



MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING** held in the Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Ludlow on **WEDNESDAY 2nd MAY 2012** at **7.00PM**

ATM/01 PRESENT

Chairman:	Councillor Aitken
Councillors:	Davies; McCormack; Newbold; Parry; Perks; Pound; Smithers; Wilcox
Officers:	Veronica Calderbank, Town Clerk; Gina Wilding, Deputy Town Clerk Sean Turgoose, DLF Supervisor Naomi Brotherton; Secretary/Admin/Finance
Unitary Councillors:	Councillor Rosanna Taylor-Smith Councillor Martin Taylor-Smith
MP:	Philip Dunne, MP for Ludlow
Public:	23

ATM/02 WELCOME BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the order of business.

ATM/03 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from the Councillors Hunt and Philips.

ATM/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the terms of the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (England) Order 2007 issued under Section 51 of the Local Government Act 2000 Members declared interests as follows:

Personal Interests

<u>Member</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
V. Parry	Ludlow in Bloom	Chairman
J. Smithers	Ludlow in Bloom	Treasurer

Prejudicial Interests

There were no prejudicial interests declared.

ATM/05 VOTING

The Mayor advised the Meeting that if a vote is called, only Electors of the Town were eligible to vote. He added that any decision taken at this meeting is only advisory and will be referred to Council for consideration and to make a final decision.

ATM/06 POWERPOINT PRESENTATION ON THE WORK OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

The Mayor made a Powerpoint presentation to the meeting, he stated that the Town Council had had a successful year but highlighted that there were currently two vacancies for Councillors, one in the Whitcliffe Ward and the other for Rockspring. He declared that elections would take place on the 10th May.

Projects

The Buttercross

The Mayor informed the public that consultations would continue on the Buttercross, and that the bid had been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund for £1.9 million. He confirmed that the external work had been completed but the building would remain empty until a decision on the bid had been received. He thanked Shropshire Council who had awarded the Town Council £120k from the Revitalisation Funds which would be used towards the project.

The Mayor then went on to explain aspects of the bid which he said were extensive and focused on the proposal of the Buttercross becoming an Heritage Interpretation Centre with community uses such as a classroom with interactive technology.

Other Projects

The Mayor pointed out that the Buttercross was one of many projects the Town Council had been working on. He stated that all projects took time and resources and thanked the Town Clerk for her resourcefulness and inventive ways in seeking funding. He added that thanks needed to be passed to all the staff, with special thanks to the Direct Labour Force and Sean Turgoose the Supervisor, who had an input at the conceptual stages to realisation.

Linney Riverside Park

The Mayor thanked the MP, Philip Dunne (who was in the audience) for opening jointly opening the Linney Riverside Park at the end of March. He thanked the Friends of Linney Riverside Park for their role and achievement in securing the

funding for the play area and thanked Shropshire Council for their contribution of £32k from Section 106 monies for the Linney Riverside Park and Housman Crescent improvements.

He added that unfortunately due to the inclement weather the Park had been under flood water the last few days and although inevitable it had not been anticipated so soon after opening. He clarified that anti-erosion works had been carried out to preserve the riverbank and that as it was flood plain the play equipment had been chosen specifically. An initial inspection had shown that no damage had been caused.

Boxing Club, Wheeler Road

The Mayor highlighted the benefits which would be enjoyed by the replacement Boxing Club/Community Hall. He explained that it had been set up as a Charity but the building would be owned by the Town Council and took the opportunity to thank PC Tony Sewell who was heavily involved with the Club for his efforts.

The Guildhall

The Mayor outlined the current position with the Guildhall, stating that expressions of interest for the space had been received and the options would be discussed at a future Town Council meeting.

ATM/07 SERVICES COMMITTEE – COUNCILLOR PARRY

The Mayor invited Councillor Parry, as Chairman of the Services Committee to speak and she opened her remarks by saying what a pleasure it was to be part of Ludlow Town Council. She explained the following services in Ludlow provided by the Town Council:-

Henley Road Cemetery

Cemetery House

Councillor Parry explained that Cemetery House had been refurbished with a new bathroom and kitchen, plus redecorating throughout and now had new tenants.

Cemetery Toilets and Paths

She went on to say that the toilets had also had a 'face lift' both internally and externally and were now disabled friendly with safety handrails outside and indicated that new doors that had been fitted.

Councillor Parry advised the public that the paths had been in a poor condition and had been re-surfaced with tarmac and again were disabled friendly.

