



**DRAFT - MINUTES OF THE LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CLAREMOUNT HOUSE ON
MEETING OF THE COUNCIL MONDAY 9TH MARCH 2026**

Start 7.00pm

Present: Cllr T Saunders (Chair)
Cllr J Gregory
Cllr C Harris
Cllr S Hillier
Cllr R Holmes (Vice Chair)
Cllr M Jones
Cllr P Johns
Cllr T Lindsay
Cllr G Phelps

In attendance: L Bendall (Deputy Clerk & RFO – Minute Taker)
L Gay (Senior Administrator)

Absent: Councillor S Cave

Members of the Public: Cllr A McDermid (District Councillor) and one member of the public
Councillor Saunders welcomed all present and gave the usual 'housekeeping' announcements.

Cllr Saunders apologised that this month's meeting would not be recorded.

Council was advised that when apologies are given, they are simply noted and not formally accepted unless the Council resolves to do so. This means that simply giving apologies does not count towards attendance for the purposes of the six-month rule relating to failure to attend any council meeting or function.

Pete Macklin is no longer a councillor due to non-attendance, and the vacancy will be advertised as soon as possible.

The Business Administrator has now had his operation, and a get-well hamper will be sent in due course.

Recruitment for the Clerk/RFO and Head Grounds Person positions is underway, and a healthy number of applications have already been received. The closing date for applications is noon on Wednesday 25 March 2026.

A reminder was given that the Easter Event will be held on Wednesday 1 April at Bathurst Park. Councillors were asked to support the event on the day and by sharing details on social media.

Open Forum

No items raised.

1.	<u>APOLOGIES</u>
	Apologies were received and noted from Cllrs E Taylor, S Holmes, C Evans and S Holmes.
2.	<u>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</u>
	To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with Lydney Town Council's current Code of Conduct in respect of Members. A non-pecuniary interest were declared by Cllrs Saunders and Lindsay in relation to Agenda Item 5.1b Service Level Agreement for Lydney Town Hall.
3.	<u>MINUTES</u>
	To consider approving as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on Monday 9 th February 2026. It was proposed (CH) and seconded (JG) that the Meeting of the Council minutes held on Monday 9 th February 2026 be accepted as read and correct. Resolved: Majority Approved
4.	<u>REPORTS</u>
	To receive <i>urgent</i> reports from Members of the Town, District and County Councils
	<p><u>County Council Reports</u> No reports received</p> <p><u>District Council Reports</u> Cllr Preest provided a written report in relation to his Armed Forces Champion role, which was read out by the Chair. In summary: The latest Armed Forces Hub drop-in session, held on 4 March, continues to grow, with attendance in the region of 70 people. The session is supported by a range of organisations that offer support and advice. A request was made for Lydney Town Council to appoint a councillor to attend the monthly meetings and provide feedback to the Council and the wider community. The next meeting is scheduled for 1 April, from 12pm to 3pm, at Bream Sports and Social Club. It was agreed that all councillors are invited to attend the next meeting, and that the Council will appoint a member(s) at the May meeting. The office will forward the report to all councillors for information.</p> <p>Cllr McDermid advised that the Empty Homes Strategy is in its early stages and aims to encourage homeowners to bring empty properties back into use. A query was raised as to whether the strategy was aimed solely at private landlords or if it also included social housing. Cllr McDermid agreed to clarify this and report back to the Council.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the development of two bungalows on Albert Street had been refused. This update was well received.</p> <p>The chapel redevelopment is still in the pipeline and will be referred to committee for discussion.</p> <p><u>Town Council Reports</u> No reports received</p>

5.	<u>FINANCIAL MATTERS / RFO REPORT</u>
5.1	<p>Payments</p> <p>a. To approve accounts for payment as detailed by the RFO Chair proposed that payments totalling £9,900.03 be approved. Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p> <p>Chair proposed for additional invoices totalling £421.42 be approved for payment. Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p> <p>It was commented that the support from Metta Media had now ended.</p> <p>b. To receive 6-monthly reports and approve the electronic transfers to Lydney Town Hall & Lydney Community Centre under current Service Level Agreements (SLA)</p> <p>Lydney Community Centre It was proposed (CH) and seconded (Shi) that a letter be sent to Lydney Community Centre to re-iterate conditions of the SLA and the importance that the clubs agreed are supported, any changes must be reported as it could result in a breach of the SLA and funds being held. Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p> <p>It was proposed (CH) and seconded (TL) to approve a payment of £2,344.50 under the current SLA. Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p> <p>Lydney Town Hall It was noted that Cllrs Saunders and Lindsay, whilst invited to answer any questions, would not vote on this agenda item.</p> <p>It was proposed (RH) and seconded (CH) to approve a payment of £2,500 under the current SLA. Resolved: Majority Approved</p>
5.2	<p>Income and Expenditure Reports/ Earmarked Reserves/ Bank Reconciliations and Cashbook Statement for 28.02.26</p> <p>To receive and approve the above financial reports Chair proposed for the Income and Expenditure Reports, Earmarked Reserves and Bank Reconciliations and Cashbook Statements for 28.02.26 be approved. Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p>
5.3	<p>Direct Debit Card Report</p> <p>To note the Debit Card was not used during February 2026 Noted</p>
5.4	<p>Virements</p> <p>To approve the undertaking of budget virements during March 2026, as identified by the Acting RFO and Finance Assistant. Chair proposed to approve the Acting RFO, Finance Assistant and Chair of Finance & Scrutiny, Cllr R Holmes, undertake budget virements for the 2025/2026 financial year. Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p>

