Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the meeting of Droitwich Spa Town Council held in the Council Chamber at St Richards House on **Monday 16 December 2024** at 6.05pm.

PRESENT: Councillor AM Sinton (Mayor)
Councillor Mrs C Bowden
Councillor E Bowden
Councillor SJ Brazier
Councillor M Brook
Councillor GR Brookes
Councillor JM Chaudry
Councillor P Clements
Councillor R Deller
Councillor GA Duffy
Councillor Mrs K Fellows
Councillor N Franks
Councillor J Grady
Councillor RP Hopkins
Councillor VP Humphries
Councillor RJ Morris

NOTES
(1) Webcasting Members of the Council are reminded that meetings of the Council are Webcast on the Internet and will be stored electronically and accessible through the Council's Website. Members of the public are informed that if they attend this meeting their images and speech may be captured by the recording equipment used for the Webcast and may also be stored electronically and accessible through the Council's Website.
(2) This Meeting will be webcast and live streamed on the Internet. It is anticipated that all Full Council and Committee Meetings will be live streamed from June 2023 onwards.

APOLOGIES for absence: Councillors DI Davidson & D James.

Prior to the Start of the Meeting there was fifteen minutes time allowable for any pre- notified public participation questions or statements.

The start of the Full Council Meeting was preceded by Prayers and Reflection led by the Mayoral Chaplain – Reverend Laura Handy. Councillors VP Humphries and RJ Morris both spoke in memorial and tribute towards former Councillor and Ex- Mayor Mrs Eve C Freer who had sadly passed in November 2024. The Mayor also added personal sentiments and condolences extended to the Family as part of his Mayoral announcements later in the meeting. Reverend Handy led on a moment of silence for the Town Council in collective memory and respect for former Councillor and Ex – Mayor Mrs Eve C Freer.

The words of tribute from Councillor Morris are as follows,

Eve Freer
Unfortunately, I was away when it was Eve's funeral so could not attend. Eve was a strong, hard-working well-respected individual who served Droitwich so well and became Town Mayor (a year before I joined Council).
Eve still made contact with me and we spoke or corresponded regularly on many areas such as Town events, Platform Housing issues, older people's rights to name a few.

Her last correspondence with me was 16/8 when she wrote: 'A Little cry for help please Richard, there is a water leak affecting central no one was warned about it 7 Trent are not answering the phone I am worried for older people here in the horseshoe of bungalows can you possibly find out how long it might last Richard.
When Eve wrote or contacted you, you knew it was always important as her judgment was always good. I duly found information out and she thanked me. I did bump into her in town in the autumn and we had our usual hug and brief catch up, she was always interested in what was going on.
Eve will be missed but will be long remembered for the work she did for Droitwich and our community.
Thank you, Eve.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS SESSION
None received

256. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS
Councillor RJ Morris and R Deller both declared a non- pecuniary interest for Agenda Item 10 – Droitwich Spa Lido Improvement Scheme, for the reason that they are District Council Elected Members and part of the WDC Executive Board.

257. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2024

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 23 September 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

258. MINUTES OF THE EXTRA- ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 4 NOVEMBER 2024

Councillors Mrs C Bowden and R Deller abstained from the voting for the reason that they were absent for the meeting date of the 4th November 2024.

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Extra- ordinary Meeting of Council held on 4 November 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

259. MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS
The Chairman updated the following report.

Mayor's Announcements- 16th December 2024
Since our last meeting in September, I have continued to represent the town at numerous large and small events. The saddest occasion was joining Cllr Humphries and the Town Clerk to attend the funeral of former Councillor Eve Freer at Worcester Crematorium on November 25th. As you heard earlier in the meeting Eve had been a tremendous servant to Droitwich Spa as a Councillor, as the Mayor in 1999 and more recently through her involvement in local charities. She was greatly loved by her family and the most moving part of the ceremony was to hear the wonderful tributes paid to her by family members. It was a privilege to be able to pay my respects to her on behalf of the people of Droitwich Spa and to offer sincere condolences to her family and friends.
Moving to other events, Eleanor and I held our Civic Service in St Peter's Church on September 29th. The theme of the service was to celebrate 50 years of Droitwich Spa Town Council. This was superbly led in her own inimitable style by our Rector, Rev Laura Handy. Our thanks go to her and her team and all those who attended and took part including the Cadets and other youth groups including the Guides, the British Legion, Charity Organisations and the St Peters School Choir and the readers who described their personal

