

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of Ledbury Town Council
held on Thursday 2 November 2017
in The Community Hall, Ledbury

Present: Councillors: E Fieldhouse (Chairman)
D Baker R Barnes
R Barnes A Bradford M Eager
M Eakin A Harrison
E Harvey J Hopkins
A Manns N Morris
J Roberts N Shields
J Simpson A Warmington

In attendance: Mrs K Mitchell - Clerk to the Council
Mrs J Jupp – Administrative Assistant
14 Members of the public. 1 Member of the Press.

C.130 -11.17 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs A Crowe and K Francis.

C.131 - 11.17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Barnes declared a non-pecuniary interest at E.81-10.17 owing to a family involvement.

C.132 - 11.17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A local resident criticised the Council over the lack of information available to the public in respect of Judicial Review proceedings. He felt that it was distracting the Council from normal business and that the money could be better used for other purposes.

A member of the public sought clarification on the Council's insurance cover in respect of legal costs pertaining to the Judicial Review. The Chairman explained that the Council's insurance policy would not cover legal costs for the Judicial Review but that advice received from the Herefordshire Association of Local Councils was insurance-backed.

A Parish Councillor from Wellington Heath gave an update on the status of its Neighbourhood Plan. A key policy was to preserve the strategic gap between Ledbury and Wellington Heath and to protect the area from inappropriate development. This was being drawn into question by a planning application currently under appeal.

He advised that the Town Council's support for the stance in Wellington Heath to preserve the strategic gap would be greatly appreciated.

EHF

The Chairman said that the issue would be taken back to the Ledbury Neighbourhood Development Plan group and the Economic Development and Planning Committee.

Referring to P.126-10.17, a member of the public expressed a concern regarding the budgetary allowance for the Town Plan, reduced from £3,700 to £1,700. The Clerk explained that the figures related to earmarked reserves only that there was currently no money allocated to the budget line for Town Plan in the 2018/19 budget. The earmarked reserves had been re-allocated to Traffic Management which was an objective of the Town Plan.

C.133 - 11.17 MINUTES

Members considered the accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2017.

Referring to C.126-09.17 Cllr Eager proposed that the following text:

".....that a grant of £750.00 over three years had been received from the Great Places Scheme."

be corrected to read

".....that a presentation from Kate Le Bar, Manager of the Hereford City of Culture bid reported to the meeting that they had received a grant of £750,000 over three years towards their next bid for City of Culture status".

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 28th September 2017, as corrected, be confirmed as an accurate record.

**VOTING: For 10
Abstentions 5**

C.134 - 09.17 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

The Mayor went through her report and thanked everyone who had supported her recent Civic Service, especially staff in the office.

A letter had been received from a resident of Eastnor, expressing concern regarding the lack of benches in the High Street and Homend.

C.135 - 09.17 COMMITTEE MATTERS - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

In Cllr Crowe's absence, The Vice Chairman of the Economic Development & Planning Committee, Cllr Manns presented the Minutes of the Economic and Development Meeting held on 5th October 2017, copies having been circulated.

Referring to P.128-10.17 Councillor Eager proposed that the recommendation be amended to read:

ChF.

'That the Town Council be recommended to adopt a policy, when commenting on planning applications, that all new dwellings with a garage, driveway or *parking space* should have provision for on-site charging'.

VOTING: For 11
Abstentions 4

RESOLVED: That the Minutes P.120-10.17 to P.13-10.17, as amended, be approved and adopted.

VOTING: For 12
Abstentions 3

C.136 - 11.17 COMMITTEE MATTERS – ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

Councillor Bradford, Chairman of the Environment and Leisure Committee presented the Minutes of the meeting held on 12th October 2017, copies having been circulated.

Councillor Bradford highlighted E.82-10.17 Dog Hill Wood, vandalism of the bin in the Cricket Pitch area and the replacement by an 'Anti-Vandal Bin'.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes E.76-10.17 to E.85-10.17, be approved and adopted.

VOTING: For 10
Abstentions 5

C.137 - 11.17 COMMITTEE MATTERS – FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES

1. In Councillor Barnes absence, Councillor J Roberts Vice-Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, presented the Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th October 2017, copies having been circulated.

With regard to F.97-10.17 Risk Management, concerning the removal of the lighting conductor at the Cemetery Chapel. A further professional opinion had been sought who felt that a risk assessment should be carried out and consideration given to 'joining forces' with the Parish Church and Barrett Browning Institute who also had lighting conductors, before removal was carried out.

