



MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **COUNCIL** held in the Rockspring Centre, Sandford Road, Ludlow on **WEDNESDAY 23rd NOVEMBER 2011** at **7.00PM**

FC/216 PRESENT

- Chairman: Councillor Aitken, Mayor
- Councillors: Hunt; Jackson; McCormack; Newbold; Parry; Perks; Phillips; Pound; Smithers
- Officers: Veronica Calderbank, Town Clerk;
Gina Wilding, Cemetery & Communications Officer
Naomi Brotherton, Admin Assistant
- Also in attendance: Adrian Kibbler, Ludlow Advertiser
Mike Jackson, Resident, Lower Broad Street
Simon Buteux, Ludlow Civic Society
Tracey Huffer, Unitary Councillor, Shropshire Council
John Barnard, Friends of Whitcliffe Common
David and Lesley Pritchard, Residents, Old Street
Jonathan Wood, Ludlow Historic Society
Sean Ward, St Laurence's Church

FC/217 PRAYERS

The Mayor passed on the Mayor's Chaplain's apologies and therefore no prayers were said.

FC/218 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Leyton-Purrier and Wilcox.

FC/219 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>Reason</u>
G. Perks	Applied for a bid through the Market Town Revitalisation for Skillbuilder.
V. Parry	Chairman of the South Shropshire Access Group

Prejudicial Interests

No prejudicial interests were declared.

FC/220 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION (15 minutes)

There were eleven members of the public and press present.

The Mayor explained that it would more appropriate to hear the presentation from the Town Clerk and then the public would be invited to speak.

FC/221 PRESENTATION ON THE ENTIRE PROJECT, WALLS, WALKS, PATHS, GARDENS AND HERITAGE INTERPRETATION CENTRE/EDUCATION BASE

The Town Clerk gave a presentation on the Heritage Lottery Bid and pointed out that the Hereford Diocese owned only a tiny piece of the Town Walls.

She explained that she had been advised that full planning permission was required before the bid is submitted for Stage I, but that the finer details of the project could be confirmed at a later time during Stage II.

The Town Clerk stressed that for the Buttercross to enter the 21st Century it needed to be DDA compliant. She highlighted the walks and particularly the Breadwalk extension which had lent itself to the project as a larger walk. This would enable the disabled to use the path and traverse past the river which would end at the Charlton Arms' car park near Ludford Bridge.

She went into detail about the benefits of the bid to the Town, including the introduction of technology to the proposed Heritage Interpretation Centre within the Buttercross.

The Town Clerk reported that there was considerable anti-social behaviour overnight in the ground floor of the Buttercross and Market Traders had raised concerns. Although there were clean up options, preserving the fabric of the building should be strongly considered along with the option of closing in due to the effect the acids within body fluids were having on the Buttercross and staining the limestone which is porous.

The Mayor asked Members for their comments and gave thanks to the Town Clerk for all her hard work. The Town Clerk confirmed that Members could view initial costings for the bid, which had been discussed at previous meetings in confidential session, at the Town Council Offices.

FC/222 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

The Mayor invited members of the public to speak.

Mike Jackson – Lower Broad Street

Mr Jackson stated that he opposed the closing in of the ground floor of the Buttercross. He described the Buttercross in Shrewsbury which was open to the elements and in his opinion there was no necessity to close in Ludlow's. He declared that it would take enjoyment away from people who would be unable to shelter from the rain or enjoy a summers evening. He believed this element was "just an add on" and the anti-social behaviour was "over egged".

Simon Buteux – Ludlow Civic Society

Mr Buteux confirmed that the Ludlow Civic Society supported the whole bid and also applauded the work which had been done to date on the Buttercross and the role of the Town Clerk in bringing this about. However, he stated that the Ludlow Civic Society felt that the glazing or closing in of the ground floor of the Buttercross would detract from its character. He said that while he understood the arguments regarding vandalism and anti-social behaviour, it would move the problem from one area to another. He stated that there could be a potential uprising from the public should the closing in go ahead and he would not like to see it derail the bid. He pleaded with the Town Council to go ahead with the bid, including the lift but to omit the doors in the plan and leave the openings as they currently are.

Adrian Kibbler - Ludlow Advertiser

Mr Kibbler asked, firstly he understood the bid was for £1.9 million and the funding from the Market Town Revitalisation was £120,000. He asked if the Town Council needed £70,000 to achieve match funding. Secondly he asked when the bid would be submitted.

The Town Clerk responded by saying that the bid was currently budgeted at £1.9 million but there was also other funding she was pursuing for the element of the extension of the Breadwalk and the bid.

She stated that the proposed bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund had been brought to Members on the 31st January and twice again in public meetings and brought back in light of the suggestions that had been made. The bid needed to be submitted without delay or funding may be no longer available to the Town Council. The Revitalisation monies were only available until September 2012 and further delay could jeopardise the bid.

