



MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **ANNUAL TOWN MEETING** held in Oscars, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Mill Street, Ludlow on **MONDAY 25th APRIL 2016** at **7.00PM**

ATM/01 PRESENT

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chairman: | Councillor Draper |
| Councillors: | Clarke; Cobley; Gill; Ginger; Jones; Kemp; Lyle; Parry; Perks; Sheward; Smithers (from 7.40pm) |
| Officers: | Gina Wilding, Town Clerk; Sarah Hughes, Finance Assistant Charlotte Ambrazas, Admin Assistant |
| Unitary Councillors: | Tracey Huffer, Andy Boddington, Vivienne Parry, Richard Huffer |
| Electors: | 53 |

ATM/02 WELCOME BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced himself, the Councillors and Town Clerk, explained the order of business and thanked all who were attending. He informed the meeting of the fire exits and fire assembly point in the event of an emergency.

The Mayor stated that it had been a pleasure and honour to have served the Council in the capacity of Mayor and that it had been a pleasure working with staff and Councillors.

ATM/03 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors J Newbold, S Newbold and M Jones.

ATM/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests
None Declared.

Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

Personal Interests

| <u>Member</u> | <u>Item</u> | <u>Reason</u> |
|---------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| Cllr Parry | LIB | Chair of Ludlow in Bloom |
| Cllr Perks | Services | Member of Pride of Place |

ATM/05 VOTING

The Mayor advised the meeting that if a vote was called, only Electors of the Town were eligible to vote.

ATM/06 PRESENTATION ON THE WORK OF THE TOWN COUNCIL 2015-2016

The Mayor gave details of the Town Council's 2 main publications, the Calendar of Events and Buttercross Bulletin, which are distributed throughout Shropshire and the Midlands to raise awareness of Ludlow. He also updated the public on the new website, which is due to be launched soon.

The Mayor thanked Town Council staff for their hard work during 2015/16, and welcomed new members of staff Alex Turgoose and Wayne Speake to the Direct Labour Force, and Senior Finance Assistant Lucy Jones on her recent return from Maternity Leave.

He gave an update on Council properties, including the Buttercross, which has been refurbished and returned to public use as the new home for Ludlow's museum, and The Guildhall, which is due to undergo repair works due to water damage to the roof.

The Mayor also informed the public that the schedule for the Town Plan for 2016-2020 was well underway, with meetings in venues across Ludlow to be announced shortly.

He added that post it notes had been placed inside agendas for nominations for the street names which will be submitted to Shropshire Council for future housing developments.

ATM/07 SERVICES COMMITTEE –COUNCILLOR JONES

The Mayor invited Councillor Jones as Chair of the Services Committee to speak on the work of the Committee.

Services Committee meets every six weeks and consists of 12 Councillors who receive regular reports from the Town Clerk and operational updates from the Direct Labour Force Supervisor and Market Officer.

Ludlow Town Council run a number of local services including Amenity Areas at Wheeler Road, The Linney, Houseman Crescent and Castle Gardens; Ludlow market; Christmas Lights; public toilets; Henley Road Cemetery, public benches, bus shelters; and local and tourism publications.

Councillor Jones went on to talk about some service developments in 2015/16 beginning with:

A very important local service for any town - Public Toilets. In Ludlow, they are cleaned and maintained by the town council. We have listened to local feedback and decided to implement changes to increase the frequency of cleaning and introduce a small charge to support an improved service.

The town council's grounds team routinely inspect play areas and maintain grassed amenity area. The perennial planting is becoming established and seasonality is being introduced to ensure the longest flower period.

The town council were awarded Incredible Edible funding to plant a community fruiting garden at Wheeler Road and The Linney - plants include apple and pear trees, and fruiting bushes.

The town council give an annual grant of £2,500 to Ludlow in Bloom to support their work and staff help Ludlow to look lovely and we won GOLD again in 2015.

Henley Road Cemetery is also cared for by the grounds team. The cemetery continues to serve the community and in 2015 /16 - 50 burials took place.

