

Madeley Town Council

Minutes of Full Council held on Monday 2 December 2024 commencing 6.30pm at Jubilee House, High Street, Madeley.

Councillors Present: H Morgan, C Ansah, A England, N England, S Heighway, J Jones, R Meadows, K Middleton, A Morgan, S Taylor, P Watling, D White

Also Present: Alison Hinks, Town Clerk

25/53

Apologies

Cllr R Evans – holiday

Cllr P Cogings was not present at the meeting. Cllr J Loveridge is on a leave of absence.

Resolved:

Councillors unanimously resolved that the apologies received were accepted.

25/54

Remarks from the Mayor

The Mayor asked the Town Clerk to pass on Councillor's thanks to the whole team for their hard work at Saturday's Christmas Lights Switch-on event in Madeley. The Mayor also thanks those Councillors who attended the Councillors Christmas Meal on Friday 29 November 2024.

25/55

Public Discussion.

The Mayor welcomed Andy Harrison and Sarah Harrison to the meeting.

25/56

Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Kelly Middleton – Agenda item 25/65.1 Telford & Wrekin Council Cabinet Member responsible for Community Centres

Cllr P Watling – agenda item 25/65.1 Member of The Hub on the Hill Management Board

Cllr D White – agenda item 25/65.1 Member of The Hub on the Hill Management Board

Cllr J Jones - agenda item 24/65.1 Member of The Hub on the Hill Management Board

25/57

Minutes

To confirm and approve the minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 7 October 2024.

Resolved:

Councillors unanimously resolved that the minutes of the meeting of Madeley Town Council held on 7 October 2024 be confirmed and approved for signature (Appendix A).

25/58

Casual Vacancies

The Mayor confirmed that the Personnel Committee has met with Andy Harrison and Sarah Harrison regarding their expression on interest to fill the 2 x casual vacancies in Woodside Ward and in Cuckoo Oak Ward.

Resolved:

Following the recommendation from Personnel Committee, Councillors unanimously agreed to appoint Andy Harrison and Sarah Harrison to the two casual vacancies in Woodside Ward and in Cuckoo Oak Ward.

25/59 Services Report

To note the report updating on services provided by Madeley Town Council

Councillors noted the Services report, giving an update from officers on all the services provided by Madeley Town Council (see Appendix B).

Noted.

Cllr A Moran asked about the increase in vandalism at the public toilets. The Town Clerk said that that it may be down to the change in weather and that West Mercia Police are regularly inspecting the toilets when they are Madeley.

Cllr White said that the over 75's grass cutting service needs to be expanded to include people with disabilities. The Town Council said that there are currently 70 residents who have the grass in their front and back gardens cut once every 3 weeks. There is always a waiting list for this service and the service is staffed for 32hpw. Unfortunately, the current budget will not allow for any additional hours.

Cllr Watling suggested that community payback team could be approached so that people with a disability could be included in the grass cutting scheme. DW said that there may be concerns from the community about this approach. Cllr Watling said that the Community Pay Back Team are risk assessed and supervisions at all times. Cllr Jones said that the grass cutting service is a service for vulnerable people at their homes. Cllr Middleton said that it was not in the Probation Service's interest for community pay back to not correctly risk assess the activities of the community payback. Cllr A England said that Madeley Town Council will need reassurances that the service is appropriate. Cllr Watling suggested that the Probation Service are invited to a future Leisure & Community Committee to discuss this.

25/60 Projects Report

To note the report updating on current projects provided by Madeley Town Council

Councillors noted the Projects report, giving an update from officers on all the current projects provided by Madeley Town Council (see Appendix C).

Noted

25/61 Committee Meetings

To note the minutes from committee meetings.

61.1 Draft minutes from Leisure & Committee held on 4 November 2024

The Town Clerk presented to Councillors the draft minutes from the Leisure & Community Committee held on 4 November 2024 for information (Appendix D).

Noted.

Cllr Taylor said that the Leisure & Community Committee are now receiving grant applications for the full amount available to be awarded (£1,500) and from organisations that are not traditional voluntary or charitable groups. Cllr H Morgan said that the grant criteria states that grants will be given to a constituted organisation. The Town Clerk said that a review of the grant criteria was raised on the 2023-24 Internal Audit Report.

62.2 Draft minutes from Environment Committee held on 11 November 2024

The Town Clerk presented to Councillors the draft minutes from the Environment Committee held on 11 November 2024 for information (Appendix E).
Noted.

62.3 Draft minutes from Finance & General-Purpose Committee held on 18 November 2024

The Town Clerk presented to Councillors the draft minutes from the Finance & General Purpose Committee held on 18 November 2024 for information (Appendix F).
Noted.

Cllr Watling said that the Finance & General Purpose Committee have expressed concern about the high number of Amazon transactions and have suggested that cheaper companies are used as well.

25/63 Budget & Financial Monitoring

63.1 Expenditure Transactions

The Town Clerk had prepared an expenditure transactions list for the period 1 August 2024 to 30 September 2024 (Appendix G).
Noted.

63.2 Income Transaction

The Town Clerk had prepared an income transactions list for the period 1 August 2024 to 30 September 2024 (Appendix H).
Noted.

