



MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Stable Block Meeting Room, Stone House, Corve Street, Ludlow on **MONDAY 8th NOVEMBER 2010** at **7.00PM**

PF/87 PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor McCormack

Vice-Chairman: Councillor Pope

Councillors: Aitken; Davies; Glaze; Newbold; Parry; & Wilcox

Officers: Veronica Calderbank, Town Clerk;
Lucy Morgan, PA

PF/88 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Leyton-Purrier.

PF/89 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
S. McCormack	Cittaslow CIC
D. Davies	Cittaslow CIC

Prejudicial Interests

No prejudicial interests were declared.

PF/90 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION (15 minutes)

There were two members of the public present.

Graeme Perks, Honey Meadow, offered his thanks to the Council as he was now able to view Agendas, Minutes and Accounts on the website. Mr Perks informed the Committee of the current status for Benchmarking and Social Enterprise.

Rosanna Taylor-Smith, Unitary Councillor, stated that the requested bus shelter on the agenda would be in her ward and she looked forward to working with the Town Council on the proposal.

PF/91 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION FEEDBACK

There were no questions raised at the previous meeting.

PF/92 MINUTES

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meeting held on 13th September 2010, subject to the deletion of the word “of” following “enable” in minute PF/70, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PF/93 ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

a) Minutes

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the minutes of the Accounts Committee meeting held on the 22nd September 2010, be received.

PF/94 RESOLVED (7:0:1)

That the minutes of the Accounts Committee meeting held on the 13th October 2010, be received.

PF/95 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SERVICES COMMITTEE

MARKET MATTERS

a) Request to Waive Fees

That:-

- i. traders be charged half rent for the 1st October 2010.**
- ii. a report be put to Policy and Finance to agree an Inclement Weather Policy.**

Responding to the recommendation the Town Clerk stated that she would like to bring a report regarding an inclement weather policy to the next Policy and Finance Committee, she asked Members to submit any comments on this policy prior to the meeting so they could be incorporated into the report/policy recommendations.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That:-

- i. traders be charged half rent for the 1st October 2010.**
- ii. a report be put to Policy and Finance Committee to agree an Inclement Weather Policy for future eventualities.**

PF/96 UPDATE ON CARDBOARD RECYCLING

That a report on cardboard recycling be presented to Policy and Finance Committee.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That a report on cardboard recycling be presented to the next Policy and Finance Committee.

PF/97 MAYORS BOARD AND BADGES

That a report be sent to Policy and Finance Committee with regard to the provision of past Mayor and Mayoress badges and the developments on the Mayor's Boards.

The Town Clerk informed Members that she had met with a former Chief Executive of South Shropshire District Council to discuss the Mayors' Board and he had agreed that the inclusion of staff and Councillors on a Mayoral board was inappropriate, agreeing to the removal of the middle section to be framed and

retained. She advised that the law relating to the successor authorities needed to be clarified on the board as there was no indication of the transition from Ludlow Borough Council to Ludlow Town Council. She went on to explain that she was now looking into costs to display the Rural Borough Council staff and Councillors board separately therefore freeing up an entire panel for Ludlow Mayors for the future.

The Town Clerk went on to introduce the report on past Mayor's badges. The Mayor queried the relevance today of this sort of recognition and considering the current financial climate the prudence of such a purchase. Councillor Parry stated that Mayors deserved a badge in recognition of their service to the town. Councillor Wilcox pointed out that the Mayors' Board was a continuing record of Mayors' service. He added that he believed the cost of badges to be excessive.

The Town Clerk explained to Members that having spoken to a former Mayor the previous policy had been for the Council to provide a past Mayor's badge but that if required the Mayor would purchase a badge for the Mayoress/Consort this was the situation in the early 1990s. She also reminded Members of the number of past Mayors who had not received a badge and therefore the possible cost implications to the Council.

RECOMMENDED (4:3:1)

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.