Ludlow market is thriving and we are thankful that the heart of this market town is strong. The variety of traders and high quality goods is a draw for local people and visitors. The town council meets with traders regularly and works with them to create a lively, friendly market. Income generated by the market supports related services in the town and helps to reduce the council tax burden for local people.

Street trading pitches are located throughout the town centre and add to the colour and vibrancy of the town; as well as generating income for the town council.

She informed the public that there are further details of local services in the Annual Report.

ATM/08 REPRESENTATIONAL COMMITTEE – COUNCILLOR GINGER

The Mayor introduced Councillor Ginger to speak on the work of the Representational Committee.

Councillor Ginger explained the role of Representational Committee as a statutory consultee for planning applications received by the Planning

Authority, Shropshire Council. He stated that the Town Council commented on a local perspective.

He informed the public that 125 applications had been considered this year and highlighted that all received equal consideration. The Town Council, he added, worked closely with the Local Conservation Area Advisory Committee to retain Ludlow's rich heritage.

Councillor Ginger thanked the Town Council's tree officer, volunteer Peter Norman, for the invaluable advice he provides to the Representational Committee.

Traffic Regulation Orders

Councillor Ginger stated that traffic regulation orders included consultations on road markings and also notification of road works.

Annual & Project Support Grants

Councillor Ginger outlined the project support grants that had been granted in 2015-2016 and added that the Town Council invited applications from organisations to be considered at the Representational Committee. The Grant had recently been renamed the Annual & Project Support Grant and the amount an organisation could apply for had been increased to £300 from a pot of £2,000.

A criteria and application could be obtained from the Town Council staff at The Guildhall.

ATM/09 POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE – COUNCILLOR COBLEY

The Mayor introduced Councillor Cobley to speak on the work of the work of the Policy & Finance Committee.

Councillor Cobley explained that the Committee had a two main functions. Firstly to ensure the Council had adequate and up to date policies in place to help the working of the Council and staff; and secondly to set and monitor the Town Councils budget.

He reported that the Council's finances are in good shape, and that details will be available for inspection in July.

ATM/10 WRITTEN AND VERBAL QUESTIONS FROM RESIDENTS

The Mayor informed the public that questions had been received prior to the meeting.

Questions received from Mr Mark Kirby:

Q *The Current proposals for NHS care in South Shropshire have been described by the partners at our two GP surgeries as leading them to be: “gravely concerned that at a time of financial austerity the CCG is looking to target the most vulnerable in our society.”*

Do you share this concern and are you willing to write to the CCG to ask for reassurances that they will revise their worrying plans for NHS in this area?

A Ludlow Town Council does share concerns that vulnerable people in a rural area may be put at risk by decision made the CCG.

Council wrote to Shropshire Council and the CCG on 18th January 2016 expressing concern regarding the current and future provision of beds at Ludlow Hospital, which have already been reduced resulting in residents and families having to travel long distances to other hospitals.

Members are aware that there is an additional cost to delivering rural services in sparsely populated areas, which is dubbed the ‘rural premium’ and needs to be recognised in the current funding arrangement when providing healthcare services.

Shropshire is a large rural county with one of the highest levels of older people in the UK. Ludlow also has a significant elderly population. Rurality is a fact of life, but cannot be used to justify a reduced level of service and number of beds if the demand is not being met. Members ask that the situation regarding bed numbers in Ludlow is reviewed to enable full understanding of a dynamic situation and provision to respond to changing circumstances is made available.

Councillor Draper read out the response received from the Shropshire CCG who had declined the offer to attend tonight’s meeting. He suggested that staff at Ludlow Hospital are written to expressing thanks for their hard work during this difficult time.

Q *When it was proposed that we were going to get a new hospital, the ownership of Ludlow Hospital was transferred from SCHAT to Propco which has now proposed to charge market rents. This is creating problematic additional pressures for SCHAT who run the Hospital. Together with plans by the CCG to reduce bed numbers, and the threat to Shropdoc this presents a worrying threat to the entire viability of Ludlow Hospital. What actions are you taking to make clear the wishes of Ludlow residents for their hospital to remain and to be a central part of NHS healthcare in Ludlow?*

A Ludlow Town Council wrote to the CCG on 4th April 2016 regarding Shropdoc, Ludlow Hospital and Future Fit & NHS Trust to request clarification regarding Ludlow Hospital lease with PropCo. And express concern regarding the level of rent and a clause permitting the movement of treatment rooms /

equipment at short notice were causing a delay. Asking if these matters been resolved? And are there any other matters delaying the signing of the lease?

