

LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL



ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2019

Minutes of the Leominster Annual Town Meeting held at The Council Offices. 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP on Monday 8th April 2019 commencing at 7:30pm

IN THE CHAIR: Cllr Jenny Bartlett

PRESENT: 16 members of the community.

OFFICERS PRESENT: The Town Clerk.

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Cllr Bartlett welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Rosser, S Morgan and P Blench.

3. MINUTES

The meeting **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Meetings held on 24th April 2018 be adopted and signed as a correct record.

4. ANNUAL REPORT

Cllr Bartlett presented Leominster Town Council's annual report for 2018/19. She outlined the work undertaken by the Town Council and thanked everyone for their support during the civic year. Achievements included:

Full Council:

- Adoption of a revised Corporate Strategy and a Medium Term Financial Plan
- Hosted Herefordshire Armed Forces Day which was preceded by a number of events in Leominster for Armed Forces week;
- Hosted the Royal visit with the Duke of Gloucester;
- Oversaw the 100th anniversary of the end of the 1st World War including the Remembrance Day commemorations, in partnership with the Royal British Legion Leominster Branch.

Environment & Services Committee:

- Provided a new play area at Sydonia utilising S106 funding, an Awards for All grant and around £5,000 from the Town Council's funds. The works included a new play area, an outdoor gym, a new goal end and refurbishment of the existing junior climbing frame and new safer surfacing;
- The cleaning of the War Memorial following the successful application of a grant to help towards the overall cost of the works;
- Secured £32,000 grant funding through LEADER for new signage throughout the town;
- Provided a number of new grit bins in the Town;
- Continued to undertake footpath maintenance under the P3 scheme;
- Continued to undertake limited Lengthsman duties under the Herefordshire Council scheme;
- Took over the licence to mow all the open spaces and verges in Leominster;
- Had to use a contractor due to delays at the beginning of the 2018 season;
- Undertaken a survey of business waste with a view to introducing a business waste recycle scheme in 2019/20 with Binit Ltd as the main partner;
- LTC supported Leominster in Bloom in 2018 and achieved another Gold;
- LTC entered Sydonia Park and received a silver award, so the focus in 2019 will be to bring this up to gold standard;
- Sudden termination of the Interserve contract by Herefordshire Council resulted in the cleaning of the Town Council's toilets having to be done internally;
- Commencement of the Grange Open Space Master Plan consultation;
- Set up a Direct Labour Force to carry out grounds maintenance from April 2019 onwards;
- Julie Debbage, Environmental Supervisor, has left and been replaced with Mark Culbert, Grounds & Environmental Supervisor.

Finance & General Purposes:

- Overseen to implementation of the General Data Protection Regulations and the new Data Protection Act 2018;
- Oversaw the application for a further PWLB loan to help invest in the toilets, the Secret Garden, Grange open space and grounds maintenance;
- Completed the "Mapping Leominster's Youth" project report which identified areas of support to be given by LTC;
- Supported the development of a Duke of Edinburgh inclusive programme;
- Continued support for CAB, the Community Centre and LARC;
- The provision, under a Service Level Agreement, of a part time curator for Leominster Museum;
- Overseen staff recruitment via the Personnel Sub-Committee;
- Budget development for 2019/20. Final increase was 4.1%;
- Actively supported the Janice & Peter McCaull Charitable Trust over a difficult period.

Provided Grant support for the following organisations:

Leominster Priory Holiday Club	£900.00
Leominster Festival	£1,000.00
151 Squadron	£1,000.00
Festival Window Competition	£250.00
Window Competitions	£500.00
McCaul Trust	£250.00
Hope	£840.00
Car Parking (SBS)	£1,079.00
Festive Lights	£527.00
Royal British Legion	£400.00
Halo	£1,000.00
Meeting Centre	£1,000.00
Shopmobility	£1,000.00
Leominster Museum	£1,000.00
ECHO	£800.00

Communications & Events

- Continued to oversee the Friday Market and the monthly Farmers Markets;
- Continued to manage the Tourist Information Centre providing information to visitors, an opportunity for local producers to sell their products and to promote local tourist focused businesses;
- Provided the Stables Gallery, an opportunity for local artists to showcase their work. This is fully booked for the next 12 months;
- Overseen the final elements to the holiday flat including the fire safety works, a new gas supply and final furnishings. The flat will hopefully be available for rent in May 2019, subject to West Mercia Energy;
- Supported the Small Business Saturday with the provision of free car parking in Leominster funded by Leominster Town Council;
- Put on the second “Through the Wardrobe” event in the Secret Garden;
- Hosted the Christmas Light switch on event for the first time in 2018.

