

LEOMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Leominster Town Council Meeting held on Monday 29th March 2021 commencing at 19:00 hours remotely via Zoom.

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

OFFICERS PRESENT: Town Clerk, Projects & Grants Officer and the Democratic Services Officer.

ALSO PRESENT: Ward Cllr Stone and a member of the press (19:25).

74/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. Williamson had informed the clerk that it was not likely that she would be able to attend.

75/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Norman, Herschy and Sutcliffe – Trustees of LARC.

76/20 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No requests for dispensation had been received.

77/20 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

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

78/20 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Council **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Leominster Town Council meeting held on 25th January 2021 be agreed and signed as a correct record when social distancing regulations are lifted by central government.

79/20 CLERK'S REPORT

Council noted the following Clerk's Report:

- The HSHAZ Steering Group is currently short of members. Cllr. Bartlett agreed to join as a representative of Herefordshire Council.

80/20 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

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 18th January 2021, 8th February 2021 and 1st March 2021 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 16th March 2021 and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein;

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- 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 22nd February 2021 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 15th March 2021 and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein;
- Cllr Thomas, Chair of the Personnel Sub-Committee, presented the minutes. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee held on 18th January 2021 and 5th March 2021 and to authorise the decisions and recommendations contained therein.

81/20 FINANCES

- (a) **Accounts Paid and Invoices for Payment** – It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the payment of invoices February 2021, as outlined on the payment statements provided.
- (b) **The Income & Expenditure Report and budget notes for Month 11** – Council **RESOLVED** to accept Income & Expenditure Report and budget notes.

82/20 REPORTS

The following reports were received:

Cllr. Norman – Shop Mobility

The council noted that Shop Mobility have continued to provide services throughout lockdown due to help from volunteers.

Leominster North Ward Report from Ward Cllr. Stone

The council noted the report contained in the agenda.
Cllr. Stone added that Balfour Beatty will be prioritising drainage works.
Recycling centres are shortly due to re-open 7 days a week.

Leominster South Ward Report from Ward Cllr. Marsh

The council noted the report contained in the agenda
Cllr. Marsh added that Balfour Beatty will also be focussing on footways and structures.

Leominster West Ward Report from Ward Cllr. Norman

The council noted the report contained in the agenda.
Cllr. Norman added that a number of measures are being considered to try to solve the phosphate problem. It was **RESOLVED** to contact Local MPs regarding the issue.
There have been a couple of school closures due to Covid-19 but the situation has been helped through Covid-19 testing.

Leominster East Ward Report from Ward Cllr. Bartlett

The council noted the following report:

Parish Summit on 30th March at 7pm - Public Health, Talk Community and the police will be providing updates on responses to the Covid-19 pandemic and working with communities to improve resilience. There will also be time to ask questions of the speakers, so do try and make this.

Parish BBLP Session on 30th March 2pm – 3pm – This is frustratingly short notice this year but I do hope parish councillors can make this too. It is an opportunity to ask BBLP about the plan priorities for the coming year. This is a separate session from the Parish Summit so please try to make one or both. There is a catch up session on Thursday 8th April at 2pm for anyone who cannot make this meeting. These meetings are being held by locality now so there will be more time to ask questions about Leominster.

Rural Services Network Market Towns Forum – This is the second forum meeting that I am attending on behalf of Leominster Town Council. A great opportunity to network with market towns up and down the country to share common issues such as rural transport and rural service delivery.

Adult and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee - The committee has considered the implications of the new NHS White Paper: Integration and Innovation. The new Integrated Care System should make partnership working easier, removing barriers that prevent local NHS, Public Health, Social Care and voluntary sector services. The committee will consider the draft Carers Strategy at the end of March and make further recommendations to strengthen this plan. The committee has also received briefings on the new Mental Health Transformation Plans for the county.

Members Briefings and challenge sessions – There have been briefings for all members on the emerging Carer's Strategy and the visitor economy project in the county.

BBLP Briefings and Annual Plan – There was a very useful briefing on land owner and riparian duties, field run-off and flooding. Understanding who is responsible is key to finding a solution. There is a lot of work ongoing with the Natural Flood Management Project in and around Leominster to reduce flood risk. All members briefing on the Annual Plan has also taken place.

