



## MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Guildhall, Mill Street, Ludlow on **MONDAY 14<sup>th</sup> JULY 2014** at **7.00PM**

### **PF/17     PRESENT**

Chairman:                   Councillor Holcombe

Councillors:               Cobley; Draper; Gill; Ginger; Kemp; Lyle; Mold; Parry;  
Sheward; Smithers; Perks (ex-officio)

Officers:                    Gina Wilding, Town Clerk  
Lucy Jones, Finance Secretary

### **PF/18     HEALTH & SAFETY**

The Chairman informed Councillors and members of the public of the fire exits, fire assembly point and asked that everyone sign the attendance log.

### **PF/19     APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **PF/20     DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests  
None declared.

#### Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

<u>Member</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
A. Cobley	Coder Road Depot	Works at Rockspring Centre

#### Declarations of Personal Interest

<u>Member</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
P. Draper	Mayfair	Wife works for Terry Jones travel
N. Holcombe	Ludlow Town Football Stadium	Previously been Chair/ Community Director of the Football Club

### **PF/21     PUBLIC OPEN SESSION (15 minutes)**

There were no members of the public or press present.

**PF/22     UNITARY COUNCILLORS SESSION**

Unitary Councillor Boddington, Ludlow North, stated that Shropshire Council's highways department would be moving from Coder Road to Craven Arms in October this year and Shropshire Council wanted to realise the asset value of the site.

Councillor Cobley entered the meeting at 7.03pm

Councillor Boddington stated that negotiations were currently ongoing to delay advertising the site for sale until a practical community scheme can be discussed. He stated that many sources of project funding were currently being investigated.

Councillor Boddington went on to say that in order to secure the future of the football stadium the town needed to look at ways to create future stability, whether by setting up a charitable trust or assistance in resolving the current issues with land covenants etc.

Councillor Ginger pointed out that though the stadium was an asset to the town, it was owned and run as a private business.

**PF/23     MINUTES**

**RESOLVED (Unanimous) PD/JS**

That the open and closed session minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2014, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**PF/24     ITEMS TO ACTION**

**RESOLVED (Unanimous) PD/CS**

That the Items to Action table be noted.

**PF/25     FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

**RESOLVED (Unanimous) JS/PD**

That the Payments and Income Reports, Barclaycard Statement and Bank Reconciliation for May 2014 be noted.

**PF/26 POLICIES & LEGISLATION****a) Flexible Working Policy**

The Town Clerk explained that from July 2014, the Council must have a flexible working policy in place to consider staff requests.

Councillor Smithers asked what the cost implication would be, if the Town Clerk has received advice on this policy and how the policy would work with the current Time Off in Lieu system ("TOIL").

The Town Clerk stated that the policy was in line with other Councils, cost implications were one of the criteria in the policy under which all requests will be considered. She added that the flexible working policy referred to a contractual change of working hours, the Toil system worked within contracted hours and did not affect this policy.

**RECOMMENDED (Unanimous) PD/GG**

That:-

- a) the Flexible Working Policy be adopted
- b) the ACAS guide be noted.

**PF/27 b) The Future of Local Council Audit****RESOLVED (Unanimous) PD/JS**

That the update on the future of the Council's external audit process be noted.

**PF/28 c) Planning Pre-Application Discussions Protocol**

Councillor Ginger expressed his concerns that the protocol allowed for discussions to take place in closed session, when such proposals effect the whole town discussion should be open to all.

Councillor Perks entered the meeting at 7.32pm

**RESOLVED (Unanimous) NH/GG**

That:-

- a) the protocol be amended to state that the Council will not consider any information from developers in closed session.
- b) the Planning Pre-Application Discussion Protocol be referred to Representational Committee for further consideration.

**PF/29**      **CODER ROAD DEPOT**

The Chairman informed the Committee that the meeting with Philip Dunne and other interested parties would take place on the 12<sup>th</sup> August 2014 at 6.00pm, he asked for Members to attend. Councillors Smithers, Sheward, Parry, Holcombe and Gill expressed an interest in attending the meeting if they were available.

Councillor Gill left the meeting at 7.35pm

Councillor Gill rejoined the meeting at 7.37pm

**RESOLVED (Unanimous) JS/CS**

That the report and the date of the meeting with Philip Dunne and interested parties be noted.

**PF/30**      **GUILDHALL FIRST FLOOR**

The Chairman stated that currently the first floor of the Guildhall was vacant and therefore a wasted asset to the Council.

Councillor Smithers expressed his concerns regarding the impact of letting on Council security and the parking and street scene on Mill Street.

Councillor Ginger stated that though it would be good for the Council to realise the asset, the tenant needed to be carefully considered as they would impact on the Council's security, confidentiality and visual ownership of the building through advertising.

**RESOLVED (10:0:1) NH/GG**

That:-

- a) the Town Clerk seek quotations for the commercial letting of the Guildhall first floor
- b) the Committees reservations in relation to security, confidentiality, advertising and visual ownership of the building be noted.
- c) suitability of any prospective tenant would need to be carefully considered.

**PF/31**      **BANK CHARGES**

The Town Clerk stated that bank charges could be reduced further once the system of electronic payments is introduced, but that any reductions will be limited until the large amount of cash payment are reduced.

**RESOLVED (Unanimous) GG/PD**

That the Council continues to bank with Barclays.

**PF/32 LUDLOW TOWN FOOTBALL STADIUM**

The Chairman gave a brief history of the problems faced by the stadium and stated that the closure had now been postponed but that there were still issues to be resolved. He stated that it may be possible to set up a charitable trust to run the stadium in the future.

Councillor Smithers stated that he was concerned that should the stadium close the land may be redeveloped for housing. Councillor Parry said that the stadium was a great asset to the town, particularly to young people.

Councillor Perks stated that the stadium was originally developed using a grant from the European Union and it may be useful to investigate the original funding agreement as it may include limitations on future uses or protection against disposal to private individuals for development.

**RESOLVED (Unanimous) NH/JS**

That the report and update from the Chairman be noted.

**PF/33 FIRE SERVICE INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN 2015-20**

Councillor Sheward stated that he had attended the meeting in respect of this plan at which control centre staff had made a presentation questioning the level of savings proposed from a merger of control centre and suggesting that real term saving would be half. They also expressed concern that halving staffing levels would be detrimental to the service.

**RESOLVED (10:0:1) NH/GG**

That the Town Clerk reply to the consultation, expressing the Committees concerns that the plan does not take into account the additional housing to be built in Ludlow during the term of the plan and the impact of the pronounced retirement demographic in the county.

**PF/34 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC: PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960**

The Chairman moved that the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business pursuant to section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**RESOLVED (Unanimous) NH/PD**

That the public be excluded and the meeting continue in closed session.

The meeting closed at 8.33pm

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Chairman

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Date

N.B. Closed Session Minutes will be issued.