

# LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Leominster Town Council Meeting held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020 commencing at 19:00 hours in the Council Chamber, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

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

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Town Clerk and Town Clerk Designate.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Ward Cllr Stone.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Town Council received an update on the temporary closure of the Minor Injuries Unit in Leominster from the CCG. The issue was not funding but the difficulty of recruiting the correctly qualified staff. A number of concerns regarding the temporary closure were raised by the Town Council alongside some potential solutions.

## **85/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Rosser (work) and Williamson.

## **86/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Declaration of Interest was made:

- Cllr Norman: Marches Family Network.

## **87/19 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

No requests for dispensation had been received.

## **88/19 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

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

## **89/19 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Leominster Town Council meetings held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

## **90/19 CLERK'S REPORT**

Council noted the following Clerk's Report:

- (a) Town Clerk** – Council noted that this was the last Full Council meeting the current Town Clerk would be attending as he would be semi-retiring at the end of March 2020.
- (b) Bus Service Meeting** – Council noted that a meeting with Herefordshire Council, Yeomans, Lugg Valley Travel and Community Wheels had been arranged on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 at 7pm to discuss public transport provision in Leominster. Following that meeting a public meeting would be arranged.

- (c) **Proposed Motion** – Council noted that the proposed Motion regarding a 20mph speed limit in Leominster would be considered at the Full Council meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Councillors indicated support in principle for the proposal, which would be discussed in full on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

#### 91/19 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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

- Cllr Preece presented the minutes. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Planning & Highways Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein;
- Cllr Rumsey, Chair of the Communications & Events Committee, presented the minutes. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Communications & Events Committee held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020 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 16<sup>th</sup> December 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 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein.

#### 92/19 FINANCES & POLICY

- (a) **Month 9 Statement of Accounts** – Council noted the budget report for the third quarter (Month 9) and balances held. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the budget report and note the balances of £539,485. This included the £200,000 loan received from the Public Works Loan Board. At year end relevant balances would be set against costs incurred, especially with regard to capital projects.
- (b) **Accounts Paid Statement** – It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the payment of invoices for December 2019, as outlined on the payment statement provided, amounting to £3,517.87, inclusive of VAT, and for January 2020 to date, as outlined on the payment statement provided, amounting to £51,914.00, inclusive of VAT.

#### 93/19 BUDGET 2020/21

Council reviewed the final budget presented for the 2020/21 financial year that had been developed by the appointed Task & Finish Group. Public consultation had taken place and this had informed the budget process.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Preece, seconded by Cllr Norman and **RESOLVED** to formally adopt the Budget for 2020/21. Thanks were extended to the Task & Finish Group for all their hard work.

#### **94/19 PRECEPT 2020/21**

It was proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Preece and **RESOLVED** to request a precept of £557,574 from Herefordshire Council for 2020/21, which would result in a Band D charge of £151.58.

#### **95/19 REPORTS**

The following reports were received:

- (a) **Community Centre** – Council noted that the Centre would be joining the cardboard recycling scheme operated by Binit Ltd and supported by the Town Council. The Centre was operating successfully and organising more events at the weekend.
- (b) **Leominster in Bloom** – Council noted that the volunteers were busy implementing this year's theme of knitted sheep. Patterns were available in the Tourist Information Centre.

Council noted the following Ward Councillor reports:

#### **Ward Report Leominster North & Rural – Cllr John Stone:**

##### **Minor Injury Units**

I attended a meeting of the Adults and wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on January 13<sup>th</sup> which discussed the temporary closure of the Minor Injury Units at Leominster and Ross-on-Wye community hospitals due to Winter pressures. The Wye Valley Trust reported that patient safety was the key priority and that highly skilled and experienced staff from the 2 hospitals were needed in Hereford County hospital. They pointed out that Hereford are dealing with up to 230 patients a day in A&E and in December, 70 ambulances a day were arriving at the hospital. They claimed only just over one person an hour was being seen at Leominster. It was the third year running of these temporary closures. Several councillors disputed the statistics relating to the community hospitals and I supported the concerns raised by Cllr Jenny Bartlett, vice chair of the committee. These were that there was a lack of consultation, the closure caused local confusion as the rest of the hospital was open as normal, residents valued MIUs on their doorstep and indeed needed them and not everyone had easy access of transport to Hereford. Wye Valley Trust replied that there will not be a similar closure next winter and they were working on alternatives and a long-term solution. They also accepted that the closures caused public concern and they would consult more in the future including Town Councils. We can only hope that these assurances will be followed through. I fully accept that the Trust is under great pressure with the increased demands on A&E during the Winter months but these temporary closures are not the solution.

##### **Herefordshire Council Budget 2020-2021**

The Council Budget will be set on February 14<sup>th</sup> and is based on the assumption that Council Tax will increase by 4%. This will include a 2% ring-fenced precept for adult social care which is the biggest pressure on the budget. An increase of 1% raises about £800,000 which is a modest amount due to the county's relatively small population, lack of large businesses and cost of service delivery in a large geographical area. Local parish councils

have kept their precepts at last year's level or made small increases mainly to help finance their local Lengthsman schemes.