reflections on the history of the Town Council. We were also privileged to be joined by the High Sheriff of Worcestershire, Charles Moyle.
High Sheriff also visited us on November 28th. It was a delight to accompany him as he attended presentations and distributed awards on behalf of the King to my two mayoral charities. Speakeasy and The Disability Football Club were thrilled to have such a high-profile visitor.

November 28th -Thanksgiving Day in the USA - was also the inaugural Edward Winslow Day here in Droitwich Spa. This started with the raising of the Stars and Stripes outside St Richard's House, where I met some of our local American residents, and concluded with a special service at St Peter's attended by the Deputy Mayor and my consort. I know the organisers are keen to extend this event next year.
November was a particularly busy month with two major annual town events also taking place. The Remembrance Parade on November 10th again showed the town at its best with hundreds of local residents of all ages gathering to show their respects to the Fallen. The Christmas Lights switch-on created an unexpected challenge due to Storm Bert threatening the whole event. I must thank Katy in particular on behalf of all of us for her Trojan efforts in rearranging the event at the last minute and also the people who helped make it happen, particularly the manager of the St Andrew's Shopping Centre.
As you know Eleanor and I are very keen to support our two Twinning Associations. We spent a superb week's holiday in Bad Ems in October when we were given an incredibly hospitable welcome. Eleanor attended the French Twinning AGM earlier this month and we are hoping to visit Voiron at some point in 2025.
May I remind Councillors of our policing priorities of action against anti-social behaviour, misuse of drugs and all forms of speeding? Also I should like to remind you of our campaign against unauthorised parking on pavements. Any major contraventions should be reported directly to the relevant authorities or through our Town Clerk.
On behalf of us all I congratulate Dan Merriman on winning Master Chef -the Professionals on BBC1. He was born and educated in Droitwich Spa but now lives in Accrington. This was a great achievement!

Looking ahead 2025 promises to be an exciting time for the town with the development of projects such as our Heritage Centre improvements and the plans to renovate the Lido moving forward as well as the hugely popular Band Concerts programme-now extended to 20 weeks- and the other regular events taking place in the town. We can also look forward to taking part in the national VE Day celebrations in May and of course the inaugural Rik Mayall Comedy Festival in June-an event which has already attracted nationwide publicity.

I would like to thank all the staff in the office as well the elected Councillors for the support you continue to give me as Mayor which I really appreciate. I should also like to thank the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Chris Bowden, for filling in for me on several occasions.

Finally, Eleanor and I wish all those involved with the working of the Town Council-the Officers, Rob our Lengthsman, the Heritage Managers with their superb team of volunteers and my fellow Council members- a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

260. <u>POLICING IN DROITWICH SPA</u>

The Chairman welcomed PC Sarah Clarke & PCSO Carrie Giles representing the Droitwich Town Centre section of the SNT to the Meeting. To receive a report on policing matters in Droitwich Spa. The report had been provided to the Clerk and circulated to all

DSTC Elected Members by email in advance of the meeting earlier in the day *[for information]*.

PC Clarke summarised the following points taken from her report. The Town Centre Officers are working with businesses to help combat crime and raise awareness. Initiatives include collaboration with outside Agencies to assist with and encourage the reporting of crime incidents, which is conducive towards greater intelligence mapping, detection, deterrents and securing convictions. An example of this work is improved IT Support for businesses similar to progress made in Worcester and Pershore. There may also be some financial support available through OPCC Grant funding.

