

SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**Meeting of the Recreation & Leisure Committee
Held in Committee Room, Livesey House, 7 St John's Hill
At 6.00pm on Wednesday 8 May 2024**

PRESENT

Councillors: P Gillam (Chair), B Bentick, A Mosley (substitute for K Parady), E Roberts, A Wagner & B Wall.

IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Ball (Town Clerk), Stuart Farmer (Acting Operations Manager), Ruth Jones (Office Manager), Danny Powell (Acting Operations Manager) Ian Thorpe (Commercial, Markets & Events Manager) and Michelle Farmer (Committee Officer).

Also in attendance was Peter Gilbertson (Projects Manager - Shropshire Council), Jane Trethewey (Assistant Director – Homes & Communities - Shropshire Council) and Grant Wilson (Infrastructure, Contracts & Compliance Manager - Shropshire Council).

107/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

RESOLVED:

Apologies be received and accepted from Councillor Davies, Lemon & Parady.

108/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY & NON-PECUNIARY) IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Shropshire Councillors	Those twin-hatted members declared a personal interest in any matters relating to the Town Council's relationship with Shropshire Council.
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109/23 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 6 March 2024 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Recreation & Leisure Committee meeting held on 6 March 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

110/23 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Min 96.4 – Anti-Drink Spiking Project – Full Council approved the recommendation to fund the phase 2 pilot and various artwork had been approved.

Min 103 – Bathing Water Status – It was reported at the recent Clean Rivers Working Group that the outcome of the DEFRA Consultation was imminent. The group remained hopeful of a positive outcome.

Min 104 – Christmas Lights – Finance & General Purpose Committee had approved the tender for Christmas Lights – Turnock Ltd would continue to be the Christmas Lights Contractor and they would be looking to extend lights into Barker Street.

Min 92/23 – Capital Programme - Councillor Mosley provided an update on the Dana Footpath. Further meetings had been held and the Shropshire Horticultural Society had agreed a long-term lease of the site to Shropshire Council; revised terms to complete the lease with the Horticultural Society were being drawn up. There was also a need to discuss works with the owners of the prison which also owned the Dana Footpath. It was hoped that permission would be completed by the end of June 2024. There needed to be talks with contractors regarding the costs and the target date for this was September/October 2024 and overall completion was hoped for February – April 2025.

111/23 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Town Clerk reported on the following:

- Kynaston Drainage works was now complete.
- Monkmoor Recreation Ground Tennis Courts – the Town Council had received an indicative cost for outdoor gym equipment of £50,000 utilising two of the redundant tennis courts. This could be funded through developer contributions relating to significant development in the vicinity. There was also a need to look at undertaking a wholesale review of activity on site. The Bowling Club had now relocated elsewhere, and there was a need to look at safely accommodating the archery club on site so that they do not conflict with football. There was also a football coach who had somehow gained access to the all-weather pitch without paying but was promoting coaching on-site.
- Castle Grounds – The Shropshire Horticultural Society had come to a long-term agreement with Shropshire Council regarding the outer bailey which will mean that the pathway can progress subject to an application for Planning Permission and Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent for a revised path.
- Beaver Project – Contractors were back on site to undertake the snagging list and install the trash screens. Arrival of the Beavers was expected to be autumn time.
- Greenfields Recreation Ground land that had been repurchased has had its Heras fencing re-erected to prevent access. Works were required to make the site safe, but could not be undertaken until the bird nesting season moratorium had ended.

RESOLVED:

That the Capital Programme report be noted.

112/23 SPORTS VILLAGE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Peter Gilbertson (Senior Project Manager - Shropshire Council) attended the meeting along with Jane Trethewey & Grant Wilson to discuss the current public consultation around the

development of a swimming pool and fitness centre at Shrewsbury Sports Village. Public consultation was due to close on 9 May 2024.

New proposals included:

- 25m x 8 lane competition standard pool: 1m – 1.8m depth
- Easy access steps and pool pod for wheelchair users
- Spectator seating for competitions and galas
- 17m x 10m studio pool with moveable floor and party feature
- Unisex changing village with two group changing rooms
- Changing places facility
- Soft play and café
- Fitness gym with 130 station and new cycle spin studio
- Two multi-use studios and toning suite

All other sports village facilities would remain unchanged. The new facilities was estimated to cost £28 million which would be funded through Capital spending and if approved and would take three years to design and build.