Babies Memorial

She made reference to the babies memorial stone which had been cleaned and explained that the area would be improved.

Chapel Doors

Councillor Parry reported that the chapel was originally gated with metal gates but this was causing significant damage to the surrounding stone work. She stated that the new doors had made a significant difference and credited Councillor Pound for this idea.

Poly Tunnel

She went on to say that the Cemetery now had a poly tunnel and area for plug plants to be grown on for the Town Council.

Memorial Benches

Councillor Parry explained there was a new Policy for memorial benches and explained why the particular choice of bench had been chosen to deter skate boarders and vandalism.

Public Toilets

She outlined the street lights had been swapped for public toilets with Shropshire Council. The change over had been successful however Ludlow Town Council had made a decision to have coin boxes fitted which would offset the cost of cleaning and maintenance.

Ludlow in Bloom

Councillor Parry advised the meeting that Ludlow in Bloom is discussed at the Services Committee and that she was Chairman and Councillor Smithers, Vice-Chairman. She reported that Ludlow had been awarded it's 7th Gold this year and she thanked by the MP and the Shropshire Unitary Councillors present for sponsoring new boxes on Old Street. She also thanked the staff for whom she said the completion would not be possible.

Market

She outlined that the Market had won Market of the year award in 2011 for the best run Council market and this was a tribute to the Town Council.

ATM/08 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS WORKING GROUP

Councillor Parry as Chairman of the Christmas Lights Working Group thanked the Communications Officer (present in the audience) for her work on the Christmas lights and drew attention to the new motif over Corve Street last year

for which residents had voiced appreciation. She added that the lights would be added to each year or refreshed where appropriate.

ATM/09 STREET TRADING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Mayor invited Councillor Jim Smithers to explain Street Trading and the Committee's work over the last year. Councillor Smithers explained that Street Trading had passed to the Town Council last April from Shropshire Council. A Policy had been drawn up by the Committee which complied with legislation and suited the Town Council's needs. This had generated income of £5,244 in the first year.

ATM/10 REPRESENTATIONAL COMMITTEE

The Mayor invited Councillor Wilcox as Chair of the Representation Committee to explain its function.

Councillor Wilcox described Shropshire Council as the Planning Authority which consults the Town Council on planning applications/issues in the Town. Other than being asked for its opinion the Town Council could not influence any decision. He advised the meeting that an Officer from Shropshire Council now attended the meetings which had made the process run more smoothly and for which he was grateful.

He went on to explain that the Committee received applications for grants and the annual budget is set at £2,000 with a maximum grant of £200 being awarded per application.

Councillor Wilcox also explained that the Town Council awarded Core Grants to certain organisations annually which helped to ensure a continuation of service in the Town citing CAB as one of the recipients.

ATM/11 POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Mayor invited Councillor McCormack to speak on the function of the Policy and Finance Committee.

Councillor McCormack advised that the Committee had the function of Policy and also Finance. She explained that through the Policy function the Town Plan had been compiled the previous year and highlighted all the policies which had been adopted for 2011-2012 stating it was good governance. She referred to the Town Plan again adding that with grant funding, not being as plentiful, group working in the community was essential for services and projects to ensure the benefit to the Town.

Turning to the Finance role of the Committee, Councillor McCormack stated that the precept didn't allow much room in the Town Council's budget for project

work but that thanks should go to the Town Clerk for her resourcefulness in accessing a variety of grants/funding. She asked the public to note that there was no increase to the precept in the current year.

She then referred to the office staff in relation to the Market which she stated was “a total success” which supplemented the rates outside grant funding. She pointed out that the expenditure for the year was misleading as local Government does not distinguish between income and capital reserves and the figure of £721,179 attributed to all the project work that had been done for the year. Councillor McCormack stated it was a tribute to the Town Clerk on how the money was used and the staff, thanking them.

The Mayor thanked all Councillors for their contributions and added that the Town Council had invited groups, Schools and Colleges to include items in the time capsule which was being filled to coincide with the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee. It had been decided by the Town Council that it would be re-opened in 50 years.

ATM/12 WRITTEN AND VERBAL QUESTIONS FROM RESIDENTS

Q Written question. Mr Cant, Bell Lane. “Have salaries of staff gone up by 5% in the last year”.

The Mayor replied by explaining that salaries had not increased and the Town Clerk added that the Town Council used the LJC scales which had not increased since 2008/2009.