63.3 Budget Cashbook

The Town Clerk had prepared the Financial Summary – Cashbook report for the period 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024 for information (Appendix I)
Noted.

63.4 Budget Comparison Report

The Town Clerk had prepared the Financial Comparison Report for the period to 1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024 for information (Appendix J).
Noted.

63.5 Half Year Budget Monitoring and 2025-26 Budget Setting Process

To note the budget monitoring and projections from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

The Finance Officer had prepared the budget monitoring and projected spend up to 31 March 2024 along with the initial proposals for the 2025-26 budget (see Appendix K). As at 30 September 2024 there is an overall year end projected overspend of -£35,061. This is due to income for The Hub on the Hill room hire being £40,000 lower than projected when setting the 2024-25 budget.

The Finance Officer had prepared a breakdown of earmarked reserves amounting to £147,202, along with a breakdown of project bank balances at year end and the amount that will be transferred to reserves, estimated at £250,000. These amounts are within the LGA suggested reverse of half annual running costs.

The Finance Officer had prepared a proposed 2025-26 budget which includes the costs for a second CAT team amounting to £46,000 and the shortfall in the income for The Hub on the Hill, along with additional costs associated with the running of The Hub on the Hill including BiT, insurance charges. Madeley Town Council has also bought into an enhance T&WC HR support package and H&S support.

The Town Clerk said that Telford & Wrekin Council has informed the Town Council of an increase to the Council Tax Base rate to £4,498.50.

Due to all the changes above, the proposed 2025-26 showed a shortfall of £92,869 which equates to a 14.1% increase in Band D Council Tax payments for residents of Madeley, Sutton Hill and Woodside. Broken down, this rise would be an annual increase for a Council Tax Band D resident of £20.64pa, £1.72pm, £0.40pw.

Cllr Watling said that an increase in the 2025-26 Precept was the only option to ensure that services are maintained. If the 2025-26 Precept had not increased those services would be cut.

Cllr White said that an increase to the 2025-26 Precept is justified as the Town Council is taking on new services to ensure that the Town Council is progressing.

Cllr Middleton said that a breakdown of what is being spent should be shared with residents to demonstrate the increase in the 2025-26 Precept. Cllr N England said that the Town Council needs to priorities what services are needed within the local community.

Cllr A England said that the proposed change of structure will ensure that the Town Council is working more efficiently along with working together with other organisations and asked that apprenticeships are considered in future staffing structure. Cllr Watling said that the Personnel Committee are

looking at a staffing restructure following the priorities identified at the Councillor Strategy Away Day in October 2024.

RESOLVED:

Councillors resolved to increase the 2025-26 Precept increase by 14.1%. Cllr Meadows abstained from the vote.

25/64 **Policy Updates**

To review and agreed policy updates presented below.

64.1 Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Resolved:

Councillors unanimously agreed to adopt the Artificial Intelligence Policy (Appendix L).

25/65 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

Resolved:

Councillors unanimously resolved that, because of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, councillors consider a resolution to exclude press and public from the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 sec.1 to consider the following items:

65.1 Update on The Hub on the Hill

To discuss and approve future arrangement for The Hub on the Hill

The Town Clerk presented a report for Councillors to consider (Appendix M)

Resolved:

Councillors resolved to change the lease for The Hub on the Hill and Severn Walk to a 3 year lease with a 6 month rolling break clause. Cllrs Jones, Middleton, Watling, and White all declared an interest in this item and abstained from the vote. Cllr Meadows abstained from the vote.

Resolved:

Due to the ongoing damp problems at Severn Walk which are affecting the current tenants and the inability to resolve these issues, Councillors resolved to issue Mark Taylor Support with 6 months' notice to terminate the licence to occupy the building. Cllrs Jones, Middleton, Watling, and White all declared an interest in this item and abstained from the vote.

Resolved:

Councillors resolved for Telford MIND to take over the running of The Hub on the Hill Community Café. Cllrs Jones, Middleton, Watling, and White all declared an interest in this item and abstained from the vote.

65.2 Staffing Update

Cllr Morgan updated Councillors on the resignation of the Youth Officer.

25/66 **Correspondence**

66.1 HM Lord Lieutenant's Shropshire Garden Party

Cllr H Morgan went through the recent letter received from Anna Turner inviting nominations for the 2025 Shropshire Lieutenancy Garden party at Orleton Hall on 4 June 2025 and asked Councillor to send nominations to the Town Clerk.

66.2 Kings Honour

The Town Clerk went through a recent briefing from the Shropshire Lieutenancy regarding nominations for the 2025 Kings Honour. Telford & Wrekin Council are available to help and support organisation through the process. Any nominations to be forwarded to the Town Clerk who will discuss with Telford & Wrekin Council.

25/67 Information

Nothing to report.

25/68 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Madeley Town Council is arranged for Monday 3 February 2025 commencing 6.30 pm at Jubilee House, High Street, Madeley.

There being no further business, the Mayor closed the meeting at 7.45 pm.

Signed:

Mayor of Madeley Town Council

Dated: