



MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Guildhall, Mill Street, Ludlow on **MONDAY 3rd NOVEMBER 2014** at **7.00PM**

PF/56 PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor Draper

Councillors: Cobley; Ginger; Lyle; Kemp; Mold; Sheward; Smithers

Officers: Gina Wilding, Town Clerk
Sarah Hughes, Admin Assistant

PF/57 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/58 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Holcombe and Parry.

PF/59 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

<u>Member</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
None declared.		

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

Declarations of Personal Interest

D. Lyle	Item 15	Involved in Fringe Festival and Friends of Whitcliffe Common
G. Ginger	Item 14	Business Owner
P. Kemp	Item 14	Business Owner
A. Cobley	Item 15	Knows members of organisations being discussed
P. Draper	Item 16	Homestart is the Mayors Charity
J. Smithers	Item 15	Representative for Youth Forum
C. Sheward	Item 15	Previously a member of Ludlow in

D. Lyle Item 16 Bloom
Family uses play area on a regular
basis

PF/60 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION (15 minutes)

There were no members of the public or press present.

PF/61 UNITARY COUNCILLORS SESSION

There were no Unitary Councillors present.

PF/62 MINUTES

RESOLVED (6:0:1) JS/CS

That the open and closed session minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 15th September 2014, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Cobley entered the meeting at 7:05pm

PF/63 ITEMS TO ACTION

The chair thanks the staff for providing the items to action.

RESOLVED (Unanimous) PD/JS

That the Items to Action table be noted.

PF/64 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

a) Payments – August & September 2014

RESOLVED (unanimous) PD/GG

That the Payments Report for August and September 2014 be noted.

PF/65 b) Income – August & September 2014

RESOLVED (unanimous) PD/GG

That the Income Report for August and September 2014 be noted.

PF/66 c) **Barclaycard Statement – August & September 2014**

RESOLVED (unanimous) PD/JS

That the Barclaycard Statements for August and September 2014 be noted.

PF/67 d) **Bank Reconciliation – August and September 2014**

RESOLVED (unanimous) PD/AC

That the Bank Reconciliation for August and September be noted.

PF/68 **2nd QUARTER ACCOUNTS**

a) **2nd Quarter Income and Expenditure Report**

RESOLVED (Unanimous) PD/GG

That the 2nd Quarter Income and Expenditure Report be noted.

PF/69 b) **Exceptions Report**

RESOLVED (Unanimous) PD/GG

That the 2nd Quarter Exceptions Report be noted.

PF/70 **POLICIES & LEGISLATION**

Councillor Draper informed the meeting that the Disciplinary & Grievance Policy was currently being reviewed by the Councils HR Advisor. He proposed that the policy is deferred until the amendments have been made.

RESOLVED (Unanimous) JS/PD

That the Disciplinary & Grievance Policy review be deferred to the next Policy & Finance meeting.

PF/71 **POLLING PLACES**

Town Clerk relayed comments passed on from Unitary Councillor, Andy Boddington regarding the suggested poll stations from Shropshire Council.

Councillor Ginger stated that he believes neither suggestions are suitable; they are not accessible enough and somewhere more central should be used.

Councillor Draper agreed with Councillor Ginger, and stated that Palmers Hall is not a good alternative due to its location in the town.

RESOLVED (Unanimous) PD/GG

That a letter be written to Shropshire Council in response to their proposal, stating that Ludlow Town Council does not consider either location to be a suitable suggestion due to limited accessibility.

PF/72 **INTERNAL AUDITOR**

Councillor Draper noted minute FC/384 which stated that the Council agreed to go out to tender for an Internal Auditor to be appointed for a 4 year period.

Councillor Sheward stated that we must be mindful of the unique workings of Council when selecting an auditor, and make sure the candidate had full understanding and correct qualifications.

Councillor Ginger responded that the process of selection is a safeguard and ensures an appropriate choice.

RESOLVED (Unanimous) PD/JS

That the application process for appointing the Internal Auditor be approved.

PF/73 **EXTERNAL AUDIT**

RESOLVED (Unanimous) PD/JS

That the Annual Return approved by the external auditor be noted.