Q *Shropshire CC have recently listed a number of things provided in Ludlow which they intend not to continue funding, including the Library and Museum, The Assembly Rooms and the Leisure Centre. They estimate the cost of providing these as £700,000 annually. This works out at about £3 per household per year. Will you be proposing to take over these services?*

A In December 2015, Shropshire Council approved zero budgets for:

Ludlow Library and Customer Services Points
outdoor recreation spaces and street cleaning
Arts, Tourism, Visitor Information & Museums
Ludlow Leisure Centre and swimming pool
Local Buses - transport subsidy

SC have asked for local plans to be in place by September 2016.

Ludlow Town Council is currently reviewing the implications of Shropshire Council's budget cuts in Ludlow, which amounts to a 150% increase in the precept (Ludlow Town Council's portion of the Council Tax bill) LTC are awaiting confirmed costings from SC.

LTC will consult residents to establish a mandate; and devise the best model to enable the services to continue.

The town council has discussed Shropshire Council's zero budgets and the implications for Ludlow at Full Council and in a working group. These initial meetings have raised many questions and members will imminently meet with Shropshire Council and will arrange a series of ongoing meeting to discuss the way forward.

There will be a local consultation process in the near future.

There is no definitive plan in place at this time, but many options are being considered and talks with Shropshire Council will continue with the aim of reaching a plan for retaining services in Ludlow by September 2016.

Ludlow Town Council has requested further financial information from Shropshire Council which has been promised by Wednesday 27th April.

Q *What actions are you taking to protect The Foyer, an important service threatened with closure?*

A Ludlow Town Council supports the planning application for the new Foyer Building and supports the values of the Foyer approach and the long term community benefit to assisting young people find their feet and become productive and contributing members of society.

Questions received from Ludlow 21:

Q *Could you please advise us of the timetable for the preparation of the 5 year town plan this year and reassure us that Ludlow 21 will be consulted in the process? We should also like to be represented on the Steering Group if possible. How do we go about that?*

A Members have begun the process and the following preparation has taken place:

- Two initial meetings of working group
- Undertaking review of 2010-15 Town Plan
- Successful grant funding application and £3,000 in place for consultation events, surveys, questionnaires, collation and analysis
- List of stakeholders updated
- Outline agreement on type of consultation meeting and target audience including schools, college residents, local organisations

Ludlow 21 will be consulted.

Members recognise that the steering group should represent the wider community and will invite members of local organisations to contribute during the process.

The Town Clerk added that dates and venues are currently being confirmed and exact details will be released shortly.

Questions received from the Town Centre Residents Association:

Q *Why has there been no re-introduction of boating from the Riverside Park?*

A Services Committee resolved to invited expressions interest – and conversation have taken place – but no bids to run the service have been received.

Q *What is the current situation relating to the repair of the Town Walls? When are they going to be repaired?*

A Adopted an outline project plan:

| | Stages of the Project |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Establish an Admin and Committee Structure for the Project |
| 2 | Nominate Members of all Committees |

| | |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 | Appoint a Project Manager |
| 4 | Appoint an Engineer / Engineering Design for the Repairs |
| 5 | Appoint an Archaeologist /Get the Archaeology done |
| 6 | Get Permission from Historic England for Ancient Monument Works |
| 7 | Get a Church of England Faculty for the Churchyard Works |
| 8 | Finalise the Specification of the Works |
| 9 | Get an Estimated Cost of the Works |
| 10 | Apply for Grant Aid |
| 11 | Assemble all possible other sources of funding |
| 12 | Begin the Public Procurement Processes by advertising Invitation to Tender |
| 13 | Receive Tenders |
| 14 | Chooses Contractor |
| 15 | Repair the Wall |

