

## LUDLOW TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Ludlow Town Council held on Friday 16 January 2009 at 7.00 pm at The Buttercross, Ludlow

---

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillors Newbold (Town Mayor), Davies (Deputy Town Mayor), Aitken, Bradley, Galtress, Glaze, Hunt, Kidd, Pope, Pound, Smithers, Taylor-Smith and Wilcox

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Sally Tallon, Solicitor for South Shropshire District Council

**FC44/09/1 APOLOGIES** – No apologies were received.

**FC45/09/1 PREJUDICIAL AND PERSONAL INTERESTS** – Cllrs Smithers and Galtress declared a personal interest in the development of the market given that they are traders in the town.

**FC46/09/1 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION** – There were no members of the public present.

**FC47/09/1 MARKET BUSINESS PLAN** - Cllrs Pope, Bradley, Davies felt that enough money had been spent on reviewing the market and that there was sufficient expertise within the Council to decide how to manage it. It was felt that the Council, not a markets manager nor a consultant should decide how to run the market and that it was up to the council to ensure that the plan was followed. Cllrs Taylor- Smith, Aitken and Kidd supported the need for a professionally prepared business plan. They recognised the expertise of members of the council but felt that given the commitments of those members a consultant should be commissioned. It was also felt that a professionally produced business plan would aid any application for grants and funding. It was **resolved** that:

1. That the Town Council commission Chris New of New Market Solutions (NMS) to produce a Business Plan for the market as detailed in the report.
2. That a sub-committee be formed to work with and instruct NMS, up to a maximum cost of £6300, in the production of the Market Business Plan ensuring that the Town Council receive the best value for money. Membership of the sub-committee to be Cllrs Pound, Taylor-Smith, Newbold and Aitken.

**FC48/09/1 STAFFING MATTERS** – Councillor Aitken reported on the advice received from Lanyon Bowdler Solicitors regarding the possible termination of the Town Clerk's contract of employment. As the Town Clerk has not been employed for 12 months there would be very limited possibility of a claim for unfair dismissal if termination were to take place. It was noted that the Town Clerk is currently suffering from anxiety and depression but Councillors were clear that this was not a factor in any decision. The relevant issue was whether Councillors felt that the Town Clerk was capable of meeting the requirements of the role. As the Town Clerk has a contractual notice period of three months, if the contract was to be terminated a payment in lieu of notice would be made but the balance of the money loaned to the Town Clerk (£1600) would be deducted. It was **resolved** that:



1. the Town Council has lost confidence in the ability of the Town Clerk to be able to perform the responsibilities necessary for the role and as set out in the job description.
2. having considered the advice of Lanyon Bowdler Solicitors the Town Council wishes to terminate the employment contract of the Town Clerk.
3. a step one letter as drafted by Lanyon Bowdler be sent to the Town Clerk as soon as possible inviting her to attend a meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> January to discuss her employment and the intention to terminate her contract.
4. the Town Mayor, Councillor Newbold delegates his role as chair of the Staffing and Appeals committee under the disciplinary procedures to Councillor Taylor-Smith in liaison with Councillor Aitken in relation to the termination of the employment of the Town Clerk.
5. the District Council be approached to provide support in the administrative aspects of the disciplinary process, given the need to keep the proceeding confidential.
6. other employees be advised that the Town Clerk is being invited to attend a meeting to discuss her future at the Town Council.

Councillor Taylor-Smith reported on the urgent need for Staff Review Meetings to take place and the lack of information currently recorded about complaints against the performance of members of staff. It was **resolved** that:

7. the Town Mayor, Councillor Taylor-Smith and Councillor Aitken initiate Staff Review Meetings to consider ensure up to date job descriptions and contracts and to includemarthe@renardieres.net <marthe@renardieres.net> the introduction of a staff handbook.
8. all Councillors prepare a list of complaints they are aware of and the current status of these complaints (ie. whether the matter is outstanding) and provide these to the District Council by Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

It was further agreed that Councillors consider providing a positive outward appearance at the official Town Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> January and that preparatory meetings should be arranged.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

---

Town Mayor

---

Date