The proposed facility mix needed to attract the widest possible range of users. The new facilities needed to appeal to all ages, abilities and interests. By meeting modern access standards, the sports village would be more inclusive. More visitors would make the sports village financially sustainable which was vital if leisure facilities were to be maintained. The facilities proposed would include: Studio pool, Competition standard pool, Moveable floor with party feature, Easy access steps, Wheelchair Pool pod, Unisex Changing village, Cycle spin, Multi use immersive studios, Changing Places facility, Café, Soft play, 130 station gym and Wellness Toning Studio.

Building costs had risen dramatically in recent years and so in Autumn 2022, the Council set out to plan a cost-effective single storey extension to the Shrewsbury Sports Village with a target capital budget of £27-28m. Architects Roberts Limbrick were commissioned through the UK Leisure Framework to complete a high-level feasibility study to see if this was practical.

The Sports Village, whilst catering well to traditional sports, relied on Council subsidies to survive as it struggled financially due to low customer numbers. Investing capital funds in new facilities would attract more users, generating income to offset the investment and improve its financial sustainability. The transformed facility would result in:

Improved accessibility - It would meet disability access standards and provide much improved accessibility through:

- A level single storey facility
- New disabled changing and Changing Places facility
- Easy access steps and Pool Pods on both pools
- A toning studio so those with mobility issues could exercise

Carbon neutrality - Traditional gas heated pools were costly and environmentally harmful. To reach the Council's 2030 carbon neutrality goal, a new all-electric pool with good insulation, heat pumps and photovoltaic solar panels was needed. This facility would meet BREEAM sustainability standards and offer EV car charging.

Swimming Competitions - The Amateur Swimming Association had long advocated for a competition-standard pool in Shropshire. A new pool meeting Swim England standard would allow Shropshire to host county-level competitions and galas, eliminating the need for swimming clubs to travel to Wolverhampton or Sandwell.

Swimming lessons and facilities for families - Schools were legally obliged to provide swimming lessons, so a good, accessible pool was crucial. The transformed Sports Village would offer easy coach access, efficient heating and a new studio training pool with accessible steps. The moveable floor and party module could help boost children's confidence and enjoyment in water. The sizeable café, overlooking the studio pool and adjacent soft play area, would make an attractive destination for parents.

Shrewsbury Sports Village was opened in 2005 by the former Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council. Now owned by Shropshire Council, its development was part-funded by Sport England and the Football Foundation. The site included sixteen football pitches and changing rooms, with grant terms protecting this football provision for several years. The Sports Village had good car access with public transport and cycle routes.

The Sports Village currently offered an ample 340 parking spaces. The development would reduce spaces by 114 but add thirty-seven new ones near the Bowls Hall. Additional parking and overflow options were available if needed. A detailed transport study, including traffic and parking demand modelling, would be conducted in the next project phase.

The Sports Village was currently served by the number 24 bus route, providing a direct link to and from Shrewsbury bus station. If the project were approved, the Council would explore options to further enhance public transport offerings. The Sports Village benefitted from cycle paths like National Cycle Route 81 (along the old canal) and local routes on Sundorne Road. The Council's Cycling and Walking Plan sought to improve cycling access, increasing leisure opportunities, particularly for communities like Sundorne, Harlescott and Castlefield where car ownership was lower.

The timeline for the project was as follows:

January 2024 - Council Cabinet approved an 8-week public consultation (15th March - 9th May 2024).

Summer 2024 - Consultation results guide the Cabinet and Full Council on whether to approve and fund the project.

Summer 2025 - If approved, design and planning would take approximately one year.

Summer 2027 - If approved, construction was estimated to take approximately 18-24 months.

Winter 2027 - The transformed Shrewsbury Sports Village could open late 2027 or early 2028.

Members thanked Peter for his presentation.

Councillor Bentick enquired that if the pool were competition standard would this include competition diving. Peter replied to say that it had not been planned and it would cost an additional £10 million.

Councillor Bentick also asked about the 25% reduction in parking and how customers would be accommodated. Also, in regard to transport, if the cycle path were impassable during the winter how would people get there and there was no provision for residents from South of Shrewsbury to get to the Sports Village.

