



**Minutes of Wem Economic Forum Meeting
Roden Suite, Edinburgh House, Wem
9 April 2019 at 4pm**

Present: Cllr Tim Wilton-Morgan (Wem Rural Parish Council) (Chair), Viv Edgar (Dementia Friendly Wem), Cllr Connie Granger (Wem Town Council), Cllr Chris Mellings (Shropshire Council), Cllr Edward Towers (Wem Town Council) and Oliver Richardson (Wem Civic Society)

In attendance: Wem Rural Parish Council Clerk Carole Warner (Secretary) and Wem Town Council Clerk Penny O'Hagan.

11/19 Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

12/19 Apologies

Peter Broomhall (Wem Rural Parish Council), Simon Thornley (Midcounties Coop Society) and Sarah Zacharek (Wem Town Hall)

13/19 Minutes of Meeting held on 6 February 2019

The minutes were agreed.

14/19 Working Groups – update

a. Traffic

Penny O'Hagan confirmed that a Community Infrastructure Levy application had been submitted to fund the experimental order for Drawwell Lane scheme.

Discussion took place on the impact the car parking charges had had on the Spring Market run by the Combine Harvesters. Options including having free parking for special events, using other car parks (eg Bowens Fields) and reimbursing customers were considered. It was noted that Shropshire Council was to review parking charges in Wem late summer/early autumn. It was agreed that a survey of shops should be carried out to assess the impact the increase of charges had made. This together with other supporting information would be put to Shropshire Council.

b. Emergency Plan

Cllr Mellings reported that the launch was planned for late May.

c. Review Markets

Covered in discussions under Traffic.

d. Dementia Friendly Wem

Viv Edgar advised Wem had been recognised as Working Towards Dementia Friendly. More public and closed sessions were planned.

15/19 New Projects

a. The 'High Street' including Wem Independent Traders

It was reported that Shropshire Council's Economic Growth team had met with WEF members the previous week. Joint working to develop a 'regeneration' action plan had been agreed. A visioning event for end of June would be held. Research into using empty shops as 'pop-up' shops and display units for Thomas Adams was being carried out.



WEM ECONOMIC FORUM

b. Tourism

Work to promote more cycling routes in and around Wem was being considered plus a 10k run.

16/19 Other matters of interest

a. Additional cash machines

WEF had written to Cardtronics United Kingdom which is the contractor responsible for the machine but no response had been received

b. Festivals

General discussion took place on new festivals.

17/19 Wem Sweet Pea Show

Karen Good attended the meeting and a discussion took place on the future of the sweet pea show. Karen explained that the current committee (many of whom had been involved from the beginning) wished to retire and would not be organising another show after 2019. However the Sweet Pea Society would still continue to operate.

All members present expressed their gratitude to the committee for the work that they had put into the show over the last 31 years. It was however recognised how important Sweet Pea weekend was to the economy of the town and a discussion took place on whether it would be appropriate to hold a Sweet Pea Show in some form in 2021.

Karen indicated that she would be willing to share information with any group who would be interested in running a sweet pea show / event in the future but she was not willing to be involved. A general discussion took place on the need to create a permanent display somewhere in the town documenting the history of the sweet pea as this could become a tourist attraction. Penny also offered to approach Wem Town Hall to see if they would be willing to display the trophies prior to this year's show.

It was agreed to discuss this matter again in the Autumn .

18/19 Date, venue and time of next meeting:

Monday 8 July 2019, Roden Suite at 4pm