### **Phosphates and planning**

Many planning applications are presently on hold due to phosphate pollution in the River Lugg. The area affected extends nearly to Kington to Bromyard and north almost to Orleton. It is causing a serious planning backlog, putting pressure on local building firms and on the county's five year land supply. There is a meeting of the Nutrient Management Board on January 29<sup>th</sup>. Some of the £2.2m expected from the New Homes Bonus may be diverted to develop measures to deal with this phosphates issue. It is not a new problem but there will be serious effects on the local economy if it is not urgently addressed.

### **Bus services**

One trip has been withdrawn in the Lugg Valley 490 service, the 9.35 Leominster to Ludlow commercial journey. The remaining services remain intact including the extra Saturday afternoon journey introduced last September. The 490 is a lifeline for villages like Luston and Orleton so please encourage its use. Meanwhile Brimfield benefits from two bus services a week to Leominster and two to Ludlow.

### **Road safety**

I am supporting the proposal for a 30mph speed limit through Leysters on the A4112 which featured heavily in their neighbourhood plan consultation, the continued deployment of a SID in Brimfield and continue to support local efforts to persuade Highways England to make the Salwey Arms junction safer (which often feels like a losing battle). I was dismayed to see overflowing litter bins along the A49 this weekend and wish Highways England and Balfour Beatty would be more active and less tolerant over fly tipping and litter. Many thanks to volunteers in Leominster and elsewhere who do regular litter picks.

### **Holocaust Memorial Day**

Today is the international day to remember the millions murdered by the Nazis during the Holocaust and in the genocides which followed. The Council is marking the day with an exhibition about the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. The exhibition is being held at All Saint's Church in Hereford. There have been moving testimonies on TV from some of the few remaining survivors. Prince Charles and others have reminded us how important it is to remember and not to let the history of these terrible events be brushed under the carpet. Our schools have a part to play too.

### **Cllr Felicity Norman, Ward Member Report – Leominster West**

#### **Events and meetings attended**

##### **December**

- Special Educational Needs conference in Hereford
- Walkers are Welcome AGM in Leominster
- Cabinet meeting in Leominster at the library – very well attended and opportunity for discussion with cabinet members followed

- Launch of Herefordshire Wildlife Trust new electric car at Queenswood
- Small Business Saturday – a busy, well supported day
- Aida's Amble – walk to celebrate the reopening of accessible footpath from White Lion around the town via the Millennium Green, and to remember Aida, who died last year, and who was instrumental in getting the path established some years ago.
- Leominster Victorian Fair – once again very well attended and successful
- Spotlight Review into Peer on Peer abuse at the Shire Hall, Hereford
- Stakeholder (businesses, local organisations etc.) consultation on Herefordshire Corporate Plan, Hereford
- Councillor consultation on Corporate Plan
- Carols by Candlelight at the Priory Church

### **January**

- Wassail event processed from Corn Square with Jenny Pipes Morris to the Community Orchard, Millennium Green, and then to Grange Court. A good crowd for this enjoyable event
- Meeting with Sir David Nicholson, consultant on NHS plans
- Health and Wellbeing Board, workshop to refocus aims
- Children and Young People's Scrutiny committee
- Visit to Northfield (Staffs) Community centre, good practise community hub
- County Tourism Forum at Green Dragon, Hereford
- HealthWatch Mental Health forum for schools
- Visit to the Bromyard Hope Centre, offering support for children and families

### Ward Issues

- No movement on applications at Barons Cross Camp site, West Winds off Cholstrey Road, McDonalds or on the poultry house application at Stagbatch.
- No further information on the phosphate levels in the River Lugg, and the resulting halt to development, although plans are to build reed beds/WET systems at sewage outlets.
- Still no sign blocking HGV access to Ginhall Lane and Green Lane through Pierrepont road.

### **Leominster South Ward report – Cllr Trish Marsh**

- Aida's Amble – There were a number of issues with access to the part of this walk around the White Lion including car parking and planning;
- The Herefordshire Corporate Plan was nearing completion following very useful consultation;
- Tourism Meeting, Green Dragon – this had been very useful with over 100 people attending and 28 speakers.

### **Leominster East Ward report Cllr Jenny Bartlett**

- Queenswood Countryside Park – Launch of Herefordshire Wildlife Trusts new electric car sponsored by Severn Waste Services.