Residential Burglaries have risen in number as the darker evenings of winter time prevail. These are considered to be lower level opportunist incidents for the most part. Similarly opportunist and petty shop lifting is a wider issue currently and often goes unreported. Anti - Social Behaviour (ASB) problems have decreased over the past months from the higher levels encountered during the summer. Thefts of high performance motor vehicles has re-emerged as a local issue and is believed to originate with regional Organised Crime Groups. Recently 1 local burglary of car keys linked to the theft of two luxury vehicles. For this incident 1 vehicle has been recovered and 1 person charged with the offence. Separately 2 other persons have been charged in connection with similar motor theft incidents.

Any Questions were then taken from the Elected Members.

Councillor N Franks asked whether the reported statistics for domestic violence and domestic abuse could be segregated and broken down to specifics for the areas of East, West and Town Central. PC Clarke commented that this was being looked at.

Councillor N Franks commented that there had been a rise in crime for Vine Park and whether any additional Policing measures will be considered prior to the District Council having implemented an improved street lighting scheme for that area of town. PC Clarke updated that extra patrols were in currently place by the SNT Officers covering days and evening hours. The area was also being considered for designation as part of the “hot spot” areas in town, which currently includes some parts but not the Vines Park. Hot Spot ranking would extend coverage to a wider Police response awareness over and above the existing local SNT remit.

Councillor N Franks requested an area map to specify the local policing sectors of East, West & Town Centre. PC Clarke confirmed that the areas for East and West were already available and a map of the Town Central section is currently in course. This area will include the Town Centre, Vines Park, Lido Park and some retail and business locations (for example the outlets near to Lidl and B & M).

The Chairman asked if the shop lifting incidents in the Town exceeded national average levels. PC Clarke explained that the recorded statistics were often difficult to interpret for the reason that the accuracy is dependent on the level of reporting. To this effect many incidents still remain unreported which can distort the figures. The key to accurate reporting, incident follow up and recording is community engagement through the Local Policing Team. In turn reporting aids the intelligence gathering, deterrent setting and intervention aspects to mitigate against this kind of criminal activity.

The Chairman thanked both Officers for attending and for their contribution to the meeting.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

261. <u>HIGH SCHOOL</u> – To receive an update from the Senior Students Team at Droitwich Spa High School *[if appropriate]*

No representatives attended. Councillor RJ Morris conveyed apologies on behalf of the High School Team.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

262. YOUTH COUNCIL – To receive an update from the Youth Council *[if appropriate]*

No representatives attended. Councillor RJ Morris conveyed apologies on behalf of Maisie Truman and the Youth Council Team. He updated on the following Youth Council initiatives.

Please accept Maisie's apology for being unable to attend the meeting today – you are left with me to provide an update on the recent activities of the Droitwich Youth Council and the High School.

The Youth Council has been very active recently and has achieved a great deal. One of the highlights was a visit to ENVIROSORT, where the group gained valuable insight into recycling processes and addressed several common misconceptions. Inspired by what they have learned, they are looking forward to applying their knowledge in a campaign or initiative planned for after Christmas.

Quirky facts: –

- **It takes 7 days for a newspaper to be recycled into a new newspaper.**
- **Recycling one glass bottle saves enough energy to watch TV for one hour.**
- **Recycling one plastic shower gel bottle saves enough energy to toast three slices of bread.**
- **Recycling one aluminium drink can save enough energy to make three meals in a microwave.**
- **The U.K. uses 227,000 miles of wrapping paper every year. The moon is 238,855 miles away (approx).**
- **The U.K. uses 7 million disposable coffee cups every day. That's 2.5 billion each year.**

The Youth Council also played an important role in the Edward Winslow festivities. They devised thoughtful and insightful questions, which helped us to develop a detailed presentation about Edward Winslow which was covered in Assemblies. Additionally, several members participated in the wider town's Winslow Day events, such as the choir at the thanksgiving service with the Westacre Choir. We were unable to action one of the council's ideas of an art workshop open to the community and would love to hear any suggestions on how to make this happen in the future.

