

**LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY, 23 APRIL 2026**

PRESENT: Councillors Bradford, Chowns, Eakin, Hamblin, Harvey (Chair), Hughes, Kettle, Morris, Troy and Wilkinson.

ALSO PRESENT:

Angela Price – Town Clerk
Julia Lawrence – Deputy Town Clerk
Sophie Jarvis – Minute Taker

C1272. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Browning.

C1273. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. Councillor Morris submitted a non-pecuniary interest in respect of agenda item 15, planning application 268012.
2. Councillor Hamblin submitted a personal interest in respect of agenda item 15, planning application 260870.

C1274. TO NOTE THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES

RESOLVED:

That the Nolan Principles be received and noted.

C1275. TO NOTE THE GENERAL DUTY ON PUBLIC AUTHORITIES OF SECTION 149 OF THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

RESOLVED:

That the General Duty on Public Authorities of Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 be received and noted, noting that the Clerk would advise Members when it is appropriate for matters to be considered under this duty.

C1276. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES MEETINGS OF COUNCIL HELD ON 2 APRIL 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of Council held on 2 April 2026 be approved and signed as a correct record.

C1277. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE ACTION SHEET

The Clerk provided Members with sight of the rebranded designs provided by Ledbury Poetry.

The following points were discussed on the Action Sheet.

1. **C1034(3) – “The Clerk to contact the LTC’s current electricity provider to seek clarification in respect of implications for electricity costs due to the TNUoS increase.”**
Councillor Hughes noted that this action could now be considered closed, providing the Clerk continues to monitor electricity prices to ensure the Council secures the most favourable available rates.
2. **C1094.3 – “That officers ensure that all necessary adaptations to the mountings and electricity points for the Christmas Lights be progressed as a matter of priority.”**
Members expressed concern about the progress of this action. The Clerk advised that she has received images of Christmas light fixings used by other towns and has contacted Festive Lighting to request a meeting; however, a response is still awaited. The Clerk confirmed she will follow this up.
3. **C1250(2) – “That the surplus furniture is not offered for sale at the forthcoming antiques market.”**
This action is to be removed from the Action Sheet as the Antiques Market is scheduled for Saturday, 27 April and the furniture was not being provided as a sale item.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the Action Sheet be received and noted.**
2. **That an estimated completion column be added to the Action Sheet as well as a key indicating the difference between ‘in progress’ and ‘ongoing’.**

C1278. TO RECEIVE CHAIRMAN’S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman informed members of recent invitations received from neighbouring towns, as well as events attended by representatives of Ledbury Town Council. Councillor Harvey thanked those Councillors who had attended these events.

Councillor Harvey informed members of the successful visit from Friends from Strömstad and advised Councillors of the two successful coffee mornings that had taken place during their stay in Ledbury.

Councillor Morris updated members on the opening ceremony for the Berlin Wall segment at Eastnor Deer Park, which he attended on behalf of the Chairman. The Chairman encouraged members to visit the Deer Park to view the installation and reflect on this significant historic artefact located nearby.

The Chairman informed members that she had received the very sad news that Adam Munthe, the Association President of Ledbury & Strömstad Twinning Association, had passed away. Adam had served as President for over 25 years and was one of the Twinning's greatest friends and supporters. She noted that his passing is a great loss, and that he had greatly valued the friendship across the North Sea. The Chairman instructed the Clerk to formally send their condolences from Ledbury Town Council to his family.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Chairman's Communications be received and noted.**
- 2. That the Clerk send condolences to the family of Adam Munthe from Ledbury Town Council.**
- 3. That it be noted that the Deputy Clerk reports deferred from the previous meeting will be provided at the meeting of 7 May 2026.**

C1279. TO CONSIDER QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF STANDING ORDERS 3(E) AND 3(F)

None received.

C1280. TO RECEIVE MOTIONS PRESENTED BY COUNCILLORS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 9

Motion received from Councillor Harvey:

"This council has stated its intention to invest in improving the market offering in the town and to continue to contribute positively to the economic health of the town centre.

With this in mind, I would like to propose that:

This council instruct officers to urgently draft proposals to:

- increase use of the undercroft and upstairs of the Market House on Charter Market days
- take forward the TMAP report recommendations as they relate to our markets; and
- reduce the Traffic Regulation Order area of on-street parking which is designated for market trading on market days".