Peter reported that a transport study would identify the target for peak and general use. In regard to the path there could be provision for possible resurfacing or drainage. He also confirmed that they could look at enhancing the public transport to service the south of the town.

Councillor Bentick also asked what effect this project would have on the Quarry pool. Peter could only consult on the Sports Village; the Quarry would be a separate issue.

Councillor Roberts commented that she had concerns on all the finance that was being put into this project and there would be nothing left for the Quarry and would like some assurances that both sites would stay.

Councillor Wagner commented that the proposed moveable floor could not be profitable, and most users would use it as a leisure facility and not for competition. There needed to be a consultation regarding the Quarry and if both pools could be funded.

Peter confirmed that the pool on its own would not be viable, hence the reason for additions including wellness, gym, café and soft play to attract customers and generate revenue. The money for the Sports Village project would be borrowed firstly and repaid by revenue the facility accrued, the less money borrowed the better.

Council Wagner commented that if this were an attractive facility there would be less draw to the town pool which would in turn affect the town centre.

Councillor Mosley enquired about the build costs of the wet side of the facilities as oppose to the dry side. Wet build had been costed at £6500 sq/m with the general build a £200 sq/m.

Members were collectively of the view that this new facility could not be looked at in isolation given the need for refurbishment at the Quarry Pool in the town centre. Whilst they welcomed the investment at the Sports Village, this could in no way be seen as support for the deletion of swimming facilities in the town centre and there needed to be a co-ordinated plan to support the sport across both sites.

RECOMMENDATION:

- (i) That the Council continue to support the retention of swimming facilities in the town centre and the need for an holistic approach for the sport across the two sites
- (ii) That Councillor Macey (Portfolio Holder for Leisure) be invited to a future meeting
- (iii) That all Twin-Hatters continue to press the need for the future of the Quarry Pool to be secured.

Peter Gilbertson, Jane Trethewey & Grant Wilson left the meeting.

113/23 FOOTFALL

Stuart Farmer, Acting Operations Manager, updated the committee on footfall. Visitor numbers throughout the Quarry had continued with a similar trend over recent months.

Visitors to the Quarry throughout March and April showed an increase in March and a slight drop in April, however with the return of the funfair in early May and early indications of improved weather conditions it was expected that numbers would increase as with previous years.

Taking in to account the weather conditions throughout April a slight drop in the number from March was only to be expected. Due to ground conditions, attractions such as the bouncy castles and canoe hire did not attend the park until the last weekend in April.

Events during the spring and summer season were expected to bring similar attendances as previous years. April had seen the return of the bouncy castles and reverse bungee attractions, unfortunately due to the high river levels the canoe concession was not able to return in April as planned but had indicated a return was imminent.

- The counters that were located in the Market Hall had now been confirmed as operating correctly. The Market Hall was showing steady figures of 8500 visits for April with approximately three hundred visits per day, however due to the non-trading days it was difficult to show this on a graph similar to the Quarry counters due to spikes in the week. Fridays and Saturdays are the busiest days in the market.

RESOLVED:

That the Footfall Report be noted

114/23 FISHERIES

114.1 Shrewsbury Town Fisheries

The Town Clerk reported that the Shrewsbury Town Fisheries continued to improve the infrastructure to ensure safe angling by the river; the risk of slips, trips and falls was a constant concern particularly in light of bank erosion due to high flood levels. There were new platforms at Radbrook Pool and riverside platforms on Sydney Avenue and the Quarry to help combat high water levels. The new fishing season would start on 16 June so there

was a lot of work strimming vegetation from the platforms. This was done to a minimum to ensure that they kept the natural look of the river and its banks. Junior Coaching was going well which helped to grow and sustain the membership. Angling had seen the greatest increase in membership of any sport and recreational activity in the town since COVID.

There were two new river bailiffs joining the team who would have duties on Sydney Avenue and Monkmoor river fisheries. There were now 20 active bailiffs who voluntarily patrolled the fisheries checking permits and protecting the fisheries. Dog walkers and other members of the communities also acted as eyes and ears.