In the spirit of Winslow Day, the Youth Council also sent Thanksgiving cards to over 16 local organisations, including the emergency services, care homes, and the foodbank. This was a gesture of gratitude for the vital work these groups do in supporting the community.

Meanwhile, the High School is in the midst of its annual foodbank drive. Last year, the response was so overwhelming that the foodbank needed to make multiple trips to collect all the donations. This year, the students are determined to surpass last year's contribution and are working hard to achieve this goal.

We still have the ambition of a Town Centre Youth Club and to date:

Youth Club petition 461 online signatures & 60 + letters

We will be presenting to Wychavon District Council in the New Year.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to providing further updates in the near future.

Kind regards,
Maisie Truman & Richard Morris

Councillor M Brook asked whether details of the Youth Centre on line petition can be made available and shared to encourage wider support and responses. Councillor Morris provided details to the Clerk which were circulated to all DSTC Elected Members for sharing through wider networks the following morning after the Meeting.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

263. OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC GAMES – PARIS, SUMMER 2024.

Pursuant to Draft Minute reference 168/2024-2025 of the Meeting of Full Council on 23rd September which unanimously resolved to confer Honorary Freeman status for swimming gold medal winners Matt Richards & Rebecca Redfern. To confirm that arrangements are progressing for a Ceremony and Civic Reception to be held on Monday evening 17th February 2024 at the Community Hall. This date will most likely confer the Honorary Title for Rebecca and recognise her younger brother Matthew and Jade Shekells for their Team GB representations last summer. A separate ceremony will be required later in the year for the Honorary Freeman Title for Matt Richards due to his availability and sporting obligations. Full confirmation of dates will be provided in due course.

For information: The Council can bestow these honorary titles in recognition of distinguished contribution to civic life. On 12 January 2010 the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 came into being which amended the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 thereby enabling all local councils to confer honorary titles. These are conferred in accordance with Section 249 the Local Government Act 1972 (As Amended) and therefore will be by resolution of the Council, supported by two-thirds of those voting. The Council's adopted Protocol for such Appointments advises that these honours are to be given infrequently as many people provide good service both to the town and to the Council, they should be given to reward exceptional service

RESOLVED That the information be noted

264. DROITWICH SPA LIDO IMPROVEMENT SCHEME. To receive a summary update on the proposals from Wychavon District Councillor Dan Birch & Steve Knight – WDC, Place Projects Manager. This coincides with the recent public consultation carried out from Monday 18th November until Sunday 15th December 2024 *[for information]*.

The Chairman welcomed WDC Councillor Dan Birch, Steve Knight and representatives of Sobb's who were in attendance. The Chairman proposed suspension of the Standing Orders for this Agenda Item only for the reason to enable wider input and discussion on the subject of the Lido proposals - as necessary. This was duly seconded by Councillor GR Brookes and unanimously voted in favour by the Elected Members present.

RESOLVED To temporarily suspend Standing Orders for the remainder of this Agenda Item only conducive towards wider discussion and input in consideration of the outlined Lido improvement proposals.

Steve Knight presented background and context for the Lido proposals- outlining that,

The WDC initiative originated from the Town Centre prospectus document through the Place Board identifying that the Lido represents a significant asset and development opportunity for the Town. Initially a feasibility study was commissioned only for the Art Deco building aspect

of the Lido facility. This identified strong potential for a food and beverage service offering and an all year round facility using the building. The next stage involved commissioning of various design options covering a spectrum of schemes from basic improvements, middle scope and ambitious. Further consideration by the Place Board, Wychavon Leisure and WDC Executive Board including operational and fiscal scope has been carried out leading to the proposed option for the Improvements which has formed the basis of the recent wider public consultation exercise.