Councillor Harvey elaborated on her motion to members that shop traders have approached her to ask if the Council would be willing to reduce the parking spaces that are designated for market trading. The Chairman explained that she would like to see market traders encouraged to fill the pitches underneath the Market House as well as upstairs rather than utilising these car parking spaces.

Councillor Bradford expressed his concern over the removal of the market on High Street and queried whether the intention would be to completely remove all the parking spaces or just some of them.

Councillor Harvey confirmed that two of the spaces adjacent to the Market House would remain for those traders who make use of the electricity supply such as the fishmongers and the Cheeseman who would be unable to sell from underneath the Market House due to selling direct from their vehicles.

Councillor Morris queried the project timeline. The Clerk advised that she would take members' comments back, liaise further with staff, and report back with a proposed timeframe and additional information at a future Council meeting.

Councillor Hamblin requested a copy of the TEMAP report from the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED:

That Council instructs officers to urgently draft proposals to:

- 1. Increase use of the undercroft and upstairs of the Market House on Charter Market days.**
- 2. Take forward the TEMAP report recommendations as they relate to our markets; and**
- 3. Reduce the Traffic Regulation Order area of on-street parking which is designated for market trading on market days.**
- 4. That the Clerk provide a timeline for the completion of this report.**

C1281. INVOICES FOR PAYMENT (INCLUDE SALARIES)

Members asked that Amazon only be used if items cannot be purchased in Ledbury as an absolute last resort.

Members noted the cost increases of the two contracts, in particular the payroll company increase. Members instructed the Clerk to obtain quotes from alternative companies for consideration of change of provider.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the invoices for payment in the sum of £32,185.06 plus VAT be approved for payment.**
- 2. That the salary costs for April 2026, in the sum of £37,868.52 be approved.**
- 3. That members receive and note the information received in respect of cost increases to two contracts, noting that as the council were only notified of these in April 2026 the increases have not been taken into account within the annual budget and**

therefore may affect the final expenditure total at the end of the current financial year.

4. That the Clerk obtain quotes from alternative payroll companies for consideration.

C1282. MONTH 12 BUDGET MONITORING REPORTS

- i. Receipts and Payments 1 to 31 March 2026
- ii. Balance sheet and Trial Balance – Month 12
- iii. Budget Monitoring Reports 1 April – 31 March 2026

The Chairman expressed her thanks to all staff involved in the work that had gone into completing the year-end with a 1.5% underspend.

The Chairman asked the Clerk to ensure that the internal auditor provides advice to the Council on whether its reserves are at an appropriate level for a council of this size.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Receipts and Payments 1 to 31 March 2026 be received and noted, noting the 2025/26 year-end net position (income v expenditure) is as follows:
Actual Income £807,571 – actual budget £794,775 = £12,796 surplus, which is due to higher than expected “other income” even though expenditure is slightly over budget (£9,050).
2. That the Balance sheet and Trial Balance for Month 12 be received and noted, noting that the 2025/26 budget is in line with the expected percentage of 91.67% at the end of month 12 of the financial year.
3. That the Budget Monitoring Reports from 1 April – 31 March 2026.

C1283. 2025/26 YEAR-END FINANCIAL REPORTS

RESOLVED:

That the Year-End Financial Reports for 2025/26 be received and noted.

C1284. TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES IN RESPECT OF CODE OF CONDUCT MATTERS

Councillor Harvey informed members that she is awaiting a response from Herefordshire regarding the ongoing Code of Conduct complaint.

Councillor Harvey asked Councillor Bradford whether he had any updates to inform members of whether he has complied with the recommendations from Herefordshire Standards Panel. Councillor Bradford confirmed he had not changed his stance from that given when the Standards Panel decision had been made.

RESOLVED:

That the updates in respect of Code of Conduct Matters be received and noted.

C1285. COUNCILLOR RESIGNATION

RESOLVED:

That the resignation of Ewen Sinclair be received and noted, noting the actions taken by the Clerk in respect of notifying Elections at Herefordshire Council so that the formal process of advertising the vacancy is undertaken.

C1286. TO CONSIDER PLANNING CONSULTATIONS

- 1. Application No. 250297 – Dayroom/laundry room for consented mobile homes site (part retrospective) – Little Bush Pitch, Bush Pitch, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2PX.**

The Clerk informed members that she had written to the Planning Officer at Herefordshire Council regarding Ledbury Town Council's concerns about the planning application and was awaiting a response.

