

Council links Tesco Build to Ledbury Centres

Written by John Eager

Thursday, 15 September 2011 12:39 - Last Updated Thursday, 03 November 2011 13:58

Herefordshire Council wants to offload some its buildings, such as Ledbury Youth Centre and Heritage Centre, with Ledbury Town Council expecting Tesco to finance local infrastructure as sweeteners to help its planning application.

On Saturday (10th September) I reported that the Mayor of Ledbury had announced at last week's council meeting that Herefordshire Council was to sell Ledbury's Youth Centre and Heritage Centre.

This subsequently has become an argument of who said what. Councilor Eager told the Ledbury Portal that it was councilor Harvey not the mayor who made this announcement. However, councilor Bradford has insisted it was the mayor who said it, while councilor Harvey told the Ledbury Portal it was certainly not her.

The mayor has been asked to clarify, but has not responded.

To this observer having webcams in the council chamber, as advocated by councilor Bradford, is now even more of a priority to stop such disputes arising as members of the public would be able to scrutinise councilors' utterances and hold them accountable to them.

Webcams would also enable remote citizen journalism.

However, this is all obfuscation which draws attention away to what was actually discussed at the meeting.

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Councilor Harvey told the Ledbury Portal that council discussed that buildings like the Heritage Centre and Youth Centre might be sold by Herefordshire Council for as little as £1, if they were seen as more of a liability than an asset.

In discussing the funding of such things as the refurbishment of the Youth Centre, councilors also discussed S106 monies. Section 106 monies are payments from developers to deal with the impact of building developments. Councilors also refer to these monies as planning gains, while the general public might call them sweeteners... or worse.

According to councilor Bradford councilor Harvey told council that their 'wish list' had to 'marry up' with Tesco.