Key components of the proposed Design centred on three elements-

(a) Approach and Connectivity – Focus for an improved pedestrian corridor connecting to the Town Centre – Worcester Road aspect. Considerations included a safer route , segregation of pedestrians from the existing car park, improved manageable space for people queuing to enter the pool facility during the busier peak times and a vehicular turning circle for drop offs .
(b) Extensions to the existing art deco building to maximise potential and create more operational space for the facilities. The addition of extension wings, use of upper floor and a balcony area for the proposed restaurant. Repurpose of the existing café building for a Brine Pool and facility. Development of a new café towards the south aspect of the Lido Pool site – with access maintained from the Park side.
(c) Development of the pool facility into a larger recreational space and wider offering. Relocation of the existing splash pad feature to a new designated area close to the tennis courts in the park – maintaining free public access for use of the splash pad play area.

The Consultation ran from 18th November to midnight on 15 December 2024. This included both digital and paper based means for feedback, as well as a pubic drop in session held on Friday 22nd November at Droitwich Spa Library. Publicity for the consultation included reaching out to the rural surround to encourage input from people using the Town facilities' as a local service hub, as well as residents and people working in Droitwich Spa. Results had been very positive and encouraging – capturing 583 online responses and 101 printed format responses. Approximately 100 people had engaged at the open consultation session hosted through the library on 22nd November. Feedback had generally been very positive and any critical points made were in the spirit of constructive suggestions to add into the preliminary design options as the project emerges.

The Next Steps – Summarised to be full analysis of the Questionnaire responses. Anticipated to be reported for consideration of final sign off to proceed by the WDC Executive Board most likely in February 2025.Thereafter following a mandate to proceed – to appoint a project Manager, final designs and progress to construction stages. Indicative timescales for completion would be approximately two years from Feb 2025, subject to all factors being aligned.

Mr Bill Moy- Chairman of Sobb's and Ms Lee Edwards represented, both reaffirming that the proposals including the Brine Baths facility had been very well received by their Group. They added that by consensus Sobb's were delighted and wholly supported the project. Ms Edwards explained that Councillor GR Brookes had generously contributed WCC Divisional funding towards supporting a feasibility visit to the acclaimed Nivarna Spa brine and health spa facilities. A very positive and comprehensive summary report had been compiled following the Sobb's delegation visit a week earlier. This document had been made available to all DSTC Elected Members through the Clerk prior to the Meeting. Those visiting the Nivarna facility had included representatives of Sobbs, Place Board , WDC Officers and the commissioned Brine Engineer (from Sobb,s). The consensus reached from the visit is that the brine facility for Droitwich Spa would be very well suited as an integral part of the outlined Lido improvements and had the principle advantage that the brine was a natural and unique resource for this location.

General questions were put forward to Steve Knight from Members present. Suggestions made and noted for consideration included – The requirement for improved public toilet & baby changing facilities at the Lido Park to be part of the finalised designs, to ensure accessibility for all covering a wide spectrum – tactile surfacing & directional signage to assist people with visual impairment and additional mobility needs, wider spacing of doorways & footpaths and consideration for staff & life guards to be trained in sign language & greater awareness for visual impairment.

Steve Knight thanked Members for their suggestions and support. He added that there would be plenty of time and scope to consider all options including various ticketing and pricing tariff arrangements. These details will be considered in consultation with the Service Provider Wychavon Leisure in due course.

Councillor VP Humphries offered to help advise upon any aspects for the suggested accessibility points. Councillor N Franks commented that he was disappointed that the Town Council had not agreed a corporate response for the public consultation.

The Chairman thanked Steve Knight and Councillor Dan Birch from Wychavon for their contribution, as well as the representatives attending from Sobb's.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

265.NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NDP) PROJECT REPORT.

To note that the last Steering Group Meeting was held on 6th August 2024 and included a Full review of the Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan prepared by the professional Consultant. The document is comprehensive and comprises 17 separate policies. This was unanimously recommended to proceed for public consultation (Regulation 14 Stage) anticipated to be in half one 2025. The next stage of the process required referral of the Draft NDP for Environmental Monitoring and approval through Wychavon District Council, expected to take approximately 2-3 months. Thereafter a formal resolution to proceed for the Regulation 14 Consultation is required from Full Council. Following final amendments through the Consultant, The Town Clerk has submitted the Draft to WDC on 24th October 2024. A further Steering Group Meeting is anticipated during January to prepare the arrangements for the Community Consultation which is expected to proceed in the spring. Councillor Brookes and the Town Clerk last updated with the Consultant on 10th December 2024 *[for information]*.