RESOLVED:

That this planning application be deferred for comment to the next meeting of Full Council taking place on Thursday, 7 May 2026 and that the Clerk request an extension to comment on this planning application due to not having received a response from the Case Officer.

- 2. Application No. 260577 – Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for confirmation that the proposed use as a residential care home for up to 2 children and 2 staff (C2) would not be materially different to the property's current use as a dwelling house (C3) – 24 Lambourne Close, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2HW.**

Councillor Hughes informed members that the planning portal states that comments will not be accepted in respect of this planning application. Members agreed that despite this they would be submitting a comment from Ledbury Town Council.

The Chairman informed members that Ward Councillor Simmons had raised her concerns with this planning application with Ledbury Town Council previously.

RESOLVED:

No objection, subject to a condition being applied to ensure that the premises are operated solely as a residential facility, equivalent in use to a residential dwelling as

detailed within the planning application. This condition is intended to prevent the use of the premises as a venue for care company meetings on domestic premises, thereby avoiding the increased traffic movements and parking issues that have been experienced at similar facilities elsewhere in the county.

3. **Application No. 260812** – Demolition of an existing stable outbuilding and erection of a new build side extension along with the conversion of the existing garage into ensuite bedroom accommodation – The Elms, New Street, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2EQ.

Councillor Morris declared a non-pecuniary interest in Planning Application No. 260577.

Councillor Morris left the meeting at 7:50pm due to declaring a non-pecuniary interest.

**RESOLVED:
No objection.**

Councillor Morris rejoined the meeting at 7:51pm.

4. **Application No. 260833** – Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 250786 (Proposed two storey rear extension, internal reconfiguration to dwelling and detached flat roof 3 bay car port) – amendment to proposed external materials – Beechcroft, New Street, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2EA.

Councillor Hughes informed members that this was a retrospective planning application and that the work had already been completed at this property.

Members expressed disappointment that this was a retrospective application rather than the householder having followed the correct sequencing as regards the planning process and noted that the external materials that had been used were different to those stated in the original planning application.

RESOLVED:

Objection on the grounds that this is a retrospective application, and that there has been a variation of materials used to those stipulated in the original application, noting that Ledbury Town Council would support the retention of the original condition stipulating the materials.

5. **Application No. 260870** – Alterations to the existing shopfront, installation of a large metal fascia sign positioned over the existing timber fascia; and the installation of overhead lighting. (Retrospective) – 71 The Homend, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1BP.

It was noted this was a retrospective application, and that enforcement action had been taken in respect of this business.

Councillor Hamblin informed members that he had received complaints from residents living near the property regarding light disturbance in the evenings, which was affecting their sleep.

Councillor Harvey confirmed that, as the Ward Councillor for the area in which the property is located, she had also received a significant number of complaints from residents regarding issues with the new signage at the property. She also informed members that a number of businesses and property owners have also expressed their concern over this property. She advised that the objections were in relation to lighting, and that the style and provenance of the sign was not complimentary or a positive addition to the Homend Streetscape.

Members noted that this property is within a conservation area and the style of the building alterations does not align with the policies set out in the Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan.

RESOLVED:

Objection on the grounds that this a retrospective application and contrary to policies in respect of it being in a conservation area, light pollution, and the Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan, particularly in relation to maintaining the general aesthetic of the town.

C1287. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE UPDATE ON PLANNING DECISIONS

Members requested that any Planning Application that have been 'withdrawn' are to be removed from the Planning Decisions log for the next meeting of council.

RESOLVED:

That the update on the Planning Decisions Log was be received and noted.

C1288. REPRESENTATION AT HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Clerk informed members that it would be prudent to add this as a standing item on Full Council agendas, to ensure that any last-minute

planning meeting invitations received after the agenda has been despatched can be considered and if required a Councillor can be nominated at the next Council meeting. This would help prevent opportunities for representation being missed after the agenda has been published, such as in the case of the Lidl application.

Councillor Harvey informed members that she attended the Planning Committee meeting at Herefordshire Council as a Ward Councillor about the Lidl planning application. Details of Councillor Harvey's representation at this meeting has been published in the agenda for members to note in the next item.

It was noted that no further Herefordshire Council Planning Committee Meeting invitations had been received.

C1289. WARD MEMBER SPEECH PRESENTED AT HEREFORDSHIRE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN RESPECT OF PLANNING APPLICATION P242783/O

RESOLVED:

That the Ward Member speech presented at Herefordshire Planning Committee meeting held in respect of Planning Application P242783/O be received and noted.

