



Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Full Council

Held on Monday 13th February 2023 at 7.00 pm

At the Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye. HR9 5HL

Present: Councillor E O'Driscoll – Chairman
Councillors C Bartrum, D Ciolte, L Delves, I Gumm, D Lister, B Pope,
J Roberts, M Setchfield, L Stark, P Symonds, J Utting, and J Winder.

In attendance: Sarah Robson – Town Clerk

There were three members of the public present, and one member of the press.

23/02#01 Apologies for Absence

[Local Government Act 1972 S85 \(1\)](#)

To receive and approve any apologies for absence

Councillors S Cole, P Cutter, D Ravenscroft, and R Taylor

RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.

Absent: Councillor K Fowler

23/02#02 Declarations of Interest

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

To receive Councillors' declarations of interest in items for discussion.

None

23/02#03 Applications for Dispensations

To receive Councillors' applications for dispensations.

None

23/02#04 Report from Ross Police

None present

7.02 pm Councillor Winder arrived at the meeting.

23/02#05 Herefordshire Councillor Ward Enquiries

[maximum time allowed 15 minutes].

Town Council Members to raise issues with the Ward Councillors, on matters to be dealt with at County level.

A question was asked in relation to the failed bid to the Levelling Up Fund for Model Farm, and whether Herefordshire Council (HC) had capital funds it could allocate to the project. Council was advised that HC intended to pursue the project as there was a sound business case for it but that it was unlikely to fund it directly.

23/02#06 Public Participation

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

A representative from Ross Community Litter Clear Up Crew addressed the Council to follow up on comments made at last year's Annual Parish Meeting in relation to the poor condition of cleanliness in the town. It was believed that some residents would be in support of an initiative to see the Town Council employ a street cleansing operative for this purpose.

She was advised that, whilst this is not something the Town Council is currently responsible for, discussions between HC and its public realm contractors were taking place in an effort to try and resolve this. It was noted that changes in the way the contract is managed will see improvements to communications and a full review of the service would be taking place.

7.10 pm One member of the public left the meeting

A member of the public raised a question relating to previous enquiries she had made about the possibility of renting some land for a small holding, and also land at Model Farm to run vocational training courses. She felt areas which were being underutilised could be used for community led projects and bring in some income to the Council. It was noted that the areas in question were not in the ownership of the Town Council and that on-going investigations by the Ward Councillor should continue.

23/02#07 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public.

[Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Lister

RESOLVED – that agenda item 23/02# 21 ‘Staff and Commercial in Confidence’ be treated as confidential and be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) have been excluded.

23/02#08 Full Council Meeting Minutes

[Local Government Act 1972 schedule 12 para 41\(1\)](#)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of Full Council held on Monday 14th November 2022.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of Full Council held on Monday 14th November 2022 be signed as a correct record.

23/02#09 Sub- Committees – To receive and note the minutes of the following meetings and approve any recommendations;

Planning & Development Sub-Committee 3rd January 2023

Finance & Property Sub-Committee 10th January 2023

Proposed: Councillor Bartrum
Unanimous

Seconder: Councillor Symonds

RESOLVED – to recommend to Full Council that the Election Costs EMR (Code 323) be closed and the balance of £2123.00 be transferred into the General Reserve.

The Chairman agreed that the other recommendation from the Finance & Property Sub-Committee would be moved to the end of the meeting when Council went into closed session. This was due to new information coming forward which was commercially confidential.

Amenities Sub-Committee 16th January 2023

CM&T Sub-Committee 17th January 2023

Proposed: Councillor O’Driscoll
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Gumm

Approval was given to make a recommendation to the Full Council to vire £585.42 from the Tourism budget to the Market Development and Promotion budget and to proceed with the purchase of the Market software from AdvantEdge.

Planning & Development Sub-Committee 31st January 2023

Amenities Sub-Committee 6th February 2023

Personnel Sub-Committee 7th February 2023

RESOLVED – to receive and note the above minutes as detailed and approve the Sub-Committee recommendations.

23/02#11 Working Groups

to receive and note the updated schedule of proposed meetings from the relevant conveners.

Working Group	Parent Committee	Convenor	Last/Next Meeting Held
Climate & Eco Emergency	Management	ClIr Roberts	Preparations are in hand to carry out an audit which would be concluded by April
Markets Strategy	CM&T	ClIr Pope	There are a number of proposals within the Strategy Document going to the next CM&T meeting
Play Strategy	Amenities	ClIr Pope	Work has commenced on obtaining external grants
Market House Phase II	Finance & Property	ClIr Utting	Work to conduct the tender evaluation was still on-going and work had commenced to scope out possible funding sources
Economic Investment Plan	CM&T	ClIr Bartrum	The elections in May would mean there was little prospect of seeing much progress in coming months
Keep Ross Tidy	CM&T	ClIr O’Driscoll	Plans to engage a part time enforcement officer have been put on hold for the time being
Dementia Friendly Community	CM&T	ClIr Roberts	The Library is hosting training events from February to April. A bid for grant funding to hold events during May for Dementia Action Week is being prepared

23/02#11 Mayor’s Announcements

to receive a verbal report from the Mayor.

The Mayor reported it had been a quiet month.

Tickets were now available for the Coronation Ball in May which the Mayor was using to raise funds for his Charity – Ross Community Development Trust.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/02#12 Town Clerk's Report

to receive and note the verbal update from the Town Clerk

- NALC is lobbying government for multi year exemption on referendum principles for local councils to offer more certainty and allow councils to better plan for the future and continue to support their communities through challenging times
- Notification had been received of plans for the Betzdorf twinning visit to Ross in May. The F&P Sub-Committee would be discussing the civic reception at its next meeting.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/02#13 Finance– Income & Expenditure 2022/2023

To review the budget information for the year to date.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/02#14 Finance – Accounts for payment [Cheque signatories to be Cllrs Bartrum & O'Driscoll]

[Local Government Act 1972 s150 \(5\)](#)

To receive and note items of expenditure paid since the last meeting and accept schedule of updated payments.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/02#15 Finance – 2022/2023

To review and confirm schedule of payments for 3rd quarter for Direct Debits, BACS payments and manual cheques.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

22/02#16 Finance – Budget 2023/2024

To approve recommendation from the Management Committee Chairman to Full Council for the adoption of the 2023/2024 expenditure budget of £709,965.00 and set the precept at £563,754.00 which equates to a 5% increase for Band D properties, value of £140.55 with any deficit at the Year End to come from General Reserves.

The Chairman proposed an amendment to the motion to approve an increase of 3%. He thanked the Clerk for the clear report outlining the options.

The consensus of opinion was that the budget deficit could be mitigated in future years by removing budgeted transfers into the earmarked reserves for projects to upgrade, and/or replace the Council's assets which might include the skatepark and playparks.

A concern was raised that this might create a future problem if budget deficits continued which would make it more difficult to support the community with services for youth provision and other facilities.

Councillors recognised the cost-of-living crisis would see financial hardship for some residents and appreciated that keeping the increase low was a gesture to acknowledge this. There was recognition that a 3% increase was in line with the budget set by HC and was consistent with rises in previous years by this Council.

There was a reminder issued that after a difficult few years this Council had put things back into the community through taking over a series of assets such as the public toilets, and the Market House whilst keeping the increases very low and that funds in reserve must be spent for the benefit of the community.

Proposed: Councillor O'Driscoll
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Stark

RESOLVED – to adopt the 2023/2024 expenditure budget of £709,965.00 and set the precept at £553,045.00 which equates to a 3% increase for Band D properties, value of £137.88 with any deficit at the Year End to come from General Reserves.

23/02#17 Health & Safety

To receive a verbal update on the application of the Council’s Health & Safety Policy, consider any outstanding actions from the Audit and to report any accidents or near misses.

A report from the Operations Manager confirmed there had been no reported accidents or near misses in relation to staff operations.

This month’s Toolbox Talk to staff had been carried out and new PPE was on order.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/02#18 Herefordshire Council Funding Schemes via ‘Welcome Back Fund’ and ‘Great Places to Visit’

To receive a verbal report and update on progress to date on the approved schemes and projects.

- The digital notice boards are still not live due to some hardware and connectivity issues. A request was made to look at how to put the screen in sleep mode overnight
- The works to extend the Buggy Route have been started, completion is expected soon

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/02#19 Official Representatives on Outside Bodies

Review of representation on, or work with external bodies

Board of the Community Association	Cllr Utting	It was reported that one of the Directors had died and the funeral at St Mary’s was taking place this week
Conde Twinning Association	Cllr Roberts	The planned Spring visit to Conde had been postponed until the Autumn and a recruitment drive for new members was in hand
HALC	Cllr Ravenscroft	Written report circulated

23/02#20 To confirm date of next meeting and propose items for consideration.

