



MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **SPECIAL COUNCIL** held in the Ludlow Conference Centre, Ludlow on **MONDAY 23rd FEBRUARY 2011** at **7.00PM**

FC/212 PRESENT

Chairman:	Councillor Aitken, Mayor
Vice-Chairman:	Councillor Pope, Deputy Mayor
Councillors:	Davies; Hunt; Jackson; Leyton-Purrier; McCormack; Newbold; Parry; Smithers; Wilcox
Officers:	Veronica Calderbank, Town Clerk; Lucy Morgan, Secretary Gina Wilding, Communications and Cemetery Officer
Also in Attendance:	Colin Richards, Shropshire Council Conservation Officer Councillor T. Huffer, Shropshire Council Councillor M. Taylor-Smith, Shropshire Council Councillor R. Taylor-Smith, Shropshire Council

FC/213 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Callender, Glaze and Pound.

FC/214 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Wilcox stated that in terms of transparency this process was flawed as every Councillor had at least one prejudicial interest.

Colin Richards, Shropshire Council's Conservation Officer, stated that Shropshire Council's Legal Department had advised that so long as Members adhered to the Code of Conduct there would be no breach, the bids would be put to the Local Joint Committee ("LJC") in March for ratification/endorsement by a wider audience. He stated that all interests should be recorded and if any were felt to have unduly influenced the decision this can be considered at the LJC.

Councillor Wilcox queried whether Shropshire Councillors would be declaring their interests prior to making a decision. Councillor R. Taylor-Smith stated that

Shropshire Councillors would declare their interests at the LJC, but that being the Council's representative on a body only constituted a personal interest.

Councillor Parry asked whether the public would be allowed to speak and vote at the LJC, Colin Richards stated that only Members of the Committee would be able to vote.

In accordance with the terms of the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (England) Order 2007 issued under Section 51 of the Local Government Act 2000 Members declared interests as follows:

Interests

<u>Member</u>	<u>Item</u>
J. Aitken	Ludlow Town Council
D. Davies	Town Walls Trust Cittaslow Ludlow Town Council
P. Hunt	Ludlow Assembly Rooms South Shropshire Housing Association Ludlow Town Council
R. Jackson	Community Guesthouse Bid Ludlow Town Council
J. Leyton-Purrier	Human Rights Resource Centre Bid Ludlow Town Council
S. McCormack	South Shropshire Furniture Scheme South Shropshire Housing Association Ludlow Town Council
J. Newbold	South Shropshire Furniture Scheme Ludlow Town Council
V. Parry	Ludlow Assembly Rooms Ludlow Shopmobility Scheme Bid Improved Radio Service Ludlow Town Council
A. Pope	Ludlow Town Council
J. Smithers	Ludlow Shopmobility Scheme Bid Ludlow Chamber of Commerce Ludlow Town Council
J. Wilcox	Ludlow College Ludlow Conference Centre Parish Church of St. Laurence Ludlow Town Council

The Town Clerk agreed with the link Officer and explained that the bids were being guided through the LJC mechanism and that Shropshire Councillors had final authority. Ludlow Town Council is only acting in an advisory capacity therefore all interests are treated as personal and no Member needs to leave the room during the votes for the purpose of this meeting as there was no provision for it other than to meet unofficially.

FC/214 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION (15 minutes)

There were fourteen members of the public present.

The Mayor asked if anyone had any comments other than those related to the bids which could be expressed as they were discussed by Council. No-one wished to speak.

FC/215 UNITARY COUNCILLORS SESSION

Councillor R. Taylor-Smith stated that the next steps were a Planning Meeting on the 15th March, a Board Meeting on the 18th March and the LJC on the 30th March 2011 at the Harley Centre.

FC/216 MARKET TOWN REVITALISATION

Colin Richards pointed out that the bid criteria was clear and the monies were for capital items only on a revitalisation basis that would contribute to the economy and creation of jobs. Councillor Leyton-Purrier stated that there seemed to have been some confusion among businesses in the town as to what the money was for and who could apply.

