenbury on 4th September.
- I had another pleasant duty opening the food fayre in corn square on Saturday 7th September.
- Wednesday 11th September I attended Bretina Meadows funeral at the crematorium at Hereford
- Also on Wednesday 11th Sept I attended a wonderful presentation of the Queens award to the volunteers of Leominster in Bloom by Lady Darnley.
- On Thursday 12th September The Mayoress and myself attended the presentation of awards to Herefordshire section of West Mercia Police
- Sunday 15th September attended Hereford Cathedral in Hereford to commemorate the 79th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.
- Over the weekend I heard on local radio that part of the government grant for £95 million was to come to Leominster
- For this period I must thank Cllr John Rumsey and Liz, his wife, who have covered many public functions for us during this period.

Council noted the forthcoming Civic Engagements:

- Ivington Harvest Service – 13th October 2019 at 11am followed by lunch;
- Annual Civic Service, The Priory – Sunday 27th October 2019 at 10am;

- Polish Remembrance Ceremony – Leominster Cemetery, Sunday 3rd November 2019 at 12 noon;
- Remembrance Sunday – 10th November 2019;
- Christmas Lights Switch On – Saturday 30th November 2019 at 4pm;
- Victorian Street Market – Saturday 14th December 2019 at 11am.

DEPUTY MAYOR ENGAGEMENTS

August 2019

- 3rd – Opening Monkland fete
- 6th – Waverley Day centre
- 29th – Mayor’s Charity Market, Ludlow.

September 2019

- 7th – Stourport on Severn carnival
- 11th LIB Queens Award, Grange Court
- 11th – Bretina Meadow’s funeral
- 12th – Waverley Day Centre
- 16th – Leominster Festival Committee
- 17th – Communications & Events Committee
- 18th – HALC meeting
- 18th – Polish Friendship meeting
- 19th – ECHO AGM
- 21st – Opening Westfield School Fete
- 23rd – Mayor’s Meeting, Hereford
- 27th – Supporting families in Hereford
- 29th – RBL meeting, Hereford

66/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Council noted that the next Town Council Meeting would be held on Monday 25th November 2019 commencing at 7:00pm at the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

67/19 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

As certain items to be discussed included 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 would 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 outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

68/19 PROJECTS UPDATE REPORT

Council received a projects update presentation from Liz Womack, Grants and Projects Officer. Council noted the projects update report.

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to support the Traveller Awareness event by:

- Acting as a point of liaison between Rural Media and organisations/venues in Leominster.

- Hosting an exhibition of artwork in the Old Stable Gallery at 11 Corn Square.
- Promoting the event through the Town Council websites, notice boards and social media accounts.

69/19 LEOMINSTER HERITAGE ACTION ZONE

Council noted that Leominster had been one of the 69 successful high streets selected across England to receive a share of the £95 million fund. Delivery plans would be worked up over the next 4 months, with the funded schemes beginning in April 2020.

It was further noted that Historic England had confirmed that the final decision as to the level of funding provided to each High Street, and the associated spend profile, would be taken as part of the process to agree the Programme Design, which should be completed by January 2020. The Town Council was waiting to hear when the first meeting with Historic England will take place.

70/19 STAFFING REPORT

Council considered the Staffing Report presented and, following discussion, **RESOLVED:**

- To employ Mr McEwen on a three year fixed term contract to commence employment from 4th November 2019;
- To develop a job description for the role;
- To focus on the following key projects as well as general tasks around the Town
 - Secret Garden
 - Renovation of Grange and Central Car Park public conveniences
 - Fitting out the Depot ready for use by the Environment team.

Council also approved the draft job description for the role of Town Clerk.

71/19 GRANGE COURT UPDATE

Council noted that no further update had been received.

72/19 PROPOSED DEPOT

Council **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to negotiate terms and conditions to rent a depot on Croft Business Park to the Town Clerk. Once a tenancy agreement had been received this would be considered by either Full Council or the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

There being no other business the Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9:25pm.

MAYOR

DATE: