

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

-52-

Minutes of a Meeting of

Ledbury Town Council

held on Thursday 6th April 2017

in The Community Hall, Lawnside Road, Ledbury

Present: Councillors: The Town Mayor, Cllr D Baker, Chairman
A Bradford A Crowe
M Eager M Eakin
E Fieldhouse K Francis
N Shields J Simpson
H Wilce

In attendance: Mrs K Mitchell - Clerk to the Council
Mrs J Jupp – Administrative Assistant
8 Members of the public and 1 press
Inspector Callie Bradley and PCSO Dave Alexander

C.38 - 04.17 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors:

R Barnes
A Harrison (seated in public gallery)
E Harvey (seated in public gallery)
A Manns
N Morris
J Roberts,
N Roberts
A Warmington

C.39 - 04.17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Baker Crowe and Francis declared non-pecuniary interests in item F43 – 03.17 of the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee (EX03/2017)

C.40 - 04.17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Inspector Callie Bradley, appointed as Inspector for Safer Neighbourhood explained about policing in the local area. One Sergeant, one Police Constable and two Police Community Safety Officers were allocated to Ledbury.

Inspector Bradley highlighted several serious incidents, including an attack on the ATM in the Co-op in Bromyard, which was thwarted by the arrival of the police. Inspector Bradley warned that a gang of shoplifters were actively targeting small tourist centres; she asked that local businesses were made aware and put on their guard.

Inspector Bradley noted that Ledbury Police Station was covered 24 hours a day but if there was only one officer on duty and they were called out then there would be no cover.

The Inspector highlighted an on-going need for volunteers with IT skills, telephone skills, able to speak to victims of crime etc. Councillors were also welcome to accompany an officer on patrol, as a 'ride along'.

CSO Alexander advised that the next Partners and Communities Together (PACT) Meeting would be taking place on Monday 10 April at 7.00 pm in the Town Council Offices.

There had been a spike in anti-social behavior in the last few months but it had been addressed and was now much reduced. The Youth Drop In sessions were having a very positive impact on the Town.

The PACT was also feeding into the Safer Road Partnership. There had been three burglaries on the Deer Park which was unusual for the time of year. There had been arrests for drug related offences.

Councillor Harvey, who was seated in the Public Gallery and had given apologies for the meeting spoke about Love Ledbury. The Finance and General Purposes Committee had been asked to approve a return of grant funds which had been awarded to Love Ledbury in connection with the taking on of the Bye Street Toilets. Love Ledbury had set aside £2K for signage and sponsorship. Coin locks had been fitted and Love Ledbury had sought to address persistent and inherited faults. Funds had been committed to the legal process of registration which had taken a long time. Cllr Harvey requested that a decision regarding the return of funds was deferred until the additional information was available.

Councillor Harvey circulated copies of her speech and then left the meeting together with Councillors Harrison and Morris at 7.50 pm

C41 – 04.17 PRESENTATION

There were no representatives from the Friends of the Masters House in attendance to give a presentation regarding the Joined-Up Heritage Project.

C.42 - 04.17 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 2nd March 2017 were confirmed as an accurate record.

C.43 - 04.17 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

The Mayor delivered her report and highlighted forthcoming charity events she was arranging.

C.44 - 04.17 HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

No reports had been received.

C.45 - 04.17 COMMITTEE MATTERS - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING

As the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee were not present, Councillor Bradford (Committee member) presented the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2017, copies having been previously circulated.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes P.28 - 03.17 to P.39 - 03.17, be approved and adopted.

**VOTING: For 7
Abstentions 3**

C.46 – 04.17 COMMITTEE MATTERS - ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE

1. Councillor M Eager, Chairman of the Environment & Leisure Committee, explained that the minutes of the meeting which had taken place on 16 March 2017 had not yet been received from the external minute taker and would therefore be deferred until the next Full Council meeting.
2. Councillor Eager explained that at the end of the previous year the Council had approved the replacement of the Toddler Unit with a 'Little Miss Muffet Multi-Play Unit and the Straight Slide to be replaced with a 'Swingalong'. This involved retaining the bark surfacing. Councillors Barnes and Eager had since met with the contractors and they were now recommending a wetpour surfacing which involved additional costs. The Clerk explained that the additional costs amounted to £3,558.60, but that this was still within budget.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: To approve the replacement of the Toddler Unit and Straight Slide with the 'Little Miss Muffet' and 'Swingalong' with the wet pour surfacing for a total sum of £13,273.