Q Written question. Stan and Cy Jones, Mill Street. Market traders taking up many valuable spaces in Mill Street 6 days a week using visitor permits

Visitor permits were not devised for that purpose at all – but for residents’ occasional visitors/trades people/workmen etc. (and we fought hard to get them after meters were installed).

I am aware that Ludlow Town Centre Residents Association are working hard to address this problem, but an item for discussion at the forthcoming meeting would be much appreciated by many of us, though unfortunately I’m unable to attend the meeting.

Answer – written by the Town Clerk.

To resolve an objection from Market Traders when the on-street parking order was made the then County Council offered a fee of £1 per day to Market Traders and rather than go to the expense of having a separate ticket, as the fee was £1, which is the same as resident parking, they decided they should be used for both residents and traders.

Following representations from residents in Mill Street, the matter is being reconsidered and various meetings have taken place in an attempt to find a solution. One of the problems is that the car park has charges on Sundays,

whilst on-street parking is free and another, the success of the market which is now operating 6 days a week. Various options have been devised and will be available for public consultation for the next Ludlow Town Residents Associations meeting on the 8th May 2012. All comments and suggestions would be welcomed, including ideas on how car parking in Ludlow could be improved generally for residents and visitors.

The Town Clerk re-iterated verbally that a consultation document was being published on the 3rd May and invited residents to leave their email addresses with her and she would email the consultation to them.

- Q Mr John Haslam, 16 Mill Street. Mr Haslam stated that his question had been the same at the previous one with Sundays causing him particular problems.**

The Town Clerk replied by saying that the problem had been acknowledged by Shropshire Council and added that the Town Council did not receive the income from traders parking either on-street or from the car park and sold tickets at cost.

- Q Liz Binch, 29 Mill Street. My concern is with the new caravan park and will we get motor homes parking in on-street space also? Given the architectural history of the Town it will take away its charm.**

The Town Clerk replied that this question could be asked during the consultation process.

Unitary Councillor Rosanna Taylor-Smith stated that Shropshire Council were well aware of the problem and she was happy to answer further questions at the end of the meeting.

- Q Adrian Kibbler, Ludlow Advertiser. When do you expect an outcome of the HLF application? Could you get all or some of the money applied for? If you are not successful is there a plan B?**

The Town Clerk replied that the Town Council should hear the outcome in July. She explained that the Town Council had initially applied for stage I and this was for £1.9 million, and included plans for an extension to the Breadwalk. She added that she did not foresee the bid being unsuccessful but the plan B was that the Revitalisation monies of £120k from Shropshire Council would enable the Buttercross to be refurbished and made into a Heritage Interpretation Centre but would not allow for any other works.

- Q Jill George. 102 Corve Street. The staff have been recognised and thanked tonight for their hard work by the Councillors who have spoken with genuine warmth. Could it be minuted that thanks from the meeting will be passed onto staff please and that residents are happy also?**

The Town Clerk and Mayor assured Ms George that thanks would be passed onto the staff.

Q Philip Dunne, MP for Ludlow. I have two observations; there is a lot of work being done by the Town Council and capital works which for a Town Council of this size is amazing. It is obviously down to good leadership. I am delighted to see elections for the vacancies and hope that with whole Council elections next year the same will happen, which will refresh and energise the Town Council. Regeneration is an important part of devolution of power from Central Government down to Parish and Town Councils and it is important to have Town Support.

How are we going to deal with opportunities? There is a Neighbourhood Plan going through Central Government at the moment. Has the Town Council decided to do a Neighbourhood Plan? There are resources and help available from Shropshire Council which both Much Wenlock and Lydbury North Parish Council are currently utilising.

I will be interested in the outcome of the consultation of the Guildhall but think that it is a credit to the Town Council and should be used as offices much like other Towns such as Bridgnorth and Much Wenlock. (The audience applauded).

The Mayor thanked Philip Dunne for his comments and said that a report to Full Council would be made on the Guildhall on options for its future use and added that the wish for the Town Council to use the building for itself would be considered. He agreed that all resources should be utilised from Shropshire Council and added that technical help could be brought in but the Town Council was aware of cost implications if this occurred.

Councillor McCormack added that she had attended a meeting at Shropshire Council on Town Council planning and it was felt by all attending that the cost and time implications would be astronomical and would not be practical for small Town and Parish Council. She added that she had been to a lot of consultations in both private and public capacity and for many Council's some of these changes, similar to the Neighbourhood plan may be going back to square one.

The Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and participation.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Town Mayor

Date

N.B. No Confidential Minutes will be issued.