PF/74 **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

The Town Clerk gave a brief explanation of the Calendar of Events entries and advertisements.

Councillor Draper asked the Town Clerk when the rates were last increased, to which Town Clerk replied that they had not increased in the last three years and the rates were set below current market values.

Councillor Smithers asked whether the cost of producing the print has increased since then, to which Town Clerk confirmed that the cost has increased and confirmed that the expenditure budget was £6,000, the income expectation is £5,500, and the Town Council was supporting local businesses and tourism through a £500 subsidy.

Councillor Ginger commented that it is not viable for the Council to absorb the increase in costs for a fourth year.

RECOMMENDED (6:0:2) PD/DL

That the Calendar of Events fees be increased by 7.5% for the 2016 publication and a review be undertaken annually.

PF/75 CORE FUNDING GRANTS

Ludlow Assembly Rooms SLA

Discussion took place regarding Ludlow Assembly Rooms and the purpose and conditions of funding in the current Service Level Agreement.

Councillors agreed that regular reports detailed in the SLA should be received by the Council, including the business plan, financial reports and general updates.

Councillor Mold noted that the conditions of the agreement need to be reminded to the organisation.

Councillor Ginger quoted the Purpose of Funding from the agreement, which he feels contradicts what we would be funding considering the recent changes to the dynamics of the organisation and the use of the building.

RESOLVED (unanimous) JS/AC

That the Town Clerk write to Ludlow Assembly Rooms to:-

- i) remind The Assembly Rooms of the purpose of their funding;
- ii) remind them to comply with the SLA conditions and provide the required information;
- iii) request their current business plan; and
- iv) that the requested information is supplied before the end of November 2014.

PF/76 Ludlow in Bloom

Considerable discussion took place regarding Ludlow in Bloom and their current Service Level Agreement. Councillor Ginger stated that clause 3.1 of the agreement has been breached by the organisation. Councillor Kemp agreed with this, adding that he felt there is a strong conflict of interest that the Ludlow in Bloom chair simultaneously held the office of Town Councillor.

RESOLVED (Unanimous) PD/JS

That the Town Clerk write to inform Ludlow in Bloom that:

- i) Ludlow Town Council believes that Ludlow in Bloom has breached their SLA on several occasions.
- ii) a letter will be written to them under the terms of the SLA to remind them of the conditions of the Service Level Agreement, and further breaches will be notified in writing and may result in 1 month notice of withdrawal of funding.
- iii) the requested information as per the terms of the SLA be supplied.

PF/77 Annual Core Grants

Councillors discussed the remaining current core grants and no changes were made.

RECOMMENDED (Unanimous) PD/JS

That the Annual Core Funding Grants for 2015/16 financial year are:-

Homestart South Shropshire £1,000
Crucial Crew £413
Youth Festival £500
Youth Forum £1,000
Citizens Advice Bureau £3,000
Friends of Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty £50
Teme Weirs Trust £300
Ludlow College £30
Friends of Whitcliffe Common £500
Ludlow Town Band £500
St Laurences Church £9,000
Town Walls Trust £2,000
Pride of Place £300
Project Support Grants £2,000

PF/78 **SERVICES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

IT Upgrade

That:-

- i) the upgrades were funded from current budgets;**
- ii) the redundant PC bases are donated to Computer Aid for professional recycling, including secure data removal.**

RECOMMENDED (Unanimous) PD/JS

That:-

- i) the upgrades were funded from current budgets;**
- ii) the redundant PC bases are donated to Computer Aid for professional recycling, including secure data removal.**

PF/79 Market Fees

That:-

- i) Market fees for 2015-16 remain the same as 2014-2015;**
- ii) Market fees are reviewed again in 2015-16 to set fees for 2016-2017.**

RECOMMENDED (Unanimous) JS/PD

That:-

- i) Market fees for 2015-16 remain the same as 2014-2015;**
- ii) Market fees are reviewed again in 2015-16 to set fees for 2016-2017.**

PF/80 Cemetery Fees

That the Cemetery Fees for 2015-2016 remain the same as 2014-15.

