

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EVENTS WORKING PARTY MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY, 13 JANUARY 2026**

PRESENT: Councillors Chowns, Harvey and Morris
Non-Councillors: Al Braithwaite (Chair) Griff Holiday, Sonia Bowen, Nina Shields and Lynette Loader.

ALSO PRESENT: Olivia Trueman – Community Engagement Officer
Julia Lawrence – Deputy Clerk

44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hughes and Lizzie Gissane.

**45. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EVENTS WORKING PARTY HELD ON 28 OCTOBER 2025**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the events working party held on 28 October 2025 be received and noted

46. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE ACTION SHEET

Members reviewed the Action Sheet and noted the work being undertaken by Officers.

There was a discussion regarding the proposed volunteer database and Members were Informed that since the report was published, Full Council had already agreed to trial GOAL 17 for 18 months rather than create a separate database. This decision was made due to staff and time constraints and the advantage of enabling the Council to collaborate more effectively with other towns in the county that are also using the platform.

The CEO advised Members that she would be promoting GOAL 17 to community groups, encouraging them to sign up and help raise awareness. She suggested using GOAL 17 during the World Bookfest as a trial run for future events.

RESOLVED: That the Action Sheet be received and noted.

**47. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE LEDBURY WORLD BOOKFEST – 7 MARCH
2026**

The CEO gave an update on the Ledbury World Bookfest event. She advised members that Full Council had agreed the budget and that she was preparing the marketing material and would have this ready for the next Events Working Party.



It was noted that many workshops have already been booked, including the Aardman modelling class, Red Earth Arts crafts workshop, and the Autor workshops.

RESOLVED: That the update on Ledbury World Bookfest be received and noted

Isabel Lewis, Masefield Matters Project Assistant joined the meeting at 10:18am.

48. TO CONSIDER THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK PROPOSAL – 6 JUNE 2026

The CEO presented a report proposing that the Council commission a local practitioner to create a willow dome at the Recreation Ground in advance of The Great Big Green Week, with the structure intended to serve as a performance space during the event.

While Members supported the idea in principle, it was agreed that the proposal should be deferred for future consideration to allow further consultation, including engagement with residents on the facilities and features they would like to see at the Recreation Ground. It was also noted that Ledbury Community Hub is undertaking a similar project at Oatley's Meadow, which could serve as a trial run. The Council could use this as an indicator of whether a similar initiative would be well received.

Members discussed additional ideas for The Great Big Green Week / Community Day, including an inflatable planetarium and other environmentally themed activities. Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that the CEO would meet with Ledbury Community Hub, Sustainable Ledbury, and Ledbury Community Day to develop a plan for the event and report back to Full Council with recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. That the Council works in partnership with Ledbury Community Day and Sustainable Ledbury to deliver activities that align with and complement Ledbury Community Day programming.**
- 2. That the CEO provides a report to Full Council setting out a proposed approach for The Great Big Green Week, including details of the financial implications and identification of the budget sources to support delivery.**



49. TO CONSIDER LEDBURY CELEBRATION PROPOSAL – 5 JULY 2026

The CEO presented a report advising Members that Ledbury Food Group had requested the Town Council's support for the Ledbury Celebration, marking the second year of partnership between the Council and the Food Group.

The CEO outlined the benefits of collaborating with Ledbury Food Group, including access to market trader contacts for the Charter Market and opportunities to strengthen relationships with local traders.

Members agreed that the Ledbury Celebration is an important event, and that, with the appropriate resources, the Council should provide support. It was recommended that this matter be brought to Full Council for formal consideration.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Events Working Party recommends to Full Council that Ledbury Town Council works in partnership with Ledbury Food Group again for the delivery of Ledbury Celebration 2026.

50. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE LIGHT SWITCH ON FEEDBACK – 23 NOVEMBER 2025

Members reviewed the 2025 Christmas Light Switch-On report prepared by the Community Engagement Officer. It was noted that the 2025 event marked a successful return to full-scale delivery, following a reduced event in 2024 due to adverse weather. The High Street and surrounding areas were well attended throughout the day and evening, with strong participation from families and visitors from across the area.

Members highlighted that the lantern parade was a particular success and expressed support for its return at the 2026 event. It was suggested that timings should be clarified, and that clearer directions for entry and exit of the parade would be beneficial. Members also recommended having a Master of Ceremonies to introduce the lantern parade as it moved through the town.

There was a discussion regarding whether the Morris dancers could hold several workshops in the lead-up to the event, similar to the lantern parade workshops, to enhance participation on the day.

Members also welcomed the use of the snow machine. It was agreed that the Council should explore hiring or purchasing a snow machine. The CEO advised that she prepare a report for Full Council with prices and options.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That the following recommendations be approved At Full Council:



1. That the Members of the Events Working Party recommended that the Council hold the Light Switch on Event in 2026 on Sunday, 22 November 2026, to avoid clashes with events in neighbouring towns.
2. That a recommendation be made to Full Council to approve a budget for £5,000 for the delivery of the 2026 Light Switch on Event.

As noted above, this does not include the hire costs of market stands as this will be addressed separately at a further meeting, in order to then seek approval from Full Council.

3. That a recommendation be made to Full Council to agree to the booking of the below entertainment to ensure their availability:
 - I. Hire of snow machine - £550 + VAT (or possible purchase)
 - II. Winter walk about Fairy - £470 + VAT
 - III. Red Earth Arts - £475 + VAT
 - IV. Hire of St. Katherines Hall - £120 + VAT

51. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE VIRTUAL APP UPDATE

The CEO provided a report updating Members on the potential for a virtual trail app to engage residents and visitors with Ledbury's heritage and community spaces.

The CEO updated Members on discussions with Hereford City Council regarding their "Love Exploring" app, highlighting both the benefits and limitations and considering its potential suitability for Ledbury. Members noted that Officers from Hereford City Council reported that the app had not achieved the anticipated level of engagement and offered limited scope for local customisation. Based on this experience, the Events Working Party concluded that a similar approach would not be suitable for Ledbury.

Some Members asked whether it would be possible to tie the project in with the town of Culture Grant or secure funding from the BID.

The Chairman and CEO advised that they investigate these funding options and report back to Members accordingly.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the following recommendations be approved:

1. That the Chairman and CEO prepare a tender to be sent to companies capable of developing a bespoke virtual or augmented reality app for the town, with the aim of having the app ready for a September launch to coincide with Heritage Open Days.
2. That Members note the contents of this report. A further update will be provided to the Events Working Party once additional information has



been received regarding the Ross- on- Wye Museum without Walls project.

3. That a recommendation be sent to Full Council to include funding for this project in the 2026/ 2027 budget, ensuring resources are available to support its development and delivery.

52. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE EVENTS CALENDAR

Members thanked Officers for preparing the Events Calendar, which runs up to December 2026.

It was noted that the text on the calendar was too small to read clearly and requested that it be enlarged for the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the upcoming Masefield Matters events be added to the events calendar.

53. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

To note that the next meeting of the Events Working Party is scheduled for Wednesday, 18 February 2026.

The meeting ended at 11:05am

Signed AB Brantworth Date 6/3/26

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