

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/344 APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

FC/345 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None declared.

Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

Personal Interests

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Ginger	17	SSYF was his charity during his Mayoral term.
Harris	17	Recommended applicant approach council for support.
Owen	29	Knows the Chair of Ludlow Town Walls Trust.
Cowell	29	Is a member of the choir at St Laurence's Church. Knows the Chair of Ludlow Town Walls Trust.
Parry	29	Worships at St Laurence Church. Knows the Chair of Ludlow Town Walls Trust.
Hepworth	29	Knows the Chair of Ludlow Town Walls Trust.
Maxwell-Muller	29	Knows the Chair of Ludlow Town Walls Trust.
Childs	29	Knows the Chair of Ludlow Town Walls Trust.
Lyle	13	Knows the Treasurer.
	17	Knows the applicant.
	29	Knows the Chair of Ludlow Town Walls Trust.

FC/346 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION (15 minutes)

There were two members of the public in attendance.

A resident of Ludlow submitted a letter to each councillor and requested that it be read outside of the meeting.

A resident of Ludlow thanked the council for correcting the statement regarding CCTV on the council's website. They also asked whether Councillors Childs, Owen and Hepworth, in light of fuller information now available regarding

reported harassment and bullying, considered previous complaint letters they submitted against former councillors to have been misplaced, and whether they would offer a public apology.

FC/347 LUDLOW POLICE UPDATE

PS Bell from the Safer Neighbourhood Team gave an update to members on current policing in the area. He reported that a PCSO is due to return from maternity leave in May, and that officers continue to build relationships as familiar faces in the town. Surgeries continue to be held across the town, with additional venues being sought in other parts of the Ludlow area. Ongoing action is being taken to address antisocial behaviour and shoplifting, including the issuing of ASB warning letters and recent charges brought before the courts. A recent case resulted in a custodial sentence for multiple shoplifting offences, including incidents in Ludlow. An update was also provided on traffic enforcement, noting a recent conviction and fine for a wrong-way driving offence on Tower Street. Residents were encouraged to report concerns to the police via the appropriate channels.

FC/348 LUDLOW'S UNITARY COUNCILLORS SESSION

Councillor Parry (Ludlow South) reported that Sheet Road will be fully resurfaced from 23rd March 2026, with a complete closure from the top roundabout to the bottom, as far as the pedestrian crossing next to Smithfield Car Park.

FC/349 MINUTES

RESOLVED DL/KC (13:0:1)

That the open and closed session minutes of **Council** on 5th January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

FC/350 ITEMS TO ACTION

Councillor Parry provided an update on the Market parking issue, advising that Shropshire Council has appointed a new Transport Lead who has been contacted. Councillor Parry reported that, as far as she is aware, Shropshire Council is still looking into the matter. Councillor Hepworth asked for a report on the timeline on the CCTV project.

RESOLVED KC/DL (unanimous)

To note that the Items to Action were considered.

FC/351 DISPENSATION

RESOLVED DL/KC (12:0:2)

To grant a dispensation for the duration of the existing council term for Councillor Parry to participate and vote on all matters relating to the devolution of powers, and / or delivery of Shropshire Council services by Ludlow Town Council.

FC/352 BUDGET AND PRECEPT

RESOLVED DL/KC (unanimous)

That the 2026 / 27 budget report, be noted.

FC/353 RESOLVED DL/MT (12:0:2)

That the recommendations from Policy and Finance Committee regarding the budget and precept, be approved.

FC/354 RESOLVED DL/MT (12:0:2)

That the budget of £1,295,579.00 for 2026 / 27, be approved.

FC/355 RESOLVED DL/KC (12:0:2)

That the precept of £946,655.00 for 2026 / 27, be approved.

FC/356 RESOLVED DL/PA (unanimous)

That the current earmarked reserves and a general reserve of in excess of 3 and up to 12 months of the precept for 2026 / 27, be approved.

FC/357 PROJECT SUPPORT GRANT

RESOLVED TG/PA (unanimous)

That the application is currently outside the criteria, and additional information, including full project details and an official quotation showing the total cost of the work, be sought from the Croquet Club, as well as evidence of a bank account in the name of the club, with confirmation of at least two signatories.

FC/358 **EXTERNAL AUDIT 2024 / 25**

That the notice of conclusion of the external audit, together with Sections 1, 2, and 3 and the audit certificate, be noted as published on the website.

