

LEDBURY TOWN

Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held in The Community Hall, Ledbury on Thursday 27th April 2017

PRESENT: The Town Mayor, Cllr D Baker, Chairman
Councillors R Barnes A Crowe
M Eager E Fieldhouse
K Francis E Harvey
A Manns N Morris
N Shields A Warmington
H Wilce
Approx. 39 members of the public

APOLOGIES: Cllrs A Harrison, J Roberts, N Roberts and J Simpson.
Mr C Jupp and Mr and Mrs B Stump

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 April 2017 were circulated. Councillor Harvey noted that she had provided a written report for the Planning and Economic Development Committee for 2015/16. The Clerk advised that the Report had not been received in time to be printed for the meeting.

The minutes were then confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT

The Town Mayor, Councillor D Baker, welcomed everyone present to the Annual Town Meeting and read out her report regarding the Town Council's achievements and actions during the administrative year 2016/17. The Mayor highlighted the input of volunteers to the work of the Town and particular events including Armed Forces Day, her contact with the Romanian Orthodox Church and the visit of the Duke of Gloucester to the Town in February. (Councillor Baker provided a written report which will be placed on file with the minutes).

3. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

3.1 Planning and Economic Development Committee

Councillor R Barnes, Chairman of the Planning and Economic Development Committee, presented a summary of the work undertaken by the Committee during 2016/17 (Cllr Barnes provided a written report which will be placed on file with the Minutes)

There were no questions on the report from members of the public. The Mayor thanked Councillor Barnes for his report.

3.2 Environment and Leisure Committee

Councillor M Eager, Chairman of the Environment and Leisure Committee, presented a summary of the work undertaken by the Committee during 2016/17. Councillor Eager thanked the members of the Committee, especially those who served on the Working Parties, for their hard work and commitment, staff who

had taken on an increasing workload with the resignation of the Deputy Clerk, Maria Bradman, whose departure had left a huge gap and paid tribute to the Clerk for the constant support, knowledge and team leadership that she provided, in spite of the undue pressure she was working under. Cllr Eager provided a written report which will be placed on file with the Minutes.

There were no questions on the report from members of the public. The Mayor thanked Councillor Eager for his report.

3.3 Finance and General Purposes Committee

In the absence of the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Councillor J Roberts, Councillor K Francis, Vice Chairman, presented a summary outlining the work undertaken by the Committee during 2016/17. Councillor Francis provided a written report which will be placed on file with the Minutes.

Copies of the Town Council's estimated expenditure for 2016/17 and the budget for 2017/18 were made available to the meeting. Cllr Francis briefly summarised the reasons for a 6.88% increase in the precept request for 2017/18 compared to the previous year. An increase of 7.98% in the Band D equivalent was mainly due to Herefordshire Council not passing on the Council Tax Relief rebate, money having to be put aside for additional audit costs relating to challenges to the Council's financial governance and funds to cover professional services (legal costs).

Councillor Francis highlighted the distribution of grants to local organisations, forthcoming report in the Ledbury Focus to cover key matters involving the Council to enable the community to be better informed, funding of the Citizens' Advice Bureau to provide face to face support in the community on a monthly basis. Councillor Francis thanked the Clerk for her support and commitment throughout the year.

There were no questions on the report from members of the public. The Town Mayor thanked Councillor Francis for his report.

3.4 Town Council Estimates of Income and Expenditure 2017/18

There were no questions from members of the public.

4. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM ELECTORS OF LEDBURY PARISH

The following matters were raised:

1. Portas Grant

A local resident asked about the disbursement of the Mary Portas Award. Councillor Harvey explained the background to the Award and the process to date. Applications had been received from 6 groups, more information was awaited from one group and then the release of the funds by the Town Council.

2. Youth Council

A local resident reported on the work of the Youth Council. The resident and Councillor Crowe were working with a group of very enthusiastic Year 9 students from John Masefield High School. The Group were organising a family picnic and games on the Recreation Ground as part of Community Day and an art competition for local primary schools as part of the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Ledbury Market House. New Year 10 students were also keen to be involved.

3. Cancer Research Relay for Life 2018

Lynn Eagles and Paul Tibbins, local fund raising managers for Cancer Research UK, spoke about a Relay for Life in Ledbury in 2018. A full information evening would be held at Ledbury Rugby Club on 11 May 2017.

4. Herefordshire Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Dawn Sheppard and Mark from CAB expressed their gratitude to the Council for the grant of £5,000 which had enabled face to face work to recommence in Ledbury on a monthly basis. Funding constraints meant that CAB were having to rethink the way they delivered their services across the County. Dawn noted that their statistics indicated that £10K investment could generate £1mn benefit. CAB service users came from all walks of life.

5. DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS AWARDS 2017

There were 4 Distinguished Citizen Awards and one Youth Achievement Award. The individuals who had made the nominations introduced the award winners and spoke further about their achievements. Awards were presented to:

- Peter Arscott. Hilary Jones explained that Peter was a longstanding volunteer within the Ledbury community. Peter had been instrumental in the founding of Ledbury Youth First and the Ledbury Poetry Festival and was currently President of the latter.
- Mary Every. Councillor Keith Francis explained Mary’s extensive role in the Ledbury Community Market, involvement in the Ledbury and District Civic Society, Burgage Hall, Butchers Row Museum and Ledbury in Bloom.
- Steve Onions. In Clive Jupp’s absence, Councillor Robert Barnes explained Steve’s commitment over many years to Ledbury Swifts and Eastnor Cricket Club. As the Swifts representative on the Ledbury and Strömstad Twinning Association he had been a major influence on the Swifts being the most consistent supporter of the links between the two towns.
- William Turberfield (Bill the Bell). The Mayor highlighted Bill the Bell’s outstanding loyal and dedicated service to the Town, in his role as Town Crier over the last ten years. David Fieldhouse, local artist, presented Bill with a portrait of himself as Town Crier.
- Joe Kirkwood (Youth Achievement Award). The Mayor explained Joe’s role as a member of Hereford and Worcester Army Cadets, mentoring, teaching and supporting young cadets, helping to raise their aspirations and encouraging them to higher goals.
- Ledbury Swifts (Joint Award for Twinning Activities between the Towns of Ledbury and Strömstad). Councillor Barnes explained that the Swifts Under 16’s had been involved in a tournament with IFK Strömstad, almost every year since the inception of the Twinning Agreement in the year 2000. Clive Jupp, Links Coordinator for Twinning, was in Strömstad where a similar award was being made to IFK Strömstad by the Strömstad Kommun that evening

The Town Mayor thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.00 pm.

Signed..... Date

Town Mayor