



MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **COUNCIL** held in the Ludlow Conference Centre, Ludlow on **MONDAY 10th OCTOBER 2011** at **7.00PM**

FC/197 **PRESENT**

Chairman:	Councillor Aitken, Mayor
Vice-Chairman:	Councillor Wilcox, Deputy Mayor
Councillors:	Davies; Glaze; Leyton-Purrier; Jackson; McCormack; Newbold; Parry; Pope; Pound; Smithers
Officers:	Veronica Calderbank, Town Clerk; Lucy Morgan, Secretary

FC/198 **PRAYERS**

The Mayor passed on the Mayor's Chaplain's apologies that he was unable to attend this meeting and asked that in his absence Councillor Reverend Canon Wilcox lead the Council in prayers.

The Mayor, on behalf of the Mayor's Chaplain, also reminded Members that this years Remembrance Day was very special as it is the 11th day of the 11th month of the 11th year of the twenty first century. He hoped as many Councillors as possible would attend the services.

FC/199 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Davies.

FC/200 **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

No personal interests were declared.

Prejudicial Interests

No prejudicial interests were declared.

FC/201 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION (15 minutes)

There were eleven members of the public and press present.

FC/202 UNITARY COUNCILLORS SESSION

Unitary Councillor R. Taylor-Smith, Ludlow North, congratulated the town and Ludlow in Bloom for once again achieving gold in the In Bloom competition. She particularly wished to congratulate the residents of Lower Broad Street for achieving a Level 5 and The Globe a Silver Gilt in their first year. She also expressed her thanks on behalf of Ludlow in Bloom for all the hard work carried out by the Town Council.

She went on to say that the Action for Market Towns Convention had brought over two hundred visitors to the town and she looked forward to welcoming the AMT again. She added that it was hoped that some special parking concessions could be applied to Ludlow over the Christmas period and Shropshire Council was working with the Chamber of Commerce on this issue.

Unitary Councillor M. Taylor-Smith, Ludlow South, stated that the Local Joint Committee will meet on the 20th October at Richards Castle Village Hall where the final plans for Ludlow Hospital would hopefully be presented.

Following a question from Councillor Parry, Councillor M Taylor-Smith stated that following consultation Shropshire Council proposed to charge parking fees to blue badge holders but to extend their parking term by 1 hour.

FC/203 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION FEEDBACK (15 minutes)

The Town Clerk stated that all questions had been answered at the previous meeting.

FC/204 PRESENTATION ON BUSINESS CASE FOR LUDLOW ASSEMBLY ROOMS

Mike Penn, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, thanked the Town Council for the opportunity to address the Council. He updated Members on the current situation and business plan options which had been submitted to Shropshire Council.

He stated that following the loss of the Arts' Council funding the Assembly Rooms were looking for other funders. But he emphasised that the Assembly Rooms were not closing.

Sam Hine, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, explained to the Council the different option available which included working and sharing space with the Visitor Information Centre and Museum to capitalise on visitors to all three organisations and the prominence of the Castle Square frontage.

She stated that the business plan would be discussed by the Shropshire Council Cabinet before Christmas.

FC/205 POLICE INSPECTOR ROB THOMAS

The Mayor informed Members that Inspector Rob Thomas was the newly appointed Police Inspector for Ludlow. He wished to meet the Council but unfortunately he was unavailable tonight and passed on his apologies.

FC/206 STANDING ORDERS

RESOLVED (8:1:1)

That Standing Orders be waived in order to reconsider the following item.

FC/207 CHEQUE SIGNING

The Town Clerk introduced this item, she stated that she did not know of any other Council that had an Accounts Committee as most dealt with all financial matters at their equivalent to our Policy and Finance Committee. She added that the Committee did at times struggle to be quorate especially following the resignation of two Members. Legally the Council had an obligation to pay creditors once the goods/services have been received.

Councillor Parry stated that she was not happy to lose the Committee as it carried out the important job of scrutinising the cheque payments. Councillor Newbold added that the Accounts Committee had been set on a three weekly basis in order to stay within credit terms, should payments go to Policy and Finance Committee cheques would either be signed and paid prior to consideration by the Committee or the Council would be outside their payment terms. He also stated that he believed all payments should also be presented to Council.

The Town Clerk stated that the current Accounts Committee used resources producing an agenda and minutes but that the cheque list could continue to be circulated to all Members prior to the cheques being signed for them to be scrutinised as all Member had received in the past.

Members also considered whether to extend cheque signing to all Members of the Policy and Finance Committee if they agreed.

RESOLVED (7:1:2)

That, if they agree, all members of Policy and Finance Committee be authorised to sign cheques.

FC/208 RESOLVED (6:1:3)

That the Accounts Committee ceases and that all papers usually provided to the Committee be presented the Policy and Finance Committee.