Statement form LTC:

'Ludlow Town Council will take its rightful place at the head of those looking for a way of funding the necessary repairs to the collapsed section of the Ludlow Town Wall, next to the Garden of Rest. In taking on this responsibility, Ludlow Town Council will look to Shropshire Council and St Laurence's Parochial Church Council to do whatever they can in support of the project. This will be a large project, beginning with commissioning and agreeing a full specification for the repair works contract, working out an accurate estimate of the likely cost of those works and getting all of the necessary permissions. Above all, Ludlow Town Council needs Shropshire Council and the Parochial Church Council to give meaningful support to our eventual application for the necessary funding grants.'

Councillor Smithers entered the meeting at 7.35pm

Q *When will the museum finally be housed in the Buttercross?*

A The majority of exhibits are in place. Security is in place. LTC working on the final stages prior to opening.

Q *Under 'Residents' in the Town Plan:*

Item 3 -'Promote an extended riverside path – any progress?

A Plans and drawings were drafted as part of the 2012 HLF bid, unfortunately the bid was not approved.

Q *Under 'Economy' in the Town Plan:*

Item 5 – extend opening hours of toilets, work to create additional toilet facilities – how far has this got?

A The Town Council took over the running of public toilets in 2011.

On the 1st February 2016 the council resolved to:

- Work to improve Ludlow's tourist experience
- Reduce costs and increase income streams
- To redeploy related income to improve existing toilets
- For coin boxes to be fitted to Castle Street toilets & charge 20p per visit

Q *Item 7 in the Town Plan – improve Park and Ride, signage, Sunday and evening buses*

A Current SC funding cuts are a regressive step and the existence of local services are under threat – LTC are working with SC to address this issue by September 2016. SC is the transport authority. LTC have also been working with residents and SC through IOL forum.

Q *Item 8 in the Town Plan – Encourage Shropshire Council to improve and maintain all signage – sadly little sign of this happening to date?*

A Again the landscape is changing, SC's Ringway Highways contract is coming to an end in 2018. SC is looking to make significant cuts and review the way services are delivered again – LTC and every other town and parish council (Shropshire has 140 of them) are taking to SC to find out what the options may be.

LTC has schedule of cleaning the market signs and updated them in 2014.

Q *Under 'Environment' in the Town Plan:*

Item 1a. Support reduction of car transport and development of public transport – So why no financial support for the 490 service?

A Herefordshire Council has agreed to continue funding the service for a year. Timetables available at the Annual Town Residents meeting and at the Guildhall. The picture is broader than one service. Shropshire Council will stop local service subsidies in 2017 so alternative ways of delivering the service and / or ways of raising funding need to be considered. Members are making contact with local transport providers and other parishes in this process.

Q Under 'Town Centre' in the Town Plan:

Item 1 - Develop a vision for the Town Centre – LTC to coordinate the many organisations working to achieve this – Can we have an update on a) progress and b) organisations involved please?

A Informal discussions regarding a Business Investment District (BID) have taken place, but have not developed. A BID would require a financial contribution for local businesses and a local referendum with over 50% support before it could be put in place. Shrewsbury have fairly recently created a BID.

Destination Ludlow Partnership began to emerge at the end of 2015 and brings together representatives from Ludlow Castle, Ludlow Chamber of Commerce, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Ludlow Fringe Festival, St Laurence Parish Church, Ludlow Food Festival, Ludlow Medieval Festival and Ludlow Town Council.

