**Minutes of an Annual Town Meeting in Market Drayton held on Thursday 25 April 2019 at 7.00pm in the Festival Drayton Centre, Frogmore Road, Market Drayton.**

**Present:** Councillors: R. Aldcroft, A Cartwright,

 M. Erwin, S. Glover, I. Nellins, R. Smith, M. Whittle (Mayor).

**Clerk:** Town Clerk and Projects Officer

There were also approximately 26 members of the public present.

1. **Welcome by the Town Mayor**

Councillor Mark Whittle introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies have been received and accepted from Councillor Mrs J Beckett, Councillor T Beckett and Councillor D Edmunds.

1. **To confirm the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on the 26 April 2018.**

The Mayor asked if everyone was satisfied with the minutes.

Councillors and members of the public said they were.

Councillor Glover proposed, Philip Trueman seconded and it was **RESOLVED** with one abstention:

**To confirm the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 26 April 2018.**

1. **To hear a verbal report from the Chairs of Committees:**
2. **Community and Governance**

Councillor Whittle said that the Community and Governance Committee is responsible for the promotion and development of sports and recreation, responding to consultations and liaising with outside organisations regarding Community Safety, Highways and much more.

1. **Services and Facilities**

Councillor Aldcroft introduced himself and explained that the Services and Facilities Committee deal with horticultural, recreational and leisure. For example, playground equipment, street lighting, allotments, CCTV and liaison with Shropshire council.

1. **Finance and General Purposes**

Councillor Nellins introduced himself as Vice-Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. He explained that the committee deals with the Council’s budget, income and expenditure. Income is from cemetery fees, allotment fees and precept. Expenditure is through the committees which are allocated an annual budget. The total Town Council budget for this year is £519,671.

1. **Planning**

Councillor Roger Smith introduced himself. He said the Planning Committee have dealt with over 80 applications since April 2018 which includes the developments at Tudor Close, Rush Lane and Stafford court. Applications coming forward include the proposed Aldi development and 39 business units at Tern Valley business park.

1. **Local Organisations**
2. **To receive a presentation from the Market Drayton Community Enterprise Partnership**

A representative from the Market Drayton Community Enterprise explained that the group was formally known as the Market Drayton Senior Enterprise which was established in 2015. Their initial work included setting up the Festival of Health and identifying the need for a Community Hub.

The aim of a Community Hub is to provide a drop-in centre where volunteers provide help and advice and offer a place for people to meet helping reduce loneliness and isolations. The partnership is currently funded via voluntary contributions; they are preparing a lottery bid to help fund this project. To provide evidence of need for a Community Hub they would like to start with a pop-up shop in town; the old Shropshire Council Customer First office has been identified as a possible venue.

Other groups under the ‘umbrella’ of the Community Enterprise partnership are:

Market Drayton Arts Group –they organise an annual arts festival which encourages everyone to get involved.

Canal Group – they have 16 volunteers maintaining the area from Bridge 61 to bridge 65.

Incredible Edible – they have been involved in various projects in the town including growing vegetables on the town park and a weekly gardening club at Longlands School

Market Drayton Website – this is at an early stage; volunteers are required to develop the site.

The Mayor thanked representatives from the Market Drayton Community Enterprise Partnership for attending the meeting.

1. **Any other representative from an organisation wishing to speak**

No other representatives expressed an interest to speak

1. **Questions from the electors in the audience**

Q. The Mayor said that a question had been received prior to the meeting asking if the expenditure on the provision of badges was a misuse of public money.

A. The Mayor explained that the badges cost £72.10 each and would be given to Former Mayors who have served Market Drayton Town. The cost of a badge equates to approximately 19p per day for a year’s service.

He continued to explain that Councillors serve for several years before being elected as Deputy Mayor, then Mayor, at which time they take on more responsibility. The Mayor represents the town for the year attending various events and is available 24 hours a day.

