

LUDGERSHALL TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the Annual Town Council meeting held on Wednesday 31st March 2025 at 7pm at Memorial Hall, Ludgershall.

Public Attending: 71

Meeting opened by Councillor O White (Mayor of Ludgershall)

AGENDA ITEM

1, Minutes of meeting held 25th March 2024-, resolved to accept.

2, Ludgershall Town Council report- The meeting opened with a welcome to electors and attendees. Thanks were extended to local organisations for attending. The mayor outlined the role of councillors and highlighted key events and achievements over the past year: Easter Party held at the Memorial Hall, featuring a disco, Easter Bunny, and face painting. Well attended. Collaboration with Yellow Brick Road Youth Project on a skate park art initiative. D-Day Commemoration marked by the lighting of the Beacon, attended by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire. Party in the Park event with live music, entertainment, and refreshments. Remembrance Sunday Service held in partnership with St James Church and 26 Engineer Regiment, followed by a reception. Christmas Celebrations, including Christmas Fayre and lights switch-on Santa's grotto, stalls, raffle, and refreshments. Santa Sleigh Visits across Ludgershall and Perham Down. Visit to Salisbury Hospital children's ward distributing gifts. Educational visit delivering a Medieval Ludgershall presentation to Marlborough primary school pupils. The mayor attended multiple civic and ceremonial events across Wiltshire. The Mayor's chosen charity for the year was Ronald & Ruby Sandy's Gift, supporting residents of Ludgershall and Faberstown.

The Office & Community Hub - was temporarily relocated due to a water leak; services resumed following repairs. Public facilities include: Two public-use computers Two meeting rooms available for residents Community policing engagement continued with PCSO Ruby hosting drop-in sessions.

Projects in Progress / Pipeline - Pedestrian survey at Bell Street bus stops regarding a potential crossing. Ongoing investigation into storage and facility improvements at the Recreation Ground. Installation of a Speed Indicator Device in Faberstown. Development of a Street Work Project in collaboration with youth outreach and Wiltshire Council.

Planning and Consultation - The Council continues to act as a consultee on all local planning applications. A public meeting was held regarding a major planning application at Castledown Business Park, currently under consideration. Thanks were given to, Council staff, Councillors for their service, Volunteers supporting events and activities. Residents were encouraged to volunteer for future events. The floor was opened for questions relating to the report. A resident asked if there were any plans on getting a youth club up and running, this was answered by Wiltshire Cllr C Williams who discussed the outreach project.

3, Police Report – Inspector Gavin Bruster presented the Police Report. He advised that crime levels across Wiltshire have remained relatively stable over the past few years. The most common issues locally continue to be off-road vehicle use and vehicle-related crime; however, overall crime levels are lower than in some other areas of the county. The Police are working in partnership with the Army to address issues relating to off-road driving. Priority areas for the Police include anti-social behaviour (ASB) and burglaries, particularly those involving garages and outbuildings. Concerns were raised regarding the weight restriction along the High Street. During periods of Police observation, no offending vehicles were identified; however, it was noted that the current signage may be insufficient. It was suggested that a review of the signage be undertaken to ensure that enforcement action can be effectively supported, this matter is to be taken up with Wiltshire Highways.

4, Wiltshire council report - At the last Town Council meeting I reported that Wiltshire Council had applied to join the government's Devolution Priority Programme but since then the Government has announced that Wiltshire Council, along with the other local authorities that made up the Wessex Partnership has not been included in the Devolution Priority Programme. The delay to joining the programme means that it will now take longer for Wiltshire's residents to benefit from the additional funding and powers promised by the government that devolution would bring. Despite Government's decision the Council remains committed to partnership working across the four councils to ensure the best outcomes for residents, businesses and visitors across Wessex. The Wiltshire Council Budget for 2025/26 was proposed at a cabinet meeting on the 4 Feb and will now go to full council for any amendments to be discussed and then for final approval. The proposal was for the Wiltshire Council element of the budget to increase by a 2.5% general increase, plus a levy of 2% to be spent solely on Adult Social Care. This would give a Band D charge of £1886.99, an increase of £1.56 per week. The Financial Year quarter three budgets were also discussed, and the current revenue budget is forecast to overspend by £1.749m by the end of the financial year. These forecasts include an element of uncertainty and there remain confidence that further management of the position will bring it back into balance by the end of the financial year. I also attended Overview and Scrutiny Management meetings where scrutiny of the financial situation took place, a financial planning task group meeting and had an informal meeting with the Practice Manager of the Castle Surgery and representatives from Wiltshire Council planning and property services, TVBC planning and the NHS ICB on impact that the scale of planning growth will have on our local Primary Health Care facilities in the Tidworth Community Area.

5, Tidworth area board council report - The Area Board reported that a total of 14 projects had been supported across Community Area Grants, Local Youth Network Funding, and Older and Vulnerable Adults Funding, with over £39,000 awarded and more than £113,000 invested overall including match funding. Several projects directly benefited Ludgershall, including funding for the Youth Club, Scouts Hall improvements, St James Church Bellingers, and Dolly's Carers Café, alongside wider initiatives supporting young people, carers, and community facilities. The Area Board's main priorities remain Health and Wellbeing, Youth Engagement, and Local Environmental Action. Progress includes the development of a detached youth work project, continued support for youth provision in Ludgershall, and the re-launch of the Environment Group, with proposals such as a pollinator corridor project. Work is also ongoing to reduce isolation and strengthen partnership working across the community.

6, 26 Engineer report – Last 12 Months The 26 Engineer Regiment has been actively engaged in several major operations and exercises over the past year, including: Operation LINOTYPER

(April – June 2024), Exercise SAILFISH (August – November 2024), Exercise CERBERUS (October 2024), Future Land Force (FLF) commitments (July 2024 – June 2025), The regiment is also scheduled to participate in the Ludgershall Area Battle Command Training (LABCT) until December 2026. The accompanying photographs show the regiment conducting river crossing operations and a group photo of personnel with engineering equipment, demonstrating their operational capabilities and team cohesion. Next 12 Months Planned activities and priorities include: Operation CABRIT rotations 16, 17, and 18,), Operation IRON LIGHTFOOT rotations 9, 10, and 11, Mission Ready Training, Exercise WAR FIGHTER, Participation in the Freedom of Ludgershall Parade on 7th June, Exercise IRON TITAN 25, Remembrance Parade.

7, Presentations from prominent local groups the following groups give brief presentations promoting their organisations and gaining awareness. Memorial Hall, Friends of Ludgershall, Castledown FM, Tidworth and Ludgershall men's shed, Ludgershall and Tidworth LINK scheme, Field crafting UK, Castle Practice. LTC Events.

8, Local Government Elector Participation – No questions

Meeting Closed at: 8.43pm

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