Aims:

Destination Ludlow Partnership

Aims and Objectives

Aim: To improve and sustain an attractive offer to visitors and further Ludlow's popularity as a tourist destination;

Objectives:

- To work collaboratively to consider ways of improving Ludlow's visitor offer
- To ensure that the Ludlow brand is consistent, attractive and effective;
- To ensure visitor publications, websites and social media are effective and consistent;
- To consider ways of improving key visitor attractions, services and festivals by sharing knowledge and resources;
- To consider opportunities to create new visitor services and attractions;

Partnership members:

Tish Dockerty – Secretary, Ludlow Chamber of Commerce

Helen Hughes – CEO, Ludlow Assembly Rooms

Gina Wilding – Town Clerk, Ludlow Town Council

Anita Bigsby – Managing Director, Ludlow Fringe Festival

Sonja Belchere – Custodian, Ludlow Castle

Prue Dakin – Director, Ludlow Medieval Christmas Fayre

David Chantler, Director – Ludlow Food Festival, Spring Festival

Representative - St Laurence's Church

Q *Item 3 in the Town Plan – seek best solutions to parking problems – to be reviewed 'annually' with, amongst others, 'residents' – have we missed these meetings?*

A Parking issues are considered by Representational Committee – meeting on a monthly basis. Recent parking matters considered have included Raven Lane, Camp Lane, Mill Street, and Lingen Road

Q *Item 6 in the Town Plan – encourage a crime free, welcoming environment in the town – progress?*

A Ongoing - LTC are responsible for CCTV maintenance contract, infrastructure repairs and upgrades. Worked with LTCRA, SC & police in

regard to the Blue Boar. Helps to keep the town looking good by providing financial and in kind support for Ludlow in Bloom; and LTC maintains area of the town centre and recreation areas.

Q *Under 'Transport' in the Town Plan:*

Item 1 – Support development of a transport hub – progress?

A Funding not available - SSDC ceased to exist and Shropshire Unitary Council was formed in 2009. Subject has been discussed at In and Out of Ludlow Forum.

Q *Item 2 in the Town Plan – restrict and simplify signage – really?*

A Not sure if this refers to highways or advertising. SC are the highways authority. Concerns regarding signage can be directed to Representational Committee.

LTC comments on all Listed Building Consent applications and advertising Consents at Representational Committee

Q *Item 8 in the Town Plan – enforcement of existing restrictions to prevent large lorries and coaches entering central area – not a great deal of evidence of this?*

A Representational Committee have commented on road restriction proposed by SC – Foldgate Lane is the most recent example. LTC also acknowledges the needs of tourism and local employers.

Q *Item 9 – Seek an improved bus service, particularly connecting Ludlow and surrounding villages – it's the 490 question again!!*

A Herefordshire Council has agreed to continue funding the service for a year. Timetables available at the Annual Town Residents meeting and at the Guildhall. The picture is broader than one service. Shropshire Council will stop local service subsidies in 2017 so alternative ways of delivering the service and / or ways of raising funding need to be considered. Members are making contact with local transport providers and other parishes in this process.

Questions received from Richard:

Q *The previous town plan contains the statement: Install local tourist attraction signage. Annual inspection and maintenance schedule. Liaise with Shropshire Council for improvement and maintenance. The town centre contains signage which is misleading to both residents and visitors alike. For example, at the top of Mill Street is a sign pointing towards the Butter Cross which clearly states Tourist information. The Tourist information centre has not been in the Butters Cross for many years. Visitors are confused by this and other incorrect signs. Why has this not been rectified long ago?*

A IOL was set up to address these issues. Currently reviewing pedestrian signage. Traffic signage is a priority in the lists of aims and objectives of the forum.

Q *The previous town plan states that the Town Council will ‘work with the police, publicans, Shropshire Council, Chamber & Guild, towards a zero tolerance of irresponsible drinking, vandalism, anti-social behaviour and better use of CCTV.’*

Judging by the level of drunken anti-social behaviour on our streets especially at weekends that not only deters law abiding citizens from making use of the town's facilities but discourages visitors from ever returning the stated policy is clearly not working so what do the Council intend to do about? I have heard Ludlow referred to as “Tombstone”: Completely lawless!

A Ludlow is designated by West Mercia Police as a low crime area. However, it is not crime free and there are issues to be addressed. Incidents reported to the Town Council are forwarded to the police, SC and other relevant authorities such as licensing. Representational Committee and Council have resolved actions regarding anti-social behaviour. Ludlow Town Council have also previously written to all licenced premises to request that they join Pubwatch. LTC participated in the SC run alcohol awareness campaign.