The Town Clerk updated from Andy Ford at WDC regarding the staus of the Environmental Screening stage of the Draft NDP – as follows from this week.

So far we have had a response from Historic England to the SEA/HRA, no issues raised, but still waiting on Environment Agency and Natural England to get back. We also need to provide an update to the NP housing requirement, based on new figures for Annex E of the SWDPR to the Inspectors. This includes the 2021 census which has obviously altered the requirement to that in the submitted SWDPR. We have also had an examiner recommend that these figures be used

There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

266. To receive and consider the Minutes of the under-mentioned meetings:-

1. Planning Committee – 21st October 2024 *[previously provided]*
2. Resources Committee – 21st October 2024 *[previously provided]*
3. Planning Committee – 4th November 2024*[previously provided]*
4. Community & Amenities Committee – 4th November 2024 *[previously provided]*
5. Planning Committee 2nd December 2024 - *[attached to Agenda]*
6. Resources Committee 2nd December 2024 – *[attached to Agenda]*

RESOLVED To accept the minutes of the aforementioned Committee Meetings on block proposal.

267. Annual Insurance Policy Renewal – To be advised of the Annual Insurance Policy renewal in readiness for 1st January 2025. The schedule details are attached with a summary of the main points to note from the renewal update by Teams completed by the Service Provider - Relationship Manager and Clerk on 26th November 2024 *[policy renewal details and summary of salient points attached with Agenda or information]*.

The Clerk explained the report and covered the nominal price increase on premium renewal from prior year of £184.94. The index linking and legal protection variances had largely been off set for the reason that the Town Council had commissioned and carried out professional full reinstatement valuations of the two public buildings in January 2024.

There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

268. Dementia Awareness & Training Update – To receive an update from Councillor R Deller *[for information]*.

Councillor Deller updated the following information.

For the Dementia Awareness campaign I would like to update Council on the progress made and where we are with the project currently.

1) We have 2 dates for the first two training sessions – Wednesday 29th & Friday 31st January 2025, this will be for Community Groups. Training takes place on both dates from 9.30am to 12.30pm at the CVS building on Ombersley Street.
2) We will be most likely networking through CALC and Clerks for surrounding Parish Councils, to ensure that we are connecting with all of our villages to make the wider area Dementia friendly.
3) We will be looking at working with carers & connecting directly with the Carers Association
4) We will be holding focus groups with Charities and carers to make sure we are offering the support needed.
5) We will be looking at a marketing campaign

Councillor Deller reaffirmed that the initiative is very important to support families in the Town and wider surrounding rural area. The aging population of Droitwich Spa was explained to be a key demographic to ensure that suitable levels of support and networks are in place to help all local people affected by dementia. The project extends for input and support from the

Youth Council and High School Teams. The Chairman and all Members confirmed their support and commended Councillor Deller on his work in taking this project forward. Councillor N Franks commented that he was currently undertaking a similar training program working on support for people suffering domestic abuse. He asked whether the outlined dementia awareness program through CVS will offer training on a similar format ? Councillor Deller confirmed that it would.

RESOLVED That the information be noted and Councillor Deller be commended & supported by the Town Council in taking forward this important project.

269. WYCHAVON DISTRICT COUNCIL – DROITWICH SPA PLACE BOARD UPDATE – To receive an update on Place Board project work from Councillor AM Sinton *[for information]*.

The Chairman updated that a lot of the Place Board initiatives and emerging projects had already been covered as part of the various agenda items for the meeting – notably the Lido improvement proposals. Many of the Place Board projects are currently moving forward and will be further updated for progress as the New Year commences. There is a lot of positive activity and much to look forward to for the Town.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

270. COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS- To receive reports on County Council matters *[if appropriate]*

Councillor RJ Morris updated the following information.