Three of the longer serving bailiffs, Ian Bailey, Andy Harley and Robert Jones had now joined the Angling Trust Voluntary Bailiffs Scheme that worked closely on a national data base, with the Police and the Environment Agency Enforcement team. This would provide additional training opportunities and comprehensive enforcement patrols for their fisheries. The training was passed down to other bailiffs to improve their development and skills.

Work was underway on upgrading the permit sales section of the website to make the purchase of permits easier, particularly for the older anglers. The system would go live once it had thoroughly been tested before addition.

Coaching sessions had started for the Shropshire Recovery Forum adults and was being met with success and positivity. It was proving to make a positive difference to the lives of the persons taking part in the activity of fishing. The Junior Coaching Events had been added to the website and the places were booking up fast. There was nothing more rewarding than youngsters catching their first fish with mum and dad present. All these sessions are run and supervised by our Head Coach Ian James, Level 2 and seven level 1 coaches as his team.

In April, the first salmon of the season was caught at the weir in Shrewsbury. This was a big strong hen fish of approximately 25lb in weight. Its significance was important. She would have travelled thousands of miles and would have passed through Shrewsbury at least seven times in 3/4 year cycles and doubled in weight. She would navigate back to where she was born to spawn in the upper reaches thousands of eggs to hopefully continue the salmon cycle. Only a handful new-borns may survive. She would have avoided many dangers, predation, pollution and climate changes that had faced her on her journey. She was released quickly and unharmed to continue on her natural mission. The river was full of these specimens 40 years ago and now sadly only a few remain.

The Town Clerk had met the new Environment Agency Manager for the River Severn in Shropshire. They discussed the fisheries in general and in particular the byelaw relating to salmon fishing by the Weir. This Byelaw dated back to the 1990s at which time the markers defining the extent of fishing was laid out. These markers were laid out incorrectly which had meant that anglers had been fishing too near the Weir. They discussed where the new markers would have to be relocated. This was causing some anguish with the salmon anglers, but at the end of the day, due to the reduction in salmon stocks, the need to protect them was key.

RESOLVED:

That the Fisheries report be noted

114.2 Rowley & Fenemere Angling Association

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that she still had not been able to resolve local member concern about the Rowley & Fenemere fishing rights. Rowley & Fenemere did have the rights to fish and any objections locally was not going to address that. Therefore, as officers their duty was to deal with the matter as best they could. This had included finding locations that they could fish from. The Town Clerk and Stuart Farmer (Acting Operations Manager) had met with the club on site so that they could show them where they wanted to create swims. These are four feet square locations that would be dug out, bounded by railway sleepers and laid with grasscrete. The vegetation would then be allowed to grow through the grasscrete. These would only be trimmed to cut back vegetation but no area around the swims would be cut – in their words anglers would have to walk through the nettles to get to the swims. The locations were a considerable distance away from the desire path that had been created and a long distance from their main path. The structures had been referred to Shropshire Fire & Rescue who had said this was a safe way for anglers to fish near to the riverbanks, without risk of slips, trips and falls. They could also be used to access the river in the event of river rescue. The specification and layout had been forwarded to Kelvin Hall in Planning who originally made comment to local resident complaints; he had advised that the swims were so deminimis they did not require planning permission. The club had also made a formal FRAP (Flood Risk Activity Permit) requested to the Environment Agency and that was awaited. The Town Clerk stated that they did now need a position statement from the Town Council as to what they would allow. Granted the right to fish does not allow infrastructure but authorising specific sites did allow the Town Council to assert some control over the number of locations. If not, the Club had said they would allow their anglers to fish anywhere from open banks.

Councillor Mosley commented that he had tried to negotiate with Rowley & Fenemere, but the Memorandum of Understanding had not been put to them as he had wished.

There was lots of local opposition to this regarding the trees and number of fishing pegs and it would inhibit residents who used it. Councillor Mosley suggested that they reaffirmed the view of the Memorandum of Understanding with Rowley & Fenemere and have talks with himself and Councillor Vasmer and bring the subject back to a future Recreation & Leisure Committee.