Management Committee Meeting – Monday 13th March 2023

8.00pm Members of the press and public left the meeting

23/02#21 In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item (Item 23/02#07 above refers)

To consider the recommendation from the Personnel Sub Committee meeting on 7th February 2023 - Agenda item P23/02#12 (ii)

RESOLVED - to make recommendation to Full Council to approve an increase in the contracted hours to 37 per week within the Community Development Officer post.

Council agreed the incumbent was very efficient and this would be a continued investment in staff resources.

Proposed: Councillor Symonds
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Utting

RESOLVED – to approve a permanent increase in contracted hours for the Community Development Officer post to a full time position of 37 hours per week.

Commercial in Confidence

To consider the recommendation from the Amenities Sub Committee meeting on 6th February 2023 - Agenda item A23/02#31 (i)

RESOLVED – to note the decision that the Council’s complaint had been upheld and to make a recommendation to Full Council to temporarily suspend further permissions for funeral services by this company until its conditions are fully met.

The Council requested that staff write to the owners of the cremated remains plot to apologise for the incident and offer an explanation as to the long delay in responding.

Proposed: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Winder

RESOLVED – to authorise staff to write to the relevant Funeral Director to confirm the temporary suspension of services at Tudorville Cemetery until the Council’s conditions are fully satisfied.

Finance & Property Sub-Committee 10th January 2023

RESOLVED – to recommend to Full Council that from May 2023 for the period of one year, that a pilot takes place to hold off site Full Council/Management meetings within the wards and that the Council Chamber becomes the main office space with the current office being utilised as a committee meeting room.

The Clerk informed the Council that new information in relation to a lease had been received and requested that a review of the recommendation made in relation to office accommodation be referred back to the Finance & Property Committee for further consideration.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.10 pm

Chairman

Date

Mayor/Deputy Mayor Diary Engagements: 10th January – 13th February 2023

No Engagements



Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council

Held on Monday 15th May 2023 at 7.00 pm

At the Larruperz Centre, Old Grammar School Close, Ross-on-Wye.

Present: Councillor E O'Driscoll – Outgoing Chair and Councillor Stark – Incoming Chair
Councillors C Bartrum, M Boylan, D Ciolte, V Coker, L Delves, S Foreman, K Fowler, S Freer,
D Lister, C Lodea, M Setchfield, R Taylor, J Utting, and J Winder.

In attendance: Sarah Robson – Town Clerk, Carla Boyles – Deputy Clerk and Charlotte Reynolds –
Community Development Officer

There were twelve members of the public present, and one member of the press.

23/05#22 Election of Mayor (Chair of the Council) and signing of the Declaration of the Acceptance of Office

[Local Government Act 1972 S14 \(1\), 15 \(1&2\), 33 \(1\) and 34 \(1&2\)](#)

Councillor O'Driscoll welcomed the members of the public and councillors and thanked everyone for coming. He expressed his appreciation to everyone for their support over the last year which had been exceptionally busy. He thanked the staff for their help too during a year which had seen for the first time in the country's history a monarch's jubilee, death and coronation.

Nominations were invited and Councillor Lister was nominated and accepted the nomination of Chair of the Council and Mayor.

Proposed: Councillor Coker
For: 5

Seconded: Councillor Boylan

Councillor Stark was also nominated and accepted the nomination of Chair of the Council and Mayor.

Proposed: Councillor Bartrum
For: 9

Seconded: Councillor Freer

Abstentions: 2

RESOLVED – that Councillor Stark be elected as Mayor and Chair of Ross-on-Wye Town Council unless he resigns or becomes disqualified and shall continue in office and preside at the Annual Meeting until his successor is elected at the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

7.05pm Councillor Stark took over chairing the meeting from Councillor O'Driscoll.

Cllr Stark addressed the meeting and thanked Cllr O'Driscoll for the splendid way in which he had dealt with everything over the last twelve months. He welcomed new and returning councillors to the new council for the next four years. He expressed that he felt things are difficult for local authorities still grappling with deep cuts alongside

austerity and rising inflation in what are unprecedented times. Herefordshire Council was no exception to these challenges and therefore there would be a lot less funding available at county level. Cllr Stark said he would push for fairer funding in Ross, as he believed at times too much funding ends up in Hereford. He commented on the need for the Town Council to come together and work more flexibly in terms of the areas of responsibility and the resources available and look at opportunities for filling in the gap with service provision at county level. He said as mayor he would try and do the best job to represent and promote the interests of Ross around the county and beyond to put Ross on the map.

The Mayor's charity for the coming year is Enviroability whose aim is to help vulnerable people, providing opportunities for positive developments in their lives

The Mayor signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

23/05#23 Election of Deputy Mayor

The Chair invited nominations and Councillors Boylan and Pope were nominated and accepted the nomination as Deputy Chair of the Council and Deputy Mayor.

Nomination for Councillor Boylan

Proposed: Councillor Lister
For: 6

Seconded: Councillor Foreman

Nomination for Councillor Pope

Proposed: Councillor Utting
For: 10

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

RESOLVED – that Councillor Pope be elected as Deputy Mayor and Deputy Chair of Ross-on-Wye Town Council unless she resigns or becomes disqualified and shall hold the office until immediately after the election of the Chair of the Council at the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

23/05#24 Mayor's Announcements - to receive a verbal report from the former Mayor.

The outgoing Mayor, Cllr O'Driscoll reported on a number of events he had attended, a list of engagements would be appended to the minutes.

23/05#25 Apologies for Absence

[Local Government Act 1972 S85 \(1\)](#)

To receive and approve any apologies for absence

Councillor B Pope

RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.

23/05#26 Declarations of Interest

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

To receive Councillors' declarations of interest in items for discussion.

None

23/05#27 Applications for Dispensations

To receive Councillors' applications for dispensations.

None

23/05#28 Report from Ross Police

A representative from the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team had sent written apologies and advised there was nothing to report. A reminder was issued to encourage reports to be made via email or phone and a response will be given.

23/05#29 Herefordshire Councillor Ward Enquiries

[maximum time allowed 15 minutes].

Town Council Members to raise issues with the Ward Councillors, on matters to be dealt with at County level.

None

23/05#30 Public Participation

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

A resident made a request about what opportunities members of the public had to ask councillors questions. It was noted that in addition to meetings, councillor surgeries will be starting soon at the Library on Saturdays, as well as contact through the website.

A question was asked in relation to works to the willows near the riverbank. The Amenities Sub-Committee Chair reported that the pollarding work had been authorised on the grounds of health and safety due to a danger of them failing. The pollarding increases the lifespan of the tree, and they grow back very quickly. A comment was made about the value of the willow rods.

23/05#31 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public.

[Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

No confidential business to be transacted

23/05#32 Full Council Meeting Minutes

[Local Government Act 1972 schedule 12 para 41\(1\)](#)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of Full Council held on Monday 13th February 2023.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of Full Council held on Monday 13th February 2023 be signed as a correct record.

23/05#33 Sub- Committees – To receive and note the minutes of the following meetings and approve any recommendations;

Planning & Development Sub-Committee 25th April 2023

RESOLVED – to receive and note the above minutes as detailed.

23/05#34 Committee Membership

[Standing Orders Clause 5j \(vii\) and 4d \(vi\)](#)

i) to consider nominations for appointments to Committees, Sub Committees, Panels and Working Groups

The Chair proposed that voting for appointments to the sub-committees would be done en bloc once all the nominations were put forward. Councillors were reminded that if they are unable to attend it is their responsibility to find a substitute to deputise for them.

- Amenities Sub-Committee

Proposed – that Councillors Boylan, Ciolte, Coker, Fowler, Lister, Pope, Setchfield, Taylor, Utting and Winder be appointed to the Amenities Sub-Committee.

- Community, Markets & Tourism Sub-Committee

Proposed – that Councillors Boylan, Foreman, Fowler, Freer, Lister, Lodea, O’Driscoll, Pope and Taylor be appointed to the Community, Markets & Tourism Sub-Committee

- Finance and Property Sub-Committee

Proposed – that Councillors Bartrum, Delves, Foreman, Freer, O’Driscoll, Stark, Utting and Winder be appointed to the Finance & Property Sub-Committee

- Planning & Development Sub-Committee

Proposed – that Councillors Ciolte, Delves, Foreman, Lodea, Setchfield and Winder be appointed to the Planning & Development Sub-Committee

- Personnel Sub-Committee

Proposed – that Councillors Bartrum, Ciolte, Delves, Freer, Stark and Utting be appointed to the Personnel Sub-Committee

- Personnel Appeals Panel

Proposed – that Councillors Boylan, Fowler, Lister, Setchfield and Winder be appointed to the Personnel Appeals Panel.

