

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL
HELD ON 24 JULY 2025

PRESENT: Councillors: Browning, Harvey (Chair), Hughes and Kettle

ALSO PRESENT: Angela Price – Town Clerk
Julia Lawrence – Deputy Clerk
Honor Holton – Minute Taker

C882. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chowns, Eakin, Morris and Sinclair.

C883. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hughes declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to any reference to the Ledbury Carnival due to being the Chairman of the Carnival Association this year.

C884. TO NOTE THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES

RESOLVED:

That the Nolan Principles be received and noted.

C885. TO NOTE THE GENERAL DUTY ON PUBLIC AUTHORITIES OF SECTION 149 OF THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Chair explained that Parish Councils are required to consider whether any decisions made have a disproportionate impact on groups that have protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010 and advised that the Clerk would alert members should consideration need to be given to any agenda items and that these considerations will be noted within the council minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the general duty on public authorities of section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 be received and noted by members.

C886. TO APPROVE AND SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL HELD ON 3 JULY 2025

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 3 July 2025 be approved and signed as a correct record.

C887. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE ACTION SHEET

It was confirmed that once actions are completed, that they be removed from the Action Sheet.

The Chairman requested that the Clerk keep a track of tasks that form part of the Work Programme to ensure that there is no slippage in the Work Programme.

The Clerk confirmed that she had signed the bank reconciliations and that Councillor Hughes now needed to attend the offices to review and sign these documents accordingly.

RESOLVED:

That the Action Sheet be received and noted, subject to the following:

- 1. Once Members have been advised that actions are completed, they be removed from the Action Sheet.**
- 2. Clerk to ask Accounts Clerk to arrange for Councillor Hughes to attend the offices to review and sign the bank reconciliations**

C888. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman noted a number of events that had been attended either in person or by someone representing her:

The Ledbury Celebration had been a great day and was rounded off the Poetry Festival and started the week of Ledbury Fringe, all events that are supported by Ledbury Town Council.

The Council had hosted the Ledbury in Bloom Judges. They were very pleased with the standard of the hanging baskets and praised Ledbury in Bloom for all their hard work throughout the year. The Chairman was also informed that there would be a late determination for the Ledbury in Bloom results, being 31 October 2025 and this will be held at the Malvern Showground.

The Chairman also thanked Councillor Chowns for attending the Anniversary of the Violette Szabo Museum on the 13 July 2025 on the Chairman's behalf.

The Chairman reminded members that several working group and sub-committee meeting dates had been circulated and asked members to respond to ensure meetings would be quorate and could proceed.

The upcoming 80th anniversary of VJ Day will take place with a short service at the War Memorial on Friday, 15 August 2025, as well as a service on Sunday, 17 August 2025 at St. Michaels and All Angels Church. Councillor Browning confirmed that he would be able to attend with the Town Clerk on the Chairman's behalf.

C889. TO CONSIDER QUESTIONS/ COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF STANDING ORDERS 3 (e) AND 3 (f)

Mr Colwell asked whether there was copy of the agenda available to consider the content. It was advised that the Agenda Papers are published on the website as well as being posted on the Council Noticeboard at the gable end of the Town Council Offices, in line with statutory requirements.

Mr Colwell asked what planning applications were to be considered at the meeting, the Chair advised that there were no large developments being considered on the agenda.

No other questions or comments were received.

C890. TO RECEIVE MOTIONS PRESENTED BY COUNCILLORS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 9

None received.

C891. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE MONTH 3 FINANCIAL REPORTS

i. Receipts and Payments – 1 – 30 June 2025

Councillor Hughes, as the Chairman of Finance, raised a question relating to Nominal Code 4000 - Staff Salaries. He noted that there were two line entries in relation to Cost Centres 109 and 230. The Town Clerk advised that these related to payments to HMRC and Pensions and staff salary payments.

ii. Balance Sheet and Trial Balance – Month 3

Councillor Hughes raised a query in respect of budget lines 4801/214 for two payments of £4,000 and £4,500. He advised that the Carnival had confirmed that they had only received £4,500.

The Clerk advised that this had been identified as an error which the Clerk was due to follow up with the Accounts Clerk.

Councillor Harvey advised that the budget sheets had been thoroughly reviewed at the quarterly budget meeting.

iii. Budget Monitoring Reports

Councillor Harvey advised that the budget monitoring group had identified a number miss-postings that needed to be addressed. She noted that a number of the budget lines were no longer in use but that the system did not allow for them to be removed until such time there is no record of income or expenditure to them for a period of three years. However, she advised that had been agreed at the working party that these lines should be renamed in such a way that it identified them as obsolete and therefore avoid miss-postings to them in the future.

