

Minutes of an Annual Town Meeting

**held on Wednesday 4 May 2022 at 7.00pm at The Festival Drayton Centre,
Frogmore Road, Market Drayton.**

Present: Councillors: R. Aldcroft (Mayor), A. Allen, T. Beckett, G. Chevins,
M. Erwin, T. Manton, and M. Whittle.

Clerk: Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk.

There were also 13 members of the public in attendance.

1. Welcome by the Town Mayor

Councillor Aldcroft introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the Annual Town meeting. He said the meeting will be recorded and asked for residents' approval; all residents approved for the meeting to be recorded.

2. To receive a presentation from John Campion, Police and Crime Commissioner on Local Policing.

The Mayor welcomed The Police and Crime Commissioner, John Campion, and Inspector Greenaway to the meeting.

John Campion reported since a previous town meeting, before the covid pandemic, there has been progresses made within the force to ensure everyone is working together towards a safer neighbourhood.

He is proud to report there are additional funds in budget to support victims of crime and is extremely proud of the support and partnership working with the Town Council which has been a success and several reported crimes dealt with.

John Campion summarised the several types of crime the police have been dealing with within the area, the structure of the force and all the work conducted in the background.

He welcomed questions residents may have.

- Q. Domestic violence has risen over the pandemic; where is the nearest refuge as there are none in Market Drayton now? what support do the police provide women/children? and what working relationships do the police have with the local authority?
- A. John Campion said this is a police priority and is taken very seriously, every effort is made to move the person causing the harm so the other person is kept safe. There are still local refuges which are fully supported by the local authority.

The Inspector said she is aware of a safe house within the town provided by the housing association where people can take refuge.

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- Q. A resident said she has supported many people domestic violence situations and people are only moved if there are charges made against them.
- A. John Campion said the police are immensely proud of the new legislation that was introduced last year; intervention does not need charges.
- Q. A gentleman said the home office statistics show there are more men being abused and wanted the residents of Market Drayton to be aware of this.
- A. John Campion said this is correct; a large growth in male abuse since lock down has been recorded along with child violence against parents and grandparents.
- Q. Councillor Manton said after meeting with Mr Campion twelve months ago the Town Council has done a lot of work with the Inspector and has come a long way in this period. He said since March 21 and Feb 22 there were 1334 crimes reported, he asked about the unreported crimes? and what were the trend in the reported crimes? what reassurances and what measures has he put in place to ensure the residents feel safe?
- A. John Campion said the police are working on the relationships formed within the town such as the Town Council to give the residents the confidence in the police so crimes are reported; crimes can only be actioned if they are reported, and he urged people to do this. There are several ways to report crime from either calling 101, using twitter, at the station or by using the Neighbourhood Matters website.
- It is exceedingly difficult to accurately report on the statistics within a small area, but this is being worked on so accurate figure can be obtained in the future.
- Q. Councillor Manton said the Neighbourhood Matters website should be advertised more; this will then encourage residents to report crimes and help assist the local police making the community a better place to live.
- A. John Campion agreed.
- Q. A resident said there is a lot of speeding on certain roads within the town and the noise from some vehicles is appalling; these have been reported and he asked what the police are doing about it?
- A. Inspector Greenaway agreed the roads are used as racetracks at times and that the issue moves from different sites to others; she urged residents to sign up to the Neighbourhood Matters website where they can report up to date issues on specific roads. She reassured residents speeding within the town is always being monitored and these are also

covered on the police Twitter account for residents to be kept up to date on what they are doing.

- Q. A resident said she visits Whitchurch where there is a police presence in the town; she asked why are there no police on the streets in Market Drayton? Not every resident is privy to the internet to report crimes and said the police station should be open.
- A. John Campion said the police station is fully operational with all the response teams and Market Drayton has more resources than Whitchurch. The station puts an A frame outside when there is an officer present, there is a bell to ring for assistance, or alternately there is a list of telephone numbers for Officers of the Safer Neighbourhood Team on the window. He agreed the station looks closed, but it is not, and this is something they are working on for the future.
- Q. Councillor Allen said he receives a lot of complaints about the bell on the police station; the police should be accountable; the doorbell is very impersonal, when it works, and the call goes straight through to Shrewsbury police station even though officers can be seen in the building.

He was pleased to hear the budget has increased to help support victims of crime; can you explain what help is offered?

- A. John Campion said the police cannot guarantee they are always at the station due to issues arising that they must attend. He personally assesses the doorbells on all stations to ensure they are working correctly and can assure residents they do work, albeit at times going to a call room. If residents need privacy, he suggested calling 101 or 999.

Therapeutic therapy is offered and used to support victims of crime.

- Q. A resident asked what is the current the policy on recruiting Special Constables?