Tracey Huffer – Unitary Councillor, Shropshire Council

Mrs Huffer informed Members that the public would be appalled if the option of glazing to the ground floor of the Buttercross went ahead. She explained that there had been no public consultation and that the Town had been bitten once historically by the Town Hall.

The Town Clerk reassured Members that there had been considerable consultation and the planning process would provide even more.

John Barnard – Friends of Whitcliffe Common

Mr Barnard stated that the Breadwalk had been in existence for hundreds of years and asked if the new proposed extension could be called another name. He asked if the £149,000 was the budget for all the costs involved.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the budgeted amount included all assessments, projected costs and requirements. She stated it was not just a feasibility study and that a Surveyor had found a walkway from the Breadwalk which predated the 18th Century which had been destroyed in the floods of 1886. She explained that £149,000 also included a contingency element.

David and Lesley Pritchard, Residents, Old Street

Both Mr and Mrs Pritchard raised concerns over the Buttercross being closed in on the ground floor. They stated that Buttercross buildings had been traditionally open and quoted one in Chipping Campden. They asked the Members to seriously consider the options.

Jonathan Wood, Ludlow Historic Society

Mr Wood also raised his concerns. He advised Members that if there was a need to close in the Buttercross then it should be sympathetic and in keeping with the building. He suggested that possibly wooden doors with fan lights above would compliment those doors already in situ. He commented that the key elements to closing in the Buttercross would be design and materials but said that he had more of an open mind.

Shaun Ward, St Laurence's Church

Mr Ward explained that the bid St Laurence's would be submitting to the Heritage Lottery Fund was £250,000 for immediate essential repairs and there would be another £4 million bid, including work for the roof, pinnacles and smaller projects. He said he supported Ludlow Town Council's bid but felt that the Church and Council should be working together and this should be a joint bid. He was happy to do a presentation to Members on the Church's bid should they so wish. He pointed out that Ludlow had a unique heritage and praised the Town Clerk and Conservation Officer for their work so far.

The Mayor stated categorically that the Heritage Lottery Fund saw both bids as separate and not as joint but thanked Mr Ward for the suggestion.

David Pritchard, Resident of Ludlow

Mr Pritchard drew Members attention to the fact that there should be public consultation which is not just confined to Ludlow. He added that Ludlow would only grow through service industries and tourism and that consultation should extend to visitors which would provide a different perspective than residents.

There was further discussion amongst Members generally about the projects and bid for the Town Council. The Town Clerk reassured both Members and the public present that there would be ample opportunity for future consultations both for the public and through the planning process and at Stage II of the bid.

One Member stated that although she had noticed there was a lot of opposition at the meeting to the closing in of the ground floor of the Buttercross, that historically it had been closed in during its time as a Fire Station. However, she agreed with Mr Wood from the Ludlow Civic Society that should the closing in go ahead it should be in keeping with the building as it now stands.

FC/223 THE BUTTERCROSS, PLANNING APPLICATION

The Town Clerk explained the technical drawings which had been provided, illustrating the options for the proposed closing in of the Buttercross ground floor.

She reminded Members that to be compliant with disability legislation the lift was necessary and that English Heritage had stressed that if the ground floor was closed in it should be a "light touch" and reversible. This would mean minimal impact on the structure and would leave no damage should the changes be reversed.

The Town Clerk then took Members through the report and outlined the options in more detail. She stated to the public present that she took on board the comments about lack of consultation but pointed out that a visit to see a Heritage Centre at Tewksbury had been organised as well as two public meetings, although none of these had been well attended.

She said she believed that the anti-social behaviour had not been 'over egged' and stated that on several occasions she had reported behaviour to the Police. The Landlord of the Church Inn would also support closure of the Buttercross at 9.00pm, although he had originally been opposed to it.

The Town Clerk explained to Members and the public present that because the planning application for the Buttercross would go to Representational Committee, members could only note it and not make any comments as the Council was the highest body. What is decided tonight is the Town Council's view. If there were objections from either Unitary Councillors or residents then the decision would be referred to the Planning Committee at Shropshire Council rather than being made by a Planning Officer under delegated powers.

There was further discussion between Members about their preferred options.

FC/224 STANDING ORDERS

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That Standing Orders be suspended and the meeting be extended for a further 30 minutes.

FC/225 THE BUTTERCROSS, PLANNING APPLICATION

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the planning process be noted.

FC/226 RESOLVED (7:1:2)

That the planning application includes enclosure of the Buttercross.

FC/227 RESOLVED (7:1:2)

That the option of transome frames and short sliding door glazing be submitted in the planning application to Shropshire Council.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Town Mayor

Date

N.B. No Confidential Minutes will be issued.