Councillor Hughes brought Members attention to budget line 101/4250 noting that the overspend had been dealt with via the earmarked reserves in the sum of £5,850. He advised that this had been raised as a query and the Clerk provided an update advising that the overspend was due to works to the perimeter wall at the Churchyard, which it had been agreed would be funded from the ear marked reserve.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That payments to pensions and HMRC be clearly identified as separate costs going forward.**
- 2. That Month 3 financial reports be received and noted.**
- 3. That the report provided in support of the financial reports be received and noted.**

C892. TO CONFIRM VERIFICATION OF BANK STATEMENTS AND RECONCILIATIONS FOR MAY AND JUNE 2025

RESOLVED:

The Chairman of Finance confirmed that he had not verified the Bank Statements and Reconciliations for May and June 2025.

C893. INVOICES FOR PAYMENT JULY 2025 (FINAL)

The Chairman questioned whether it was still appropriate for Councillor Morris and herself to register declarations of interest now that there was a formal Partnership Agreement in place. In particular, this related to utility payments. No such payments were under consideration at the

meeting, but the Clerk agreed to seek advice on the matter for future reference.

The Clerk requested that due to there not being a meeting of Council in August, delegated powers be given to the Chair of the Council, Chair of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee and the Clerk to approve invoices for payment in August, noting that this would only be for invoices for planned work/projects and would not include any new projects.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the invoices for payment in the sum of £16,213.18 plus VAT be approved for payment, noting that the payment for A J Roberts Farm will be paid from cc102 nc4206 and EMR as previously agreed.**
2. **That the Chair of the Council, Chair of Finance, Policy & General Purposes and the Clerk be given delegated powers to approve invoices for payment in August 2025, noting that this would only be for planned work/projects or urgent matters allowed under Finance Regulations and would otherwise not include any new projects.**

C894. SUBSCRIPTIONS

To note that the following subscriptions were included in agenda item 11 for approval to pay:

- i. Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management – A Price annual membership - £110
- ii. Bullguard / Norton security annual subscription - £69.99

RESOLVED:

That the subscriptions be received and noted.

C895. REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDING IN RESPECT OF MASEFIELD MATTERS

Members were requested to give consideration to a request from the Masefield Matters project Board for the release of funding for some self-drying clay activities as part of Carnival Day.

The Chairman noted her thanks to the Masefield Matters Project Co-ordinator for the report.

The Town Clerk highlighted that this is making a particular effort to reach out to hard to reach and disadvantaged groups and may well qualify

under the Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2011 provision as a demonstration of Ledbury Town Council making an effort to meet its obligations under the Act as part of the Project's delivery.

RESOLVED:

1. **That the minutes of the Board meetings be submitted to future meetings of Council.**
2. **That the release of the £320 from the Masefield Matters project contingency fund be approved.**
3. **That it be recorded that Council gave consideration to the expenditure in respect of this project and agreed that it meets the requirements of the Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2011, in so far as the project provides for individuals who are protected by the Act due to qualifying of protected characteristics.**

C896. PLANNING CONSULTATIONS

RESOLVED:

1. **Application Number 251420.** Two storey side extension and single storey front extension to front entrance lobby. – **17 Browning Road Ledbury Herefordshire HR8 2GA**

No Objection.

2. **Application Number 251954.** Proposed first floor extension over existing garage, 2 storey extension linking house to extended garage, single storey extension at the rear of the house, plus conversion of part of the garage into a habitable space & other internal alterations. – **Hallwood House, Ross Road, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2HS.**

No Objection.

C897. PLANNING DECISIONS

RESOLVED:

That the Planning Decisions be received and noted.

C898. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TEMAP WORKING PARTY HELD ON 1 JULY 2025 AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN

RESOLVED:

- 1. That it be noted that officers have started to contact organisations in respect of how to ensure the provision of the maps to businesses and visitor destinations.**
- 2. That the Chairman requested a change of wording for Recommendation 2 that “A man and a van.” Be amended to “A person and a van”.**
- 3. That a deadline of early August be given in respect of responses to the means of provision of maps to businesses and visitor destinations.**
- 4. That subject to the outcome of the above a report be brought back to the next meeting with details of potential deliveries, or that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman be provided with an update if the majority of those contacted agree to collect the maps from the Council offices.**
- 5. That the TEMAP Working Party minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2025 be received and noted.**

C899. PAINTED ROOM AND MARKET HOUSE VISITOR NUMBERS MARCH TO JUNE

RESOLVED:

That the Painted Room and Market House visitor number March to June be received and noted.

C900. INVITATION TO MEET WITH VISTRY GROUP

Members were advised that at this stage no outline planning application had been submitted but that Vistry Group are undertaking a number of pre-application consultations.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk advise Vistry that Ledbury Town Council are willing to meet with them, subject to a planning officer being in attendance at the meeting.