6.	<u>TOWN CLERK'S REPORT</u>
	<p>To receive the Town Clerk's report The Town Clerk's report was received and noted It was noted that the queries raised regarding the GAPTC Internal Auditors at the February meeting had been referred to GAPTC, and a response was awaited.</p>
7.	<u>COMMITTEE BUSINESS REFERRED TO THE COUNCIL AND REPORTS FROM THE CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES, SUB COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES AND FROM LEAD COUNCILLORS</u>
	<p>Cllr Harris thanked Cllr McDermid for his support and update on Albert Street planning application.</p> <p>Cllr Johns advised that Lydney's NDP was currently under consultation with FoDDC as part of Regulation 16.</p> <p>Cllrs Gregory, Harris and Johns had a meeting with a GCC officer today (9th March) to discuss regeneration funding that may be available from FoDDC.</p> <p>Cllr Saunders attended a meeting with representatives from Gloucestershire County Council (GCC), the Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC), and the Market Towns Officer to discuss the potential installation of pennants on selected lampposts within the town. Following an inspection, it was determined that all but one of the lampposts were unsuitable for attaching any equipment, including CCTV cameras and Christmas lights.</p> <p>The Council is currently awaiting an update from GCC officers and, if necessary, will speak with the County Councillor to explore potential funding opportunities to enable the initial replacement of approximately 18 lighting columns.</p> <p>It was noted that GCC inspect columns annually and permissions are in place for the towns CCTV and Christmas lights.</p>
8.	<u>CORRESPONDENCE</u>
8.1	<p>To receive correspondence and agree a response, if appropriate: To note correspondence from Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC) confirming that Lydney Town Council's NDP submission meets the required criteria. Noted</p>
8.2	<p>To receive correspondence from a local resident regarding queries on the Dean Forest Gateway Planning Application and agree a response Chair proposed for the Dean Forest Gateway Steering Group members, (Cllrs RH, TS & CH), respond to the queries raised. Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p>

9.	<p><u>FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (FoDDC) DRAFT LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION</u></p>
	<p>To receive and consider Forest of Dean District Council's Draft Local Plan and to agree the next steps for responding to the consultation.</p> <p>A brief update was provided by councillors who had attended the public consultation on the Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC) Local Plan. The main concerns raised were that if the proposed new settlements do not proceed, Lydney may be earmarked for more than the approximately 1,800 new houses currently included in the plan. Concerns were also expressed regarding the lack of supporting infrastructure, as well as issues relating to sewerage and flooding.</p> <p>Cllr McDermid advised the Council that he had written to the local MP to raise concerns regarding sewage spills and is currently awaiting a response.</p> <p>A reminder was given that the next Multi-Agency Flood Defence meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 18 March at 1.30pm, which Cllr McDermid is welcome to attend.</p> <p>It was noted that the doctors' development at the former Co-op site appears to be back on track.</p> <p>It was proposed (CH) and seconded (Shi) to delegate the Council's collective response to Cllrs Johns, Harris, Hillier and Gregory, with all councillors encouraged to submit individual responses. A report on behalf of the Council will be collated and submitted.</p> <p>Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p>
10.	<p><u>GLOUCESTERSHIRE LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION (LGR) PROPOSALS CONSULTATION</u></p>
	<p>To receive the Glos LGR Proposal and agree a council response</p> <p>A brief update was given by councillors who had attended the recent webinar on the latest updates regarding the Gloucestershire Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) proposals. Three options have been identified for the future structure of a unitary council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gloucestershire to be divided into two unitary councils – East and West. 2. A division into two areas, with Gloucester and the surrounding area forming one authority and the more rural outskirts forming another. 3. One large unitary council covering the whole county. <p>It was noted that other emergency and public services expressed a preference for one large unitary council.</p> <p>Whilst Forest of Dean District Council (FoDDC) is opposed to the Gloucestershire LGR proposals, its preferred options are either an East and West split or a single unitary council for the whole county.</p> <p>Following discussion, Chair proposed for the councillors to meet on Wednesday 18th March at 11.30am to formulate a response.</p> <p>Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p>
11.	<p><u>ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT</u></p>
	<p>To receive and approve the updated Accessibility Statement</p> <p>Chair proposed to approve the updated Accessibility Statement to reflect the council's website accessibility compliance.</p> <p>Resolved: Unanimously Approved</p>

12.	<u>LYDNEY COMPASS DIRECTORY</u>
	<p>To receive and consider a request from Forest Voluntary Action Forum (FVAF) for funding to support Lydney Compass Directory. It was proposed (PJ) and seconded (Shi) to approve funding of £700 towards supporting Lydney Compass Directory with funds being taken from EMR Regeneration. Resolved: Majority Approved</p>
13.	<u>GLOUCESTERSHIRE STREET WORKS WARDENS PILOT</u>
	<p>To receive details regarding the Gloucestershire Street Works Warden pilot and to identify council volunteers to take part in the trial. Following discussion, it was confirmed that councillors Harris, Hillier and Gregory had already volunteered for this scheme and a date to be identified for next week to meet with the GCC officer for further details and training to be organised.</p>
14.	<u>DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Council – Monday 13th April 2026, 7pm, in the Council Chamber, Claremont House, High Street. Lydney • Annual Parish Assembly – Wednesday 29th April 2026 – Lydney Town Hall, High Street. Lydney 6pm

Meeting closed at 8.56pm