

Town Council Meeting Not 'Hijacked' by LOTS

Written by Save Ledbury

Monday, 10 October 2011 22:38 - Last Updated Thursday, 03 November 2011 14:00

Recriminations and accusations continue to surround events at last Thursday's Town Council meeting (6.10.11) concerning the Tesco planning application.

In response to [John Eager's account](#) of the meeting on Ledbury Portal, and subsequent comments, LOTS (Ledbury Opposes Out of Town Superstores) issues the following statement:

There was no discussion, much less 'collusion' between LOTS and any of the town councillors in advance of Thursday's meeting.

Following dispatch to Herefordshire Council, LOTS issued a copy of its letter of objection to Town Councillors the day before the full TC meeting met to discuss reasons for refusal of the Tesco proposal.

While this was in line with standard practice, we were mindful of the forthcoming council discussion and naturally wished councillors to see our arguments and evidence.

When Cllr Jupp proposed that the Town Council should accept our report as the Council's submission to Herefordshire Council, everybody present from the LOTS group (about six) was surprised and it has to be admitted, slightly disconcerted. Nevertheless, LOTS supporters present were encouraged by many of the interesting and cogent points put forward by councillors during the debate, and believe that these might form the core of the TC's rationale for voting against the Tesco proposal. It is inaccurate to say that councillors uncritically followed the LOTS objection without expressing their own opinions.

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The headline in the Ledbury Portal that LOTS 'hijacked' the meeting was unfortunate, and unfair in the circumstances (although it is accepted that this was a quote from someone else).

As all present witnessed, Rich Hadley delivered the petition in line with protocol, and then, after a pause at the adjournment to allow anyone else to speak, stood up and briefly outlined the LOTS position.

Such is the febrile atmosphere over this Tesco/Sainsbury issue it seems that people are reading all sorts of underhand tactics and conspiracy politics into the situation.

LOTS wishes to assure everyone that as far as the anti-Ledbury Superstores campaign is concerned, the group will continue to put forward arguments backed up by hard evidence and experience. It is not, nor does it need to be in 'collusion' or working in concert with any other groups, individuals or organizations connected with the Town or County Councils.

In the final analysis, this is a planning issue and it will be determined on planning grounds – not local sentiment, for or against. To that extent, it is for others, not LOTS or LATS/LESS, to make up their minds about the outcome. Meantime, we remain confident in the impartiality and professionalism of the officers and members of Herefordshire Council Planning Committee to arrive at a correct decision which is in the long term interests of the people of Ledbury and Herefordshire.