Residents Parking Schemes – The annual 'rescoring' of the outstanding Traffic Road Orders has been completed. Following a meeting with BBLP and Herefordshire Council I have made the case to package all outstanding residents parking schemes in Leominster and do them at the same time. There is an increasing number of road safety issues due to inconsiderate parking on pavements and junctions, so residents parking schemes will tackle these problems as well. Hopefully the outstanding residents parking schemes in Leominster will now come forward in next year's annual plan. To put this in perspective, in the January 2020 waiting list as individual schemes they sat at numbers 55, 87, 88 and 105 respectively. As a package they

now sit at number 19 on the 2021 list, so I think it's fair to say they have they have taken a significant leap up the waiting list.

Re-Governance Task and Finish Group – This is consuming a great deal of time for the working group. As scrutiny lead for the council I have been tied up mainly with scrutiny effectiveness assessments, all member briefings, and responding to task and finish group constitutional recommendations to tackle the climate and ecological emergency responsibilities Herefordshire Council has.

Fly tipping Fines - I was really pleased to see that two people from Stourport on Severn have been prosecuted for fly tipping on Bromyard Downs recently, a great result for Herefordshire Councils Enforcement Team. Like the majority of fly tipping incidents this year, this was a commercial outfit who charge to dispose of waste, this time from the refurbished Pound Stretcher store in Hereford's Eign Gate. This year we have been totally blighted by fly tipping from commercial operators who are out to make a quick buck by taking money to dispose of commercial waste with no intention of taking it to the weigh stations in Herefordshire. I hope this sends a message that we have zero tolerance for rogue operators and individuals who blight our beautiful parish and county.

Household Waste sites – On April 1st the county sites move to summer opening times. Leominster household waste site at Bridge Street will be open 7 days a week from 8am to 6pm. To ensure safety the bookings system will continue, either by booking on line or by phoning 01432 260051 if you do not use IT.

Money for HALO Leisure centres – Leominster Bridge Street and Conningsby Road sports centres will both benefit from money to help re-open, thanks to the National Leisure Recovery Fund from Sport England. HALO and Herefordshire Council's bid has secured £460,000 for all the county sites.

Leominster May Fair new dates for 2021 – Although the May Fair will not take place in May this year, it is hoped that it can definitely go ahead. The new dates for the Leominster Fair weekend are 29th to 31st July and the fair will then move on to Hereford city as usual.

Register to vote in the Police and Crime Commissioners Election – Please can we all encourage residents to make sure they are registered to vote. The deadline for registering to vote is midnight on Monday 19th April. The election for the PCC will take place on Thursday 6th May 2021.

Budget Consultation Summary

Council noted the Budget Consultation Summary from the Projects & Grants Officer. It was proposed by Cllr. Rumsey, seconded by Cllr. Davies and unanimously **RESOLVED** that:

- A copy of the 2021/22 Budget Consultation Report is made available for download via the Leominster Town Council website;
- A link to the report is sent by email to those survey respondents who requested a copy of the final consultation results;

- A summary of key findings is published in the next available issue of the Leominster News.

Projects Update

Council noted the following verbal projects update from the Projects & Grants Officer:

COVID-19 Community Response

- 36 calls received via the Leominster helpline since the start of the 3rd national lockdown
- 13 calls within the last month
- Mostly medication deliveries and urgent food requests.
- Current intention is to decrease helpline hours on 12th April, to calls taken via the Town Council number during office hours. Monitor number of calls taken as lockdown restrictions continue to ease and work with Team Leominster partner organisations to discuss support options for those who continue to need assistance beyond the end of covid-19 restrictions.

LEADER Signage Project

- All Welcome signs are now installed at town entrances. The Projects and Grants Officer will work with Leominster in Bloom and the Leominster Fairtrade Group to finalise the designs for additional panels promoting local events and initiatives. Once these are in place, the Council will need to work with event organisers to establish a system for advertising local events using these signs.
- All pedestrian directional signage is now installed.
- All Visitor Information Signs are now installed, at the following sites:
 - Etnam St Carpark
 - Grange Public Toilets
 - Broad St Carpark
 - Broad St Public Toilets
 - Central Carpark
 - Victoria St
 - Corn Square
 - Bus Station
 - Dishley St Carpark
 - Leominster Railway Station
- The final Heritage Information sign is due to be installed this week at the Station. All others are in place and a full list of locations is as follows:
 - Grange Walk
 - The Grange (by The Pavilion)
 - Leominster Priory
 - Pinsley Mead
 - Priory House
 - Leominster's Rivers (by Leominster Fire Station)
 - Leominster's Market House (at the Buttercross Arcade)
 - Corn Square