Proposed: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Setchfield

RESOLVED – to appoint all proposed members to the Sub-Committees as minuted.

ii) to appoint chairs to the standing committee and sub-committees.

Nominations for the Management Committee chair were invited.

Proposed: Councillor O’Driscoll
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Lister

Councillor Utting was appointed to be chair of the Management Committee.

Nominations for the Amenities Sub-Committee chair were invited.

Nomination for Councillor Winder
Proposed: Councillor Lister

Seconded: Councillor Setchfield

Nomination for Councillor Lister
Proposed: Councillor Fowler

Seconded: Councillor Boylan

On being put to the vote:

Councillor Winder received 13 votes and Councillor Lister received 3 votes.

Councillor Winder was therefore appointed to be chair of the Amenities Sub-Committee.

Nominations for the Communities, Markets & Tourism Sub-Committee chair were invited.

Nomination for Councillor O'Driscoll

Proposed: Councillor Freer

Seconded: Councillor Winder

Nomination for Councillor Fowler

Proposed: Councillor Boylan

Seconded: Councillor Lister

On being put to the vote:

Councillor O'Driscoll received 12 votes and Councillor Fowler received 2 votes.

Abstentions: 2

Councillor O'Driscoll was appointed to be chair of the Community, Markets & Tourism Sub-Committee.

Nominations for the Finance & Property Sub-Committee chair were invited.

Proposed: Councillor O'Driscoll

Seconded: Councillor Bartrum

For: 15 Abstention: 1

Councillor Utting was appointed to be chair of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee.

Nominations for the Planning & Development Sub-Committee chair were invited.

Proposed: Councillor Lister

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

Unanimous

Councillor Ciolte was appointed to be chair of the Planning & Development Sub-Committee.

Nominations for the Personnel Sub-Committee chair were invited.

Proposed: Councillor Bartrum

Seconded: Councillor Freer

For: 13 Abstentions: 3

Councillor Delves was appointed to be chair of the Personnel Sub-Committee.

23/05#35 General Power of Competence

[Localism Act 2011 s 1 \(1\)](#)

To formally confirm the Town Council's eligibility and adopt the use of the General Power of Competence.

Proposed: Councillor Bartrum

Seconded: Councillor Utting

Unanimous

RESOLVED: to confirm the Town Council's eligibility and adopt the use of the General Power of Competence.

23/05#36 Appointment of Official Representatives on Outside Bodies

- i) *Review of representation on, or work with external bodies and consider and agree arrangements for reporting back.*

Proposed: Councillor O'Driscoll
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Winder

Organisation	Appointed
Basement Youth Trust	Cllr Boylan
Betzdorf Twinning Association	Cllr O'Driscoll
Board of the Community Association	Cllr Fowler, Cllr Utting
Condé Twinning Association	Cllr Pope - Provisional
Dementia Matters Here(fordshire)	Cllr Freer
Education Foundation	Cllr Delves
Friends of St Mary's	Cllr Bartrum
HALC Area Committee	Cllr Foreman, Cllr Stark
HALC Executive	Cllr Foreman, Cllr Stark
Herefordshire Destination BID Board	Cllr O'Driscoll
Namutumba Twinning Association	Cllr Bartrum
Parochial Church Council	Cllr Taylor
Ross Charity Trustees	Cllr Coker
Ross Community Development Trust	Cllr O'Driscoll
Ross Community Litter Clear Up Crew	Cllr Winder
Ross in Bloom	Cllr Taylor
Ross Library Development Group	Cllr Freer
Ross Sports Centre	Cllr Lister, Cllr Winder
Rural Market Town Group	Cllr Stark
Tudorville & District Community Centre	Cllr Boylan, Cllr Fowler
Walkers are Welcome	Cllr Taylor

- ii) *to consider request from the Herefordshire Sustainable Growth Strategy Board for applications for vacant posts of Chair of the Board and Board Member and consider nominees.*

Cllr Boylan expressed an interest in making an application, the Clerk was authorised to forward the paperwork.

23/05#37 General Data Protection Awareness Checklist for Councillors

To receive and confirm responsibility under the General Data Protection Regulation for protecting personal data.

Councillors were asked to sign and return the Form to the office, it was noted that the Checklist is advisory, but recommended.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the Checklist.

23/05#38 Meetings

To confirm the Schedule of Meetings for 2023/2024.

It was noted there are a lot of meetings scheduled and it was proposed that each sub-committee review its schedule to see if there is any possibility to reduce the number of meetings.

RESOLVED – to note the provisional Schedule of Meetings for 2023/2024 subject to a further review with the aim of reducing the number of meetings.

23/05#39 Finance – Bank Mandates

To appoint six councillors to be the nominated cheque signatories, with any two councillors to sign.

Proposed: Councillor O’Driscoll
Unanimous

Seconder: Councillor Bartrum

RESOLVED – to confirm authority for Councillors Bartrum, Coker, Foreman, Freer, O’Driscoll and Pope to act as signatories, with any two Councillors to sign.

23/05#40 Finance – Internal Auditor

To note the decision of the Finance & Property Committee (FP22/09#66) regarding the appointment of the Council’s Internal Auditor – Auditing Solutions for a four-year contract commencing 2022/2023.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the decision.

23/05#41 Internal Audit 2022/2023

- i) to receive and consider the Final Internal Audit Report (2022/23) and accept and note the conclusions.*
- ii) to confirm there is a sound and appropriate range of internal control measures in place.*

Staff were thanked for their hard work which had resulted in another clean bill of health on the internal audit work. Councillors were thanked for their work too in verifying the processes, ensuring good systems were adopted and taking a sound, proactive approach to risk management through effective control measures.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report and confirm there is a sound and appropriate range of internal control measures in place .

23/05#42 Finance – External Audit 2022/2023 Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement

[Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 \[Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015\]](#)

To acknowledge and confirm the Council’s responsibilities for ensuring a sound system of internal control has been met and to approve the assertions contained within the Annual Governance Statement and authorise the Chair and the Clerk to sign the Return.

The Clerk and staff were thanked for their efforts in carrying out their work with accuracy.

Councillor Utting confirmed he had looked through the financial workings and was satisfied all the accounts were accurately represented.

Proposed: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Lister

RESOLVED – to approve the signing of the Annual Governance Statement for the financial year 2022/2023.

23/05#43 Finance – External Audit 2022/2023 Section 2 - Accounting Statements

[Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 \[Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015\]](#)

To confirm the Accounting Statements present fairly the Council’s financial position and approve authority for the Chair to sign the Accounting Statements.

It was reported that the figures had been verified by the Chair of F&P who had also looked at the internal audit reports, verified all the cashbooks and bank account balances.

Proposed: Councillor O’Driscoll
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Bartrum

RESOLVED - to approve authority for the Chair to sign Section 2 – The Accounting Statement for the year 2022/2023 confirming it presents fairly the Council’s financial position.

23/05#44 Finance – Accounts for payment [Cheque Signatories to be confirmed]
[Local Government Act 1972 s150 \(5\)](#)
To review and note items of expenditure received since the last meeting.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/05#45 Health & Safety
To receive a verbal update on the application of the Council’s Health & Safety Policy, consider any outstanding actions from the Audit and to report any accidents or near misses.