The Mayor explained the process and pointed out that the Town Council had held several meetings up to this point and by the end of tonight's meeting the Council would have made recommendations to Shropshire Council as to which bids are to be taken forward to the next stage. He emphasised that the Market Town Revitalisation was a Shropshire Council initiative and that Ludlow Town Council had to reflect Shropshire Council's priorities and make recommendations.

Councillor McCormack asked if there were any rules as to whether the monies were for charity, community or private organisations. Colin Richards stated that the monies were to enhance the economic well being of the town and any organisation with such a bid could apply.

Adrian Kibbler, Press, asked whether it would be taken into account whether proposed bids would be in direct competition with existing businesses. Colin Richards stated that though the focus was on community schemes there was potential for competition though this would be analysed further at the next stage when business cases were drawn up.

The Mayor explained the scoring system to the Council and that there was a time pressure as Shropshire Council needed the results by the end of February and so it would be necessary to complete the analysis at the meeting within two hours. The Council had been asked to follow a 3 category scoring system:-

1. Forward to Shropshire Council for revitalisation decision;
2. Forward to Shropshire Council Officers for consideration for other funding; or

3. Not within the scope of the fund or to be dealt with in other ways.

Councillor Wilcox asked why there were four bids listed that were not looking for capital. The Mayor stated that it was the Council's decision as to which bids were eligible for Revitalisation funding and that all bids submitted were being considered. He added that amounts of monies to be awarded were a Shropshire Council decision. The Town Council would place bids into the three categories lending their support to category 1. for the fund but they would not prioritise any further. It was Shropshire Council's responsibility to test the viability of the bids and any requests for funding over £140,000 would be referred to Cabinet.

Councillor Jackson commented that due to the size of the agenda/number of bids could the time spent on each bid be limited. The Mayor advised that statements from bid proposers would be limited to three minutes for each bid.

Councillor Leyton-Purrier stated that the Council could not be unbiased as there were too many interests. The Mayor said that this was the only process available due to the short time period. He added that if Members felt that recommendations were affected due to interests the matter could be further considered at another Special Town Council Meeting. He asked that bid proposers stick to a short introduction or comment on further information not within the paperwork.

SPEAKERS

FC/217 Bid 4. – Ludlow Conference Centre – Improvements and Expansion of Accommodation

Tina Healey, of Ludlow Conference Centre, introduced the bid. She stated that the Conference Centre was a unique part of the town's heritage and was used by over 15,000 members of the community every year, providing short and long term rental space and accommodation, though the current accommodation was very basic and inadequate. The proposed extension was based on an initial seven year contract with Keele University Medical School providing a base for student whilst they undertake work placements at local medical practices, housing up to eleven students at a time. In order to confirm this contract the works need to be completed by the 1st December 2011. She stated that match funding of £310,000 had been secured and planning permission submitted in order to progress the project quickly.

Councillor M. Taylor-Smith stated that in order to exploit the monies available from the Market Town Revitalisation fund match funding was very important. Councillor Leyton-Purrier commented that she supported the project but felt that the sum requested was too large for the Town Council's pot. The Mayor reiterated that the Council was not discussing costs.

Tina Healey went on to say that the project would secure the jobs of the current Conference Centre staff plus possibly one more employee. She added that the extra rooms created would not just be for the 11 medical students and that the

first floor accommodation when unoccupied would be rented in the same way/rate as the current rooms are used.

FC/218 Bid 1. – Ludlow College – Hospitality Training

Theresa Howton, of Ludlow College, introduced the bid. She stated that the aim was to set up a training kitchen, the College already had the space available but it was not currently fit for purpose. The College had already secured a £70,000 Diploma bid for the equipment needed and the College would also provide funds. The project would provide local hospitality training for young people who currently have to travel to train. This is very important as EMA payments are to be withdrawn which would put further pressure on students. Ludlow has a high number of young people not in employment, education or training (“NEETS”) and among local students 90 had expressed an interest in the course. This project will fill an identified skills gap and reduce youth outflow from the area. The College is in partnership discussions with the Ludlow Assembly Rooms to provide work experience and are also looking to open the kitchen for community training courses during weekends and holidays.

