



MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **COUNCIL** held in the Ludlow Conference Centre, Ludlow on **MONDAY 22nd NOVEMBER 2010** at 7.00PM

FC/140 PRESENT

Chairman:	Councillor Aitken, Mayor
Vice-Chairman:	Councillor Pope, Deputy Mayor
Councillors:	Davies; Glaze; Hunt; Jackson; McCormack; Mitchell; Newbold; Parry; Pound; Smithers; Wilcox
Officers:	Veronica Calderbank, Town Clerk; Lucy Morgan, PA
Also in Attendance:	Venerable Colin Williams

FC/141 PRAYERS

The Mayor welcomed the Ven. Colin Williams and invited him to lead the Council in prayers.

FC/142 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Leyton-Purrier and for late arrival were received from Councillor Jackson.

FC/143 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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:

Personal Interests

<u>Member</u>	<u>Item</u>
V. Parry	Member of Ludlow in Bloom
J. Smithers	Member of Ludlow in Bloom
A. Pope	Member of the RSPB

Prejudicial Interests

No prejudicial interests were declared.

FC/144 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION (15 minutes)

There were three members of the public present.

Mr Bradley, 59 Steventon New Road, expressed his concerns regarding the issue of proxy voting if substitutes were allowed. He stated that a good Councillor should attend a meeting with an open mind and not pre-judge issues. Enabling proxy voting is not in the Town's best interest and could lead to voting rigging and voting for political purposes. He added that proxy voting should not be allowed in any Council.

Mr Perks, Honey Meadow, read from a script covering a number of points including town partnership, published expenditure, agendas and minutes, substitute Councillors and social enterprise.

The Mayor thanked the public for their comments.

FC/145 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION FEEDBACK

There were no questions raised at the previous meeting.

FC/146 UNITARY COUNCILLORS SESSION (15 minutes)

There were no Unitary Councillors present at the meeting.

Following a question from Councillor Wilcox clarified that Ludlow's Unitary Councillors were allowed to address the Council on an ex-officio basis but were not ex-officio members of the Council.

FC/147 MINUTES

RESOLVED (9:0:3)

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 27th October 2010, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

FC/148 POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

a) Minutes

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the draft minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 8th November 2010, subject to the insertion of the words “information on” before “anti-social behaviour” in minute PF/108, be received.

FC/149 b) Recommendations

MAYOR’S BADGES

That the Town Council automatically provide all past Mayors with a badge. However, if required badges for the Mayoress/Consort must be purchased by their Mayor.

Councillor McCormack introduced this recommendation and stated that the Council needed to consider the costs of providing badges and that this solution provided a compromise. The Town Clerk added that minutes PF/99, PF/100 and PF/101 should also have been recommendations and asked that Council consider them as well.

RESOLVED (9:1:0)

That the recommendation be approved.

FC/150 That:-

- i. **the Town Council purchase a stock of the less expensive enamel badges to be provided to all past Mayors.**
- ii. **should a Mayor wish to have a solid silver badge they may purchase this themselves.**

RESOLVED (11:1:0)

That the recommendation be approved.

FC/151 That the Council budget for the purchase of 25 past Mayors badges in the next financial year 2011/2012.

RESOLVED (11:1:0)

That the recommendation be approved.

FC/152 That:-

- i. **the Town Council budget for the purchase of 10 past Mayoress/Consort badges in the next financial year.**
- ii. **the Council offer Mayoress badges for purchase to past Mayors on a cost neutral basis (i.e. cost of the badge plus relevant percentage of the die/tooling costs).**

Councillor McCormack asked the Council whether it would be more prudent to delay purchase of the ten badges until the first order is received. Councillor Parry emphasised that they still needed to be budgeted for. The Town Clerk assured Members that she would not place the order until she had consulted with the current Mayoress to see whether she would like a badge.

RESOLVED (11:1:0)

That the recommendation be approved.

- FC/153 That in the event Ludlow in Bloom should cease Ludlow Town Council would take over the assets of the organisation without responsibility for any outstanding debts and without commitment to enter the Heart of England in Bloom competition, at the Town Council's discretion on a year to year basis.**

RESOLVED (9:1:2)

That the recommendation be approved.