A report from the Operations Manager confirmed there had been no reported accidents or near misses in relation to staff operations. This month’s Toolbox Talk to staff on the subject of Eye Protection had been carried out. Thanks were offered to the Operations Manager for his work, councillors noted there looked to be a happy team working pro-actively and doing a good job. The new operative was a welcome addition and already making a difference to the town centre cleanliness. The more proactive approach to health & safety was very much welcomed.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/05#46 Town Clerk’s Report – to receive and note the update from the Town Clerk (for information only)

- Councillor Training evening on May 18th at 7pm in the Council Chamber
- Details of other training opportunities to be circulated in due course
- Reminder to complete Registerable Interests Forms and Elections Expenses Return

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/05#47 To confirm date of next meeting and venue and propose items for consideration.
Full Council Meeting – Monday 12th June 2023 at Tudorville & District Community Centre.
Agenda items – Co-option to the Ross East Ward vacancy / Police Charter and priorities

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.20pm

Chair

Date

Mayor/Deputy Mayor Diary Engagements: 18th April – 15th May 2023

Start	Subject	Mayor	Location
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Thurs 27th April 11:00	Grand Opening Ultrafilter	Ross-on-Wye
Sat 29th April 09:00	Together for Short Lives Charity Cycle Morrisons	Ross-on-Wye
Sat 6th May 19:00	Mayor's Coronation Ball	Ross-on-Wye
Sun 7th May 11:00	Service of Celebration for Coronation	Ross-on-Wye
Tues 9th May 10:00	Opening of St Michael's Hospice new shop	Ross-on-Wye
Thurs 11th May 19:00	The Royal Hotel Quiz Night	Ross-on-Wye
Sat 13th May 13:00	Joyce Thomas Memorial	Ross-on-Wye

Deputy Mayor

Fri 5th May 14:00	Ashfield Park Primary Coronation Party	Ross-on-Wye
Sat 6th May 14:00	Holm Lea Coronation Party	Ross-on-Wye



Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Full Council

Held on Monday 12th June 2023 at 7.00 pm

At Tudorville & District Community Centre, 6 Walford Avenue, Ross-on-Wye HR9 5PZ

Present: Councillor L Stark – Chair
Councillors C Bartrum, M Boylan, D Ciolte, V Coker, L Delves, S Foreman, K Fowler,
S Freer, D Lister, C Lodea, E O’Driscoll, M Setchfield, R Taylor, J Utting, and J Winder.

In attendance: Sarah Robson – Town Clerk

There were nine members of the public present, and one member of the press, and one member of the Police.

23/06#47 Apologies for Absence

[Local Government Act 1972 S85 \(1\)](#)

To receive and approve any apologies for absence

Councillor B Pope

RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.

23/06#49 Declarations of Interest

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

To receive Councillors’ declarations of interest in items for discussion.

Councillor Fowler declared a Non-Registrable Interest in agenda item 23/06#51 as her spouse was one of the candidates for the co-option.

23/06#50 Applications for Dispensations

To receive Councillors’ applications for dispensations.

None

7.02 pm Councillor Fowler left the meeting having declared an Interest

23/06#51 Co-option

[Local Elections \(Parishes & Communities\)\(England & Wales\) Rules 2006](#)

i) To appoint a co-opted councillor to the vacancy in the Ross East Ward.

The chairman thanked the candidates for expressing an interest, he said how delighted he was that people were willing to put themselves forward.

It was suggested that in line with advice given at the recent training session that the Council approves to move to a vote by using a paper ballot in line with Standing Order 3r.

Proposed: Councillor O’Driscoll

Seconded: Councillor Ciolte

For: 14 Against: 1

RESOLVED – to approve the voting method of using a paper ballot.

Candidate names;

- *Caroline Bennett*

- Terry Fitzgerald
- Neil Fowler
- James Vidler

The candidates were individually invited to address Council. At the end of the presentation on being put to a paper ballot, there was a majority in favour of Mr. James Vidler.

RESOLVED – that under the Representation of the People Act 1985 s21 Mr. James Vidler be co-opted to the vacancy in the Ross East Ward.

Councillor Vidler was congratulated on being co-opted he then signed the Declaration of Acceptance Form and took his seat at the table.

ii) To confirm sub-committee appointments for the newly co-opted councillor

RESOLVED – to appoint Councillor Vidler to the Community Markets & Tourism Sub-Committee.

23/06#52 Report from Ross Police

i) To receive a verbal report from a representative of the Safer Neighbourhood Team

PC Ben Davidson was welcomed to his first meeting as he was new to the town. A number of questions were raised about what was being done at a higher level to tackle the drugs problem locally, and relating to the increase in anti-social behaviour and fires particularly at the Rope Walk. Councillors asked if there were going to be more foot patrols in key areas and whether PCC funding was available to enable an increase in resources?

Councillors were reminded of the need to continue to report problems to the Police.

ii) To note the Local Policing Community Charter and agree three priorities for the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) in Ross

The Council discussed which priorities it wanted to identify for the first quarter and agreed to request that the SNT focus on antisocial behaviour particularly within the night time economy, drugs, and shoplifting.

7.41pm PC Davidson left the meeting

23/06#53 Herefordshire Councillor Ward Enquiries [maximum time allowed 15 minutes].
Town Council Members to raise issues with the Ward Councillors, on matters to be dealt with at County level.

A number of questions were asked, and updates were given on the following;

- the reinstatement of the cliffs along Wilton Road
- the trees at the top of the cliff obstructing the view from the Prospect
- the pedestrian crossing at Hildersley
- the Economic Investment Plan
- installing a crossing at John Kyrle High School, Ledbury Road
- the pavement at Redhill which is blocked off
- speed enforcement measures at Ledbury Road

23/06#54 Public Participation

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

A question was asked about the problems with a particular garage at Purland, it was noted this was a Connexus matter, the Ward Councillor had reported this, and it was in

the process of being dealt with. It was noted there was lots of rubbish left which was in the process of being cleared.

Ross Town Carnival – a question was asked about its future and whether it was taking place any longer. It was noted that a member of the Carnival Committee had made an approach to a town councillor, and this is to be considered at a future CMT meeting.

There is to be a Family Fun Day on 6th August at the Ropewalk but no parade.

A resident of Smallbrook Gardens raised a concern about the vegetation which needs cutting back as it is causing difficulties for buggies to get past.

23/06#55 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public

[Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

No confidential business to be transacted

23/06#56 Full Council Meeting Minutes

[Local Government Act 1972 schedule 12 para 41\(1\)](#)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 15th May 2023

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 15th May 2023 be signed as a correct record.

23/06#57 Committees – to receive and note the minutes of the following meetings and approve any recommendations;

Finance & Property Sub-Committee 16th May 2023

Planning & Development Sub-Committee 23rd May 2023

CM&T Sub-Committee 30th May 2023

RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council approval of expenditure proposals from the Tourism budget of £1,200 for social media (including giveaways, Visit Dean Wye membership, social media advertising and influencer expenses), £4,000 for marketing (including Tourism Guide update and reprint, Tourism Guide distribution, concertina mini cards reprint and distribution, prize for newsletter subscriptions and other marketing materials/projects), £1,500 for Summer Sounds in the Market Place (two or three afternoons of music at Saturday markets), £5,000 for Equinox Festival 2023 (subject to external match funding) and £3,300 miscellaneous marketing and promotional activities.

Proposed: Councillor O’Driscoll
Unanimous

Seconder: Councillor Utting

RESOLVED: To recommend approval to Full Council that the Christmas Lights Earmarked Reserve be used towards hedgehog lights for the lighting columns on Wilton Road and related expenditure, and to apply for Street Lighting Attachment Licences for Wilton Road when the application process is launched.

Proposed: Councillor O’Driscoll
For: 15 Abstentions: 2

Seconder: Councillor Utting

Amenities Sub-Committee

5th June 2023

RESOLVED – to receive and note the above minutes as detailed and approve the Sub-Committee recommendations.

23/06#58 Working Groups

i) *Climate & Eco Emergency Working Group*

- *To receive and note the written report from J Roberts, former Working Group convenor*
- *To discuss and agree proposed Terms of Reference*
- *To appoint councillors to the Working Group and confirm the convenor*

A deferral was agreed pending a report from Jane Roberts, the former convenor.

ii) *to receive and note the updated schedule of proposed meetings from the relevant conveners (for information only).*

Working Group	Parent Committee	Convenor
Play Strategy	Amenities	To be confirmed
Market House Phase II	Property	To be confirmed
Economic Investment Plan	CM&T	To be confirmed
Keep Ross Tidy	CM&T	Cllr Winder – meeting on 16 th June

23/06#59 Mayor’s Announcements

to receive a verbal report from the Mayor.

The Mayor reported a few highlights which included attending the Betzdorf twinning reception recently, and hosting an enjoyable meeting with the Namutumba representatives and visitors. ‘Soak the Stark’ had been well supported and the Mayor thanked those councillors and staff involved in helping to raise funds for such a good cause.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/06#60 Town Clerk’s Report

to receive and note the verbal update from the Town Clerk

- Volunteers for the Proms event at the Bandstand on 16th July were sought
- The change of name from the Old Chapel to the Town Hall had been put out for consultation by Royal Mail
- Councillors were asked to collect the password for encrypted documents to enable safe sharing of confidential electronic information

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/06#61 Finance – Income & Expenditure 2023/2024

[Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015](#)

To review the budget information for the year to date.