FC/359 **EXTERNAL AUDIT 2025 / 26 ASSERTION 10**

That the informative briefing on Assertion 10 be noted, together with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.2 AA and Public Sector Bodies compliance reports for the Council's websites, which found 70% compliance as a benchmark for future improvements.

FC/360 **PROJECT ACTION PLAN****RESOLVED GG/PA (unanimous)**

That the three priority projects for January – March 2026 be the Market Parking, CCTV and Churchyard Walls.

FC/361 **SSYF REQUEST FOR FUNDING****RESOLVED PA/DL (12:0:2)**

That additional information be sought from the applicant regarding the event, including cost and proposed dates.

FC/362 **SHROPSHIRE'S DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2026 – 2029****RESOLVED DL/PA (unanimous)**

That the Council supports the draft Destination Management Plan (DMP) 2026–2029.

FC/363 **LUDLOW – TOWN OF CULTURE 2028****RESOLVED GG/VP (unanimous)**

That the Council submits an expression of interest to Shropshire Council for an application on behalf of Ludlow.

FC/364 LUDLOW BATHING WATER STATUS

RESOLVED DL/GG (13:0:1)

That the Environment Agency Report be noted.

FC/365 CIVILITY AND RESPECT PROJECT

RESOLVED DL/RO (unanimous)

That it be noted that Ludlow Town Council adopted the Civility and Respect Pledge on 1 August 2022.

FC/366 RESOLVED DL/GG (unanimous)

That the Council approves compliance with the Civility and Respect Working Group's Basic Governance Checklist.

FC/367 GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION RESPONSE – STRENGTHENING THE STANDARDS AND CONDUCT FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND

RESOLVED DL/GG (unanimous)

That the government's intention to legislate for a whole system reform of the current regime as set out in Localism Act 2011, be noted.

FC/368 MEETING CALENDAR

RESOLVED DL/GG (unanimous)

That the following changes to meeting dates be approved: the Policy & Finance Committee meeting be moved from Monday 16th February 2026 to Monday 2nd March 2026; the Full Council meeting be moved from Monday 2nd March 2026 to Monday 9th March 2026; and the Annual Town Residents Meeting be moved from Monday 30th March 2026 to Monday 1st June 2026.

FC/369 BUCKINGHAM PALACE GARDEN PARTY NOMINATION

RESOLVED VP/IMM (unanimous)

That Councillor Harris be nominated to attend the Buckingham Palace Garden Party on 12th May 2026.

FC/370 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**RESOLVED RO/IMM (13:0:1)**

That the following recommendations from the Policy and Finance Committee on 19th January 2026 be approved:

PF/180 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**RECOMMENDED RO/MM (Unanimous)**

That Financial Regulation 5.15 be amended to include the following bullet point:-

- “except that any commitment to incur expenditure on obtaining legal advice shall require consultation with the Chair of the Council (or Deputy Chair in the absence of the Chair) or of the Chair of the Policy and Finance Committee.”

PF/183 SHROPSHIRE COUNTY PENSION FUND**RECOMMENDED MT/RO (Unanimous)**

That the Actuarial Valuation Employers Contribution Rate of 16.8% for 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29, be approved.

FC/371 COMMITTEE MINUTES**RESOLVED RO/JH (12:0:2)**

That the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee meeting held on 24th November 2025 be received.

FC/372 RESOLVED KC/PA (12:0:2)

That the minutes of the Services Committee meeting held on 26th November 2025 be received.

FC/373 RESOLVED SH/PA (12:0:2)

That the minutes of the Representational Committee meeting held on 2nd December 2025 be received.

FC/374 RESOLVED ISB/KC (10:0:4)

That the minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 10th December 2025 be received.

FC/375 COMMUNICATIONS TASK AND FINISH GROUP

RESOLVED IMM/RO (unanimous)

That the consultation document is approved.

FC/376 RESOLVED IMM/GG (unanimous)

That the distribution cost of £300 plus VAT, and Quote 1 from the distributor for the printing of 7,000 colour copies (to be revised to 6,000 copies) at a cost of £408, be accepted.

FC/377 RESOLVED GG/IMM (unanimous)

That the consultation closure date is one month after the date of release, which is 31st March 2026.

FC/378 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC: PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

RESOLVED DL/KC (12:0:2)

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 9.19pm.

Town Mayor

Date

Closed session minutes will be issued for this meeting.