Planning & Highways

- Completion of the Leominster Area Neighbourhood Plan which successfully passed through its referendum;
- Continued to monitor the HUM issues;
- Planning applications have included the proposed McDonalds restaurant, Barons Cross Camp and a number of new developments in Leominster;
- Continued to lobby Herefordshire Council regarding highway matters;
- Been involved in the development of the emerging Transport Plan for Leominster.

The Mayor had attended over 140 events during the year. She thanked all the staff for their hard work organizing Armed Forces week, Julie Debbage for overseeing the refurbishment of the War Memorial, Liz Womack for securing the

LEADER funding, Gill Ding and her team for running the Tourist Information Centre and the Grounds and Environmental Team for looking after the open spaces and play area in Leominster. She reminded everyone that Leominster Museum opened for the season on 20th April 2019.

5. QUESTIONS

Questions were invited from the electors present.

The Leominster Hum

The meeting was informed that there was still an issue with the Leominster Hum. Thanks were extended to the Council for pursuing this matter during the year and a request was made to continue to press for a resolution. A further request was made for Ward Councillors to continue to pursue the issue and it was confirmed that the Ward members had lobbied throughout the year and would continue to do so.

Cllr Stone informed the meeting that he had received no complaints regarding the Hum from neighbouring parishes.

Bargates Traffic Lights

The Town Council was congratulated on all the work it had undertaken over the year. It was confirmed that a further loan of £200,000 had been drawn down. The interest rate was 2.1% for the 15 year life of the loan. Concern was expressed regarding the air quality at the Bargates junction. Although it was likely that the air quality had improved slightly there was concern that the issue had moved and was now adversely affecting other parts of the town including Mill Street.

It was confirmed that the official figures were still awaited. This was due to the figures needing to be rationalized nationally prior to formal ratification.

It was agreed to request that additional monitoring stations be set up to assess the air quality around Mill Street.

It was suggested that signage be erected requesting motorists to switch off their engines when the lights were red to help reduce pollution.

Other suggestions included real time monitors to display carbon monoxide, consideration of a congestion charge by Herefordshire Council and a review of the pedestrian lights as pedestrians had to wait some time before crossing.

It was noted that there were a number of drains along Bargates and Barons Cross Road that required repair. This would be reported.

High Street

The meeting noted that this part of the highway was in a very poor state of repair and it was suggested that a Public Works Loan Board loan be considered to help fund the repair. This was a matter for the Highway Authority.

Concerns were raised regarding the potential issues the May Fair vehicles would have on any upgraded highway work. It was agreed to suggest that a weight limit for the town centre be considered by Herefordshire Council.

A request to upgrade the Mill Street road surface had been requested.

First World War Commemorations

Very positive comments had been received regarding the commemorations in 2018 especially by Leominster in Bloom. There had been an excellent turnout for the Remembrance Service and Leominster should be proud of what it achieved.

Leominster Area Polish Society

Thanks were extended to the Town Council for its support for this Society. The grant was currently being put to good use and discussions were going to take place regarding the possible future friendship/twinning between a Polish town and Leominster.

The Town Council would require two co-options following the elections on 2nd May 2019 and encouragement would be given to securing full representation on the Town Council from all sections of Leominster society.

6. SUMMARY AND CLOSURE

Cllr Bartlett, Mayor of Leominster, thanked all the Town Councillors for their service and thanked Cllr Lacey who was not standing for reelection. Thanks were also extended to all those who had attended the meeting.

There being no other business, the Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8:14pm.

MAYOR OF LEOMINSTER

DATE: