

Ledbury Town Council meeting Thursday 1st December 2022

CLlr Phillip Howells – Ledbury West Ward Councillor's report

The main thing to report since the last meeting is the number of Ward and Town Councillor consultations and meetings that have been had over the last few months with Herefordshire Council staff over the use (or non-use!) of the significant amount of Section 106 monies in the Herefordshire bank account that have not been used. The sums involved are over £7m which has accumulated over the years with no formal project plan to use them – as has been complained about by all the Market Towns for several years.

The good news is that the council now has a dedicated team redressing this situation, which has taken something like a year to sort out to the point where we now have a list of projects, identified by Market Town, prioritised by times to deliver given there a lot and they can't all be done in one go.

Each council now has a spreadsheet with anticipated project areas on which money will be spent in Ledbury. Something like £900k has been identified for Ledbury project spend on education, open spaces/play areas, sports, public realm and transport/highways, with details of individual projects still to be confirmed. One thing we discovered was that the proposed new football facilities off the Little Marcle Road and for which S106 money is expected to part fund, was not on the project list! That is being rectified. It is work in progress but very reassuring we will see the use of the money to benefit Ledbury over the next 2-3 years.

As already reported, Children's Services and the damning Ofsted report continues to dominate Herefordshire Council attention.

I chaired a meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 11th October at which the Ofsted report was reviewed. Full council also reviewed the report and actions to be taken at the council meeting on 21st October.

We are now in the stage of finalising a new improvement plan based on 9 areas of improvement identified in the Ofsted report, under the direction of the Government appointed Commissioner, and that new plan should be approved by cabinet by the end of December.

As a Ward councillor I represent Herefordshire Council on the Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board, which is more interesting and useful than it sounds since the River Leadon is at the northernmost tip of their area and so the flooding we have here has an impact on the rest of the waterway system going south. I attended the last meeting on 2nd November, where a new Chief Executive was introduced and plans to improve governance were approved.

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Mayor report - Cllr Phillip Howells

Full details of the Mayor's programme to date for 2022/23 are in the attached spreadsheet

Mayoral engagements since the last council meeting on 6th October (16 events)

29/09/2022	Ludlow Mayor's Charity Market (Deputy Mayor)
10/10/2022	Ledbury October Fair
12/10/2022	Mayor's Coffee Morning
15/10/2022	Afghani families Coffee Morning
17/10/2022	Ledbury Community Choir
19/10/2022	The Mayor of Worcester's Charity of Lecture
23/10/2022	Mayor of Droitwich Spa's Civic Service
25/10/2022	The building of the Worcester Guildhall
02/11/2022	Raiders of Our Viking Hoard
08/11/2022	Mayors' meeting
11/11/2022	Remembrance Day
13/11/2022	Remembrance Sunday
20/11/2022	Hereford Christmas Light Switch-On
23/11/2022	Ledbury Evergreen Club celebrating 65 years
27/11/2022	Ledbury Christmas Lights Switch-on
28/11/2022	Marches Family Network's AGM

The next two events and to which all Councillors are invited to attend are:

Civic Celebration:

Sunday 4th December 2.00pm-5.00pm Ledbury Rugby Club

Mayor's Coffee Morning:

Tuesday 6th December 10.30am -12.00pm in the Panelled Room

Christmas theme. Mulled wine and mince pies

All in aid of the Mayor's Charity for the Year – Strong Young Minds

Mayor's Consort – Hilary Jones

Mayor's Chaplain – Tony Hodder