The Chair of the Finance Sub-Committee reported it was good to see that income has exceeded its target to date. He requested that the Amenities Sub-Committee be asked to confirm that a moratorium on the funding for the Solar Barrier be approved to help reduce the funding gap in the Council’s overall budget.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/06#62 Finance – Accounts for payment [Cheque Signatories to Councillors Freer and O’Driscoll]

[Local Government Act 1972 s150 \(5\)](#)

To receive and note items of expenditure paid since the last meeting and approve schedule of updated payments.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/06#63 Finance – 2022/2023

To review and confirm schedule of payments for 4th quarter for Direct Debits, BACS payments and manual cheques.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/06#64 Civility & Respect Pledge [Sign the Pledge](#)

[In collaboration with the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), National Association of Local Councils (NALC), One Voice Wales (OVW) and County Associations]

To receive and note the written report and confirm renewal of the Council's resolution to commit to demonstrating positive changes which support civil and respectful conduct.

The Chair reflected that he felt this was a valuable document. He noted that recent developments had shown that people need to be respectful, be transparent and honest with one another.

Proposed: Councillor Utting

Seconder: Councillor Foreman

For: 16 Abstention: 1

RESOLVED – to renew the Council's commitment to demonstrating positive changes which support civil and respectful conduct through the aims of the Pledge.

23/06#65 Councillor Buddy Scheme

To seek nominations under the Buddy Scheme and approve to partner up experienced councillors with newly elected 'first time' councillors.

The Chair expressed that new councillors would benefit from participating in this useful scheme and in any event all councillors would be happy to be available to offer help. Councillor Utting offered to assist with anyone needing help with financial questions. Nominations were sought for those seeking a 'buddy'.

RESOLVED - to appoint the following 'buddys';

Councillor Boylan – Councillor Fowler

Councillor Foreman – Councillor Coker

Councillor Freer – Councillor O'Driscoll

Councillor Vidler – Councillor Utting

23/06#66 Councillor Surgeries

To discuss proposals to hold regular surgeries and confirm future arrangements.

The Chair suggested the need to formalise arrangements for the continuation of the weekly surgeries held at the Library every Saturday. He expressed there were no issues with current arrangements however there was a need to ensure that insurance cover would be in place for councillors whilst representing the Town Council.

It was proposed that a new surgery event on the last Thursday monthly at the Market be authorised to engage with people in the community. It was agreed the footfall would allow good opportunities for better engagement.

It was agreed that the office would draw up the rota and councillors were asked to let the office know their availability.

Proposal: Councillor Utting

Seconded: Councillor Lister

Unanimous

RESOLVED – to approve arrangements to hold weekly and monthly Councillor Surgeries.

23/06#67 Community, Markets & Tourism - Sub Committee Membership

To receive and accept request from Councillors Foreman and Pope to stand down from the Community, Markets & Tourism Sub-Committee with immediate effect.

Proposal: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

RESOLVED – to approve the request by Councillors Foreman and Pope to stand down from the Community, Markets & Tourism Sub-Committee with immediate effect.

23/06#68 Health & Safety

To receive a verbal update on the application of the Council’s Health & Safety Policy, consider any outstanding actions from the Audit and to report any accidents or near misses.

A report from the Operations Manager confirmed there had been no reported accidents or near misses in relation to staff operations.

This month’s Toolbox Talk on Leptospirosis had been carried out as well as on site Health & Safety induction and training.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/06#69 Official Representatives on Outside Bodies

To receive reports from Councillors appointed to represent the Town Council on the following bodies

Friends of St Mary’s	Cllr Bartrum	Open Gardens – very successful, great event, well supported with £9k being raised through 700 visitors
Namutumba Twinning Association	Cllr Bartrum	3 visitors from Uganda had been welcomed it had been an excellent visit hearing of some great achievements in Uganda. Councillors were invited to a reception on Friday in the White Lion to wish the visitors well
Ross Sports Centre	Cllr Stark	A request to give prizes to a women’s football competition had been received. It was encouraging to see a good recovery post Covid with the Centre flourishing

An amendment was proposed to the HALC Executive nomination as the Council had been informed that only one appointee was allowed. It was approved that Councillor Foreman be the nominated representative on behalf of the Council.

Proposed: Councillor Stark
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

RESOLVED – to note the report and approve Councillor Foreman to be the nominated representative on behalf of the Council.

23/06#70 To confirm date of next meeting and propose items for consideration.

Management Committee Meeting – Monday 10th July 2023 – Ashfield Park Primary School

- Arrangements for Autumn Away Day
- River Wye Working Group to facilitate conversations between stakeholders

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.52pm

Chairman

Date

Mayor/Deputy Mayor Diary Engagements: 16th May – 12th June 2023

	Mayor	
Start	Subject	Location
Sat 27th May 11:00	Betzdorf Twinning Reception	Ross-on-Wye
Thurs 8th June 16:00	Summer Get Together Harrison Clark Rickerbys	Gorsley
Friday 9 th June 11:00	Reception for Namutumba Visitors	Ross-on-Wye
Sat 10th June 11:00	Soak the Stark	Ross-on-Wye



Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Full Council

Held on Monday 9th October 2023 at 7.00 pm

At the Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye. HR9 5HL

Present: Councillor L Stark – Chair
Councillors D Ciolte, V Coker, L Delves, S Foreman, S Freer, C Lodea, E O’Driscoll,
M Setchfield, R Taylor, J Utting, J Vidler and, J Winder.

In attendance: Sarah Robson – Town Clerk

There were two members of the public present, and two members of the press

23/10#71 Apologies for Absence

[Local Government Act 1972 S85 \(1\)](#)

To receive and approve any apologies for absence

Councillors C Bartrum, M Boylan, K Fowler, D Lister and B Pope

RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.

23/10#72 Declarations of Interest

[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)

To receive Councillors’ declarations of interest in items for discussion.

Councillor Coker declared a Schedule 1 Interest in Agenda Item 23/10#84 as there was a payment due to her company.

23/10#73 Applications for Dispensations

To receive Councillors’ applications for dispensations.

None

23/10#74 Report from Ross Police

i) To receive a verbal report from a representative of the Safer Neighbourhood Team.

No Police representative was available to attend, it was noted that a link to the crime statistics which had been circulated showed a lot of crime within the town. A request was asked for a written report to advise how the Police intend to tackle the crime. A recent press article reported Ross having the second highest crime rate in the County. It was agreed that the Clerk, on behalf of the Council would write a formal letter to the Police and Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to ask why crime is not being addressed within Ross and a request for more resources. It was suggested that the decline in numbers of police officers in recent years was a contributory factor. The PCC had recently stated that lack of safety was identified as a risk factor and that resources needed to be deployed to address the risk.

ii) To note the Local Policing Community Charter and agree three priorities for the Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) in Ross.

The Council discussed which priorities it wanted to identify for the coming months and agreed to request that the SNT focus on the existing main priorities which are carried forward. They are antisocial behaviour within the night time economy, drugs and shoplifting.

23/10#75 Herefordshire Councillor Ward Enquiries [maximum time allowed 15 minutes].
Town Council Members to raise issues with the Ward Councillors, on matters to be dealt with at County level.

A number of questions were asked, and updates were given on the following;

- Concerns of insufficient ambulance cover to respond to emergencies, Ward Members reported this could be raised as a concern with the Integrated Care Board for consideration.
- HC would be approached by the Eco & Climate Change Working Group for information about ownership of sites for potential tree planting

23/10#76 Public Participation

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

Lana Dawe the new local Talk Community Officer introduced herself and explained how her role would be to focus on building resilience within the community and reducing isolation. The issues of youth provision and community hubs were high on the agenda and the importance of finding spaces for young people which would in turn help reduce street crime were seen as priorities. Talk Community is currently working with Heart Start to provide training for defibs, and they are looking for places to hold training to provide CPR to local people within the community.

23/10#77 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public

[Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed: Councillor Stark
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O'Driscoll

RESOLVED – that agenda item 23/10#92 - 'Staff in Confidence' be treated as confidential and be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) have been excluded.

23/10#78 Full Council Meeting Minutes

[Local Government Act 1972 schedule 12 para 41\(1\)](#)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of Full Council held on Monday 12th June 2023

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of Full Council held on Monday 12th June 2023 be signed as a correct record.

23/10#79 Committees – to receive and note the minutes of the following meetings and approve any recommendations;

Management Committee

11th September 2023

RESOLVED – to recommend to Full Council that Standing Order 3i) should be amended to state that 'a person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and

may stand when speaking’ and to delete the remaining bracketed section and final sentence of the original clause.