The Mayor said it was a Council decision to purchase the badges.

Councillor Aldcroft said there is an Honorary Townsmen Scheme which awards members of the public for service to the Town. Town Councillors are exempt from this, there is no recognition for public service.

Q. A resident presented some cigarette ends that she had swept up from a pavement in town. She said she had swept up over 100 cigarette ends and requested more cigarette bins be installed. She referenced the Blue Planet television series and the plight of the environment. She requested that people be fined for dropping litter.

A. The Mayor explained that Shropshire Council is responsible for fining residents for littering; he said the Town Council would forward a copy of her complaint to Shropshire Council.

Q. A resident said that he was setting up a Community Speed Watch group in Market Drayton. The mobile speed signs had recorded over 1,500 speeding vehicles during a two week period and he wanted to know what funding the Town Council could put towards setting up a community speed watch group.

A. The Clerk responded that conversations are taking place with representatives from the Community Speed Watch group and the Local Policing Team and that enquiries have been made with the Safer Roads Partnership regarding volunteer schemes. The Town Council have also been advised that the current speeding signs do not need calibrating.

Councillor Aldcroft said the item would be put on a Community and Governance Agenda for discussion.

Q. A resident asked what could be done to encourage more traders to the Wednesday market.

A. The Mayor said that the market is managed externally. Councillor Aldcroft said declining street markets are a national problem. Shropshire Councillor David Minnery said that the tender for the market is out for retendering by Shropshire Council. The company who currently run the market also run several other successful markets.

Q. A representative from Market Drayton Community Enterprise asked for help getting a pop-up shop started. He said the group had written to Shropshire Council regarding the old Magistrates building and were waiting a response.

A. Councillor Aldcroft said that Shropshire Council were the correct organisation to approach about that building and that private landlords would need to be approached about other buildings on the high street. Shropshire Councillor, David Minnery said that he was aware of some interest in the property; he said he would find out and let the gentleman know.

Q. A gentleman asked what was happening regarding the Neighbourhood Plan and could the Town Council justify the 30K that it had spent on the plan?

A. Councillor Aldcroft responded that unfortunately the plan did not get through the examination despite having the support of Shropshire Council. The town Council took the advice of professionals in the production of the Neighbourhood plan; there are no penalties as a result of it not passing examination.

Councillor Aldcroft explained the money spent on producing the plan was not wasted, the work has stood the town in good sted and the Town Council are working closely with Shropshire Council to include the main objectives in the Local Plan.

1. A question was asked about the CIL money that had been lost as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan not being completed.
2. Councillor Aldcroft said that the additional CIL money would not have been paid to the Town Council as the developments were outside of the Town Boundary.

Q. A gentleman said that he had heard how many planning applications the town Council had considered. He was however concerned about jobs for all the new residents. Creating local jobs would result in money being spent locally.

A. Councillor Aldcroft responded that Shropshire Council are carrying out a planning review which includes looking at infrastructure, road networks and businesses. There is a planning application for 39 new units at Tern Valley Business Park and the Business Development Department at Shropshire Council are promoting Shropshire. Housing development and infrastructure requirements for the area are included in the Local Plan and Place Plan

Q. A resident said they had heard that the library was under threat of closure.

A. Shropshire Councillor David Minnery responded that he was not aware of any plans to close the library.

Q. A resident asked if there were any plans to have electrical charging points in the town.

A. Councillor Aldcroft responded that the car parks in Market Drayton are owned by Shropshire Council. Shropshire Council are in the process of installing a couple of trial EV points in Shropshire. The current planning application for Aldi includes two charging points.

1. **Mayor’s report and closing remarks.**

The Mayor said that the Town Council is progressing with the street lighting upgrade which will produce saving and provide improved lighting. Plans for the waterpark by the swimming pool are also progressing and CCTV coverage is increasing.

The Mayor wished the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Roger Smith, good luck for his term as Mayor of Market Drayton.