PF/98 The Committee went on to discuss the two quotations and types of badges contained within the report

RECOMMENDED (6:0:2)

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.

PF/99 **RECOMMENDED (6:0:2)**

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

PF/100 RECOMMENDED (5:0:3)

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).

PF/101 LUDLOW IN BLOOM

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.

Councillor Parry introduced this recommendation and explained to Members that Ludlow in Bloom had no intention to end in the foreseeable future. This request had emerged following the adoption of a new Constitution. She reinforced that the Council would not be liable for any debts, they would only be a residuary body for Ludlow in Bloom's property.

RECOMMENDED (unanimous)

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.

PF/102 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**Local Joint Committee**

The Mayor updated the Committee on recent Local Joint Committee (LJC) matters; he added that he had recently circulated the most recent LJC minutes to all Councillors.

The Town Clerk stated that she was grateful to the LJC who had increased their grant to the boxing club to £7,000 which would enable the new Wheeler Road building to be constructed to a very high standard, hopefully before spring of 2011.

The Chairman queried the criteria that was to be used in regard to grant applications to the Market Town Revitalisation. In reply the Mayor stated that the LJC were awaiting clarification of the criteria and once received he would report them to the Town Council.

PF/103 Cittaslow

The Town Clerk introduced the partnership working report and informed the Committee that she had been approached by Cittaslow and had subsequently met with them, all Members had been invited. She had been informed that Town Council/Mayoral input/support was a constitutional requirement and therefore without it Cittaslow could not continue. The Council involvement would require among other things the Cittaslow logo to be included on the Council letterhead and coming in line with the Cittaslow requirements.

Councillor Pope stated that it was wrong for the Council's policies to be dictated by an outside body who answers to a further outside body who do not relate to Ludlow.

Councillor Wilcox requested that this discussion be postponed until the Town Clerk can make further enquiries. The Mayor added that we should not close off any options and when considering partnerships to take into account their constitution and relationship to Ludlow.

RESOLVED (4:3:1)

That the Town Clerk present a further report on partnership working to a future Policy and Finance Committee once she has obtained further information and options.

PF/104 ACCOUNTS – SECOND QUARTER REPORT

Members discussed the Income and Expenditure, and Exceptions Report for the second quarter.

During discussions the Town Clerk advised the Committee that this years financial figures are progressing as with capital projects, barring the amounts mistakenly included from the last financial year, which included a months salaries, Phase I of the Buttercross works, plus several uncleared cheques. She added that the Council would have to work hard to balance these issues and she was therefore not going to fill the Direct Labour Force Supervisor post until next year if possible.

Councillor Pope queried the status of last years final accounts had these figures been included. The Town Clerk stated that there would still be a small surplus in last years accounts had these invoices been included as the £34,000 surplus would have been reduced. The Chairman added that she was pleased that the Council was sticking close to the budget.

Councillor Parry asked whether the works on Castle Gardens, walks and walls were still going ahead. The Town Clerk stated that a grant funding bid will be submitted shortly and that the Council was only awaiting information from the Town Walls Trust and the Buttercross may or may not be included in the bid.

The Mayor rounded up the discussion by stating that the accounts provided demonstrated that the staff had got the new account software under control and he had high confidence that the 2nd quarter had been well accounted for. He expressed two minor concerns relating to the cemetery income under spend and the general administration expenditure, though he did realise that death rates/cemetery usage cannot be predicted and therefore the Town Council should not rely on that income. The Town Clerk added that the general administration budget included several one off annual payments i.e. insurance which would skew the overall percentage.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the reports be received and noted.

PF/105 Market Matters

The Markets and Special Projects Officer introduced the Markets income report but emphasised that due to the change of stall booking procedure the budget income percentage figure was more representative than the comparison to last years income, and overall market income and occupancy was better than last year and more consistent.

He went on to say that last winter had been a learning experience and that expanding and promoting special event/market during the winter would help to counteract the usual drop in occupancy due to the weather. These special events included a 50% increase in capacity for the Medieval Market. He also reminded Members that last years Mayfair fee had been included in the Markets income budget and it had a separate budget this year.