- A. John Campion said West Mercia constabulary normally recruit approximately three hundred special police but currently have eighty; this has happened due to the lack of capacity of training. Funding is now in place; he is hopeful the numbers will soon increase.

The Inspector said she was a special twenty-six years ago for West Mercia police; she is an advocate to get people involved and is always happy to talk to people interested in joining.

There were no further questions.

The Mayor said the Town Council has developed a police panel which consists of the Inspector, The Clerk and Chairs of the committees. They meet

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regularly to walkabout the town and discuss potential concerns. This is working extremely well and thanked the Inspector for her involvement.

He thanked the Police and Crime Commissioner for match funding the second phase of CCTV cameras within the town; these are working extremely well and are a real asset to our town.

The Mayor thanked John Campion and Claire Greenaway for attending the town meeting and looked forward to seeing them in future meetings.

John Campion and Claire Greenaway left the meeting.

3. Apologies for absence

No apologies have been received for the meeting.

4. To confirm the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 29 April 2021.

The minutes were made available for residents to see.

Councillor Aldcroft proposed, Councillor Whittle seconded, and it was **RESOLVED:**

To confirm the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 29 April 2021.

5. Questions from the electors

The Mayor opened the floor for any questions residents may want to ask.

Q. A resident said the health provision within the town is appalling, people are spending up to forty-five minutes to get through to the Health Centre. They asked what are Town Council and Shropshire Council doing to help the residents of the town and shouldn't an additional surgery be proposed to help cope with the demand?

A. The Mayor said he is aware that each doctor has approximately two thousand two hundred patients, as well as fulfilling their role in hospitals. He is attending a patient group meeting soon and will bring this issue up. He asked the resident to pass on his details to the Clerk so that the outcome can be forwarded on to them.

Q. A resident said they spent three days trying to speak to a doctor, after finally getting through there were no doctors available; due to over seventeen thousand patients at the surgery it is not good enough and asked what Town Council can do to rectify this problem?

A. The Mayor said, unfortunately Town Council nor Shropshire Council have any management over the doctor's surgery, it is down to the Clinical Commissioning Group. Himself, Roger Smith, and Steve Glover are members of the patient Group at the health centre, he is aware the surgery is making updates to the telephone system to enable people to get through easier and resolve this situation. He suggested putting

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communications and updates on the towns Facebook page to ensure residents are made aware of the work being undertaken.

- Q. A resident said it took her forty minutes to get through to the doctors to be told the computer systems were down; the doctors have been open fourteen years should the technology be updated now?
- A. The Mayor said he does not have any involvement with the PC system but will mention it at the next patient meeting; the response will be published along with other updates from the PPG.
- Q. A resident said the town needs a nursing home, she is aware a few have fallen through and with the recent ambulance hub being taken from the town she asked the Mayor, as a Shropshire Council Councillor, what is Shropshire Councils involvement with implementing The Health Care Strategy to improve the town? and what are Town Council doing to try and alleviate discharging patients to a nursing home facility?
- A. The Mayor said Town Council has recently supported a planning application on the edge of town for a sixty bedroomed nursing home; Council did not support the planning application for a nursing home at Phoenix Bank due to access issues. He is aware Shropshire Council are spending eighty per cent of their budget on social services and a plan is in the initial stages for further funding, as and when he has further information regarding this it will be published for residents to see.
- Q. A resident said transportation is a major issue for this town, it stops residents socialising, getting to colleges/work and hospital appointments and people visiting our town. She is aware Town Council recently discussed the bus route from Shrewsbury/Hanley and are keen to support keeping this bus route and asked what is going on with the bus services within town?
- A. The Mayor said the Saturday bus route between Shrewsbury and Hanley will continue to September; the contracts are being looked at in hope they are renewed. People need to be encouraged to use the bus instead of the cars to keep the service running as well as being better for the climate. Town Council has sent off a letter to the Transport Secretary and we are waiting a response.
- Q. A resident said there is a need for is a bus stop at Mullers, Fordhall Farm and at Tern Hill, she asked if the Mayor, as a Shropshire Councillor, if he could request these?
- A. The Mayor said he could ask however he is aware Arriva will not stop at Fordhall Farm or Mullers due to safety reasons.

There were no more questions asked.

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6: The Town Mayor's closing remarks.

The Town Mayor thanked residents for attending the Town Meeting and for all their questions.

He said all twelve councillors are available throughout the year for further questions residents may have; all their details can be found on the Town Councils website or visit the Town Hall.

He reminded residents the meeting had been recorded and asked if anyone had an issue with this to raise it now.

There were no issues raised.

The meeting concluded at 8.32 p.m.

Signed:

M White

Date:

26 April 2023

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