

LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Leominster Town Council Meeting held on Monday 28th January 2019 commencing at 19:00 hours in the Council Chamber, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

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

OFFICERS PRESENT: Town Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT: Ward Cllr Stone.

102/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Marshall (illness) and Preece (work).

103/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Declaration of Interest was made:

- Cllr Lacey: Allotments (personal)
- Cllr Murdoch: Allotments (personal)
- Cllr Norman: Trustee of Leominster Museum

Council noted that Mrs Pauline Davies had formally resigned from Leominster Town Council due to ill health. Council agreed to formally write to Mrs Davies thanking her for over thirty years of service on Leominster Town Council and the local community.

104/18 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No requests for dispensation had been received.

105/18 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present. No matters were raised.

106/18 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Leominster Town Council meetings held on 26th November 2018 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

107/18 CLERK'S REPORT

The following Clerk's Report was noted:

- (a) **Civic Regalia** – Council noted that the Mayoral chain had been damaged and the Maces require cleaning. Following consideration of the initial estimate received, it was **RESOLVED** to request Vaughtons to attend site to carry out a full review at a cost of £250 plus VAT, which would be removed from the final bill if an order was placed.

In addition, the insurance company would be contacted regarding cover and the repairs would be funded from Council balances.

- (b) **LANP** – Council noted that the Neighbourhood Plan referendum would take place on 28th February 2019 and that Polling cards were being sent out to all those eligible to vote. It was agreed to draft a press release regarding the referendum and provide further information on the Market on Friday 22nd February 2019.
- (c) **Consultation Results** – Council noted the results of the youth consultation carried out on the 2019/20 budget priorities. This was discussed under Minute 110/18.
- (d) **Giving Crime Prevention advice** – Council noted the offer received from West Mercia Police to provide Leominster with advice on how to reduce the opportunity and likelihood of crime occurring. It was agreed to take up this offer and arrange an information evening for residents to attend.
- (e) **Railway Crossing Repair** – Council noted that emergency works were being undertaken at the railway crossing to replace an old BT cover and put a new one in. The replacement of the safety railings at this location was also discussed and Council **RESOLVED** to fully support Ward Cllr Stone in his efforts to have the railing replaced as a matter of urgency.
- (f) **Great British Spring Clean** – Council noted that this year's Spring Clean would take place from 22 March – 23 April 2019. An event was being organised at Barons Cross.
- (g) **Apprenticeships** – Council noted the brief summary of the information received following a meeting with the YMCA Apprenticeship Scheme. Further details were awaited and would be considered by the Finance & General Purposes Committee at its meeting on 25th February 2019.

108/18 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 3rd and 17th December 2018 and 7th January 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 17th December 2018 and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein;
 - It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Environment & Services Committee held on 21st January 2019 and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein;

- ES50/18 – It was formally **RESOLVED** that the recommendations contained in this minute be formally approved and adopted by Council.

109/18 FINANCES

- (a) **Accounts Paid Statement** – It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the payment all outstanding accounts for December 2018 amounting to £49,008.35, inclusive of VAT, and January 2019 to date amounting to £43,000.37, inclusive of VAT.
- (b) **Internal Auditor Appointment** – Following discussion, Council **RESOLVED** to formally confirm the appointment of Iain Selkirk FCA to carry out the mandatory internal audits required annually at a cost of £275 per visit. A minimum of two visits would be required.
- (c) **Public Works Loan Board** – Council noted that the application by the Town Council for a PWLB loan for £200,000 had been approved.

Following consideration, Council **RESOLVED** to give delegated authority to the Town Clerk to draw down the loan in order for the Council to commence the projects identified.

110/18 CORPORATE STRATEGY

Council considered the recent consultation undertaken with Earl Mortimer College on the Budget consultation. It was noted that the focus on providing children and youth services received the majority of support with parks, open spaces and footpaths being the second most popular. The consultation would be used to help support future grant funding applications.

111/18 BUDGET 2019/20

Council reviewed the final budget presented for the 2019/20 financial year and, following discussion, **RESOLVED** to formally adopt the draft Budget for 2019/20.