Westlands Roundabout- Anticipated to be finished ahead of schedule with a tentative open date for the new pedestrian crossing points and removal of the road works restrictions by Friday 20th December 2024. This date is subject to changes due to the scheduling of various inter linked works and different contractors working with WCC Highways on the Scheme. Some unexpected traffic disruption had been inadvertently caused due to works notice orders being notified later due to the project running ahead of timescales to plan. Councillor V Humphries commended Councillor Morris on his work in taking these vital accessibility and road safety improvements forward.

Celvestune Way Solar VAS- This has been recently relocated to a better and effective position on Bower Hill to help manage speed awareness for divers approaching the sweeping downhill trajectory. Thanks were expressed to the Lengthsman and Clerk for facilitating the sign location being changed.

Divisional fund: Contributions have recently been awarded to the following Groups and projects

- Westlands bench for the Residents Association
- Saltfest Festivals Simon Berry
- High School inclusion centre Gym
- Sight concern

Councillor GR Brookes updated that he had recently awarded Divisional fund contributions to

- Droitwich spa Litter Picking Group – for new signage.
- Droitwich Place Board to help towards the Lido project feasibility study visit to Nivarna Spa.
- Droitwich Spa Town Council – NDP Project and specifically towards the forthcoming Regulation 14 public consultation work for the Draft NDP.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

271. DISTRICT COUNCIL MATTERS – To receive reports on District Council matters *[if appropriate]*

Councillor G Duffy updated that the Lido proposals maintained provision for a free and open access public splash pad play area – which will be in a new location in the Park. A District initiative is currently seeking to provide additional support for partners and agencies in the housing sector. Works to manage public and site safety at the former Raven Hotel building are currently underway and being coordinated by WDC.

Councillor N Franks updated that he had confirmed with FCC, the Service Provider working on behalf of WDC that they are responsible for the removal of moss and algae from pavements in the town as part of the Street Cleaning regime. Councillor Franks encouraged Members to report any hot spot issues of this nature either directly to WDC or through the Clerk for follow up attention.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

272. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT *[lists attached with Agenda]*

Creditor Payments were presented to the Council totalling £16,417.05.
(Total expenditure = £16,417.05). There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED That the statement of accounts for payment be received and the expenditure of £16,417.05 be approved and duly passed for payment. (Total expenditure = £16,417.05).

273. To consider the exclusion of the Public and Press by passing the following motion:

That the press and public be now excluded from the meeting under the provision of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by virtue of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted which involves financial and legal matters.

RESOLVED That the press and public be now excluded from the meeting under the provision of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by virtue of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted which involves financial and legal matters.

274. Internal Audit & Mayoral Charity Arrangements 2023/2024 – (includes updating Internal Audit Engagement Letter dated 23rd Sept 2024 for the 2025 Annual Return).

Private& Confidential Update anticipated to follow from Internal Auditors Report for information to all DSTC Elected Members.

The Clerk explained that the Internal Auditor had requested copies of personal account bank statements from Mr Derek Fellows following a meeting on 8th November 2024. This meeting had been attended by the Auditor, the Clerk, Councillors AM Sinton & RP Hopkins – as well as Mr Derek Fellows and Councillor Mrs K Fellows. The Auditor had subsequently notified the Clerk on 9th December that he had requested the additional and

specified information from Mr Fellows, immediately following the meeting of the 8th November. The Auditor is currently awaiting a response to additional points raised from these Bank Statements in order to complete his second report on the matter for the Town Council. For this reason the Clerk updated that the matter will need to be part of the Agenda of the next scheduled Council Meeting for further consideration in January.

Councillor Mrs Fellows commented that the Auditor will be providing his report to her and her husband before the Town Council receives it.

The Internal Auditors – Internal Audit Engagement Letter dated 23rd September 2024 for the period of the 2025 Annual return and subsequent Annual Returns was noted as presented. There were no questions arising

RESOLVED That the information be noted

The Meeting Closed at 7.15 pm

Chairman of Council ----------
20 January 2025