- Etnam St (at Leominster Museum)
- Old Market Site
- Leominster Station
- Leominster Forbury

The Grange Regeneration Project

- Two phase consultation took place in 2019. Phase one (March-April 2019) looked to determine local residents' and stakeholders' views on and priorities for The Grange. The Phase 2 Consultation (July 2019), gave local residents and stakeholders the opportunity to provide their feedback on proposals developed by Red Kite Ltd in response to Phase 1 findings and technical site analysis.
- Sept 2019, a final masterplan document (RIBA Stage 3) for the Grange site was released.
- Next steps in taking the project forward were delayed due to Covid-19 and the challenges that this presented for staff resourcing and consultation.
- The Projects and Grants Officer recently met with Dave Tristram (Herefordshire Council) to develop a funding strategy for the Grange project – now that the signage project is close to completion and the lockdown restrictions are beginning to ease.
- The Grange Master Plan is a large project that will have to be developed in stages over a number of years. Initial priorities are the play area, the Grange toilets, and deteriorating access pathways to and around the Grange. These have all been highlighted as key priorities for residents in the latest budget consultation results. These can be developed as one project and potential funding opportunities have already been identified – including the Sports England Community Asset Fund.
- The Grange is a significant town space and so involvement from the local community is vital. Working in partnership also opens up a larger range of funding opportunities. Recommendation: that a stakeholder group be established to enable partnership working in the next stages of the project. Proposed members are those organisations that attended stakeholder meetings in the 2019 Consultation project, as they represent key demographic groups and heritage sites. To include:
 - Town Council
 - Herefordshire Council (Dave Tristram)
 - LARC
 - Leominster Priory
 - Leominster Meeting Centre
 - ECHO
 - Oaks Children's Group
 - Leominster in Bloom
 - Leominster Museum

It was proposed by Cllr. Thomas, seconded by Cllr. Williams and unanimously **RESOLVED** that a stakeholder group be established.

Leominster HAZ Scheme

- Community Engagement
 - o The Projects and Grants Officer is currently working with the HAZ Officer to develop the Community Engagement plan.
 - o Waiting on Comms templates from HE.
- Web App
 - o An initial brief has been sent to heritage and tourism groups in the town for comment.
 - o Tender is being finalised by Herefordshire Council and should go live later this week, with the aim of awarding a contract at the end of April.
- Conservation Area review
 - o Deadline for tender proposals is 21/03/2021.
 - o Contract should be awarded in the next few weeks.
- Wi-fi and footfall counters
 - o Initial meetings have taken place with potential providers to inform the project brief.
 - o There are likely to be questions for the Town Council to consider in the next stage of this project.
- Grants Scheme
 - o Currently due to launch at the beginning of May.
 - o Large renovation scheme (80% funded) and a shop front scheme (50% funded)
- Listing Project
 - o A working list of buildings of interest has been developed by HE in collaboration with local stakeholders. HE are now working on a strategy for the next steps.
 - o Interested building owners or volunteers can be referred to the Projects and Grants Officer at this stage.
- Public Realm
 - o Two aspects: Corn Square and works to roads/pavements in town centre.
 - o Steering Group sub-committee have started to develop plan for taking this project forward. Importance of extensive consultation has been emphasised.

Team Leominster

- Operational Group meetings have been on hold during the covid pandemic and are due to begin again in the near future. The Tactical Group has continued to

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meet via Zoom, with primary focus being sustaining a coordinated approach to providing support and information services during the covid pandemic.

- Now that Central Government's route map out of lockdown has been announced, we are working to identify how to restart community development work in Barons Cross. This includes Community Engagement days that have been funded by the Town Council and were originally due to take place in 2020, but were postponed.