Councillor Leyton-Purrier commented that this project would complete with local cafes and restaurants. Councillor Parry asked whether the College could guarantee employment following the course. Theresa Howton stated that though employment was not guaranteed the course would include skills training and support on how to find employment. Following a question from Councillor Jackson, Theresa Howton stated that the course was not confined to NEETS everyone would be welcome. She added that College students had spending power within the town and helped support many local businesses.

Councillor Davies expressed his concern that this project would flood the market with skilled people; Theresa Howton stated that a skills gap had been identified. She concluded by saying that it was hoped that the project could be completed and ready for students by September 2011.

FC/219 Bid 2. – J. Greenall – Flower Beds, Castle Gardens Trees, Litter Garden Fair and Toilets

The Mayor asked if this bid met the criteria, Colin Richards stated that there were other forms of grant aid more suitable for these issues. The Town Clerk added that Ludlow Town Council could address many of these issues and pass the remainder on to Shropshire Council

FC/220 Bid 3. – Jean Jarvis – Ludlow Business Community Recycling Network

Rosemary Colley of the Community Recycling Network introduced this bid. She stated that the local business community had identified a recycling need, the project would provide a vehicle and training to members of the community who do not fit into the formal education system in a similar way as the South

Shropshire Furniture Scheme. Negotiations were in progress with Shropshire Council to use the Coder Road Depot and any bid monies awarded would provide equipment. It would be a sustainable project covering running costs through income, volunteers and skills/services in kind though the focus of the project was training not income generating.

Councillor M. Taylor-Smith asked if the Furniture Scheme would provide any internal funding. Rosemary Colley stated that as yet no other funding had been secured.

Councillor Parry asked if the project would create employment. Rosemary Colley stated that depending on the need the project could create four to five jobs, but the project was moving very quickly and this could change.

Councillor Jackson asked whether the building from Shropshire Council was secured. Rosemary Colley explained that Shropshire Council had proposed the use and they were meeting on Friday to discuss.

FC/221 Bid 5. – Ludlow Assembly Rooms - Refurbishment

The Mayor pointed out that the bid included partnership working with the College and the capital requested was to improve the structure. Councillor Hunt stated that though it had not been confirmed it was likely that jobs could be lost without this funding. Councillor M. Taylor-Smith added that the decision on the Arts Council Grant would be made on the 31st March 2011 and the Assembly Rooms had also done much internal fund raising for this project.

FC/222 Bid 6. – South Shropshire Housing Association – Photo Voltaic Roof Panels

Councillor McCormack introduced this bid, she stated that the Government are supporting the use of photo voltaic roof panels through Feed in Tariff payments. The Housing Association were suggesting that the most suitable start point for the scheme was at Whitefriars sheltered accommodation where the panels could be fitted to the roofs that would generate the most electricity with the benefits being shared by all Whitefriars residents.

Councillor McCormack went on to say that the panels would be self funding and guaranteed for 25 years. Electricity companies currently pay residents with panels on the principle that 50% of energy generated is fed back into the system, this therefore would help fight poverty in Ludlow. She added that the basis of this project fitted in the environmental aspects of the Town Plan.

Councillor Pope queried whether this project was a good use of public money, as she did not believe the panels generate enough electricity, Councillor Leyton-Purrier added that we did not have right climate to take advantage of these panels. Councillor McCormack refuted this stating that she had similar panels on her roof and had not had an electricity bill in over a year.

Councillor M. Taylor-Smith commented that this project was revenue saving not capital investment. Councillor McCormack stated that capital was needed to install the first panels which would then generate revenue to install further panels and that the higher the monies awarded the more benefit to the town.

FC/223 Bid 7. – Michael Timewell – Heavy Traffic through the Town Centre

The Mayor advised that this bid was not capital based, Colin Richards added that this matter fell within local authority jurisdiction.

FC/224 Bid 8. – Dinham Millennium Green – Regeneration of Dinham (Castle) Weir

Paul Nicholls, Chairman of Dinham Millennium Green introduced the bid, he stated that the flawed weir had been inherited from South Shropshire District Council and that repairs to ensure a solid weir were vital. He said that due to the speed of the Market Town Revitalisation Project the full extent of the repairs needed and therefore costs would not be known until the consultant engineer reported back at the end of the month.