Councillor Mosley also commented that the Environment Agency had confirmed as landowners they did have some rights and could control some of the work. Councillor Mosley agreed to distribute this correspondence to all.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the update be noted;**
- (ii) That Councillors Mosley & Vasmer meet with the Town Clerk to determine a Council position statement.**

115/23 TEAM SHREWSBURY

The Office Manager provided an update on Team Shrewsbury activities. March had seen a slight increase in a number of the incident types, however this was predominately repeat issues which criminal enforcement was taking place. On reviewing the yearly comparisons, mainly the issues had reduced, however alcohol related behaviour was comparable. The reduction in incidents does represent the great work and support that the Town Rangers/Quarry Security and Taxi Marshalls undertook on a daily basis.

The various youth teams were working with young people on a regular basis and Shropshire Fire & Rescue carry out a fire setters programme offering fire safety education. If further information was required regarding the scheme or members wished to make a referral, the Office Manager could be contacted.

The Royal Life Saving Society continued to work with Schools for creating Water Smart Schools. Only a few Shropshire Schools had signed up to the programme; if Members were aware of Schools that be interested in the programme, to let the Office Manager know.

Safer Streets 5 discussions continued regarding intensive engagement work.

The Office Manger confirmed that the next Policing priorities were due to be submitted in readiness for July. These would be requested and submitted for the 1 July and then subsequently ratified at Recreation & Leisure Committee on the 10 July.

Councillor Roberts stated that there had been an increase in fires and drug paraphernalia within the Harlescott area. She also reported that a parent had contacted Shropshire Council regarding the drug issues, and she was alarmed when they did not know what to do or who to report it to. The Office Manager agreed to raise this further.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted

116/23 QUARRY

116.1 Quarry Events Programme for 2024

The Town Clerk updated the Committee on the Quarry Events for 2024. A draft list for 2024 events had been provided to Committee with some of the regular large events returning to the Quarry next year including the Food Festival, Lets Rock and Oktoberfest. Krazy Races were also returning to the Quarry this year. All the larger events were confirmed and all were starting to feed in their event planning arrangements.

Councillor Mosley enquired about the condition of the Quarry and events. The Town Clerk confirmed that there had been issues due to the amount of rainfall they had received. Layout plans for Krazy Races had been reviewed and moved from the grass to the path. Measures were put in place to mitigate any damage that may occur from events in the Quarry.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report be noted.

116.2 I.T Connectivity in the Quarry

Acting Operations Manager, Stuart Farmer, provided an update on the installation.

Major civils work was now complete and infrastructure had been installed. There had been more trenching work than originally expected but everything had been reinstated to a satisfactory standard. They would return in 5-6 weeks to surface. The latest delivery date for workings of 5G was early June.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted

116.3 Policy for Outdoor Music Events in the Quarry

The Town Clerk reported that the Town Council operated a Premises Licence for the regulation of alcohol and entertainment to meet the four licensing objectives of the Licensing Act 2003. Within that licence the Town Council was required to have enough policies to meet those objectives, one of which was noise. This policy sets out the arrangements for managing noise and provided an additional level of control to the Premises Licence. This policy had been reviewed and did not require any amendment at this stage, therefore the Town Clerk commended the Policy to the Committee for approval.

RESOLVED:

That the Policy for Outdoor Music Events in the Quarry be approved.

116.4 Security Planning Policy

The Town Clerk reported that for the last 6-7 years the Town Council had been required to have a Terrorism Management Plan for the park. This set out the various arrangements in place to maintain the general peace of the park. It should be noted that all large events were required to develop security plans, but these were limited to a very strict need to know list. This policy had been reviewed and required no amendment at this stage, therefore the Town Clerk commended the policy to the Committee for approval.

RESOLVED:

That the Security Planning Policy be approved.

117/23 RECREATION GROUND MATTERS

117.1 Boiler House Pitch

Danny Powell, Acting Operations Manager, reported to on the arrangements with Royal Shrewsbury Hospital to use of Boiler House Pitch as a Helipad came from 7 May 2024; this location being the nearest and most suitable to the hospital.

The field would remain open to the public and would only be closed 30 minutes before a helicopter landing, staying closed whilst the helicopter was on the field.

The field would be cleared by hospital security staff and porters. It would be walked before landing checking for any debris, which could cause damage to people, houses and the helicopter.