**VOTING: For 9
Abstentions 1**

C.47 - 04.17 COMMITTEE MATTERS - FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES

In the absence of the Committee Chairman, Councillor Keith Francis, Vice Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, presented the Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd March 2017,

copies having been previously circulated.

Councillor Warmington had advised that he had not been present at the meeting and had given apologies. An amendment was therefore required to the minutes.

Reports from both the Internal and External Auditors had been received in the last few days. An Extraordinary Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee would be held to discuss these reports.

Councillor Francis read out the report of the External Auditor, Grant Thornton, for the Annual return for the year ended 31st March 2016. There were two areas that they could not give an opinion on, relating to Code of Conduct investigations but they had signed off the report.

The Annual Return had been challenged by a Ledbury Town Councillor. The cost of the actual audit was £800.00 but the work, as a result of the challenge, had incurred an additional cost of £1,980.00.

Councillor Crowe proposed a vote of thanks to the Clerk; she had undertaken a great deal of complex work for the Council.

Councillor Eager highlighted that the Clerk had been under intense pressure because of this unwarranted challenge and should be congratulated on her work, especially as she had no Deputy at the present time.

Regarding Item 5.4, Councillor Shields proposed that the decision regarding the Love Ledbury Grant Funding was deferred. The proposal was not seconded.

Councillor Eager highlighted that Love Ledbury had received the grant but not followed the terms and conditions; funds had been spent on items not covered by the grant, including registration as a Charity and a variance had not been requested; therefore the funds spend outside of the grant conditions should be returned.

Councillor Crowe requested that the minutes were amended to record that she had challenged Councillor Morris, regarding his non-disclosure of a Pecuniary Interest at the start of the meeting. Councillor Crowe had had to ask Councillor Morris if he was a member of Love Ledbury, during the discussions about the grant; he had confirmed that he was a newly appointed Trustee and had only then declared a pecuniary interest.

The grant to Love Ledbury had been made for locks, signage and advertising. Any other expenditure was outside of the terms of the grant.

A named vote was taken.

RESOLVED: To request that grant money that had been spent outside of the approved grant, together with unspent funds, be paid back to the Town Council.

VOTING:

For	7
D Baker	A Bradford
A Crowe	M Eager
M Eakin	E Fieldhouse
J Simpson	
Against	1
N Shields	
Abstentions	2
K Francis	H Wilce

The motion was carried.

Regarding F.39 – 03.17, the notes of the ICT Meeting which had taken place on 3 April 2017 had been circulated prior to the meeting.

RESOLVED: To approve the ICT proposal for 2 pages in the May 2017 edition of the Ledbury Focus and content as outlined in the report

VOTING: Unanimous

It was noted that the numbering in the Minutes had omitted F.41
Regarding F.43 – 03 17 Awards (numbering should be F.45), agreement was unanimous.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes F.30 – 03.17 to F.45 – 03.17 be approved and adopted.

C.48 - 04.17 COMMITTEE MATTERS – STANDING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting which had taken place on 6 March 2017 would be deferred until the next meeting.

C.49 - 04.17 CODE OF CONDUCT CONSULTATION

The Clerk advised that NALC and CALCs across the country were in discussion with the Government regarding the strengthening of the Code. After discussion Members felt that it would be prudent to wait until such time as the outcome of the discussions was known.

RESOLVED: To defer comment on the revised Code of Conduct pending the outcome of discussions by NALC and CALCs with the Government.

**VOTING: For 9
Abstention 1**

C.50 – 04.17 OUTSIDE BODIES

The report from Councillor Barnes regarding the HALC Meeting which had taken place on 23 March 2017, circulated at the meeting, was noted.

Councillor Eager spoke about the Market Towns Forum which had taken place on 29 March 2017. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was being replaced by a tariff which every developer would have to pay into. This development would need to be kept under close observation.

C.51 – 04.17 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk gave details of correspondence received in the office and noted that a fourth WW1 exhibition would be taking place in the summer.

The deadline for the completion of the return for the Intermediate Audit was 16 June 2017.

Councillor Fieldhouse confirmed that the NDP Communications Strategy was available on the Town Council Website.

C.52 - 04.17 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Annual meeting of the Town Council will be held on 11 May 2017 at the Community Hall, Lawnside Road, Ledbury.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.