Regarding F.95-10.17 (3) Councillor Harrison queried the invoice, paid to Winckworth Sherwood Solicitors. The Chairman referred to the Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 28th July 2017 C.101-07.17 where it had been resolved that 'Ledbury Town Council engage legal counsel to contest the Judicial Challenge

ChF.

funded from budget and/or reserves if required'. No financial limit had been determined.

Councillor Eakin said that his recollection was that Standing Committee would report back to Full Council and there would then be an opportunity to vote on the proposals.

The Chairman stated that delegated authority for the Standing Committee to deal with this was agreed at the Meeting of Full Council on 29th August 2017 C.114-08.17 'To take all necessary steps, subject to legal advice, to oppose the Judicial Review proceedings and to delegate decision making authority to the Standing Committee, which will report back at Full Council meetings'.

Referring to F.97-10.17,

it was **RESOLVED:** *that the recommendation 'That subject to no issues being identified, the Town Council be recommended to approve the removal of the lighting conductor' be put on hold pending further information.*

VOTING: For 10
Abstentions 5

RESOLVED: That the Minutes F.91-10.17 to F.103-10.17, as amended, be approved and adopted

VOTING: For 7
Against 3
Abstentions 5

2. Newsletter

With regard to the approval of the Council Newsletter for the December 2017 edition of the Ledbury Focus, Councillor Shields proposed that the recruitment of the Deputy Clerk position be put on hold until the Operational Review had been fully considered.

The Chairman said that Max Goodison of LGRC had advised that it was for the Council to prioritise the Operational Review and the meeting of Standing Committee had recommended that the Council proceed with the arrangements for the recruitment of a Deputy Clerk.

It was agreed to move consideration of the newsletter content until after approval of the Standing Committee Minutes at agenda item 9.5.

CHT

C.138 – 11.17 COMMITTEE MATTERS – STANDING COMMITTEE

1. The Chairman presented the Minutes of the Standing Committee Meeting held on 19 September 2017, copies having been circulated.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Standing Committee Meeting held on 19th September 2017, be approved and adopted.

VOTING	For	9
	Against	4
	Abstentions	2

2. The Chairman presented the Minutes of the Standing Committee Meeting held on 26 September 2017, copies having been circulated. Councillor Harrison objected to the presence of Mrs Lynda Wilcox as cover Clerk.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Standing Committee Meeting held on 26th September 2017 be approved and adopted.

VOTING	For	9
	Against	4
	Abstentions	2

3. The Chairman presented the Minutes of the Standing Committee Meeting held on 6 October 2017, copies having been circulated. Councillors Shields and Harrison questioned why the recruitment of a Deputy Clerk was being progressed prior to the Operational review being considered and that objective advice should be obtained from a professional Human Resources Consultant.

Councillor Harvey said that decisions on the balance of responsibilities should not be taken by amateurs, the Council needed to properly consider how staff time was utilised in relation to the work that was required.

The Chairman responded that LGRC had offered these opinions as a guide only and they did not preclude Council from making a decision about the position of Deputy Clerk. The position was required in the Town Council Office to ensure cohesive working.

The Chairman and Councillor Barnes emphasised that Standing Committee had discussed the staffing roles, job descriptions and specifications in detail and were competent to do this.

Councillor Shields said that the objectives of the Council had not been determined yet and suggested that a project based fixed term contract be put together for the Deputy Clerk.

CVF

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Standing Committee Meeting held on 6 October 2017, be approved and adopted.

VOTING	For	9
	Against	4
	Abstentions	2

4. The Chairman presented the Minutes of the Standing Committee Meeting held on 16 October 2017, copies having been circulated.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Standing Committee Meeting held on 16 October 2017, be approved and adopted.

VOTING	For	9
	Against	2
	Abstentions	4

5. The Chairman presented the Minutes of the Standing Committee Meeting held on 26 October 2017, copies having been circulated.

It was agreed to move consideration of the Standing Committee Minutes to the end of the meeting for consideration in private session.

C.139 - 11.17 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

To appoint Councillor Hopkins to serve on the Economic Development & Planning Committee and Finance & General Purposes Committee.

* Councillor Harrison interrupted and stated that he should be reinstated to Committees. The Chairman advised that this could not be considered under the agenda item but that an update on the review would be provided in the closed session of the meeting.

Cllr Harrison disregarded the Mayors requests that he stop speaking and after repeated unsuccessful attempts to restore order the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Chairman: Quine L. Fieldhouse

Date: 7.12.17

* Amendment at full council 07.12.17 to add in following text - Proposed by Cllr E. Harvey (Refer C.164-12.17)

"Councillor Harrison requested that he be put forward for re-instatement to all 3 committees of the council, following the completion of his banning and the sanctions initiated on 11 May 2017 at the full Council Meeting C.164-05.17. The meeting was suspended." *QF*