Q *Ludlow is primarily a tourist town and as such one of its key attractions is the Museum. I am asked constantly “where is the museum”, where indeed?*

A The majority of exhibits are in place. Security is in place. LTC working on the final stages prior to opening.

Question received from Linda Mahalski:

Q *Now that the question of who is to pay for the town wall repair has been settled, can we have a definitive answer as to when it will be done? Visitors to Ludlow must be totally shocked to see this neglect.*

A Adopted an outline project plan

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| 4 | Appoint an Engineer / Engineering Design for the Repairs |
| 5 | Appoint an Archaeologist /Get the Archaeology done |

| | |
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| 6 | Get Permission from Historic England for Ancient Monument Works |
| 7 | Get a Church of England Faculty for the Churchyard Works |
| 8 | Finalise the Specification of the Works |
| 9 | Get an Estimated Cost of the Works |
| 10 | Apply for Grant Aid |
| 11 | Assemble all possible other sources of funding |
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Question received from Alan Stewart:

Q *Could we, as the population of Ludlow, see Ludlow Town Council's:*

Health & Safety Policy, Environmental Policy and typical risk assessments?

A Available at the Guildhall. H&S Advisor is Ellis Whittam.

Q *What are the Council's environmental guidelines when choosing a contractor? (Is it best price only, a fixed term contractor, local labour force, local contractor (eg from South Shropshire), one with a charitable concern, what about age group contracts <although that may not be legal?>*

A The town council does not have an approved supplier list and quotes are researched and sought for each contract / order.

Quotes are sought in line with LTC financial regulations. There is a policy to source locally, but there is discretion to balance this against cost

Q *For example, who was contacted about providing new seats for LTC*

A New seats are currently sourced from Broxap Ltd. Rowhurst Industrial Estate, Chesterton. However, repairs to existing benches are undertaken when possible and the works are undertaken on a voluntary basis by a local craftsman.

Q *Who was contacted about supplying bulbs for the local roundabouts?*

A We don't plant roundabouts – but bulbs in general are sourced from local suppliers.

Questions received from Joyce Brand:

Q *It is unlikely that there will be the rural urgent care centres promised at the launch of Future Fit but, given the fact that we are a town which hosts literally thousands of visitors, we do need to be sure that minor accidents can be treated locally.*

A Ludlow Town Council has consistently listened and shared local concerns expressed at council meetings regarding Future Fit, Shropdoc and Ludlow Hospital. The council has taken an active part and written to Shropshire Council the CCG, NHS Trust and the local MP to express concerns and ask for information.

Ludlow Town Council asked representatives from the CCG and NHS Trust to attend the Annual Town Residents meeting. The offer was declined at this time, and a commitment to attend a future meeting was offered.

Q *Will the Town Council be willing to take the lead in bringing together Ludlow residents to particularly alert them to the threats to local health services, in particular to raise the question of the maintenance of a minor injuries unit at Ludlow Hospital?*

A Would have to be put on the agenda of a full council meeting and considered for official response to be made.

Joyce asked that any such meeting arranged with regarding the hospital is made open to the public to attend, to which the mayor agreed and stated that this would need to be ratified by Full Council.

Question received from Margaret Appleton:

Q *Has the Town Council discussed the proposals by Shropshire Council to close certain local services such as the library and the Leisure Centre and Swimming pool unless alternative ways to run these services can be found?*

A In December 2015, Shropshire Council approved zero budgets for:

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outdoor recreation spaces and street cleaning
Arts, Tourism, Visitor Information & Museums
Ludlow Leisure Centre and swimming pool
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LTC will consult residents to establish a mandate; and devise the best model to enable the services to continue.

The town council has discussed Shropshire Council's zero budgets and the implications for Ludlow at Full Council and in a working group. These initial meetings have raised many questions and members will imminently meet with Shropshire Council and will arrange a series of ongoing meeting to discuss the way forward. There will be a local consultation process in the near future.

Q *Does the Town Council have a view about how these services might be managed and funded in the future and what might be the Town Council involvement in this?*

A There is no definitive plan in place at this time, but many options are being considered and talks with Shropshire Council will continue with the aim of reaching a plan for retaining services in Ludlow by September 2016.