C1290. POTENTIAL ASSET TRANSFER OF PLAY AREAS IN LEDBURY

Members expressed their concerns over taking on the play areas listed in the report, in particular the ongoing upkeep and costs for these play areas.

The Clerk informed members that this report is not a final decision and that she will be providing drafts of the draft documents for Council to consider whether they wish to proceed with the Asset .

Councillor Harvey confirmed that Herefordshire Council are struggling to maintain these areas and unfortunately, on some occasions when play equipment is damaged it's more likely to be removed and not replaced. Councillor Harvey advised that the future funding of the play areas if they were transferred would be managed via the annual budget setting process by ensuring funds are placed within the earmarked reserves.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the information provided by Herefordshire Council in respect of the proposed Community Asset Transfer of the seven play areas in Ledbury be received and noted.**
- 2. That Members agree, in principle, to proceed with the drafting of detailed Business Cases for each of the identified play areas.**

3. That members instruct Officers to complete and submit the required Business Case Templates to Herefordshire Council by 15 May 2026, subject to approval by Council.

C1291. DRAFT TREE POLICY

Members queried an update on the Cherry and Oak Tree that the Council have agreed will be planted in the vicinity of the recreation ground to commemorate 80 years of peace. The Clerk confirmed that both of these trees have been delivered to the offices and are in safekeeping and that they will be planted in the autumn.

RESOLVED:

1. That the following amendments to be made to the Draft Tree Management Policy and that an updated version be submitted to a future meeting of Council for approval:
 - i. Point 3.5 – ‘everything possible’ to be removed.
 - ii. Point 3.6 – change ‘dependent on reducing’ to ‘considering’.
 - iii. Point 3.7 –remove ‘unacceptable risk to public safety’.
 - iii. Point 4.1 – change ‘reactionary’ to “reactive” and show that the Council will also take a proactive stance.
 - iv. That points 7.4 & 7.5 be listed as points under point 7.3.
 - v. Point 11.2 – That it be made clear which areas/trees the Town Council are responsible for.
 - vi. Point 11.6 – That the following line be removed ‘The Town Council will not undertake tree work operations which may be to the detriment of the tree’
 - vii. Point 12.5 – That the phrase ‘criminal damage’ be removed.
2. That the Chair and officers consider any further amendments ahead of the policy be considered for final approval.

C1292. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 APRIL 2026 AND TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO ANY RECOMMENDATIONS

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of a meeting of the Resources Committee held on 2 April 2026 were received and noted.

C1293. OUTSIDE BODIES

1. Minutes of a meeting of Ledbury Carnival held on 1 April 2026.

2. Minutes of a meeting of the Ledbury Community Choir held on 27 February 2026.

Councillor Harvey made members aware of the diary dates included on the Ledbury Community Choir's minutes and asked that these be added onto the Town Council events page on the website.

Members noted that the same organisations submit their minutes and reports to Council however, there are a number of community groups who receive grants that do not provide this information to Council. Members agreed that it is a condition on the grant applications that community groups must keep up correspondence with the council on projects and events that the council contribute towards.

The Clerk confirmed that grant recipients are asked to provide feedback and confirmed that some will be in attendance at the Annual Parish Meeting taking place on Thursday, 30 April 2026.

Members made note that LEAF (Locally Encouraging All to Flourish) made an excellent presentation before the Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council the week prior.

RESOLVED:

1. That the minutes of a meeting of the Ledbury Carnival held on 1 April 2026 be received and noted.
2. That the minutes of a meeting of the Ledbury Community Choir held on 27 February 2026 be received and noted.

C1294. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the date of the next meeting of council is to be held on Thursday, 7 May 2026 at 7:00pm in the Town Council Offices.

C1295. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public are excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

**C1296. TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO ANY URGENT
RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE RESOURCES MEETING HELD
ON 23 APRIL 2026**

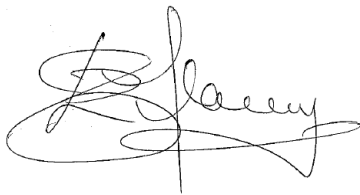
RESOLVED:

**That the Council appoint Worknest as the contractor for the staff
EAP provider for 36 months costing £1,108.00 per annum.**

The meeting ended at 8:40pm.

Signed

Dated: 7 May 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Lacey', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.