The field area would require weekly cut and collect mowing as there was a risk lying grass could be sucked into the helicopter engines. The field also required secondary drainage to be installed, to remove standing water from the soil surface to the land drains quicker. The Hospital had agreed to pay for extra mowing and for the sand to carry out secondary drainage.

The area would still be useable by the general public. Football fixtures had been relocated to other pitches.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

117.2 Grounds Maintenance update

Danny Powell, Acting Operations Manager, reported to Committee the impact the recent weather had on Grounds Maintenance operations.

The first quarter of 2024 had seen the wettest conditions in the last thirty years and the eighth wettest in history. Since July 2023, five feet of rain had fallen. The flood barriers had been erected five times and flood water had been in the Quarry and across the County Ground three times. On many sites there was standing water in places where this had never happened before. Apart from the rain, it had also been a colder spring than normal. This wet weather had an impact on operational work, but the colder weather had kept the Spring bulbs flowering for longer.

Several verges were cut in February for the Queen's visit as these were on her route in and out of the Town. Since the beginning of April, they had four machines out cutting for the majority of the time. In the first two weeks, machines had got stuck on numerous occasions and mowing had been suspended to counter potential damage to the ground.

Of late weather had improved and mowers were out every working day. By the end of May, the majority of the town will have had a first cut. Some areas had been missed because the ground was still too wet, but they hoped to pick these up on the next cut. The grass was long in many areas and was taking longer to cut than normal and leaving a lot of arisings on the top. On the plus side, the colder weather was slowing grass growth down.

The large grass cutting tractor could not yet cut the large open spaces due to weight, therefore smaller tractors were being used which was taking longer.

The football season, after a request from the Sunday League, had been extended by one week to end on May 12. All their fixtures on Town Council pitches should have been played by this date. The Junior league had also been extended to May 12. End of season renovation would then start which included overseeding, Earthquaking Aeration, goal posts taken down and topdressing with sand to improve drainage.

The cricket season had been moved back from 27 April to start on 4 May, extending the season to the 28 September meaning end of season renovations would not start until October. By then the days and nights were cooler and grass seed germination would take longer. Again the Summer and Winter seasons were overlapping by a month, causing extra work for the staff.

Bowls & Croquet seasons were operating to schedule. The first week of Rounders was cancelled because of the wet conditions, but they had now played three weeks of their season.

The grass tennis courts were now ready for use, about three weeks late because of the weather. Monkmoor Recreation Ground tarmac courts were open but did require power washing; this would be carried out week beginning 6 May.

The Dingle, Castle and Town Centre had all been kept to a high standard over the winter period. The spring bulbs had lasted well because of the cooler temperatures, the bulbs in the Dingle were now being removed because they had finished flowering. The Dingle flower beds required topping up with soil as they were now lower than the surrounding lawns. They had estimated that this would require about twelve tons of topsoil. They were in the process of purchasing this and the staff would incorporate this into the beds whilst doing the summer bedding. This summer the carpet bed at the Castle would have a D-Day theme. This had already been designed by the staff and the plant requirements and numbers worked out. The plants were now being grown at the nursery, ready to go out in June.

Plant production of the summer bedding was progressing well at the Nursery. Many of the plant plugs had been delivered and potted up. Staff had grown a number of the summer bedding plants from seed this year to reduce costs and they had been able to do this by using the propagation bench they built this winter.

All play areas were now open. A number across the town had been closed because of waterlogging during the winter. Some had been topped up with wood chips and had general maintenance carried out.

A full season of tree work had been completed by the Countryside Team including the removal of trees identified in the Ash Die back survey. Tree work for Shropshire Council and trees identified by the Town Council of requiring work were being actioned but at times the ground conditions had made this more difficult to complete. To replace trees that had been removed, over forty trees had been planted across the Town.

There had been a lot of work carried out by the team for the Old Riverbed Beaver Project which included weekly site visits, repair of storm damage and Tree protection work.

All Town Council sites had been regularly checked, any damage or vandalism to steps, handrails or bridges had been repaired.

Bird boxes had been installed at Greenfields Recreation Ground, Raby Crescent Recreation Ground and Mousecroft Community Woodland.

