

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting of
Ledbury Town Council
held on
Thursday 30th January 2014

Present: Councillors: The Town Mayor, Councillor T Widdows, Chairman

R Barnes	P Bettington
A Bradford	A Conway
A Crowe	D Durham
M Eager	E Harvey
C Jupp	C Ridler
M Roberts	C Stallard Daniels
P Winter	R Yeoman

In Attendance: Mrs K Mitchell – Clerk to the Council
Ms D Baldwin – Deputy Clerk to the Council
9 Members of the public
1 Member of the Press

C.116–01.14 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted for Councillors J Roberts, and K Francis.

C.117–01.14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared at this point in the meeting.

C.118–01.14 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman of the Ledbury Traders Association, Hannah Day, relayed the Association's concerns regarding the planned closure of the public toilets in Church Lane and emphasised the importance of keeping the toilets open for the benefit of traders, tourists and residents alike. She sought reassurance that the town will retain facilities in the future and requested that the Association be kept informed of any changes.

A suggestion was put forward by a town trader that the public toilets be converted to 'pay to use' facilities as a possible source of income to offset running costs.

A local resident expressed her view that she didn't think it fair that Ledbury residents should have to pay to keep the Church Lane toilets open and suggested that coaches drop off passengers near the Bye Street toilets instead of the town centre.

C.119–01.14 CASUAL VACANCY

A request has been received by Herefordshire Council for an election to fill the vacant seat on Ledbury Town Council. If contested, the election will be held on Thursday 27th February 2014.

Members considered whether or not to issue poll cards in the event of a contested election; the estimated cost being £3,505.

RESOLVED: That poll cards are not issued but that the public be notified of a contested election by way of a leaflet drop.

VOTING: Unanimous

C.120–01.14 BUDGET AND PRECEPT

1. Approval of Committee Budgets for 2014/15

Members had been circulated with copies of three sets of budget sheets incorporating all three draft committee budgets. Each option contained a summary sheet setting out the resultant level of precept request and band D equivalent council tax figure for 2014/15.

Option 1- reflecting the overall position after scrutiny by each committee.

Option 2 - Same as option 1 but with budget lines for public toilet and referendum costs removed.

Option 3 - Same as option 2 but with budget lines for Town and Neighbourhood Plan costs removed.

It was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED: That option 3 be rejected.

**VOTING: For 10
Against 5**

A lengthy debate ensued over whether the Town Council should make provision in its budget for 2014/15 to take on responsibility for the public toilets in Church Lane from Herefordshire Council when they are closed at the end of March 2014.

Following discussion it was proposed seconded and

RESOLVED: That budget option 1 be ruled out and that the Council work from option 2.

A named vote was taken.

VOTING:	For	10
	R Barnes	P Bettington
	A Bradford	C Jupp
	C Ridler	M Roberts
	C Stallard Daniels	
	T Widdows	P Winter
	R Yeoman	
	Against	5
	A Conway	A Crowe
	D Durham	M Eager
	E Harvey	

Members then considered the budget as set out in option 2.

The Town Council had previously resolved that it would not impose a precept increase of more than two percent without seeking agreement from the public through a referendum.

In order to attain a precept level below the trigger point for a referendum, it was

RESOLVED: That the burial ground reserves be reduced to £10,550.

VOTING:	For	14
	Abstentions	1

It was further **RESOLVED:** That the Committee budgets for 2014/15, as listed below, be approved, with a total net expenditure in the sum of £320,085.

	£
Environment & Leisure	116,923
Finance & General Purposes	186,762
Economic Development & Planning	16,400

VOTING:	For	12
	Abstentions	2

Cllr Harvey refrained from voting.

2. Precept request for 2014/15

In view of the approved budget and estimated closing balances, it was

RESOLVED: That Ledbury Town Council request a Precept of £271,912 from Herefordshire Council for the year 2014/15.

**VOTING: For 12
Abstentions 3**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.37pm.

Chairman..... Date.....