Councillor Parry asked if the hydro electric scheme was still in place, Paul Nicholls stated that the weir repairs were vital to this scheme to direct the flow of the water. He added that erosion works to strengthen the river bank had drained the Trust's funds for this important scheme.

Keith Thompson, of the Millennium Green Trust stated that the whole scheme could cost in the region of £250,000 and that other funding would be sought once full details were known.

The Mayor suggested that due the time constraints the Market Town Revitalisation Fund would not be suitable for this project.

FC/225 Bid 9. – Richard Summers – Toilets, Parking, Bio-Digester and Dog Mess

The Council agreed that this was not a capital bid, but that the issues could be remedied by either the Town Council or Shropshire Council Officers.

FC/226 Bid 10. – Roger Powell - Toilets, Approaches to Ludlow, Plant Roundabouts, Sweep Roads by Hand, Food Waste Collection and Plastic Recycling Collections

The Council agreed that this was not a capital bid, but that the issues could be remedied by either the Town Council or Shropshire Council Officers.

FC/227 Bid 11. – Skillbuilders - Ludlow Timber Skills Academy

Graeme Perks, Skillbuilders, introduced this bid, he stated that there was a need for practical skills training for the young in Ludlow and that the project would generate income through selling the items made during training. The scheme would provide practical experience to link into formal qualifications, there was also the opportunity for European exchanges.

The Mayor asked what was meant by asset transfer and advised that the business units suggested for a project base were already occupied. Graeme Perks stated that he would like to work with Shropshire Council to secure premises within Ludlow and also equipment (i.e. unused/outdated), the monies requested would provide for any repairs/alterations needed to a building, repairs to equipment and the purchase of equipment that cannot be sourced in other ways. He added that beginning with six students, dependant on negotiations with Shropshire Council, the Timber Skills Academy could be up and running within a month.

Councillor R. Taylor-Smith asked if the project would aim to cover its running costs i.e. rent. Graeme Perks stated that this would depend on what agreement was reached with Shropshire Council and the growth of the scheme.

FC/228 Bid 12. – Carole Clayton, Ludlow Chamber of Commerce – The Ludlow Guide Website

Councillor Smithers spoke regarding this item and stated that the Chamber of Commerce had done much of the groundwork for this new website already and that the sum requested was to get it up and running, live on the internet. Following which the website would create revenue to cover running costs through advertising. Councillor Leyton-Purrier asked what was the difference between this website and Ludlow Town Council's website. The Town Clerk said that they were completely separate.

Councillor Pope pointed out that the Town Council had given a grant to the Chamber of Commerce four years ago for a similar project. Councillor Smithers stated that due to legal issues the website was no longer owned by the Chamber. He added that there was the potential for the creation of two jobs with this project.

Councillor M. Taylor-Smith stated that there were other funds available for such projects.

FC/229 Bid 13. – Jessica Jackson – A Community Owned, Led and Run Guesthouse

The Mayor stated that he understood the Ludlow Conference Centre was interested in working in partnership if this project went forward to provide affordable accommodation for any ages within Ludlow.

FC/230 Bid 14. – Cittaslow – Development Trust

The Mayor explained that this bid currently had no specific building in mind, but he commented that it did not seem to fit the Market Town Revitalisation criteria.

FC/231 Bid 15. – Parish Church of St Laurence - Music in Ludlow

Councillor Wilcox explained the bid; he stated that the availability of high quality instruments would encourage young people to take up music, competitions and visiting musicians, media events and festivals to the town. He said that the grand piano would be for talented musicians and the Yamaha for training.

Councillor Leyton-Purrier queried whether a piano could be donated from other sources i.e. celebrities. Councillor Davies expressed his concerns that if a piano was not used regularly it would need retuning before it was played again. Councillor Pope added that the atmosphere of the building was very important as damp etc. could do a lot of damage to the instrument, and this issue had led to the removal of the Ludlow Assembly Rooms instrument which had been a great loss to the town.