Training and Installation took place for the Turf Tank Marker machine with one staff member who had now started training others. On some occasions two or more staff may be seen with the marker. The marker had so far been used to mark out the Rounders pitches at the County Ground, this took 20 minutes from start to finish to do four pitches and took three litres of paint. Previously this would have taken four hours and would have used 20-25 litres of paint. They had also marked out a 100m/8 lane running track, a 200m/8 lane oval track, 4 Rounders pitches, Shotput, Discus and Javelin at Belvidere Secondary School. In previous years, this took two staff four hours each, but this year one staff member did it all in two hours. The amount of marking paint was reduced from sixty litres to ten litres. They had also been advised by Bowcom Line markers that changing to a white spray nozzle and using their paint would reduce paint usage further; they had supplied ten litres of paint to try.

Councillor Bentick enquired if the Town Council had any interaction with Homes Plus and their grounds maintenance especially on the Meole Estate. Danny confirmed that the Town Council had no involvement as they had their own contractors and staff. The only way the Town Council would become involved is if they approached the Town Council asking to contract work.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

118/23 SHREWSBURY IN BLOOM

118.1 Shrewsbury in Bloom 2024 preparations

The Town Clerk updated Committee on the activity of the Bloom Working Group; this now involved some key staff from various teams, giving the group more impetus. The route had now been set and they were starting to look at who would be involved on judging day. There were lots of new locations on this year's route and both the Weeping Cross depot and the new Town Council Offices at Livesey House were featured which judges had not visited before.

Danny Powell, the Acting Operations Manager added that it was good to have staff members included in the decision making for Shrewsbury in Bloom, providing their suggestions, giving feedback and having an impact on the final route.

Hanging basket orders were going well and the Castle Carpet bed was also underway.

The various Shrewsbury in Bloom competitions had also been advertised for this year. This included the Town of Flowers Competition, School Grounds Awards and the Allotment competition.

118.2 Shrewsbury in Bloom Group meeting

The notes of the Shrewsbury in Bloom Group meeting held on 4 April 2024 were submitted as circulated and read.

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the Shrewsbury in Bloom Group Meeting held on 4 April 2024 be accepted and approved.

119/23 COMMUTED SUMS

The Town Clerk gave an update on negotiations with developers and transfer arrangements:

- (i) *Copthorne Barracks Play and Open Space*** – offsite contributions to play (£30,498 - £20,498 for Shorncliffe Drive & £10,000 for Silks Meadow – to be paid on 75% occupancy) and open space (£115,000 for sports pitches & associated facilities at County Ground – paid on 50% occupancy) - funds in relation to landscaping at the County Ground have been drawn down.
- (ii) *Barratt Homes/Bovis Homes – Mytton Oak Road*** – Phase 1 adopted; Snagging Phase 2/3 commenced. No identified date for transfer. Developer had requested early transfer, but certain works needed to be completed ahead of transfer.
- (iii) *Shrewsbury South Urban***

 - 1. Sutton Grange site – ongoing – likely transfer in 2023/24 – recent meeting with Taylor Wimpey to discuss logistics for transfer.
 - 2. Bellway Homes site – discussion on land adoption and adoption of acoustic fencing
 - 3. Galliers site – early discussions on land adoption
 - 4. Community Centre – location on the site
- (iv) *Crowmoor House*** – s106 agreement for offsite play & open space contribution to be used for Upton Lane & Monkmoor Recreation Ground – two-staged payments on trigger on percentage occupied properties. Council to bankroll work at Upton Lane Rec – forms received for drawn of funding. Money had now been received and his could be discharged from the list.
- (v) *Harlescote Infants/Juniors site*** – Offsite contributions to sport. Approvals for use of the funds at Kynaston Road Recreation Ground for drainage works – contribution for the drainage had been received so this item would now be discharged from the list.
- (vi) *Radbrook College site*** – Open space adoption – officers met with Floreat Homes on site – likely adoption once all phases are complete.
- (vii) *Weir Hill*** – Agreements to adopt the land at a future time have been signed -meeting with Taylor Wimpey looking at the possibility of the countryside land to be transferred ahead of the POS on the development site.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

120/23 CLOSING REMARKS

In closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked Councillors for attending and taking part in this Town Council meeting and thanked the staff involved in this meeting. All papers related to the meeting could be found on the website www.shrewsburytowncouncil.gov.uk.