

MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **SERVICES COMMITTEE** held in the Stable Block Meeting Room, Stone House, Corve Street, Ludlow on **MONDAY 16th APRIL 2012** at **7.00PM**.

S/115 PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor Parry

Vice-Chairman: Councillor Hunt

Councillors: Aitken (ex-officio); Davies; Newbold; Perks; Phillips;
Pound; Smithers

Officers: Veronica Calderbank, Town Clerk
Stephanie Williams, Admin Assistant

In attendance: Rosanna Taylor-Smith, Unitary Councillor

S/116 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Phillips.

S/117 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 the following interests:

Personal Interests

<u>Member</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Cllr Parry	5	Committee Member Ludlow in Bloom
Cllr Davies	6	Town Walls Trust
Cllr Perks		Pride of Place

Prejudicial Interests

No prejudicial interests were declared.

S/118 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Councillor Taylor-Smith advised Members she was attending the meeting to listen.

S/119 **MINUTES****RESOLVED (5:0:1)**

That the Minutes of the Services Committee meeting held on the 5th March 2012, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

S/120 **LUDLOW IN BLOOM**

The Chairman introduced the item and asked Members to read and note the activities undertaken by Ludlow in Bloom.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the minutes of the Ludlow in Bloom Committee meetings held on the 21st, 28th February, 13th March and 3rd April 2012 be noted.

S/121 **DRAFT SERVICE PLAN**

The Town Clerk introduced the Service Plan and invited Members to note the report. Councillor Perks asked for the document to be considered on a page-by-page basis.

Emergency Planning

Councillor Perks commented that Emergency Planning had been omitted. The Town Clerk stated that relevant Emergency service providers/planners have contact numbers if the situation relates to a service the Town Council provides. The Town Clerk stated that provision for flooding emergencies can be added into the DLF Schedule for the Linney as our staff could be called out in an emergency if the Linney flooded to close the gate and notify the Police of the vehicle registration numbers of any vehicles left in the car park.

Amenity Areas

The Town Clerk drew the Committee's attention to the former grass cutting contract details attached at page 111. It was noted that item 6. Fishmore View had been maintained by the Town Council for some time but this was the responsibility of Shropshire Council, not included in the grant the Council once received for transferred land and should never have been included. Members noted that the total cost of these unnecessary works for Fishmore amounted to £48,105 for three years representing a contract cost price of £176,385, however, she also pointed out that the DLF had undertaken this work since 2006 and offered far more value for money. It has since been passed back to Shropshire Council for them to maintain. Similarly, the Garden of Rest had been maintained by The Town Council since 1975. She pointed out that it was in the ownership of the Diocese, however, the Town Council used to maintain this at a cost of £14,397 over three years which would have had an overall impact in contract

terms of £52,789 over eleven years and now receives a grant from Shropshire Council towards the maintenance of the closed Churchyard and litter picking in the Town Centre.

Members noted the considerable savings since the DLF was established and also the cost savings in terms of staff time and contract fees since it was discovered that the lands were not the Town Council's responsibility.

Asset Management

The Town Clerk informed the Members that she had attended a meeting at the Lantern Centre, Shrewsbury that afternoon, regarding Shropshire Council's assets. The Town Clerk invited members to attend the next meeting. She also advised Members that she had again tried to make progress with regard to a cardboard recycling centre at Coder Road which was about to be vacated by Shropshire Council and was hoping to make progress soon.

She reminded the Committee that street lights had been transferred to Shropshire Council, the toilets had been transferred to the Town Council and the Town Council was no longer receiving the £18k grant for the pieces of land transferred under the 1998 South Shropshire District Council Asset Management Review.

The Town Clerk advised Members that the conveyancing issues were still outstanding as the Shropshire Council had imposed restrictive covenants on the transfers which were rejected by the Land Registry as notification had been received that day. Members were advised that the current temporary office space currently occupied was insufficient for the growing workload and functions the Town Council now performed.

Samuel Wood had returned valuations on both 49 Henley Orchards and also Weyman Road and were inviting expressions of interest as to the Guildhall. The Town Clerk stated that this would be collated and brought to Members at a future Council meeting together with the views expressed as to the potential future uses for the Guildhall which included the relocation of the Town Council's staff to the Guildhall for it to be returned to use as a public building. She advised Members that English Heritage had provided the advise of John Yates who had considered that public use was the best way forward for the building. The Town Clerk added that charities had also expressed an interest in sharing the building which would result in considerable reductions in non-domestic rates. The building would however need to have a sensitively redesigned entrance to preserve the steps utilising a possible the creation of an uphill entrance to the main frontage.