Standing Orders – to stand adjourned without discussion until the next ordinary meeting of the Council [Full Council – Monday 13th November 2023]

Planning & Development Sub-Committee 12th September 2023

CM&T Sub-Committee 19th September 2023

Personnel Sub-Committee 3rd October 2023

RESOLVED – to receive and note the above minutes as detailed.

The Chairman asked if a member of the press was recording the meeting. It was noted that whilst this was permissible it was courteous to advise those present.

23/10#80 Working Groups

To receive and note the updated schedule of proposed meetings from the relevant conveners (for information only).

Working Group	Parent Committee	Convenor	Last/Next Meeting Held
Climate & Eco Emergency	Management	Cllr Taylor	Members were reminded of the Group’s Terms of Reference. A meeting took place w/c 2nd October to consider next steps on actions to improve biodiversity. It was noted that a motion to HC had been put forward to ask the government to return to previously agreed target dates for reaching net zero.
Play Strategy	Amenities	Cllr Pope	Not present
Market House Phase II	Finance & Property	Cllr Utting	Applications to grant funders for renovations to the Market House have been made, outcomes will be known by December. Preparations are in hand to ensure that the expenditure to carry out evaluation be confirmed to establish data collection and carry out community consultation and engagement.
Refresh Ross	CM&T	Cllr Winder	A meeting took place on Friday 5 th October to discuss the Rubbish/Litter Festival, lots of activities taking place during Half Term week.

23/10#81 Mayor’s Announcements

to receive a verbal report from the Mayor.

The Mayor reported a few highlights from the events he had recently attended, they included two civic services, the Equinox Festival, to which he thanked the organisers of the event, he expressed how pleased he felt that the town was doing well. The joint charity fund raising event at the Sports Centre had raised £500 for each of the beneficiaries.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/10#82 Town Clerk’s Report

to receive and note the verbal update from the Town Clerk.

- Councillors were reminded of the invitation to attend the 232 Daffodil Line Stakeholders Meeting on 11th October. A representative from the group would be attending the November Full Council meeting to make a report on progress to date

- The interim internal audit was scheduled for this week and a report would be available to present at the next Finance & Property Sub-Committee meeting
- Councillors were reminded of the invitation to go out with Vennture in Hereford to see the Safer Streets scheme in action

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/10#83 Finance – Income & Expenditure 2023/2024

[Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015](#)

To review the budget information for the year to date.

It was noted that rental income for the toilets is very low, but a pleasant surprise that the Markets income was higher than anticipated.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/10#84 Finance – Accounts for payment [Signatories to be Councillors Bartrum and Coker]

[Local Government Act 1972 s150 \(5\)](#)

To receive and note items of expenditure paid since the last meeting and approve schedule of updated payments.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/10#85 Finance – 2023/2024

To review and confirm schedule of payments for 1st & 2nd quarters for Direct Debits, BACS payments and manual cheques.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/10#86 Town Clerk’s Delegated Powers.

[Local Government Act 1972 s101](#)

The Town Clerk will give Council details of any matters dealt with under delegated powers since the last meeting.

The Clerk reported that in consultation with the Finance & Property Sub-Committee Chairman, the appointment of a consultant had been authorised to start on the evaluation process as part of the grant condition for works to the Market House. The Council was advised the scheduling was critical to ensure that early consultation and engagement could be carried out to establish benchmarking data. The cost for the works had been included in the budget for £6k.

In line with the adopted Financial Regulations Clause 5.5c a bank transfer of £10k had been made. A new bank savings account had been opened and the transfer made so that the Council’s funds could start earning interest. An agenda item for the next Finance & Property Sub-Committee meeting would look at potential options to maximise the return on the Council’s investments.

Proposed: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Foreman

RESOLVED – to receive, accept and note the report.

23/10#87 Health & Safety

To receive a verbal update on the application of the Council’s Health & Safety Policy, consider any outstanding actions from the Audit and to report any accidents or near misses.

A report from the Operations Manager confirmed there had been no reported accidents or near misses in relation to staff operations. However Council was advised of an incident where a threat of violence was made to one of the contracted grounds maintenance operatives.

The Clerk expressed concern of a report of a councillor authorising use of land and a reminder was issued of Standing Orders which state that unless duly authorised no councillor shall inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or issue orders, instructions or directions. Investigations were on-going to establish further facts and a report would be made at a future meeting.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/10#88 Policies

- i) *to review the Council’s policy on the following and agree the frequency of the review period; [Deferred from Management Meeting M23/09#97] Sustainability Policy [Last Reviewed October 2021]*

Proposed: Councillor Delves
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Freer

RESOLVED – to approve the proposed amendments and adopt the revised policy with immediate effect.

- ii) *to adopt the proposed Equality & Diversity Policy*

Proposed: Councillor Stark
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Foreman

RESOLVED – to adopt the Policy and task the Personnel Sub-Committee to develop the policy wider to cover inclusion.

23/10#89 Official Representatives on Outside Bodies

To receive reports from Councillors appointed to represent the Town Council on the following bodies

Betzdorf Twinning Association	Cllr O’Driscoll	A recent visit to attend the 70 th anniversary Civic Celebrations for the founding of the town had been much appreciated by Betzdorf
Ross Charity Trustees	Cllr Coker	The Charity acts as social landlord for a number of local properties. The next meeting is 20 th October
Ross Community Litter Clear Up Crew	Cllr Winder	The Group would be attending the forthcoming Refresh Ross festival and doing a litter pick around town
Herefordshire County D Bid	Cllr O’Driscoll	Ross hosted the recent Board Meeting and was able to showcase tourism initiatives within the town. A grant scheme has been opened for the towns to bid for funding towards projects
Walkers are Welcome	Cllr Taylor	The annual walking event saw a record number of attendees with 400 tickets sold
Rural Market Towns Group	Cllr Stark	Recognition of a rural funding gap, support from local MP is sought to rebalance the situation. Twinning Associations in some localities are struggling

7.52pm Cllr O’Driscoll left the meeting

7.53 pm Cllr O’Driscoll returned to the meeting

A request was made for an item for the next Full Council meeting on how the Twinning Associations can be better supported to help them develop to attract increased membership.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/10#90 To discuss and confirm arrangements for the Council ‘awayday’ on Friday 27th October
The purpose of the Away Day would be to start developing a 4 Year Strategy which would be ready to take to the next Full Council meeting. It was planned to have three themes for proposals to sit within, and the event would allow opportunities for discussion about priorities. A request was made to circulate information on what the event is aiming to deliver.

23/10#91 To confirm date of next meeting and propose items for consideration.
Full Council Meeting – Monday 13th November 2023 at the Council Chamber, Corn Exchange
Items for discussion - Twinning/Standing Order amendments

8.00pm Members of the press and public were thanked for attending and left the meeting.

23/10#92 In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item.
(Item 23/10#77 above refers)

Staff in Confidence

To consider the recommendations from the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting on 3rd October 2023 - Agenda item P23/10#44

i) to confirm and authorise documents for the recruitment of a successor and agree timetable for recommendation to Full Council

Thanks were given to the Clerk for her work over the last 8 years.

Proposed: Councillor Delves

Seconded: Councillor Freer

RESOLVED – to approve the documents contained within the recruitment pack and to confirm the instruction for HALC to facilitate the interview process. The Panel of councillors recommended by the Personnel Sub-Committee was authorised to hold the interviews for the new town clerk at the HALC offices and then to make a recommendation to the November Full Council meeting.

ii) to consider a proposal to streamline the staff establishment

Proposed: Councillor Delves

Seconded: Councillor Utting

For: 11 Abstention: 2

RESOLVED – to approve the recommendation from the Personnel Sub-Committee to streamline the staff establishment.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.12pm

Chairman

Date

Mayor/Deputy Mayor Diary Engagements: 12th September – 9th October 2023

Mayor

Start	Subject	Location
Weds 20th Sep 10:00	Opening of Wildlife pond and facilities - Orchard Trust	Forest of Dean
Weds 20th Sep 11:00	Tour of facilities at Forest Dean and Wye Men's Shed	Forest of Dean
Fri 22nd Sep 09:00	AONB Study Tour	Tintern
Fri 22nd Sep 18:00	Private Viewing at Made in Ross	Ross-on-Wye
Sat 23rd Sep 11:00	Equinox Festival	Ross-on-Wye
Sat 30th Sep 18:00	Mayor's Bingo Night at Sports Centre	Ross-on-Wye
Sun 1st Oct 10:00	Ross Community Litter Pick	Ross-on-Wye
Sun 1st Oct 14:00	Ledbury Civic Service	Ledbury
Fri 6th Oct 10:30	Tour of Herefordshire Light Infantry Museum	Hereford
Sat 7th Oct 10:00	Ross RBL AGM	Ross-on-Wye
Sun 8th Oct 15:00	The Shrievalty Service	Hereford



Ross-on-Wye Town Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Full Council
Held on Monday 13th November 2023 at 7.00 pm
At the Corn Exchange, 7 High Street, Ross-on-Wye. HR9 5HL

Present: Councillor L Stark – Chair
Councillors C Bartrum, M Boylan, D Ciolte, V Coker, L Delves, S Foreman, K Fowler, S Freer, C Lodea, E O’Driscoll, B Pope, M Setchfield, R Taylor, J Utting, J Vidler and, J Winder.