RECOMMENDED (Unanimous) JS/PD

That the Cemetery Fees for 2015-2016 remain the same as 2014-15.

PF/81 Cemetery Benches/Plaques

That providing Cemetery benches and plaques remain cost neutral, the fees for 2015-2016 remain the same as 2014-2015.

RECOMMENDED (Unanimous) PD/JS

That providing Cemetery benches and plaques remain cost neutral, the fees for 2015-2016 remain the same as 2014-2015.

PF/82 Model Publication Scheme

That the cost of photocopying listed in the model Publication Scheme for 2015-2016 remains the same as 2014-2015.

RECOMMENDED (Unanimous) PD/JS

That the cost of photocopying listed in the model Publication Scheme for 2015-2016 remains the same as 2014-2015.

PF/83 Street Trading

That the Street Trading fees remain the same and reviewed again in 2015-16 to set the fees for 2016-2017.

Councillor Ginger commented that he felt the Tower Street Trader pays a high rate for his pitch in comparison to market traders considering his location.

RECOMMENDED (7:0:1) PD/JS

That the Street Trading fees remain the same and reviewed again in 2015-16 to set the fees for 2016-2017.

PF/84 Guildhall Hiring Fees

That the fees for hiring the Guildhall Chamber for 2015-2016 remain the same as 2014-2015.

RECOMMENDED (Unanimous) PD/JS

That the fees for hiring the Guildhall Chamber for 2015-2016 remain the same as 2014-2015.

PF/85 Wheeler Road Play Area Resurfacing

That:-

- i) £9,000 for the resurfacing of Wheeler Road Play Area, as opposed to total removal and replacement is included in the budget for 2015-16;**
- ii) leaflets are delivered to local residents to explain the cost of the work and the impact of vandalism throughout the year, and that further expensive repairs/replacement cannot be afforded by the Council;**
- iii) A press release is written to inform the community.**

RECOMMENDED (Unanimous) PD/JS

That:-

- i) £9,000 for the resurfacing of Wheeler Road Play Area, as opposed to total removal and replacement is included in the budget for 2015-16;
- ii) leaflets are delivered to local residents to explain the cost of the work and the impact of vandalism throughout the year, and that further expensive repairs/replacement cannot be afforded by the Council;
- iii) A press release is written to inform the community.

PF/86 Fencing at Housman Crescent Play Area

That:-

- i) the wooden fence at Housman Crescent is removed to prevent further vandalism;**
- ii) notices are placed on the gate informing the public prior to the removal;**
- iii) a press release is issued prior to removal.**

Councillors discussed the issue of vandalism of the fence surrounding the play area.

Councillor Lyle expressed concerns with removing the fence altogether because of roaming dogs and safety and added that similar action should be taken for this issue as with Wheeler Road, and residents in the area should be informed of the problem and costs.

Councillor Draper agreed that the Council should demonstrate that it will not tolerate vandalism, and asked what timeframe there should be for review of the funding, to which Councillor Lyle suggested the end of this financial year.

RECOMMENDED (Unanimous) PD/DL

That:-

- i) £1,000 for repairs to Houseman Crescent fencing be included in the 2015/16 budget subject to the following conditions:
- ii) Residents are to receive leaflets to advise them that further vandalism will result in withdrawal of the funding from the budget.
- iii) Members would make a final decision dependant on incidents of vandalism at the budget setting meeting.

PF/87 Buttercross Structural Appraisal

That:-

- i) **an initial Buttercross Structural Appraisal is included in the budget;**
- ii) **upon receipt of the report further actions, if recommended, are identified for consideration.**

RECOMMENDED (Unanimous) PD/JS

That:-

- i) an initial Buttercross Structural Appraisal is included in the budget;
- ii) upon receipt of the report further actions, if recommended, are identified for consideration.

PF/88 Server Cloud Back Up

That £1,700 for initial set up and annual fee for a cloud server is included in the budget.

RECOMMENDED (Unanimous) JS/PD

That £1,700 for initial set up and annual fee for a cloud server is included in the budget.

PF/89 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) PD/JS

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

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

Chairman

Date

N.B. Closed Session Minutes will be issued.