The Mayor recommended all Members visit the new Markets website as it was very impressive and the Council was also now using Twitter to advertise.

RESOLVED (7:0:1)

That the Market income report be noted.

PF/106 RECOMMENDED (unanimous)

That the second quarter accounts be accepted.

PF/107 STREET CLEANING SURVEY

The Chairman explained to Members that the Town Clerk had completed a draft survey with her comments and the Committee could either approve that return, agree their own or submit individual surveys.

The Town Clerk added that she thanked Shropshire Council for the extra bins that had been provided on the Market Square as it had reduced the amounts of litter, but that she had made a point in the survey that they were not emptied often enough and therefore regularly overflowed. Councillor Parry disagreed with how the Town Clerk had completed the survey as she had been approached by several members of the public concerning an increase in the amount of litter and dog fouling around the town.

RESOLVED (7:0:1)

That any Members interested may submit their own survey response to the Town Clerk to be returned to Shropshire Council along with the Town Clerk's survey.

PF/108 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

The Town Clerk explained to Members that she had written to the Police requesting information on anti-social behaviour but had not yet received a response.

RESOLVED (Unanimous)

That the Town Clerk's letter to the Police be noted.

PF/109 FOOD WASTE COLLECTIONS

The Town Clerk stated that Services Committee had already received this letter and that if Members wished the proposal for the Town Council to take over these collection could be reconsidered during the budget setting process, though she asked Members to bear in mind that the most recent costs provided by Shropshire Council were far in excess of those first proposed. The Chairman added that following the public meeting on food waste a Committee outside of the Town Council had been set up and she suggested that the Council allow them to discuss the issues involved.

Councillor Parry commented that the loss of this service was a step backwards as several Shropshire towns were just starting up similar schemes. She went on to say that the comments from Shropshire Council to put food waste in the residual bin, in the week between green collections was irresponsible in a world where recycling is becoming essential. Councillor Pope indicated that she was happier with the new arrangement and had found the caddy and blue bin food collection unhygienic.

The Chairman requested that it be pointed out to Shropshire Council that one line in their budget that was not specifically brought to the Town Council's attention is not a sufficient way in which to consult the Council on such an important matter. The Council was not aware of the change until July and had we been informed sooner a realistic alternative could have been agreed.

RESOLVED (6:0:2)

That the Town Clerk write a letter to Shropshire Council stating that one line in the budget does not constitute sufficient consultation on such a major change to local services.

PF/110 WINTER SERVICE REVIEW AND GRITTING

The Town Clerk asked the Committee to note the letter from Shropshire Council and her response. She added that Shropshire Council were very amenable to any suggestions. Following a question from Councillor Parry the Town Clerk stated that she had written to Unitary Councillor Butler regarding localisation of services, but that specifically relating to gritting she believed it would be better for the Town Council to take a role as an early warning system to inform Shropshire Council of local conditions rather than taking over gritting due to the equipment, time and liability issues involved.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the Town Clerk continue talks with Shropshire Council on this matter.

PF/111 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**RECOMMENDED (7:0:1)**

That the Town Council does not provide a representative on the Helicopter Noise Liaison Group but requests the minutes.

PF/112 REQUESTED BUS SHELTER

Following a request from a member of the public, the Committee discussed the best position for a bus shelter on Corve Street and the any possible funding available. The Town Clerk suggested that it could be budgeted for next year. Following the suggestion of two locations from Members the Town Clerk stated that a bus stop outside the Compasses Inn was used every week day by many college students. Councillor Davies suggested it be positioned near to St. Leonard's Churchyard for shoppers. Councillor Parry added that there could be conservation issues regarding cobbles etc. if the shelter was positioned outside St. Leonards Churchyard.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the Town Clerk investigate the most useful positioning for a bus shelter, costs and funding available and report back to Policy and Finance Committee.

PF/113 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.