112/18 PRECEPT 2019/20

It was proposed, seconded and **RESOLVED** to consider request a precept of £512,222 from Herefordshire Council for 2019/20, which would result in a Band D charge of £139.95.

113/18 REPORTS

The following reports were received:

- (a) **Railway Users Group** – Council noted this had now been renamed the Transport for Wales Group. Consideration was currently being given to providing a community room at the railway station.
- (b) **Poppy Appeal Collection** – Council noted that the ATC had collected over £12,000 for this appeal at Morrisons.

- (c) **Flytipping** – Council agreed to report continued incidents of flytipping on the Ridgemoor estate and Barons Cross estate.

Cllr Stone – Leominster Rural and North

Balfour Beatty Update

A44 Mill Street – The safety railings have still not been replaced by the level crossing. The work was supposed to take place on December 17th but it was delayed. We are awaiting confirmation of a new date which has to be coordinated with Network Rail and I have expressed my concern about the time this work is taking and will continue to do so.

BT Cover – A temporary plate has been fitted over a loose BT cover by the level crossing to make it safe. It should be followed by a complete replacement in the next two weeks. A road closure will be necessary when the work is carried out.

Gritting – The main roads are being regularly gritted during recent and current cold spells with no particular problems reported. The Council's 16 gritters are covering primary and secondary routes. There is also a review of all grit bins taking place across the county so please report any damaged bins to Balfour Beatty.

Inspections – Our locality steward (Leominster North) is inspecting the A roads on Tuesday Feb 5th, B roads on Tuesday the 12th and C roads in February. Accident cluster sites are being inspected on February 1st.

A49 safety Issues – I have received some representations from Kimbolton about the stretch of the A49 between Leominster and the Kimbolton turn following recent collisions. I have reported these to Bruce Evans Herefordshire Council highways and informed him of the concerns of the Town Council too. Dangerous overtaking is one of the problems but we are awaiting the result of police investigations. I shall ask for speed checks when Herefordshire councillors next meet with Highways England, but we are very much in HE's hands as the A49 is a trunk road. Incidents continue at the notorious Salwey Arms junction.

Ridgemoor Flood Prevention Scheme – Julie Debbage kindly alerted me to work due to start soon in this area. Flood defences along the river backing the Ridgemoor estate are to be strengthened by raising the bank area. There is also a contamination issue which means soil may need removing and replacing. Any trees removed will be replaced and plans for landscaping will be submitted to the Town Council by the Environment Agency. Julie has passed on documents from the EA which are now with the Town Clerk. A site visit for Ward and Town councillors is being arranged for February 14th and further details will follow. I will stress to Craig Barker of the Environment Agency the need to keep the Town Council informed. There are 7 flood prevention schemes going ahead this year around the county funded by central government.

Council Budget – The council budget for 2019-2020 will be debated and finalised on February 15th. An increase of around 4.9% in council tax is expected and although an alternative budget is being proposed the room for manoeuvre is very limited financially. Any increase above 6% would trigger a referendum. The main pressures continue to be adult social care and children's services with the increasing numbers of looked-after children.

Central government support has been reduced to well under £1m and we rely on business rates, council tax and one-off grants like the £5m pothole and road repair grant from the autumn Budget. A 1% increase only raises £ 800,000 and so you can understand the financial pressures Herefordshire is under. The fairer funding review may or may not improve the situation.

Royal British Legion – I attended the recent RBL AGM on behalf of the chairman of Herefordshire Council. It was reported that over £250,000 was raised in the county Poppy Appeal. It was good to see our Deputy Mayor at the meeting and I was able to highlight Leominster’s contribution to the First World War commemorations last year and in particular the success of Armed Forces Day. Herefordshire was second nationally in the amount of money raised per head in the Poppy Appeal, quite an accolade. The emphasis this year will be more on welfare and veterans’ mental health issues.

Neighbourhood Plan vote – Finally I am pleased a date has been set for the Leominster Neighbourhood Development Plan referendum, February 28th. We need to encourage residents to go out and vote and let’s hope for kind weather on the day. Other local referendum results. Brimfield 45% turn-out, Leysters 36%, Kimbolton 39%. So come on Leominster!

