



MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **COUNCIL** held at The Guildhall, Mill Street, Ludlow on **MONDAY 9th DECEMBER** at **7.00 PM**.

FC/228 PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor B. Waite

Councillors: Child; De Gersigny, Garner; Gill; Ginger; Hall; Harris; Miller; Parry; Tapley; Thompson and S Waite.

Officers: Gina Wilding, Town Clerk
Kate Adams, Deputy Town Clerk

ABSENT

Councillors: Jones

FC/229 HEALTH & SAFETY

The Mayor, Councillor B Waite, welcomed everyone to the Full Council meeting and made some health and safety announcements.

FC/230 RECORDING OF MEETINGS

The Mayor notified those present that under the Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014, recording and broadcasting is permitted during public session of Council Meetings.

FC/231 APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

FC/232 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

Conflicts of Interest

Councillor Parry	Ludlow in Bloom
Councillor Childs	Ludlow Residents Group

Personal Interests

Councillor Childs Item 25

FC/233 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION (15 minutes)

Twenty-seven members of the public were present.

There was unity around one issue for most present and some expressed hostility towards the council.

The Chair of the Town Walls Trust informed the Council that people are available with relative expertise and able to help. This offer is time limited as people near retirement age and officers in other authorities are in the same situation. It will be an uphill task to source funding. The TWT feel they can help to achieve the repair.

A gentleman spoke on behalf of the Rector of St Laurences.

The PCC are keen to work together; the Council needs to work transparently and clearly. The Council must drop their demand for a non-disclosure agreement. This work should be the Council's most urgent priority.

A resident said is concerned about the maintenance of the remaining section of wall which has trees and vegetation growing within the structure. The longer its left, the greater the risk of collapse and his grandchildren play in their yard adjacent to the wall. He has been assured previously that LTC have the relevant insurance in place.

A resident of Ludlow claimed that most Councillors haven't seen the Morton report but are expected to vote on issues relating to the Town Wall. There are further concerns relating to cracks in the remaining wall and the safety of the church's structure.

A resident of Ludlow said that in light of what's been asked, he had the same question regarding the Morton report. Is the report that Councillors have seen the full report, a redacted report or a version of the report?

A resident of Ludford stated that it is the duty of every Council, and Councillor, to be transparent in their duty and thinking. Too much is being redacted, how can Councillors be comfortable with this?

A member of the public who had raised their had was asked to make their point, but declined due to the general sense of hostility from others in the room.

A resident of Ludlow asked the office for a written update on CCTV deployment.

The Chair of Ludlow in Bloom said that she is no longer allowed to do anything with planting. She says that LIB Committee are not in debt.

FC/234 LUDLOW POLICE UPDATE

West Mercia Police Inspector Damien Kelly addressed the Council with an update.

November is a busy month due to annual events of Halloween and bonfire night. There has been a very visible police presence.

A new Police Officer has been designated to the Craven Arms area allowing the Ludlow Officer, Fern Johnson, more time to spend in our area. Working proactively rather than reactively.

- Operation Aurora has involved speed monitoring on Overton Road and Sheet Road, where problems have been reported, and tickets have been issued.
- Operation Ancara relates to antisocial driving at areas including the Eco Park. Needless to say that when the police arrive the antisocial behaviour stops, so they are hoping to visit covertly.
- Operation Limit is a national drink drive operation which will take place throughout December and January. People checked so far have all had a zero level of alcohol.
- Operation Whitebeam is aimed at rural thefts with a proactive theme. Providing visible patrols and presence has meant less crime in specific areas for 48 hours afterwards showing that police activity is being seen bore they spot the thieves. They are hoping a continuing, regular presence will rid the area of this issue.
- Operation Cognay relates to shop lifting and drug dealing. Including inspections of hotspots such as Henley Road cemetery. They try not to use local officers for these patrols as they will be recognised. 1 property is currently being focused on as a location for 'cuckooing'.
- To tackle shoplifting in Church Stretton a plain clothes officer approach was utilised to help reassure shops that the police were out and about, they are hoping to do the same in Ludlow.

Chief Inspector Graham Preece introduced himself to the Council and assured them that Ludlow's team is fully staffed, he has strong connections to Ludlow and will be meeting the Mayor for quarterly meetings moving forward.

FC/235 LUDLOW'S UNITARY COUNCILLORS SESSION

Councillor Boddington provided a written update to the Council.

Councillor Parry (Ludlow South) gave a brief update regarding the Police Crime Commissioner and changes to council tax payments.

FC/236 MINUTES – 28TH OCTOBER 2024

RESOLVED BW/TG (12:0:1)

To approve the addition of an addendum, note on a separate page: After the meeting the Council was provided with extra information stating Ludlow In Bloom's financial reserves.

FC/237 RESOLVED BW/EG (12:0:1)

That the open and closed session minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 28th October 2024, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

FC/238 ITEMS TO ACTION – 28TH OCTOBER 2024

RESOLVED BW/DT (unanimous)

That the Items to Action of the Council meeting held on 28th October 2024, be noted.

FC/239 TRANSPORT FOR WALES PRESENTATION

Apologies were received from Nichole Sarra, Stakeholder Manager for the Borders, Transport for Wales (TfW).

