

## OSWESTRY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2016 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, the Guildhall, Oswestry

**PRESENT:** The Mayor, Councillor D P Milner  
Councillors Mrs S Best, Mrs C Chamberlain,  
Mrs E Channon, P Cherrington, Mrs R Evans,  
Mrs C Hawksley, V Hunt, J G Jones, D Kerr,  
S Mason, J Price, C Schofield, and C Stokes

**In the Chair:** The Mayor, Councillor D P Milner

**In attendance:** D J Preston – Town Clerk  
A Roberts – Assistant Town Clerk  
One member of the public

### PRAYERS

At the commencement of the meeting Prayers were led by the Mayor's Chaplin, Reverend Simon Thorburn.

### PUBLIC SESSION

For 15 minutes previous to the commencement of the meeting, members of the public were invited to question the Council on local issues, etc. Questions to be answered by Mayor, Chairmen of Standing Committees, or Town Clerk.

Mr J Bickerton attended and asked questions relating to West Midlands Ambulance Service, and the CCG. A response was given by the Town Clerk that the Town Council was not in a position to comment upon any of the observations as expressed. An invitation had been extended to West Midlands Ambulance Service to talk to both the Oswestry Health Forum and the Town Council, and attempts will be made to try and arrange these appointments for the autumn.

### **23. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from:

**Councillor A Davis – family commitments**  
**Councillor M Jones – work commitments**  
**Councillor M Lee – holiday**  
**Councillor Mrs A Woof – work commitments**

**RESOLVED** the apologies be accepted.

## 24. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

To receive declarations under consideration on this agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 s32 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

**RESOLVED** to note no declarations were received.

## 25. SPEAKER – MR RICHARD POWELL

Following the announcement by Shropshire Council that Mile End Tourist Information was to close on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2016, Richard Powell, Chairman of Oswestry Welsh Border Tourism Association, was in attendance to discuss the promotion of tourism in Oswestry in the future and also the role of Oswestry Welsh Border Tourism Association.

It was explained that the Association was formed in 2004; it has six Board Members and 82 paid up Members; the organisation is funded from Membership fees and advertising revenue. Its main focus is in managing the Visitor & Exhibition Centre in Oswestry on behalf of the Town Council with four staff employed at the Centre on a part-time basis. It also organises guided walks with volunteer guides. Its brochure, *Escape*, has had a 25,000 publication and next year a greater print run is intended. The group also run a website which was revamped in 2016. It is also going to undertake more use of social media to promote the area and individual Member businesses.

With regard to Mile End, the Association is taking on telephone and email enquiries; however some 30,000 visitors have been lost based on the last year of trading at Mile End. It was confirmed that the Town TIC has no parking and limited signage and its Membership are primarily from small attractions and accommodation providers with limited marketing budgets.

In terms of what is next, recruitment of more Members is very important. Also it gives the Town Council support for relocating the Town TIC to a more central location. It will welcome discussion with the Town Council in ways to maximise the local tourism product and to encourage coach parties into the town centre.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED**:

- To thank and congratulate Richard Powell and his Board and team of volunteers for the work that has been undertaken;
- To confirm that a Tourism Forum would be useful, looking for a series of meetings each year between the Council and Oswestry Welsh Border Tourism Association;

- To acknowledge that the offer from the Town Council to takeover Oswestry Destination Partnership had fallen thereby highlighting the need for local input and promotion of Oswestry based tourism;
- To agree the value of shaping a tourism strategy and a meeting of representatives to be held in September to look at a strategy and the best use of the limited resources available.

## 26. COUNCILLOR MRS MARGARET CHAMBERLAIN

Letter from Councillor Mrs M Chamberlain confirming that she would soon be entering Hospital for a series of operations/assessments and Leave of Absence was therefore requested from the Council from August until December 2016; however, Councillor Mrs M Chamberlain would attend any meetings within that period where possible.

**RESOLVED** consent be granted for Leave of Absence and the Council's best wishes to be extended to Councillor Mrs M Chamberlain.

## 27. MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016 **OTC/01/16** were confirmed and signed.

## 28. STANDING COMMITTEES

**RESOLVED** to adopt the below minutes:

### Markets and Car Parks Committee

16 <sup>th</sup> May 2016	-	MCP/01/16
25 <sup>th</sup> May 2016	-	MCP/02/16

### Finance and General Purposes Committee

16 <sup>th</sup> May 2016	-	FGP/01/16
13 <sup>th</sup> June 2016	-	FGP/02/16

### Development and Planning

16 <sup>th</sup> May 2016	-	DPC/01/16
1 <sup>st</sup> June 2016	-	DPC/02/16
6 <sup>th</sup> July 2016	-	DPC/03/16

### Amenities

16 <sup>th</sup> May 2016	-	AC/01/16
8 <sup>th</sup> June 2016	-	AC/02/16

## 29. TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS

No questions were submitted in accordance with Standing Orders.

## 30. SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL MATTERS

An update was provided by local Shropshire Councillors on policies, consultation and general matters relating to Shropshire Council.

It was noted that a twelve month extension had been given regarding the re-design of Shropshire Council services and, although there was no clarity on the funding arrangements for this provision, it was considered to be good news.

The Shropshire Council Corporate Plan, in draft, has been approved and that will be helpful to refer to as to the priorities of the Council. Reference was made to the recent Audit report on Shropshire Council and concerns over management of its IT systems. Significant disappointment was recorded at confirmation that a Motion to seek support for the retention of A&E Services in Shrewsbury had been lost within Shropshire Council.

Other matters discussed included:

- Arrangements for the Elections in 2017;
- Resilient communities was now back on track;
- Potential community asset transfer was in progress with regard to the former Station Building;
- Significant disappointment was recorded at the recent fire of Gatacre Pavilion, therefore the Council agreed to commit to look at quotations for both temporary and permanent CCTV on the site, acknowledging the Council's significant contribution.

## 31. STAR COUNCIL AWARDS

The Council was provided with a draft of the submission of nominations for the Best Local Council Project 2017 and Council of the Year 2017 in the NALC Start Council Awards.

**RESOLVED** the information be noted and to await the results.

## 32. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

In view of the confidential nature of business about to be transacted which would involve the likely disclosure of confidential information as defined in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be temporarily excluded from the meeting and they be asked to withdraw.