Ward Councillor’s Report: Cllr Bartlett Leominster East

Ward Report Leominster East

- Norfolk House / Stonewater consultation on proposed makeover. A significant overhaul of the housing scheme, well supported by the majority of the residents
- 2G NHS Board Meeting, Kindle Centre Hereford
- General Scrutiny – Herefordshire’s proposed budget for 2019 – 2020
- Members workshop - Understanding Herefordshire, facts and figures. Well attended and informative, it is worthwhile taking a look at Herefordshire Councils ‘Facts and Figures’ page on the website.
- 2G NHS Governors meeting, Rikenel Gloucester
- High Street Fund Bid meeting with Paul Russell to submit a proposal for Leominster Town centre
- Extraordinary Council Meeting – to consider the recent high court judgements concerning children’s services
- Annual thank you party for Town Council staff hosted by the four ward members
- Annual than you party for the numerous town council volunteers
- Social Care symposium, Hereford

Cllr Norman – Leominster West.

- Social Care symposium, Hereford
- Task & Finish Group regarding the Special Education Needs of the County.
- Thank you tea parties for the staff and contractors in December 2018 and the volunteers in January 2019.

Cllr Marsh – Leominster South.

Training and briefings

- Data training from Intelligence Unit
- Highways England on A49

- Children's Services briefing on court judgment
- West Midlands' Green Training Day
- Services for Independent Living open day in Leominster
- High Sheriff's symposium on Social Care- very well attended and included launch of Herefordshire Vital Signs report by HCF

Networking, civic events and thanks – particularly important at the end of the year

- Christmas Tea for LTC staff
- Tea for LTC volunteers
- Cllrs Christmas meal
- Verdun Oak service
- Parish Summit: over 50 parishes attended, Leominster represented by our Deputy Mayor

Work with residents

- 60 second surveys of residents across Leominster with Green colleagues to find local priorities. Roads safety and maintenance came out in top place. Protecting jobs and local businesses and care for old and young also strongly supported. Strong feeling that HC is not strong at public consultation or transparent in its communications about its spending.

Issues

- Continue to press for publication of the delayed Leominster Public Realm and Transportation Study
- Meetings with Extinction Rebellion re their focus on reducing carbon emissions and climate change: arranged meeting to brief them on the council's actions in this field over the last decade
- Supporting the proposal for a new health and integrated social care hub at Dales to replace our cramped surgeries
- Contributing to a potential alternative budget for 2019/20

114/18 MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS

The following Mayoral appointments attended by the Mayor were noted:

- Verdun Oak Saplings Gifting Ceremony, The Priory
- Last Train to Tomorrow, the Kinder Transport. Very, very moving
- Victorian Street Market
- St Michaels 'Light up a Life' Service, Methodist Church Green Lane
- Songs and Verse, Community Choir Charity Concert at the Lion Ballroom in aid of the Mayor's Charity SHYPP and The CartShed charity
- Choral Society Carols By Candle Light, Priory Church

January as usual has been a quiet month for mayoral duties, but the calendar is filling up fast again now! Thank you to the Deputy Mayor who covered for me whilst I was recovering from an ear operation. Easter Sunday would be our last robed event of this civic year ahead of Mayor Making in May. This year Easter Sunday falls on April 21st.

115/18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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

Annual Town Meeting – Council agreed to hold the Annual Town Meeting on Monday 8th April 2019 due to the election being held on 2nd May 2019. The meeting would commence at 7.30pm and be held at 11 Corn Square.

116/18 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.

117/18 SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Council **RESOLVED** to approve the confidential minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 14th January 2019 and adopt the recommendations contained therein.

118/18 MUSEUM REPORT

Council considered the report presented. Following consideration, it was **RESOLVED:**

- That the report be noted;
- To continue the partnership until October 2019;
- That a Steering Group be appointed following the elections on 2nd May 2019 to review and evaluate the partnership;
- That the Museum Trustees be invited to attend a Sub-Committee meeting to discuss the partnership with Members.

119/18 CIVIC AWARDS

Council noted that nominations to receive a civic award must be submitted by Friday 15th March 2019 along with the reasons for the nomination. The awards would be presented at the Mayor Making ceremony scheduled to take place on Saturday 11th May 2019.

There being no other business the Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8:46pm.

MAYOR:

DATE: