

## **DROITWICH SPA TOWN COUNCIL**

### **DROITWICH SPA TOWN MEETING - LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Annual Droitwich Spa Town Meeting held in the Main Hall, Community Hall, Heritage Way, Droitwich Spa on Monday, 19 March 2018 at 7 pm.

#### **A G E N D A**

1. To confirm the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 20 March 2017.
2. To receive the reports of the Town Mayor 2017/18 and the Chairmen of the Council's Standing Committees.
3. To receive items to be referred to the Town Council by members of the public.
4. Communications as permitted by the Mayor.

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#### **MINUTES**

The Town Mayor and 13 Town Councillors were in attendance, of which 6 were also District Councillors and 2 of those were also County Councillors

Invited representatives present were Mr Vic Allison, Deputy Managing Director, Wychavon District Council, also Sergeant Sarah Kent and Inspector Gareth Morgan of West Mercia Constabulary.

The meeting was attended by 19 Town electors. There were also four family members of the late Frank Holiday present, who resided in Worcester City and Hadzor.

PRESS ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Tristan Harris – Editor, 'Droitwich Standard' and Mr Christian Barnett - Reporter, 'Berrows News/Worcester News'.

A public notice convening the meeting had been displayed on noticeboards in the Town and at the Community Hall for the required period. Copies of the Agenda, Minutes of the Town Meeting held on 20 March 2017 were available for members of the public, together with copies of reports from the Mayor and the Chairmen of the Town Council's Standing Committees.

The Town Mayor, Councillor Shaun Best took the Chair and welcomed invited guests and members of the public present.

Councillor Best then introduced:-

Councillor Mrs Chris Bowden, Vice-Chairman of Planning Committee;  
Councillor Alan Humphries, Vice-Chairman of Resources Committee;  
Councillor Mrs Sital Harris, Chairman of Community & Amenities Committee

The Mayor advised that there were other members of the Town Council that were in attendance at the meeting, who would be speaking in their capacity as residents.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: had been submitted from: Mrs Suzi Wood of Friends of Droitwich Spa Lido, Councillors G Duffy, Mrs A Hawkins, T J Noyes, and Mrs K Tomalin.

MINUTES: the Minutes of the Town Meeting held on 20 March 2017 were submitted for adoption and confirmed as a correct record.

ANNOUNCEMENT: the Mayor invited family members (including his wife Helen) of the late Frank Holliday to step forward to receive the Trophy donated by the Town Council in memory of Frank. He had served Droitwich Spa Boys and Girls Football Club for almost 40 years, having held many different roles at the Club, from Coach to Chairman, as he helped train hundreds of Spa children. There had been plaques erected within the clubhouse and it was the Mayors' great pleasure to formally dedicate this Memorial Trophy on behalf of the Town Council.

REPORTS: The Mayor referred to his written report that had been circulated. He commented upon the recently completed Enhancement Scheme for the High Street which had been driven in the most part by the tenacity of ex-County Councillor Pam Davey. He mentioned Police, Fire and Ambulance services and the great contribution they made to the town. He referred to the impact being made by Save Our Brine Baths (SOBBs) Group on the Brine Heritage of the Town for which he thanked Councillor W T Moy and his group members. He had been saddened to hear of the death this week that Mike Davies of Churchfields Farm. Mike had been one of the driving forces behind the launch of Droitwich Salt, the first time in 100 years that pure brine salt from Droitwich's brine springs had been produced and put on sale to the public. Churchfields Farm was the official producer and distributor of the extensive range of Droitwich Salt products including Pure Droitwich Salt, Salted Butter, Salted Caramel Ice Cream and Salted Fudge made by Wychbold Fudge. The Mayor was pleased to advise that the family were continuing the good work. Another initiative that would bear fruit in a few months' time was the Westlands Project, Wychavon District Council having invested £115,000 into Droitwich West to improve the lives of residents living there. The funding was over three years and formed part of an overall £230,000 investment using New Homes Bonus funding with the other £115,000 going towards the Rural Communities Programme.

The Mayor then invited the Vice-Chairmen of the Town Council's Planning and Resources Committees, and the Chairman of the Community & Amenities Committee to present their reports, which they duly did, advising of specific matters of interest and drawing attention to certain issues. In particular Councillor A Humphries, Vice-Chairman of Resources Committee advised that the Town Clerk was due to retire later that month and wished her well for the future. It was also his sad duty to report that Mr David Davies, Caretaker, who had been due to retire alongside Mrs Craney had passed away a few weeks earlier.

Thereafter the Mayor invited residents at the meeting to speak on their matters of concern.

## **1. Highways Matters**

➤ Mr Mark Heel, 43 Burrish Street

Mr Heel reported upon the poor state of several of the underpasses including the drainage situation resulting from blocked gullies which meant that the underpass at Highfield Island was usually flooded.

He advised also that he had not had a response to his question from the 2017 Town Meeting at which he had proposed an extension to the hatched area at the end of Omberley Street East by the Health Centre to the road edge between the double yellow

lines, to prevent cars parking in the area outside the Health Centre in Ombersley Street East close to the underpass and thus improving road safety issues.

County Councillor G R Brookes confirmed that he would follow up on these matters with the County Highways Department and suggested that Mr Heel spoke to him at the end of the meeting to advise of the full details.

➤ Mr Alan Davies, 1 Riverside Road

Mr Davies advised that he had submitted a report upon the offensive graffiti to both the Town Council and the District Council.