Councillor Wilcox stated that the Church already had in place the organ which was an extremely valuable instrument and therefore they had the knowledge and skills to maintain such instruments.

FC/232 Bid 16. – Ludlow Town Council – Ludlow Conservation Area Revitalisation Project

The Town Clerk pointed out the Council had already voted to support this project which would include match funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (“HLF”). This scheme was by far the biggest and would provide the most jobs and skills training opportunities to local people. She added that English Heritage and the HLF were so impressed by the skills training aspect of this bid that they were looking to encourage/role it out across the county and possibly nationwide.

Councillor Wilcox expressed his reservations that this bid was for the Town Council’s own benefit. Councillor Parry emphasised that the bid was for the benefit of the whole town not the Council as the Council was representing the people of Ludlow. Councillor Wilcox said he merely identified how it could be perceived.

Councillor Leyton-Purrier commented that the bid seemed a small amount to provide eighty jobs. The Town Clerk stated that this figured had been provided by Herefordshire College with which the Town Council was working with others on the project.

Colin Richards added that the repair costs of the town walls would fall on Ludlow Town Council/residents and that this scheme was an opportunity to secure

funding from the HLF and also provide first hand experience to apprentices and create an invaluable education opportunity.

FC/233 Bid 17. – Diane Corston – Linney Project

The Town Clerk advised Members that a play area project was already being implemented by the Town Council.

FC/234 Bid 18. – Mr C Cooke or Mr J M Smithers – Ludlow Shopmobility Scheme

Chris Cooke, Chairman of the Royal British Legion introduced this bid. He stated that Leominster and Shrewsbury currently have shopmobility schemes in place which are very successful. The scheme would provide wheelchairs, scooters and other disability related equipment for hire and he was hopeful that with sufficient fundraising and help from volunteers this service could be provided free of charge.

Councillors Smithers explained that the £60,000 requested would cover the lease hire of equipment plus a purpose built portacabin base for the project. He stated that Leominster had 800-950 loans per year, and that considering the topography of Ludlow such a scheme was even more important here. He further added that working with Shropshire Council an agreement could be reached to site the portacabin on one of the car parks close to the centre of Ludlow.

FC/235 Bid 19. – Ginny Murfin – Improved Radio Service

The Mayor introduced this item; Councillor Davies commented that the AM signal was to be turned off shortly and that without investment in such projects to change over to FM, Ludlow could go silent.

FC/236 Bid 20. – Dinham Millenium Green – Regeneration of Dinham (Castle) Weir (relates to 8.)

This item has been considered at Bid 8.

FC/237 Bid 21. – Rev. Tim Coles, Ludlow Elim Christian Fellowship – Building at the Heart of the Community

The Mayor suggested that the timescale with this bid was an issue. Councillor Parry added that this was an ongoing matter and that they were looking for a building similar to the Mayfair Centre.

FC/238 Bid 22. – Jennifer Leyton-Purrier – Human Rights Resource Centre

Councillor Leyton-Purrier expressed her sadness that Ludlow's Court was closing, she said that the bid proposed was to provide pro-bono legal advice to middle earners who were not eligible for legal aid or advice from such organisations as the Citizens Advice Bureau ("CAB").

Councillor McCormack clarified that the CAB already offered this service and that although they only received funding from the Government to offer assistance to low earners/those on benefits, they assisted all sections of the public through fundraising from other areas.

Councillor M. Taylor-Smith queried what aspect of this project met the capital based criteria of the Revitalisation Fund, as he pointed out that rent was revenue not capital. Councillor Leyton-Purrier stated she believed capital was not relevant.

FC/239 Bid 23. – Helen Vaughan, South Shropshire Housing Association – Photo Voltaic Roof Panels (relates to 6.)

This item has been considered at Bid 6.

Keith Thompson asked if there was a time limit on expenditure on any monies awarded. The Town Clerk stated that the monies had to have been spent by September 2012

Councillor Parry left the meeting at 8.58pm

FC/240 EXTENSION OF THE MEETING

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That in accordance with Standing Orders the meeting be extended by thirty minutes.