C901. PROPOSAL FROM HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL IN RELATION TO FUTURE OF NEWLY PROPOSED PUMP TRACK, ST MARTIN'S WAY, LEDBURY

The Chairman reported that the Consultation Event held on 22 July 2025 had been reported to have been positive with a good turn-out for the youth and local residents.

RESOLVED:

That Ledbury Town Council enter into exploratory discussions with Herefordshire Council in respect of taking on the area at St Martin's Way in the form of a Freehold Transfer in order to enable additional funds to be sourced for the Pump Track Project.

C902. CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING PARTY – OUTCOME OF MEETING BETWEEN COUNCILLOR CHOWNS AND NINA SHIELDS (SUSTAINABLE LEDBURY)

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the title of the meeting be changed to reflect that the meeting was not a meeting of the Working Party.**
- 2. That the Working Party be stood up and be encouraged to meet under its revised terms of reference, and to put forward proposals for the Council to consider.**
- 3. That the Clerk meet the Chair of the Climate Change Working Party to provide guidance on scope, in line with the Council's climate declaration.**

C903. EVENTS WORKING PARTY

- i. To receive and note the minutes of the Events Working Party Meeting held on Tuesday, 1 July 2025**

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the minutes of the Events Working Party Meeting held on Tuesday, 1 July 2025 be received and noted. Members thanked the Community Development Officer for providing the additional information.**
- 2. That a section be included in all committee/council reports in respect of sustainability.**

ii. Report on future events budget and resourcing

The Chairman thanked the Community Engagement Officer for the work undertaken in respect of this report.

It was noted that the document only considered events that the Town Council take a lead on and it would be helpful to have information on resources at town events that the Council get involved with such as Carnival.

Concerns were raised in relation to the suggestion of an ice rink in St Katherine's Square and the costs involved in relation to the Book Fest.

It was agreed that in principle the plans are great, however it should be recognised that the Council requires further consideration of the detail – particularly as regards large cost items, and that approval of all specific event costs be sought in advance of any commitments being made.

It was noted that if St Katherine's is to be used for a Christmas Market, then it would not be practical to provide space for an ice rink, appreciating that it is on a Sunday and therefore there would be no additional cost if part of the car park were to be used for this, however it was noted that using parts of car parks for the event would be counterproductive due to it limiting the amount of car parking space available. It was felt that an alternative option which would be less risky should be considered well in advance of any commitment being made.

A query was raised as to whether there is a cost in relation to the software in respect of the Heritage Open Days event. The Clerk advised that there is no cost in relation to accessing the software needed to create QR codes.

It was noted that this item would qualify for consideration under S149 of the Equalities Act 2011.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the report of future events budget and resourcing be adopted in principle and that it be referred to the Events Working Party to check alignment with the wider events scape for the town.**
- 2. That it be recorded that Council gave consideration to the expenditure in respect of this item and agreed that it meets the requirements of the Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2011, in so far as the project provides**

for individuals who are protected by the Act due to qualifying of protected characteristics.

3. That third party services and facilities that are material to the delivery of events but which incur no cost to the council should be included in the individual project plans/budget for clarity and transparency.

C904. REQUEST FOR SUPPORT IN RESPECT OF DEFIBRILLATOR INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE CLOSE TO BRAMLEY CLOSE

RESOLVED:

1. That Ledbury Town Council support the local resident in respect of funding the installation and continued maintenance of an AED defibrillator in the locality of Bramley Close, Ledbury.
2. That officers investigate potential external funding for the installation of defibrillators in Ledbury without delay.
3. That housing developers be encouraged to include defibrillator as part of their development proposals and that this be raised with Vistry when they meet with the Council.

C905. ENTRANCE TO PAINTED ROOM DOOR

RESOLVED:

1. That contractor No.1 be appointed to undertake the work to repair and repaint the Painted room entrance door at a total cost of £2,133.00.
2. Contractor No. 2, together with other blacksmiths, be asked to provide a quote for the handrails, with a further report being submitted to full council for consideration as a separate procurement.

C906. BIDDULPH WAY TREES

Councillor Harvey provided Members with some additional information in relation to Tree no. 18. She advised that a resident had provided photographs of the tree in the winter as opposed to the photographs in the report which showed the tree in full leaf. The resident was concerned at the one-sidedness of the tree growth.

RESOLVED:

That the Deputy Clerk be asked to seek quotations for the tree works suggested within the updated Tree Surgeon's report. Noting that additional advice is to be sought in respect of tree no.18 so as to rebalance its growth and give it the best chance of a long life.