- FC/154 That the second quarter accounts be accepted.**

RESOLVED (11:0:1)

That the recommendation be deferred to the next Council meeting.

- FC/155 That the Town Council does not provide a representative on the Helicopter Noise Liaison Group but requests the minutes.**

RESOLVED (11:0:1)

That the recommendation be approved.

- FC/156 SERVICES COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED (11:0:1)

That the draft minutes of the Services Committee meeting held on 25th October 2010, be received.

FC/157 REPRESENTATIONAL COMMITTEE

a) 19th October 2010

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the minutes of the Representational Committee meeting held on 19th October 2010, be received.

FC/158 PARKING STRATEGY FOR SHROPSHIRE

The Town Clerk explained to the Council that this was their opportunity to comment on the parking strategy as it would shortly be considered by Shropshire Council's Cabinet. She pointed out that many Shropshire towns had no charges and that Shropshire Council were proposing that Town/Parish Council subsidise parking fees.

Councillor Smithers pointed out that we already work with Shropshire Council to enable market traders to park on street and that this subsidy proposal hinted at Shropshire Council wanting to raise parking fees and therefore if we refuse to subsidise the blame is passed on to the Town Council.

Councillors Hunt, Wilcox and Pound echoed these views, adding that if Shropshire Council were to raise fees they should bear all the criticism.

Councillor Newbold queried that as parking meters do not give change what happens to the surplus monies collected over the parking fee.

Councillor Pope stated that the Council needed to know the charges enforced in other Shropshire towns and if Ludlow was being charged a higher rate, why?

Councillor Parry reported that she had heard rumours that parking charges were being rolled out to current non-charging car parks, the Town Clerk pointed out that this strategy was for 2011 and therefore if charging was to be expanded it seemed it was not to happen next year. Councillor Parry went on to query whether it was legal to make so much money from car parks and that she had witnessed several people not stopping in Ludlow as they would not pay the high car park charges. This could damage our tourism industry but the Town Council needed to distance themselves from this matter.

Councillor McCormack commented that should the Town Council subsidise parking fees, due to the current level of fees the burden upon each Council Tax paying Ludlow resident would be high. Also as the car parks were mainly used by tourists, visitors and commuters Ludlow residents would be subsidising non-Ludlow residents to park and the subsidy monies would be used across the whole of Shropshire not specifically benefiting Ludlow.

Following the Mayor's query as to why Shropshire Towns had different parking rates/policies, Councillor McCormack advised the Council that Shropshire Council had inherited charging from each District Council. Councillor Wilcox added that there needed to be uniformity across the County.

Councillor Smithers pointed out that if Shropshire Council began charging for car parks currently without charges, their income would increase and they could therefore decrease current charges without decreasing income.

Councillor Parry pointed out that the Craven Arms car park was free as the Craven Arms Town Council were already subsidising charges with LJC monies.

Councillor McCormack pointed out that this matter came down to whether the Council could afford to subsidise parking and whether it was fair to be put the burden on Ludlow residents.

RESOLVED (Unanimous)

That the Council does not subsidise car parking within Ludlow.

FC/159 RESOLVED (Unanimous)

That the Town Clerk write to Shropshire Council requesting the full countywide car parking charges.

FC/160 ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

The Mayor explained that the scheduled Accounts Committee on the 15th December 2010 would clash with the Senior Citizens Christmas Party. The Town Clerk added that she wished to move the Accounts Committee from the 30th March 2011 to avoid a large number of uncleared cheques being carried over into the next financial year.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That:-

- i. the dates of the Accounts Committees scheduled for the 15th December 2010 and 30th March 2011 Accounts Committee be changed; and
- ii. the Accounts Committee be delegated authority to agree appropriate alternative dates for the meetings

FC/161 MAYFAIR SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP

The Mayor introduced these minutes and stated that the Mayfair Safety Advisory Group would meet again in February 2011 to begin preparations for the 2011

Mayfair. This would be organised and chaired by Shropshire Council as the strategic safety events group organiser for Shropshire.

RESOLVED (Unanimous)

That the minutes of the Mayfair Safety Advisory Group meeting held on 28th July 2010, be received.