Council agreed to take a short break at 9.00pm
Councillor Leyton-Purrier left the meeting at 9.00pm
The Council meeting re-started at 9.08pm

FC/240 CATAGORISING OF BIDS

CATEGORY 1 DECISIONS ONLY DUE TO TIME CONSTRAINTS.

The Mayor suggested that a vote be taken on each bid as to which category they were to be put in. It was agreed that the voting begin with category 1. those bids to be put forward to Shropshire Council for a Revitalisation decision.

Councillor Leyton-Purrier rejoined the meeting at 9.11pm

FC/241 RESOLVED (9:1:1)

That Bid 1. – Ludlow College – Hospitality Training, be put forward to Shropshire Council for a revitalisation decision (Category 1.).

FC/242 RESOLVED (7:4:0)

That Bid 3. – Jean Jarvis – Ludlow Business Community Recycling Network, be put forward to Shropshire Council for a revitalisation decision (Category 1.).

FC/243 RESOLVED (10:0:1)

That Bid 4. – Ludlow Conference Centre – Improvements and Expansion of Accommodation, be put forward to Shropshire Council for a revitalisation decision (Category 1.).

FC/244 RESOLVED (7:2:2)

That Bid 5. – Ludlow Assembly Rooms - Refurbishment, be put forward to Shropshire Council for a revitalisation decision (Category 1.).

FC/245 RESOLVED (2:6:3)

That Bid 6. – South Shropshire Housing Association – Photo Voltaic Roof Panels, be put forward to Shropshire Council for a revitalisation decision (Category 1.).

The proposal was not carried.

FC/246 RESOLVED (7:0:4)

That Bid 11. – Skillbuilders - Ludlow Timber Skills Academy, be put forward to Shropshire Council for a revitalisation decision (Category 1.).

FC/247 RESOLVED (2:0:9)

That Bid 15. – Parish Church of St Laurence - Music in Ludlow, be put forward to Shropshire Council for a revitalisation decision (Category 1 later overturned see FC/248).

The Town Clerk pointed out to Members that the previous vote with 2 Councillors for and 9 Councillors abstaining was passed to go through within 2 votes. Several Members asked if they could revote as this was not their intention. The clerk explained how this could be done.

FC/248 RECONSIDER MINUTE FC/246

RESOLVED (7:3:1)

That Standing Orders be waived to allow the matter resolved at minute FC/246 to be reconsidered.

FC/249 RESOLVED (2:7:2)

That Bid 15. – Parish Church of St Laurence - Music in Ludlow, be put forward to Shropshire Council for a revitalisation decision (Category 1.).

The proposal was not carried.

FC/250 RESOLVED (unanimous)

That Bid 16. – Ludlow Town Council – Ludlow Conservation Area Revitalisation Project, be put forward to Shropshire Council for a revitalisation decision (Category 1.).

FC/251 RESOLVED (3:6:2)

That Bid 18. – Mr C Cooke or Mr J M Smithers – Ludlow Shopmobility Scheme, be put forward to Shropshire Council for a revitalisation decision (Category 1.).

The proposal was not carried.

FC/252 RESOLVED (5:5:1)

That Bid 19. – Ginny Murfin – Improved Radio Service, be put forward to Shropshire Council for a revitalisation decision (Category 1.).

As the vote was even the Mayor had the casting vote.

RESOLVED (5:6:1)

The proposal was not carried.

FC/253 Councillor Leyton-Purrier proposed that Bid 22. – Jennifer Leyton-Purrier – Human Rights Resource Centre, be put forward to Shropshire Council for a revitalisation decision (Category 1.). There was no seconder for this proposal and it was therefore defeated.

FC/254 The Mayor advised that a formal letter regarding the bids referred to Shropshire Council under category 1. would be sent to Shropshire Council shortly after this meeting.

Councillor Jackson expressed her concerns regarding the criteria used and how difficult they were to apply. Councillor M. Taylor-Smith stated that Shropshire Council Officers use this criteria every day and have an impartial perspective on the bids from which they will make recommendations to the LJC and Shropshire Councillors to aid in the decision making process.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Town Mayor

Date

N.B. No Confidential Minutes will be issued.