Question received from Tony Mahalski:

Q *Given the tragic circumstances of the Alton Park accident last year (heaven forbid it should happen here). This accident resulted in huge financial losses and legal cases against the owners and their representatives running into multi million of pounds. Can the Mayor give the assurance that both the Town Council and members of the Council plus the Operator (Wynn) have sufficient insurance to cover such a tragic event.*

A Mr & Mrs Wynn the principle event organisers have £10,000,000 cover and Ludlow Town Council has £10,000,000 cover.

ATM/11 The Mayor then asked for questions from the floor.

Q *How are the fares payable on the town centre services calculated? I have experienced an inconsistency in what I have been charged from the Eco Park (visitors) and from the Town Centre (locals)*

A The mayor confirmed that Minsterley Motors run the Park and Ride bus service, and the contract of which is negotiated with Shropshire Council.

Q *Mark Kirby asked for more clarification on Shropshire Council's Zero Budgets and the implications on this to the Tax Payer.*

A The Mayor informed the meeting that Shropshire Council have submitted Zero Budgets but are currently negotiating funding with Central Government.

Councillor Ginger added that the figures are not yet confirmed but that it is likely the precept could be increased to maintain current services.

Ludlow Resident Joyce Brand, Ludlow Resident, stated that Ludlow must battle against Shropshire Council and the way that Ludlow is being treated. She added that we must question what funds are being given per head in Ludlow compared to Shrewsbury.

Q *In other towns in the area, social enterprises have been set up to run services previously run by Shropshire Council, has this been considered in Ludlow?*

A Councillor Draper confirmed that this is one of the options being looked into.

Q *Could Shropshire Council be persuaded to give Ludlow the income from its own car parks?*

A Councillor Parry answered that she had asked this question to the new Leader of Shropshire Council, Cllr Malcolm Pate, who had verbally declined this request.

Councillor Clarke left the meeting at 8.20pm

Q *What assurances can the Town Council give that steps will be taken to ensure value for money when undertaking services transferred from Shropshire Council?*

A Councillor Cobley confirmed that budgetary considerations are discussed at Budget Working Group meetings and ratified by Full Council. Should Ludlow Town Council inherit services, procedures will be implemented to ensure that public money is used wisely and that we are an effective purchasing body and Service Provider.

Councillor Clarke re-entered the meeting at 8.25pm

Q *What channels of communication are held with our local MP, Philip Dunne?*

A The Mayor answered that letters have been written to the MP regarding various issues over the last year and responses have been received, although some were currently outstanding.

Q *Would Ludlow Town Council be able to pledge their support to the campaign for Health Services in the town?*

A Councillor Rose Jones responded that in these challenging times Ludlow must stick together and show solidarity.

Councillor Draper stated that the issue will be discussed by Full Council at a future meeting. Councillor Perks added that the Town Council has and will take action to support the campaign where it can.

Ludlow Resident Pat Hansen stated that staff at Ludlow Hospital fear for their jobs and are being kept in the dark regarding their position. CCG plan to cut the bed capacity in the hospital to 14, raising concerns that the hospital will become unviable. She added that Phillip Dunne MP should be putting pressure on the Department of Health to give Ludlow its hospital back (the building is currently owned by PropCo because Ludlow were expecting a new hospital and the old building would be redundant but there will not be a new hospital and Ludlow needs to be given ownership again).

The Mayor agreed that Phillip Dunne needed to push this matter centrally, and that receiving letters from Ludlow residents would demonstrate its urgency.

Q *When did the town walls fall down?*

A Councillor Boddington responded that the Castle Street Car Park Section of the Town Walls had collapsed in February 2013.

Joyce Brand commented that it was good to be able to clearly hear members during the meeting, and that a microphone system should be considered for regular meetings.

The Mayor thanked the public for attending the meeting and reminded them that the upcoming all out election in 2017 for the Town Council. He invited residents to join the Town Council by standing for elections.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm

Town Mayor

Date

N.B. No Confidential Minutes will be issued.