Cemetery

There was a discussion over the management of the Cemetery toilets and the opening hours to the public. Options discussed; key holder and automatic locking device. The Town Clerk advised that she had made arrangements for an automatic locking device to be fitted to the Cemetery toilet on the left side and

that a disabled access key would be given to the Cemetery House tenant in order for them to assist in the event of an emergency if, for example, the locking devices failed to work. This would enable the public to use the facilities during daylight hours during weekends and bank holidays.

There was a discussion over the grass cutting in the cemetery and the Town Clerk advised Members that she had altered the DLF work schedule in consultation with the DLF Supervisor for grass cutting to commence at the beginning of March each year. Councillor Hunt explained that the organisation for whom he worked had a contract to cut grass and they had to cut it whether it was growing or not. He suggested the Town Clerk would need to take a view on this if the grass started to grow earlier in the year.

Councillor Perks suggested that as a letter had been received from the Undertaker's Association and Professional Body, that we should add in the Funeral Directors Trade Association to the Stakeholders within the Service Plan and the Town Clerk agreed to add this.

Committee Services

The Town Clerk informed the Members that Ludlow Town Council has had more meetings than the Local Joint Committee in Shropshire with less staff and this was their only responsibility, whereas the Town Council's staff had to multi-task. The Mayor (ex-officio) said that provision had been made for additional Committee Officer time and queried what a 13 hour day was. The Town Clerk advised Members that an Officer attending work at 8.30am going home after a Committee such as Services Committee often had to work more than 13 hours in the one day whereas in other Council's this would represent two days work which was unacceptable and pointed out the Town Council received an exceptionally good service from its officers.

Councillor Perks requested that the publishing of the approved signed minutes should be made public on the website as soon as they were approved and the Town Clerk agreed to add in as requested a key performance indicator for all staff responsible for Committee's to upload onto the website signed minutes within three days if possible of the meeting where they were signed and at the outside a week.

Community Engagement

The Town Clerk advised members that the Town Council are working towards Quality Status.

Councillor Parry asked if all press releases have to go through the Town Council, the Town Clerk explained the procedure. Members were happy with explanation that the Town Clerk would prepare all press releases in conjunction with the Chairman of each Committee or the Mayor.

Event Management

The Town Clerk reminded Members that there was an opportunity to meet with Twinning representatives from La Ferte Mace on the 17th May 2012 at the Ludlow Brewery. All Members had been invited to attend.

The Town Clerk outlined the proposed celebrations for procession of the Olympic torch and the planned Olympiad market. There was considerable discussion regarding the celebrations.

The Town Clerk asked Members for their ideas on where to park coaches for the Olympic torch celebrations. The Town Clerk also informed the Members of Standard Operating Procedures for most Civic Events and Council processes.

Councillor Pound asked Town Clerk how many meetings were held at the Assembly Rooms. The Town Clerk advised that ten were allocated but the Assembly Rooms this is not always possible as the rooms are often booked. She said that the Garden Party for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee was being considered as one of the Town Council's bookings as we were unlikely to use ten bookings a year plus Mayor Making, as contained within the Service Level Agreement. Discussion took place regarding the use of the toilets and the Assembly Rooms and the Town Clerk advised that the "WC" sign was now pointing at the Assembly Rooms on the finger posts, as requested by Members. She also advised Members that they would be receiving representations from the Assembly Rooms for a contribution towards the upkeep of the toilets as the use by the public was likely to increase once the coin boxes were fitted to the Town Council's public convenience facilities.

DLF Services

Members noted the variety of work undertaken by the DLF and how the workload had increased for them over the last five years, including the responsibility for toilets. She drew Members' attention to the reports for the Supervisor following on the Agenda.

Linney (Parking)

The Town Clerk thanked all Members on the success of The Linney project. Councillor Aitken agreed with The Town Clerk and said, "It is something to be proud of," explaining that he had seen hundreds of children at the fun day on the 31st March and at least 200 children were present with their families.

Members discussed disabled access on the Linney area. The Town Clerk informed members that a 3ft path is to be laid on the left side of the Linney car park entrance and disabled/pushchair friendly benches to be purchased for this area. She advised Members that this was a condition of the Big Lottery Grant Funding of £50,000 for the park and as sensitive as possible to blend in.

It was noted that the speed restriction sign had been damaged and concerns were raised on the flooding of this area. The Town Clerk pointed out to Members

that money was 'ring fenced' for the Linney, to be used for this purpose and the play equipment and furniture had been purchased with a 12 year guarantee.

Renovation of the Linney toilets would be possible from the ring fenced monies collected from the meter and undertaken in the next few months.

Market

The Town Clerk informed Members of the great success the market has been. Extra help is needed with market issues and a report will be brought to Staffing and Appeals Committee as to markets and street trading workloads in particular.