FC/162 LUDLOW PLACE PLAN

The Mayor pointed out to Members the main point of the plan and that much of the content was provided by the Town Council. He added that should any Member want a colour copy to make better sense of the tables/graphs to contact the Town Clerk.

Councillor Wilcox expressed his concerns that Shropshire Council aspirations had been included with those of the Town Council and that the issues supported by the Town Council should not be confused with those not supported.

Councillor Jackson entered the meeting at 7.58pm.

RESOLVED (12:0:1)

That:-

- i. the Ludlow Place Plan be referred to the Town Plan Working Group.
- ii. the Town Plan Working Group be delegated authority to make representations to Shropshire Council on this issue.
- iii. the Town Clerk write to Shropshire Council to let them know that the Ludlow Place Plan was being considered.

Councillor McCormack added that should any other Members be interested they were welcome to attend the Town Plan Working Group meeting.

FC/163 ANNUAL CORE BUDGET GRANT – CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

The Town Clerk introduced this item and explained that this amount was outside of Representational Committees authority but that they had recommended a grant of at least £2,000 in the next financial year. The Mayor pointed out that there were two issues, does the Council continue funding the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) and how much is granted.

Councillor Smithers pointed out that Shropshire Council were making many cuts to funding for such organisation but that the Council could not pick up the slack on every project without increasing the precept. Councillor Wilcox added that there would be many cuts to important social services in the coming years that would impact worst on ordinary people and the CAB supports these people.

Councillor Pope stated that there was already a lot of pressure on next years budget and therefore it may be difficult to give more than £2,000.

Councillor Pound pointed out that considering the current financial climate the Town Council should be making saving in next financial year not increasing spending.

Councillor McCormack pointed out the Members the numbers of people the Cab have helped and the amount of money they had brought to the area by advising residents of what benefits they were eligible for and how to increase them. They also advised member of the public on debt management which would become a more vital services over the coming years. Cutting this grant would affect the poorest Ludlow residents as there was no other similar service to provide help.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That:-

- i. the current £2,000 core budget grant to the Citizens Advice Bureau continue for the next financial year.
- ii. an increase in the grant amount, to £3,000, be considered in the budget process.

FC/164 HENLEY ROAD CEMETERY

The Town Clerk introduced a letter of thanks for the upkeep of the cemetery.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the letter be noted and the Council's appreciation be passed on to the workforce.

FC/165 ANNUAL POLLARDING OF LIME TREES

The Town Clerk advised the Council that Shropshire Council had agreed to the annual pollarding of the lime trees in Castle Gardens.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the permission from Shropshire Council be noted.

FC/166 WHEELER ROAD

The Mayor stated that though this matter would normally be considered by Services Committee, due to the urgent nature of the matter Council was asked to make a decision. Members discussed the matter.

Councillor Wilcox left the meeting at 8.15pm

Councillor Pope asked that should the trees be felled two more be planted to replace them in order to minimise the affect on wildlife. The Town Clerk advised against replanting at Wheeler Road to avoid similar problems in the future, she suggested planting two trees on the Linney playing field as it would also help prevent the erosion problems encountered in that area.

Councillor Wilcox rejoined the meeting at 8.20pm

RESOLVED (11:0:2)

That:-

- i. the two trees as identified in the letter from Shropshire Council be removed.
- ii. two trees be planted at the Linney to replace those felled above, following consultation with the Council's Tree Warden on the best tree for the area.

FC/167 SUBSTITUTE COUNCILLORS

Councillor Smithers stated that he had requested Council to consider substitutes to negate the possibility of Committee meeting being inquorate and therefore delaying decisions especially those with time constraints i.e. planning consultations. Nominating substitutes would allow Committee business to take place. He added that he had never intended this to mean proxy voting, but that the Member unable to attend give up all their voting rights and the substitute represents their own views not the view of those they are standing in for.

Councillor Wilcox emphasised that Members should not volunteer to joint a Committee unless they are willing to strive to attend every meeting. Members who are not regularly able to attend should resign from the Committee and allow another Member to join.

Councillor Smithers proposed to change Standing Orders to allow the use of substitutes. No one seconded this proposal and it was therefore defeated.

FC/168 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC: PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

The Chairman moved 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.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the public be excluded and the meeting continue in closed session.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Town Mayor

Date

N.B. Confidential Minutes will be issued.