Talk Community

- Herefordshire Council's Talk Community Team are looking to establish Talk Community Hubs in communities across Herefordshire – empowering local residents to support their communities by signposting to key services (using the WISH website and local knowledge).
- Hubs can be permanent, or virtual.
- New Talk Community Hubs can apply to receive:
 - o funding of up to £2,500 for setting up and developing the hub
 - o free training for volunteers or staff
 - o free additional promotion via WISH
- The Talk Community team have confirmed that they would be willing to support a virtual Talk Community hub at Barons Cross. This would involve:
 - o Access to WISH via Team Leominster Barons Cross Support surgeries.
 - o A new community noticeboard where support services, advice and activities can be promoted.
- Seed funding would be used to cover the cost of notice board, together with wifi access and a tablet for use at support surgeries.
- The Town Council is able to submit the application for seed funding on behalf of Team Leominster.
- Recommendation: that the Council grant permission for the Projects and Grants Officer to apply for a Talk Community seed funding grant to be used for setting up a virtual Talk Community hub at Barons Cross.

It was proposed by Cllr. Preece, seconded by Cllr. Rosser, and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Projects & Grants Officer apply for a Talk Community seed funding grant.

83/20 CCTV – CENTRAL CAR PARK

Council noted the estimate of cost received from the CCTV Manager at Herefordshire Council and **RESOLVED** that the clerk should obtain 2 further quotes from the CCTV Manager.

84/20 KICKSTART SCHEME UPDATE

Council noted that the paperwork for the government Kickstart Scheme has been received and two job descriptions have been written. The job descriptions are for a Project & Grants assistant and an Environmental & Grounds assistant. The Job Centre will forward suitable applicants aged between 16-24.

85/20 MEETING CALENDAR 2021/22

Council noted the meeting calendar for 2021/22 and **RESOLVED** to accept the calendar.

86/20 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Council noted that the Annual Town Meeting will be held on Monday 19th April 2021. Details will be published on the Town Council website. It was **RESOLVED** that the Chair of each Committee will attend the meeting.

87/20 ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Council noted that the Annual Town Council Meeting will be held on Monday 24th May 2021. Discussions have been held with the Priory and it is proposed that the Mayor Making Ceremony is held in the Autumn.

88/20 MAYOR'S UPDATE

Council noted the verbal update provided by Cllr. Thomas (Mayor):

- The Mayor was able to carry out a number of public functions before the introduction of Covid-19 restrictions;
- A Covid-19 helpline was set up by the Town Council to support local residents. The Town Council linked up with Community Wheels to provide support. The helpline was also manned in the evenings and weekends;
- The High Sheriff visited Leominster between the national lockdowns. Members of the Town Council were invited to the new High Sheriff Making Ceremony, held in Hereford Cathedral, via Zoom;
- The Mayor wrote to the Herefordshire Cabinet member for Infrastructure and Transport, on behalf of the Planning & Highways Committee, regarding the poor condition of the roads in Leominster;
- The Mayor has been unable to hold Charity events, except for Party in the Park, due to the Covid-19 restrictions;
- The Mayor thanked the Town Council staff for their work during the pandemic.

89/20 NHS & CARERS DAY

Council noted that the NHS & Carers day will be held on 5th July 2021. It was **RESOLVED** that the Communications and Events Committee consider whether any local events should be held at the next committee meeting on 11th May 2021.

Cllr. Stone and the member of the press left the meeting at 20.17.

90/20 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) Museum Report

- Council noted the report regarding the Museum Partnership 2018 – 2021.

(b) Millennium Green

- Cllr. Herschy provided a background to the proposed merger between the Millennium Green and LARC in 2014.

Cllrs Norman, Herschy and Sutcliffe left the meeting at this stage.

- Council considered the ownership and maintenance of the Millennium Green.

Cllrs Herschy and Sutcliffe re-joined the meeting.

(c) CCTV 11 Corn Square

- Council noted the options for CCTV at 11 Corn Square.

(d) Potential Devolved Asset

- Council noted the potential Devolved Asset.

91/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Council noted that the next Town Council Meeting would be held on Monday 24th May 2021 commencing at 19:00 hours either remotely via Zoom or at the Council Offices, 11 Corn Square, Leominster HR6 8YP depending on social distancing regulations being relaxed by central government.

There being no other business the Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 21.33 hours.

MAYOR: _____ **DATE:** _____