Mr V Allison advised that this was a matter for Worcestershire County Council and County Councillor G R Brookes confirmed that he would look into this matter, it being the first time he had heard of this particular problem.

➤ Ms Carol Moseley, 25 Showell Close

Ms Moseley referred to the lack of overhead lighting for the footpath between Addys Way and Primsland. She was also concerned at the lack of a public crossing in the vicinity of the M&S Garage on Worcester Road.

County Councillor Brookes suggested that anyone who had any highway concerns was welcome to contact him at any time. However he could confirm that the area of the Worcester Road by the garage had been assessed in accordance with the highways standards and a crossing was not deemed appropriate for the present time. County Councillor R J Morris confirmed that the garage had been monitored and the volume of highways users did not warrant any change to this viewpoint. He understood that some residents objected to additional street lighting in the area of Addys Way and Primsland, however it was necessary to revisit such matters as raised by Ms Moseley from time to time, as situations did change.

Ms Moseley advised that it was not a crossing for the Worcester Road that was required, there needed to be signage for those drivers exiting the garage onto the Worcester Road to ensure that they looked both to the right and to the left.

➤ Mr James Mulligan, 2 Dodderhill Road

Indiscriminate car parking in the vicinity of the 'Freemasons Arms' Public House on Bromsgrove Road was causing traffic obstructions and narrowed the road down to single-file traffic. This was a main route in and out of the Town.

County Councillor G R Brookes advised that a 'No Waiting' (double yellow lines) Order was being progressed for the Chapel Bridge area. Traffic obstruction could sometimes be dealt with by the Police however Mr V Allison advised that Wychavon District Council was the enforcing authority for on-street parking and that he would look to progress this matter.

➤ Mr Geoffrey Briscoe, 45 Shirley Road

Excessive vegetation at Chateau Impney Gatehouse and St Mary de Witton graveyard was hazardous to cyclists and need to be attended to.

The Mayor advised that the Parochial Church Council was arranging for radical and very extensive gardening works to be undertaken at St Mary de Witton which would address the issue of the overhanging foliage. It was noted that the Chateau Impney Gatehouse site

lay within Wychbold Parish Council's area and Mr Allison agreed that the District Council would look to improve the verges in this area.

## **2. Drug Dealing, Westlands**

➤ Mr Patrick Healey, 28 Thatchers Place

Mr Healey referred to his question as recorded in Minute No 4 of the Town Meeting held in 2017. By way of an update he wished to advise that he had documentary evidence of damage and that he had received threats as to 'fire-bombing' his home. Orders had been breached some 66 times and he had submitted several complaints to the Police Authority. He had also made a complaint regarding a police officer that was being investigated currently.

The Town Clerk and the Mayor advised that if there was an investigation pending then it was not possible for this issue to be discussed at the meeting, and in any case the matter had been placed in the hands of the correct authorities, it was not within the remit of the Town Council.

Mr Healey confirmed that this was correct. Also he confirmed that a private prosecution was being pursued.

## **3. The former Raven Hotel (Listed Building)**

➤ Mr Mark Heel, 43 Burrish Street

Mr Heel suggested that this site was going down a similar route as taken by The Worcestershire. He was concerned about the interior fittings and the stained glass in particular.

Mr V Allison advised that he had obtained a statement from the relevant officer concerned with the conservation of this Listed Building. The building had been visited on several occasions by the conservation officer and was inspected regularly. The Mayor confirmed that the Police also kept a regular watch on the building.

➤ Ms Carol Moseley, 25 Showell Close

Ms Moseley queried the ownership and Mr V Allison confirmed that the site was in private ownership and had been sold by its previous owner privately. Wychavon District Council was being kept informed however as the Planning Authority its powers were limited.

➤ Mr Stephen Rigby, 63 Swan Drive

Mr Rigby queried the situation with regard to eg the boiler which he did not consider to be a conservation issue.

District Councillor G R Brookes confirmed that Wychavon District Council could only take an interest in the matter within the powers that it had legally. Notices had been served and the conservation officer was monitoring the situation on a regular basis.

➤ Mrs Lynne West, 32 Leigh Grove

The rating situation was queried. Mr V Allison responded that although there was a period of zero rating for empty business properties this only lasted for a certain period. There was however an exemption for Listed Buildings whereby the zero rating was maintained throughout the period of vacancy.

#### **4. Friday Charter Market**

➤ Mrs Val Humphries, 17 West Street

Mrs Humphries inquired as to the disappearance of the Friday Charter Market and the lack of communication to the public on the matter.

Town Councillor Mrs S Harris, Chairman of the Community and Amenities Committee advised that unfortunately the operator had requested a suspension in the service owing to ill-health. It had been hoped that the market would be able to recommence at Easter but unfortunately it had just been confirmed that this was not to be. Alternative providers were being explored and the matter was in hand. It had been a sensitive situation which had necessitated very minimal information being given to the public. It was her intention to make every effort to secure a new operator.

There being no further questions or comments, and no communications for consideration, the Mayor concluded the meeting at 7.47pm. He thanked the representatives from Wychavon District Council, Worcestershire County Council and West Mercia Police for their attendance and support.

In addition, he referred to the imminent retirement of Mrs Pam Craney, Town Clerk and as this was her last meeting he invited all present to join him in a round of applause, in time-honoured fashion. Mrs Craney thanked everyone for their kind wishes.