In attendance: Sarah Robson – Town Clerk, Carla Boyles – Deputy Town Clerk
There were twelve members of the public present, and one member of the press

23/11#93 Apologies for Absence
[Local Government Act 1972 S85 \(1\)](#)
To receive and approve any apologies for absence
Councillor D Lister
RESOLVED – To accept the apologies given.

23/11#94 Declarations of Interest
[Local Authorities \(Model Code of Conduct\) Order 2007 SI No. 1159](#)
To receive Councillors’ declarations of interest in items for discussion.
Councillor Coker declared a Schedule 1 Interest in Agenda Item 23/11#108 as there was a payment due to her company.

23/11#95 Applications for Dispensations
To receive Councillors’ applications for dispensations.
None

23/11#96 Report from Ross Police
To receive a verbal report from a representative of the Safer Neighbourhood Team.

No Police representative was available to attend, it was noted that there was still a vacancy within their team. An email was read out which had been received in response to the recent communication about the reported crime rate in Ross. A daytime meeting with the Police had been suggested and it was agreed that Councillors Boylan, Fowler, Bartrum, Vidler and Stark would attend to represent the Council.

23/11#97 Busus4Us CIC – Developing the Daffodil Line
To receive and note the written Stakeholder Report dated October 2023

It was reported there was an expectation that it would be three years to get the service to a level where it would be fully fundable by the relevant Transport Authorities. It was emphasised by councillors there needed to be clear evidence about passenger numbers to ensure that any further contribution was value for money for the town. The written report stated that of those using the bus half are visitor or leisure travellers, this had been revealed through a survey of passengers. It was clear that the major attraction on

the route was Ross-on-Wye, and help to promote the town had been given by Council staff advertising Ross as a destination. This was having the effect of delivering money to the economy of the High St without bringing pollution and congestion into town.

A question was asked regarding on-going funding and that if the Town Council funding was not available how would it impact on the service? The representatives explained that their volunteers work hard to attract more passengers to ensure the service can be completely funded through Passenger Services but that there was still some way to reach that point. Questions were asked about subsidies by the two principal authorities covering the geographical area and their level of financial support.

Councillors requested a financial breakdown to establish the need and to enable the Town Council to make a decision regarding the budget. The representatives were thanked for coming and for their time and effort in getting the service off the ground.

7.25pm Seven members of the public left the meeting

23/11#98 Herefordshire Councillor Ward Enquiries [maximum time allowed 15 minutes].

Town Council Members to raise issues with the Ward Councillors, on matters to be dealt with at County level.

A pedestrian had recently experienced a near miss with a vehicle at the junction on the corner of the Market House. A request was made for the Ward member to see if installing traffic bollards or some other form of street furniture would be possible.

It was suggested that the Amenities Sub-Committee could consider options to ameliorate this issue.

23/11#99 Public Participation

[Standing Orders Clause 3 \(e, f, g & h\)](#)

The Treasurer of the Ross Community Food Larder asked if there would be a discussion about the proposal from Vennture and whether there be a consultation period to enable residents to put forward their point of view. It was suggested that as this was going to be raised under the budget item at the Community Markets & Tourism Sub-Committee meeting on 14th November this question could be considered then.

7.30pm One member of the public left the meeting

23/11#111 Ross-on-Wye Twinning Associations

i) to receive verbal reports from the councillors nominated to be the Council's Official Representatives on the twinning associations in regard to what support is needed.

ii) to review the existing budget allocation and consider the mechanism whereby funding will be made available

It was reported that a letter from Betzdorf had been received requesting continued support with funding to ensure future trips to Germany were viable. Councillors expressed the opinion that the Council must offer financial support to enable continued links with the three twinned towns. It was agreed there needed to be a better understanding of the nature of the visits and the schedule as there are different costs depending on where the visit is taking place. It was noted that a contribution to subsidise travel would be important due to the increasing costs and the reduced numbers of people involved. The matter would be considered further at the Finance & Property Sub-Committee when consideration is given in relation to the budget and it was proposed that the Policy should be reviewed too.

It was suggested there needed to be an active drive to recruit more members and it was encouraging that stronger links with John Kyrle High School (JKHS) have been evident with pupils taking a recent trip to Betzdorf. Councillors were encouraged to join one of the Associations and take part and enjoy the benefits of gaining a better understanding of other cultures. The Namutumba Twinning Representative stated that the Association would like funding support too and also an opportunity to publicise their work through an article in the Town Council newsletter to promote the issues within the region. There are strong links already with JKHS too which fosters and encourages visits every two years. A contribution from the Council would help to provide teaching aides, books, and learning materials to support education which is key to avoiding poverty.

RESOLVED – to defer the matter for further consideration to the Finance & Property Sub-Committee when it next meets to look at the budget. It was also agreed to review the Policy to see if changes were necessary.

23/11#100 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public

[Public Bodies \(Admission to Meetings\) Act 1960](#)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Proposed: Councillor Stark
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Winder

RESOLVED – that agenda item 23/11#116 - ‘Commercial and Staff in Confidence’ be treated as confidential and be dealt with after the Public (including the Press) have been excluded.

7.45pm Two members of the public from the twinning association were thanked for coming and they left the meeting

23/11#101 Full Council Meeting Minutes

[Local Government Act 1972 schedule 12 para 41\(1\)](#)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the ordinary meeting of Full Council held on Monday 9th October 2023

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the ordinary meeting of Full Council held on Monday 9th October 2023 be signed as a correct record.

23/11#102 Committees – to receive and note the minutes of the following meetings and approve any recommendations;

7.45pm Standing Orders were suspended to enable the representative of Vennture to address the Council.

CM&T Sub-Committee

19th September 2023 (previously noted)

RESOLVED: To receive a full project proposal from Vennture, to be included for consideration at the next meeting of Full Council.

A brief summary was provided from the representative of Vennture regarding the written proposal. It was reported that a survey had taken place in Ross to establish whether there was a need for this type of service within Ross.

Vennture had already received a number of expressions of interest from volunteers wishing to get involved if the pilot scheme in Ross were to go ahead. There was a question raised regarding the level of external funding available to set up a pilot in Ross as it had been hoped that Home Office Safer Streets 5 funding would be offered, it was stated this had not been granted.

It was noted that three town councillors had attended a night time session in Hereford to see how the service operated and feedback about the visits expressed concerns that there had not been much activity on the streets and there was a view expressed there was not the need for the same level of support within Ross as it was not felt the need was so great.

Proposed: Councillor Bartrum
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

It was agreed to defer the matter to the Community, Markets & Tourism Sub-Committee meeting to consider as part of their budget discussion to see if there was support for running a pilot within Ross.

8.03pm Standing Orders were reinstated, and one member of the public left the meeting

Planning & Development Sub-Committee 10th October 2023

Amenities Sub-Committee 6th November 2023 - Deferred

Planning & Development Sub-Committee 7th November 2023

RESOLVED – to receive and note the above minutes as detailed.

23/11#103 Motion that stood adjourned from Full Council meeting of 9th October 2023 (23/10#79) to recommend to Full Council amendment to Standing Orders.

RESOLVED – to recommend to Full Council that Standing Order 3i) should be amended to state that ‘a person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and may stand when speaking’ and to delete the remaining bracketed section and final sentence of the original clause.

Proposed: Councillor O’Driscoll
For: 16 Against: 1

Seconded: Councillor Foreman

RESOLVED – to accept the proposed changes to the Standing Orders with immediate effect.

23/11#104 Working Groups

To receive and note the updated schedule of proposed meetings from the relevant conveners (for information only).

Working Group	Parent Committee	Convenor	Last/Next Meeting Held
Climate & Eco Emergency	Management	Cllr Taylor	Working with other stakeholders towards an action Plan to bring something back to the Management Committee at a future meeting.
Play Strategy	Amenities	Cllr Pope	A meeting is scheduled for 17 th November to continue discussions as there are a few things which need to be determined.