Councillor Smithers left the meeting at 7.50pm

FC/209 VITUAL SITE VISIT AND LAND AND PROPERTIES REPORT

The Town Clerk walked Members through the video presentations of all the Council's land and properties. She pointed out the yew tree in Castle Gardens that the Ludlow Rotary Club were proposing to use for this years Tree of Light, gave an update on the Linney erosion control and play area works and the graffiti/toilet/smoking issues encountered in the Buttercross open market area.

She went on to say that the ownership and maintenance issues regarding the Garden of Rest had now been resolved. It had been agreed with the Church that the Garden of Rest and supporting town wall was not within the ownership or responsibility of the Town Council but that following a Council resolution we would continue to maintain the grassed area with the help of a maintenance grant from Shropshire Council.

Councillor Jackson queried whether the tunnel through the berm on the Linney design would be included in the final play area. The Town Clerk stated that due to the health and safety risks involved it was unlikely and she would look for a similar priced piece of equipment. Councillor Parry asked for a report to be presented to Services on how any future flooding would affect the proposed play area.

Councillor Newbold drew the Council's attention to the use of bluetack etc. to display items on the outside of the Buttercross, he asked that this issue be referred to Services Committee. The Town Clerk advised that the person concerned had stopped putting bluetack or similar products on the stone.

FC/210 THE BUTTERCROSS LISTED BUILDING AND PLANNING APPLICATION

The Town Clerk explained to Members that the Council had now considered the contents of the HLF bid on several occasions.

The Town Clerk stated that the Buttercross was an integral part of the bid as its conversion to a Heritage Interpretation Centre satisfied the educational requirement of the criteria. The centre would provide a space for visitors and

schools and also a cinema showing films on traditional building skills which are important for the future sustainability of the Town Walls and training for builders generally.

She went on to say that the installation of the lift and doors would be the only alteration to the groundfloor open market area which would continue to operate as a market, open to the public during the day maintaining its traditional use. Closing the doors over night would allow the area to be protected from misuse and vandalism. She circulated a photograph of the glass doors recently installed at Ludlow Castle which were similar to those suggested for the Buttercross.

The Town Clerk stated that with regards to closing in the ground floor of the Buttercross Members had various options. She took Members through her report.

The Town Clerk advised that Members had previously resolved to include glass sliding doors within the Buttercross element of the bid but that she wished to make Members aware of all the options for enclosing the Buttercross as suggestions had been received.

The Town Clerk assured Members that significant consultation and public meetings had taken place during the Market Towns Revitalisation process which had secured the Town Council £120,000 match funding for the bid. The planning permission process also included a significant amount of public consultation.

RESOLVED (7:0:2)

That:-

- i) the Town Clerk be authorised to correct the planning permission plans to include sliding glass doors.
- ii) the updated plans be distributed to all Members for consideration and information.
- ii) if following consideration of the plans Members wish for the matter to be further discussed/clarified a special Council meeting be called.

FC/211 The Breadwalk

The Town Clerk explained to Members that Ludford Parish Council had requested that an extension to the Breadwalk, to link the walk to the Charlton Arms' car park, be included in the Council's HLF bid.

Councillor McCormack pointed out that the extension to the Breadwalk had been included in the Council's Town Plan and including it in the bid would be a good way to achieve that goal. She added that the extension would complete the circular walk for visitors.

Councillor Hunt added that the Council needed to make a decision on this matter as further procrastination could endanger the whole bid.

RESOLVED (6:0:2)

That the Breadwalk extension be included in the Council's Heritage Lottery Fund bid.

FC/212 The Guildhall

The Town Clerk explained to Members that following several delays HMCTS had now served the Council with a three month notice of their intention to vacate having been forced into that position. They wanted to pay only until the end of September.

Councillor Parry stated that as the current Council offices were dependant on Shropshire Council remaining on the Stone House site it would be a good idea to relocate to the Guildhall which could also be used as a wedding venue.

Councillor McCormack said that the Council needed to take into account the loss of income moving into the Guildhall would mean. The building had been let for many years on a full repairing lease and the Council needed to consider the upkeep and maintenance costs of such a historic building.

Councillor Pound stated that currently Ludlow did not have a Civic Centre/Town Hall and that in the coming years more powers could be passed down to the Town Council making us a more important body. Therefore use of the Guildhall as a Civic Centre and Council offices would provide an important centre to the town and give the Council the prestigious frontage that it deserves.

The Mayor commented that the recent talk on the Guildhall held at the Ludlow Assembly Rooms and the subsequent site visit had shown that many members of the public would be interested in the Council moving back to the Guildhall. He added that the Council could rent part of the building to other organisations to minimise the loss of income and maintenance costs for the building.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk to invite quotations from Estate Agents to market the Guildhall for rent and to let the contract to the Estate Agents offering the best value for money.

FC/213 GUILDHALL BOOK LAUNCH

Members noted the details of the book launch in the Guildhall on the 3rd November 2011.

FC/214 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 9.00pm.

Town Mayor

Date

N.B. Confidential Minutes will be issued.