FC/240 CO-OPTION

RESOLVED BW/SW (unanimous)

To note that there have been no applications for co-option in Gallows Bank ward and there will be no further action to co-opt a Councillor because it is less than six months to an all-out election.

FC/241 EXTERNAL AUDIT

RESOLVED BW/GG (unanimous)

To adopt the external auditors report for the financial year 2023/24.

FC/242 SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL BUDGET CONSULTATION 2025/26

RESOLVED BW/AT (unanimous)

To note the themes of Shropshire Council's consultation that commences during December (date TBC) includes:

- Reviewing household waste collections

- Reviewing Park and Ride services in Ludlow and Shrewsbury, and how these services are funded.
- Reviewing enforcement for littering, dog fouling and illegal parking.
- Reviewing a range of options for car parking in town centres.
- Reviewing charges for social care support.
- Reviewing whether more services could be devolved to other organisations.

FC/243 ICO MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME

RESOLVED BW/RH (unanimous)

To approve the Council's updated model publication scheme.

FC/244 PROJECT SUPPORT GRANT APPLICATION

Councillors asked that the BSL show is publicised by the town council on its social media.

RESOLVED BW/EG (12:0:1)

To approve a £750 grant for Ludlow Assembly Rooms in support of British Sign Language (BSL) translator for a Pantomime performance.

FC/245 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

RESOLVED SW/GG (unanimous)

To approve the recommendations from Policy and Finance Committee on 2nd December 2024 as follows:

INTERNAL AUDIT

That Full Council adopt the internal auditor's observations and proposed actions from November 2024 and note the status of actions on prior observations from Year End internal review 2024.

INVESTMENTS

That Full Council increase the investment in the Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) by £500,000.00.

RESERVES

Annual Review of Reserves

To continue monitor income trends, asset conditions, and expenditure to adjust reserves as necessary.

Income Diversification

To reduce reliance on precept by exploring grants, and sponsorships.

Proactive Asset Management

To conduct regular inspections of listed buildings, play areas, and other high-risk assets to prevent unexpected costs.

Cost Monitoring

To continue continuously monitor operating expenses to ensure reserves remain adequate and proportionate to risks through Policy and Finance Committee.

Reserve Levels

To approve a General Reserve of £300,000 or equivalent to 3 months of operating expenditure, providing a balance between flexibility and prudent risk management.

Earmarked Reserves:

To approve total earmarked reserves of £600,000 - £800,000.

Breakdown:

- Listed buildings maintenance: £200,000
- Play areas and public toilets: £75,000.
- Market infrastructure: £50,000.
- Staffing contingencies: £50,000.
- Legal and regulatory compliance: £30,000.
- Other projects / devolution costs: £350,000

To approve building total reserves of £900,000 to £1.1 million to ensure the council can handle both short-term operational risks and long-term capital obligations.

FC/246 BUDGET TASK AND FINISH GROUP PRELIMINARY REPORT

RESOLVED BW/SW (12:0:1)

To approve the preliminary draft budget for 2025 / 26.

FC/247 RESOLVED BW/EG (12:0:1)

To note that the final budget including fees for grave digging and benches, and adjustments for the council tax base will be presented to Full Council for approval in January 2025.

FC/248 REMOTE MEETINGS

RESOLVED BW/DT (11:0:2)

To respond to the Government's consultation questions as follows:

- To agree with the broad principle of granting local authorities' powers to allow remote attendance at formal meetings.
- To agree that there should be no limitations placed upon councils with regard to setting arrangements for remote attendance of council meetings, up to and including full remote attendance.

FC/249 SOUTH SHROPSHIRE YOUTH FORUM ANNUAL REPORT

RESOLVED BW/RH (unanimous)

To note the report.

FC/250 LORD-LIEUTENANT'S SHROPSHIRE GARDEN PARTY 2025

RESOLVED SW/DC (unanimous)

To submit a nomination for Councillor Parry to attend the garden party in recognition of her work for Ludlow in Bloom.

FC/251 SHROPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE CONSULTATION

RESOLVED TG/EM (unanimous)

To respond in general support of priorities.

FC/252 NATIONAL CREMATION AND BURIAL CONSULTATION

RESOLVED BW/EG (12:0:1)

Ludlow Town Council would be against removing burials and reusing graves and to maintain compliance with current regulations that graves are sold once and dug to double depth and could include up to five single depth cremated remains interments.

FC/253 COMMITTEE MINUTES

RESOLVED SW/GG (unanimous)

To receive the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee on 21st October 2024.

FC/254 RESOLVED BW/EG (unanimous)

To receive the minutes of the Services Committee on 27th November 2024.

FC/255 RESOLVED GG/EM (unanimous)

To receive the minutes of the Representational Committee on 22nd October and 19th November 2024.

FC/256 RESOLVED EG/RH (unanimous)

To receive the minutes of the Staffing Committee on 14th November 2024.

FC/255 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC: PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

RESOLVED BW/EM (unanimous)

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

The meeting closed at 8.59pm.

Town Mayor

Date

Closed session minutes will be issued for this meeting.