- Leominster Area Polish Society (LAPS) Film ‘Last Witness’, the story of the last survivor of the Katyn massacre of 22,000 Polish Officers during WW11 and its historical cover up. The film’s director Piotr Szkopiak was there and there was a wide ranging and thoughtful discussion with him after the film.
- Leominster Rail Users Group meeting – unfortunately there was no one from Transport for Wales able to attend, so plans for the station are no further forward. Let’s hope this year is more successful.
- Cheaton, Cogwell and Ridgemoor Natural Flood Management Community Meeting – more information available about the grants available and opportunities for volunteer involvement.
- Adult & Wellbeing Scrutiny work – Workshop to identify upcoming issues and work. The full committee considered the temporary closure of the Minor Injuries Units at the community hospitals in Ross and here in Leominster. We also took a further look at the emerging budget for the A&WB Directorate. Regular quarterly meeting with Herefordshire Healthwatch where the MIU’s came up again.
- All Member Briefings and workshops – Shaping the Future of Green Infrastructure in Herefordshire briefing looking at the innovative ways of using innovative data and mapping open source mapping to better understand green infrastructure resources, especially trees. Looking towards working with volunteers at the local level.
- The Ambition for Herefordshire workshop based around the emerging Council’s ambitions and budget priorities for the next four years. Some very good round table discussions and brainstorming contributions from all sides.
- Task and Finish groups – the Waste Contract and Re-thinking Governance T&F groups are both starting this month. I am on both of these.

## **96/19 MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS**

Council noted the following Mayoral appointments attended by the Mayor.

- Saturday 21st Dec 2019 The Mayor and Mayoress attended a carol service and prize presentation for St John Ambulance Herefordshire at St Martins church, Hereford. We were pleased to see lots of young people from Leominster taking part and winning some prizes. It was very interesting for us as we both have a very long association with St John.
- On Christmas morning we both went to Leominster Community hospital to wish patients and staff a happy Christmas and to present a gift to each patient from the league of friends it was very noticeable how the patients were very well cared for and in one case this was looking after the relatives. I would like to congratulate the staff on behalf of the people of Leominster for the way in which the whole unit was run and the care being given the to the patients beyond the call of duty.
- You may not be aware that the Wye Valley Trust are proposing to close the Minor injury units at Leominster and Ross on Wye permanently;
- The both of us ended up Christmas day by having lunch at the Barons Cross which was very good and no washing up.
- I am making an appeal on behalf of Leominster St John who rent a unit on southern avenue and have to vacate this by the end of February. If you

know of anywhere that they could rent for two or three evenings a week for adults and cadets, please contact the Mayor.

The Town Council formally **RESOLVED** to put on record its thanks to all the Staff and Councillors who had taken part in the “Through the Wardrobe Event” helping to make it so successful.

#### **DEPUTY MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS:**

##### ***November:***

16<sup>th</sup> – Leominster Choral Society at the Priory

21<sup>st</sup> – Roger Albert Clark Rally start

28<sup>th</sup> – Waverley Hall Funday

30<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Lights Switch On Leominster

##### **December:**

3<sup>rd</sup> – West Mercia PCC Q&A session

14<sup>th</sup> – Victorian Street Market and “Through the Wardrobe”

14<sup>th</sup> – The Bargoed Welsh Male Voice Choir, Sports Club, Leominster

20<sup>th</sup> – Carols by candlelight at The Priory

##### ***January:***

10<sup>th</sup> – Funeral of Lin Henderson, wife of Mayor of Stourport

14<sup>th</sup> Communications and Events Committee meeting

19<sup>th</sup> – The Blue Light Service of Thanksgiving

27<sup>th</sup> – Mayors and Deputy Mayors meeting, Hereford

#### **97/19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Council noted that the next Town Council Meeting would be held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2020 commencing at 19:00pm at the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP.

**Annual Town Meeting** – Following discussion Council **RESOLVED** to hold the 2020 Annual Town Meeting on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2020. The meeting will commence at 7.00pm and be held at 11 Corn Square.

#### **98/19 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.

- (a) Grant Funding Ratification** – Council **RESOLVED** to ratify the grant of £500 in support of the Marches Family Network bid to Herefordshire Council’s Disabled Children & Young People Short Breaks Capital Grants Program.
- (b) Staff Report Update** – Council **RESOLVED** to adopt all the recommendations contained within the report. A confidential appendix is attached to these minutes.

- (c) **General Projects Update** – Council received the Grants Projects update report. The following information was noted:
- Meetings were being held with the National Trust regarding the future development of the Secret Garden, 11 Corn Square;
  - The Open Spaces Grant from Herefordshire Council amounting to £10,000 had been confirmed and would be received by 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020;
  - An update on the No Wrong Door report relating to the Barons Cross initiative was presented;
  - The Team Leominster update was acknowledged alongside the Barons Cross Community Engagement sessions;
  - The LEADER signage project update was presented.
- (d) **High Street Heritage Action Zone Fund Update** – Council noted that a final decision regarding this grant funding would be reached in Spring 2020.
- (e) **Museum Update** – Council considered the report following the meeting held with the Museum on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020. Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED:**
- To continue the current staffing secondment to the Museum for a further twelve month period ending in March 2021, during which time support will be provided to recruit and train a replacement curator;
  - To review the Partnership Aims as part of the continuation of the partnership;
  - To consider all options available to recruit a replacement curator for the museum through further discussion.
- (f) **Civic Awards** – Council agreed to commence the consideration of awarding civic awards at the Mayor Making ceremony scheduled to take place on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2020. Nominations from Councillors should be submitted to the Town Clerk Designate by Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 along with a brief outline of why the nominee deserved an award.

There being no other business the Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 20:50pm.

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**MAYOR**

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**DATE:**