Market House Phase II	Finance & Property	Cllr Utting	Agenda item to follow to confirm appointment of Contractor to undertake the works which will be due to start in March and to last about six months.
Refresh Ross	CM&T	Cllr Winder	The Rubbish Festival took place, it was an enormous success and thanks to Caz Holbrook and the councillors who took part.

23/11#105 Mayor's Announcements

to receive a verbal report from the Mayor.

The Mayor reported a few highlights from the events he had recently attended, they included the RBL events for the Poppy Appeal and Remembrance activities over the last few weeks. Thanks were expressed to the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Pope for standing in for the Flag Raising at the Market House on Armistice Day.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/11#106 Town Clerk's Report

to receive and note the verbal update from the Town Clerk.

- Councillors were reminded to respond to the email about the new rota for surgeries, a plea to encourage more participants for the monthly Thursday sessions was made. The deadline for responses to the Doodle Poll was Friday 17th November
- A recent House of commons vote had overturned the recommendation to enable parish councils to hold remote meetings on the basis that to improve local democracy citizens needed the opportunity to attend meetings and meet their elected representatives
- Herefordshire Flood Groups – an invitation was issued to attend a meeting hosted by Herefordshire Council on 29th November

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/11#107 Finance – Income & Expenditure 2023/2024

[Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015](#)

To review the budget information for the year to date.

The Chair of the Finance & Property Sub-Committee explained that expenditure in the region of £500k is still to be made this year, although some of that allocation would be earmarked for sinking funds or reserve accounts. There would be some budget allocations which might not be all spent during the financial year and there would be some carry forwards at the year end. He reported there had been a deliberate decision to spend the Council's reserves for capital projects whilst investing in local schemes. It was noted some grant applications had been refused due to the Council's balances so if the position changed this might offer more external funding opportunities.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/11#108 Finance – Accounts for payment [Signatories to be Councillors Bartrum and Foreman]

[Local Government Act 1972 s150 \(5\)](#)

To receive and note items of expenditure paid since the last meeting and approve schedule of updated payments.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/11#109 Health & Safety

To receive a verbal update on the application of the Council's Health & Safety Policy, consider any outstanding actions from the Audit and to report any accidents or near misses.

A report from the Operations Manager confirmed there had been no reported accidents or near misses in relation to staff operations. It was noted that a new Lone Worker App had been set up for the outdoor team.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/11#110 Council ‘Away Day’

- i) to receive and accept the written report from the Away Day held on 27th October 2023*
- ii) to consider identified priorities and discuss proposed next steps to schedule a planned programme of works*

The report was noted, and it was recognised an operational plan to agree the priorities was necessary. It was felt there was further work to do in deciding what the next steps were to take forward the priorities and this should be started by the Sub-Committees. The budget setting process would determine which of the schemes were deemed as a priority and then work should commence on a project plan. A programme of works would need to be developed to agree timelines for expenditure, to take into account key milestones and set realistic deadlines.

It was recognised there would be issues with staff capacity during the first six months of the new year with staff vacancies and the start of the Market House project so that careful thought needed to be given to resources and capacity.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report and defer the projects to the Sub-Committees for further consideration, with the exception of the redevelopment of the Riverside Inn project which was removed from the Plan.

23/11#112 Climate and Ecology Bill proposal from Zero Hour

To support the adoption of the Bill through the UK Parliament and resolve to

8.30pm Councillors Boylan and Setchfield left the meeting

Proposed: Councillor Taylor
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Ciolte

RESOLVED to:

- 1. Support the Climate and Ecology Bill;**
- 2. Inform local residents and inform local press/media of this decision;**
- 3. Write to Jesse Norman MP to inform him that this motion has been passed, and urge him to sign up to support the CE Bill;**
- 4. Write to Zero Hour, the organisers of the cross-party campaign for the CE Bill, expressing this Council’s support;**

23/11#113 Citizens Advice Outreach – Ross-on-Wye

To receive and note written reports for October 2022 – September 2023

Councillors agreed ongoing financial support should be made available as the challenges will only increase. The Council thanked the CAB for the report and the excellent work they are doing.

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/11#114 Official Representatives on Outside Bodies

To receive reports from Councillors appointed to represent the Town Council on the following bodies

Ross Educational Foundation	Cllr Delves	Grants were distributed and donations to schools for new books had been made
Friends of St Marys	Cllr Bartrum	Concert at St Mary's- Saturday 25 th November
Charity Trustees	Cllr Coker	Repairs to alms houses had been carried out, rent arrears retrieved. Cawdor land planning permission had expired, companies have expressed an interest in the site
Ross in Bloom	Cllr Taylor	Bulbs have been planted ready for the spring

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report.

23/11#115 To confirm date of next meeting and propose items for consideration.

Management Meeting – Monday 11th December 2023 at the Corn Exchange
 Items for discussion – Consultation on Public Payphone removal

8.38pm Members of the press and public were thanked for attending and left the meeting. Councillor Fowler left the meeting

8.39pm Councillor Setchfield returned to the meeting

23/11#116 In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it is likely that the press and public will be excluded during consideration of this item. (Item 23/11#100 above refers)

Commercial in Confidence

Market House – Phase II

To note the revised Market House construction costs and receive the Market House Working Group's recommendation to appoint the main contractor for the proposed programme of works and to approve signing of the JCT Project Construction Contract.

Proposed: Councillor Utting
 Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Bartrum

RESOLVED – to note the revised costs and approve the Working Group's recommendation to appoint Treasure and Son Limited and to authorise the Proper Officer to sign the relevant Contracts.

8.45 pm Councillor Coker declared a Non-Registerable Interest and left the meeting

Staff in Confidence

i) To receive a verbal update on proposed streamlining of staffing establishment

RESOLVED – to receive and note the report and confirm the start of the consultation process.

8.50pm Councillor Coker returned to the meeting

Proposed: Councillor Stark
 Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Bartrum

RESOLVED – to extend the meeting by thirty minutes to allow the remaining items to be discussed.

- ii) To receive and accept the resignation of the Town Centre Cleansing Operative effective immediately and consider proposal to make the post a permanent position.

Proposed: Councillor Utting
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Foreman

RESOLVED – to receive the resignation and confirm that the post be made a permanent position within the Council’s establishment.

- iii) To agree delegated authority to the Town Clerk and Operations Manager to manage the recruitment process for the Town Centre Cleansing Operative, to include appointing a suitable candidate.

Proposed: Councillor Stark
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Delves

RESOLVED – to confirm delegated authority for the officers to recruit and appoint to the vacant post.

9.00pm The Deputy Town Clerk left the meeting

- iv) To receive and note the verbal report from the Personnel Sub-Committee Interview Panel and consider the recommendation regarding the appointment of a new Town Clerk. [As per authority given at Full Council on 9th October 2023 - Agenda item 23/10#92]

Proposed: Councillor Bartrum
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor O’Driscoll

RESOLVED – to approve the appointment of Carla Boyles to the post of Town Clerk/RFO with effect from 1st January 2024 on SCP 37 plus one point for the CiLCA qualification.

9.05pm The Deputy Town Clerk returned to the meeting

The Deputy Town Clerk was congratulated on her appointment.

- v) To consider and agree recruitment and appointment process to other vacant positions within the approved staffing establishment

Proposed: Councillor Delves
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor Bartrum

RESOLVED – to delegate to officers authorisation to start the recruitment process for the Deputy Town Clerk vacancy within the range of SCP 28-32 and to agree that the Personnel Sub-Committee would select a panel with authority to appoint a suitable candidate.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.12pm

Chairman

Date

Mayor/Deputy Mayor Diary Engagements: 10th October – 13th November 2023

Mayor		
Start	Subject	Location
Weds 11th Oct, 11:00	Meet and Greet with Age UK	Ross-on-Wye
Thurs 19th Oct, 19:00	Ross and Monmouth Sea and Royal Marine Cadets AGM	Ross-on-Wye
Sat 22nd Oct, 12:00	Patron's Curry Lunch at Sulva Barracks	Hereford
Thurs 26th Oct, 18:00	John Kyrle High School Open Evening	Ross-on-Wye
Thurs 26th Oct, 19:30	Ross Action Committee AGM	Much Birch
Sat 28th Oct, 11:00	Launch of Remembrance Events	Ross-on-Wye
Thurs 9th Nov, 11:30	Chelsea Pensioners/Falklands and Korean Memorial Commemoration	Ross-on-Wye
Sun 12th Nov, 11:00	Remembrance Day service	Ross-on-Wye
Deputy Mayor		
Sat 11th Nov, 11:00	Armistice Day Service	Ross-on-Wye