Concerns were expressed as to the market traders having "no voice" as the Chairman had previously advised Council that all Members had resigned. The Town Clerk advised that she had contacted Mike Riley (N.M.T.F) and advised that if Ludlow Market Traders were without a voice to represent them then the N.M.T.F would stand in. In fact, the Secretary and Chairman and Treasurer had not resigned, although due to a number of contentious issues Mike Riley would be attending to discuss matters with the Town Clerk and traders at the Town Clerk's request.

She urged the Members to refrain from visiting every market trader to ask them if everything on the market was "alright" and invited Members who were previous market traders to comment. Councillor Newbold said, "There will never be a time when everyone is happy on the market as it is the nature of the business" and Councillor Pound agreed and said that it was difficult to keep everyone happy.

Projects

Linney: The Town Clerk stated that the Linney Project has been time consuming but very worthwhile, a success and well used. She advised that a path will be added to the Park and then monies will be received from the Big Lottery Funders. She advised that a maintenance grant IRO of £3,500 had been received by the Friends of the Linney Riverside Park from the Big Lottery and they were paying for a litter picking H&S training course on Saturday 21st April 2012 and Pride of Place members were also attending.

She pointed out that without the support of Shropshire Council there would not be the Park we have today as they had contributed £32,000 towards playparks in Ludlow, within 2011-2012, providing significant improvements to Housman Crescent and the Linney.

Boxing Club: The Town Clerk advised that the Club had achieved charitable status bring with it non-domestic rate advantages and that works would commence at the end of May. She pointed out that due to the charitable status additional funding of £21,000 was now possible and would be imminently received.

Street Trading

The Town Clerk advised in the substantial increase in workload and income generation and said that she would be reporting to Staffing and Appeals with regard to extra resources from the income generated.

Streetlights

Members heard that 13 lamps remained in the ownership and control of the Town Council as they were used to provide electricity for the market traders. She explained the technical difficulties in that posts that had been destroyed had been replaced with stronger posts, however, they were also found to be higher and had to be removed for the height to be reduced.

Toilets

The Members discussed opening times at length and sought assurance that Shropshire Council would be paying for refurbishment. The Town Clerk gave assurances that Steve Brown had agreed to pay the sum quoted in this financial year.

RECOMMENDED (unanimous)

That the Service Plan as amended be adopted.

S/122 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR SERVICES COMMITTEE

Members discussed the functions and duties undertaken by the Services Committee and decided to make certain additions to the Terms of Reference provided as follows:-

The insertion of:-

- i) 'S' in the heading;
- ii) the addition of the works (including benches and street furniture) in 4a iv;
- iii) creating a new b) which reads – operational activities on the market as and when required;
- iv) changing b to c and c to d.

RECOMMENDED (unanimous)

That the Terms of Reference be adopted.

S/123 DLF MATTERS

Frequency of Grass Cutting

There was discussion over the frequency that the grass is cut in the Amenity Areas in the Ludlow.

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the DLF grass cutting schedule is altered to allow earlier cuts should weather dictate this.

S/124 DLF QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the DLF Quarterly Monitoring Report be noted and the Supervisor be thanked for the excellent report.

S/125 FORMER GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT DETAILS

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the former grass cutting contract details be noted and the cost savings involved outlined by the Town Clerk earlier in the Service Plan.

S/126 COMPLIMENTS

RESOLVED (unanimous)

That the two letters of compliment regarding the Town Council's decision as to not giving live goldfish as prizes at the Mayfair be noted.

S/127 OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY MARKET

The Town Clerk updated Members on the progress of the Olympic Torch Market and the proposed celebrations which included music from buskers and entertainment which currently included a magician and the Cheerleaders that had been on events square when the Christmas lights were switched on last year. She stated that Lower Broad Street would be subject to a road closure and reminded Members that the Torch procession will be along Old Street. The Town Clerk invited Members suggestions for coach parking.

S/128 CEMETERY MATTERS

The Town Clerk introduced the report and there was considerable discussion as to grass cutting. Members considered the various grass cutting methods, areas and ways of working. The Town Clerk asked Members to remember that works to the Linney prior to the opening had taken considerable time as had the allotment hedge, which is the Town Council's responsibility and had not been maintained for many years. She enquired as to whether or not all Members had

visited the Linney. Councillor Pound stated that he had been too busy and was more concerned about the Cemetery.

The Town Clerk showed Members the improvements to the babies' area and Members noted the changes from the before and after photographs provided showing the area of the land that had been cleared. She advised Members that she had written to the bereaved families as requested by Council on the 2nd April and as an interim measure, in line with a request from Council a tree/hedge area near to Mr and Mrs McLellans baby grave had been cleared and pointed out the new grave stone that had now been positioned, now that access had been afforded. The Town Clerk advised Members that kerb stones would be fitted to the area prior to tarmacing in this financial year.

S/129 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC: PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

RESOLVED (unanimous)

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 meeting closed at 9.25 pm.

Chairman

Date

N.B. Confidential Minutes will be issued.