



MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **COUNCIL** held at The Guildhall, Mill Street, Ludlow on **MONDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2025 at 7.00 PM.**

FC/195 PRESENT

Chair: Councillor Lyle

Councillors: Addis; Childs; Cowell; Gill; Ginger; Harris; Hepworth; Maxwell-Muller; Owen; Parry; Scott-Bell; Tapley; Taylor; Waite

Officers: Gina Wilding, Town Clerk
Kate Adams, Deputy Town Clerk
Helen Jones, Senior Administration Assistant

FC/196 HEALTH & SAFETY

The Mayor, Councillor Lyle, welcomed everyone to the Full Council meeting and made some health and safety announcements.

FC/197 RECORDING OF MEETINGS

The Mayor notified those present that under the Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014, recording and broadcasting is permitted during public session of Council Meetings. The act of recording and broadcasting must not interfere with the meeting.

FC/198 MEETING PROTOCOL

The Mayor reminded Members of the vital importance of mutual respect, professionalism, and full adherence to the Council's Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, and Meeting Protocol.

Councillors and officers have distinct yet complementary roles and work collaboratively in the best interests of the community. Councillors are responsible for setting policy and representing the public, while officers provide impartial advice and are tasked with implementing Council decisions.

During meetings, Members must conduct themselves with decorum, follow the established rules of debate, and respect the authority of the Chair. Disruptive behaviour, undue pressure on officers, or prioritising personal interests above

Council objectives undermines good governance and is contrary to the standards of conduct expected in Council proceedings.

Maintaining integrity, accountability, and a respectful environment is essential to ensuring effective and transparent decision-making.

FC/199 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None declared.

Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

Personal Interests

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Gill	10	Covenant to the church.
Owen	10	Knows the Chair of Ludlow Town Walls Trust. Is not and never have been, or been invited to be, a member, friend or trustee of either the Ludlow Town Walls Trust or St Laurence's PCC.
Cowell	10	Sings at St Laurence's Church. Not a member of St Laurence's PCC.
Parry	10	Knows the Chair of Ludlow Town Walls Trust and was a member in the past.
Hepworth	10	Knows the Chair of Ludlow Town Walls Trust. Is not a member of the Town Walls Trust or St Laurence's PCC.
Lyle	10	Knows the Chair of Ludlow Town Walls Trust.
Maxwell-Muller	10	Knows the Chair of Ludlow Town Walls Trust.
Childs	10	Knows the Chair of Ludlow Town Walls Trust.

FC/200 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION (15 minutes)

There were six members of the public in attendance, and of those four addressed the council.

A resident of Ludlow raised their concerns that the item relating to legal advice on the topic of the collapsed section of the Town Wall was being discussed in confidential session given its potential implications for council expenditure. It was requested that, where possible, the legal advice be made publicly available on the council's website. A further request was made for the council to commit to undertaking a full public consultation before making any decisions that might have a long-term financial impact on local council taxpayers.

A resident of Ludlow referred to the Councillors' Code of Conduct in relation to Item 10 on the agenda (Legal Advice). It was their view that Appendix B, Paragraph 9 of the Code - regarding other registrable interests - may apply to certain councillors, and that, unless a dispensation has been granted, they should not speak or vote on the item. They outlined their thoughts on potential conflicts of interest based on involvement in local organisations, including the St. Laurence's PCC, St Laurence's Conservation Trust, and the local residents' group, and raised concerns around potential pre-determination. The speaker emphasised the importance of honesty, integrity, and accountability in decision-making. A request was made for full and thorough public consultation prior to any decision with the potential for long-term financial implications for local council taxpayers.

A resident of Ludlow expressed concern that the potential financial burden of repairs to the town wall would not be met by town council, but by local taxpayers. They said that accepting responsibility could set a precedent obligating the council - and future generations - to ongoing maintenance costs, potentially running into millions. The speaker questioned whether the council should bear such responsibility. The Town Walls were described as a national monument, with a call for central government funding and for all parties to work together constructively to secure external support, rather than prolonging local disputes.

A resident of Ludlow stated that given advice he had received from the National Flood Forum that, to preserve the independence and effectiveness of both councillors and flood action groups, the two roles should remain separate, should current councillors sit on the Flood Action Forum. The speaker asked if in light of her dual roles, the Mayor should consider stepping down as Mayor and from the Council in order to maintain the integrity and autonomy of the Flood Action Forum.

FC/201 LUDLOW POLICE UPDATE

Sergeant Bell has recently taken over the local team, with PC Maslen reassigned to the town centre and an additional officer starting shortly. These staffing changes aim to improve visibility, though the Police Service is facing broader cuts, including the loss of approximately 130 office staff.

A major Class A drug seizure occurred behind Sainsbury's, leading to two arrests. Drug activity, particularly linked to county lines, remains a concern. Anti-social behaviour continues to be reported at the Eco Park and other areas, with some incidents of damage and ongoing concerns about youth gatherings.

Dangerous and anti-social driving was highlighted as a significant issue, including speeding, loud exhausts, and erratic driving. Police advised that they have different operations that target antisocial driving, as well as antisocial behaviour and drugs, so if we can continue to pass information along this will help pinpoint these operations.

Roadworks on Coronation Avenue were noted to be causing traffic issues on Lower Corve Street. Police are in contact with SC Highways, and residents are encouraged to report breaches.

The police emphasised the importance of community cooperation and timely reporting to help target resources effectively.

FC/202 LUDLOW'S UNITARY COUNCILLORS SESSION

Councillor Waite (Ludlow East) confirmed that Ludford Bridge will close on 10th September, The Linney on 23rd September (for one day), and Temeside from 13th to 19th October 2025.

Councillor Waite shared a report from a recent transformation meeting, where it was noted that Shropshire Council is expected to declare a financial emergency. This will significantly limit their ability to provide support to town and parish councils, with no additional funding available. The Council needs to make savings of at least £1 million, with wider cuts expected. As a result, services such as libraries may face temporary closures across the county.

Councillor Waite noted that a Memorandum of Understanding has been circulated and that other councils have already begun signing it. This is expected to be brought to a future Full Council meeting for consideration.

Councillor Parry (Ludlow South) confirmed that the new bus timetables will come into effect on 27th October 2025. Councillor Parry also confirmed her participation in the Task and Finish Group for town and parish councils.

FC/203 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC: PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

RESOLVED DL/KC (14:1:0)

That 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, and the meeting continue in closed session.

The meeting closed at 9.26PM.

Town Mayor

Date

Closed session minutes will be issued for this meeting.