C907. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 3 JULY 2025 AND TO RECEIVE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN

The Chair asked Members to defer consideration of the recommendation within the Resources Minutes until after they had considered agenda item 27 due to an update being available which may be relevant to the Council's decision in respect of minute no. R201(2).

Following discussions in respect of agenda item 27 Members were asked to give consideration to the following recommendation (minute R201(2) refers).

“That a RECOMMENDATION be submitted to Council that the Council trials implementation of less than the full recommendation of the Standards Panel and permits Councillor Sinclair to participate in Task & Finish Groups and Working Party meetings, with the caveat that the Council reserves the option to rescind this trial.”

Members considered that, in the light of Councillor Sinclair's refusal to accept the letters sent to him by the Chairman asking that he give written assurance that he will comply with the responsibilities placed upon him as a Councillor under the Code of Conduct, the Nolan Principles and the Civility & Respect Pledge which Ledbury Town Council has signed up to, the recommendation as outlined above should not be supported.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the minutes of the Resources Committee held on 3 July 2025 be received and noted.**
- 2. That the recommendation from the Resources Committee that Councillor Sinclair be permitted to participate in Task & Finish Groups and Working Party meetings is not supported, due to Councillor Sinclair exhibiting an unwillingness to provide undertakings that he will in future behave in a manner befitting his position as Town Councillor.**

1. Councillor Sinclair

The Chairman advised Members that she had written to Councillor Sinclair, as agreed at the Resources meeting held on 3 July 2025 (minute no, R201 (6) & (7) refer), reminding him of his responsibilities under the Code of Conduct, Nolan Principles and the Civility & Respect Pledge that the Council has signed up to; and requesting that he provide written undertakings as regards his future dealings with the Clerk and when handling confidential material provided to him.

However, the Chair informed Members that Councillor Sinclair had refused to sign for and receive both letters. It was noted that Councillor Sinclair would now be aware of the content of each of those letters, due to having received a copy of the agenda for the Full Council meeting.

Members were therefore asked to consider what if any action should be taken in response to Councillor Sinclair's refusal to accept the letters from the Chairman.

The Chairman reminded Members that as an employer the Council has a requirement by law and should make efforts to protect all staff from persistent harassment and upset when it occurs, and there is extensive evidence that Cllr Sinclair's behaviour is not acceptable. She explained that as this is a staffing matter it is important that it is treated confidentially, hence the reason for suggesting that the Resources Committee be given delegated powers to review the matter in appropriate detail.

2. Councillor Bradford

Members were provided with a response from the Monitoring Officer in respect of the amended proposals agreed by the Resources Committee (minute no. R201(4) refers) to be submitted to the Chair of the Standards Board in respect of COC093.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Councillor Sinclair's failure to provide assurances regarding his future conduct, be noted.**
- 2. That the Resources Committee be delegated to take further appropriate action as regards Councillor Sinclair's behaviour towards the Clerk and in respect of his handling of confidential materials.**

3. That regular reports be submitted to Council providing details of any action taken by the Resources Committee in respect of resolution no. 2 above.
4. That it be noted that the Monitoring Officer has suggested no amendments be made to minute no. R201 4(a & b)
5. That R201(4)(c) be amended to read as follows which will enable the Clerk/Deputy Clerk to consider the Complainant's location when Councillor Bradford attends the office:

"Councillor Bradford attends the Council Offices only for approved meetings of council or councillors, or with 24 hours written notice to the Clerk or her Deputy"

6. That R201(4)(d) be amended as follows:

'That mediation between Councillor Bradford and the complainant, taking a restorative approach to rebuilding a working relationship, be commenced when both parties are prepared to engage in such mediation'

7. That R201(4)(e) be amended as follows:

'That the distancing measures (a, b & c) apply only until the first two Panel recommendations are complied with and (d) has been commenced, or until the Clerk and Monitoring Officer considers appropriate',

C909. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 3(X)

That Standing Order 3(x) be suspended for a period of 15 minutes to enable the remaining business of the agenda.

C910. HIGH SHERIFF'S AWARD FOR EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

RESOLVED:

That the Council recognise the High Sheriff's Award for Exceptional Service and make use of this process as an alternative to creating a new award within Ledbury Town Council.

C911. OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED:

1. That the minutes of a meeting of the Carnival Association held on 2 July 2025 be received and noted.
2. That the minutes of meetings of the Ledbury Community Choir held on 13 June 2025 and 8 July 2025 be received and noted.

C912. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Clerk informed members that an Extraordinary meeting was likely to take place in the second week of August re co-options to the Council.

RESOLVED:

To note that the next meeting of Council is scheduled for Thursday, 11 September 2025.

The meeting ended at 9:22 pm

Signed Date