

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF CULTURAL & ECONOMIC COMMITTEE
MONDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2019 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Councillors A Dodwell (Chair)
 S Hemmings
 G Perham
 M Freeman
 R Goodchild
 R Berry (substituting for D Bowater)
 S Jones (substituting for K Cursons)
 S Owen (substituting for P Snelling)

Also in attendance: S Sandiford, Head of Democratic and Central Services
 V Cannon, Head of Cultural and Economic Services
 L Farmer, TACTIC Manager
 B Bodsworth, Town and Community Promotions Consultant
 J Balaam, The Greensand Trust
 Cllr V Harvey

Members of the public: 3
Members of the press 0

17/CE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors C Chambers, K Cursons (substituted by S Jones), D Bowater (substituted by R Berry) and P Snelling (substituted by S Owen).

18/CE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests, including the nature of those interests, which they had in any of the items under consideration at this meeting. Councillor S Owen declared that as a member of the St Barnabas PCC he would not vote on recommendation 1.2 on agenda item 10 (signage for St Mary's Church).

19/CE QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Two members of the public spoke to question the decision to remove a tree from the stone entertainment circle at the bottom of the High Street and to site the Christmas tree there in future. Concerns were raised regarding proximity to the funfair for the Christmas Festival weekend and proximity to buses.

A response was given that the decision to re-site the Christmas tree had been made in March 2019 and was due to the fact that no structural certificate was available to inform the tree supplier of the safety of using the existing groundhole. Whilst it was regrettable that a tree had had to be removed, another would be planted in Mentmore Park. Preparatory site visits and risk assessments would be undertaken and no issues were anticipated in respect of the three-day funfair or the buses.

Mr G Borelli spoke as Chair of LB First to ask that the Council make a statement about the tree to provide information to the public and to confirm that a site visit would be undertaken with the funfair prior to this year's event.

It was confirmed that a press release had already been issued and picked up by the local newspaper. Consideration would be given to publishing the press release on the Council website for information.

20/CE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee received the draft minutes of the previous committee meeting held on 3 June 2019.

Minute reference 3/CE: it was noted that the Town Council organised its free community events very well and all those involved were thanked.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cultural and Economic Services Committee held on 3 June 2019 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.

21/CE SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Committee received the draft minutes of the Market Sub-Committee meeting held on 29 August 2019 for consideration.

RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the Market Sub-Committee meeting held on 23 August 2019.

22/CE GREENSAND RIDGE WALK AND CYCLE GATEWAY FEATURE

The Committee received and considered a presentation from Mr J Balaam from the Greensand Trust on the progress of the Greensand Ridge Walk and Cycleway gateway feature project. The intention was to install a feature at each end of the trails, linking the routes to the town centres and creating a focal point for photographs. The agreed location was the stone entertainment circle at the bottom of the High Street and the current preferred design was a sandstone boulder with relevant items "inserted" into it. Funding had been secured from the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership.

Next steps were to secure permissions and final costs, finalise the design and construct. It was hoped that the feature could be officially launched in

May 2020 as part of the Greensand Country Festival.

A question was raised about ongoing maintenance of the feature, particularly in the event of any vandalism.

The committee was advised of a cycle shop and club, the Bossard Wheelers, which had previously existed in the town and which had held an annual Boxing Day cycle ride. It was suggested that local children and bicycles be involved in the launch event.

RESOLVED to note the information.

Mr Balaam left the meeting at 2009 hours.

23/CE COMMUNITY EVENTS

The Committee received a progress report on all of the annual community events and was given a verbal report on recent highlights, including the Proms in the Park concert and live screening, the Living History Day and the launch of the Living History Trail. Dates for 2020 events were provided. It was noted that the health and safety review of events continued.

The Committee expressed thanks to all those involved in organising a brilliant events programme. It was noted that the Proms in the Park event had been a great success but suggested that in future, greater consideration be given to lighting the toilets and footpaths in Parson's Close Recreation Ground, as well as to screening the song lyrics as programmes could not be read once darkness had fallen.

It was suggested that consideration be given to holding a band concert on the Sunday of the August Bank Holiday weekend. Historically this had been avoided due to staffing implications, but as staffing was no longer required, it was felt that regular concertgoers would welcome the additional date. This was supported by Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to note the report.**
- (ii) to continue to deliver the later finishing time for the Linslade Canal Festival for a further two years using earmarked reserves (9057/970) as per Committee endorsement Ref. 140/CE.**
- (iii) to continue to deliver the Last Night of The Proms for a further two years using earmarked reserves (9057/970) as per Committee endorsement ref 140/CE**
- (iv) to continue to hold earmarked reserves (9057/970) for three years to fund a Live TV Screening event when a significant national event occurs as per Committee endorsement Ref. 140/CE.**
- (v) to endorse the event dates for the 2020 Events programme.**

The Committee received an additional report regarding events budgets.

Budgets had remained static since 2016 but increasing costs for event infrastructure and waste management meant that less funding was available for entertainment.

A request was made to consider greater recycling of coffee cups in line with Town Council environmental ambitions. It was noted that the council was encouraging traders and suppliers to have greater environmental awareness but that this would likely be a gradual process.

A query was raised regarding seeking corporate sponsorship to assist with community event costs and an explanation was given of activity currently taking place to seek this.

RECOMMENDED to the Policy and Finance Committee an increase in the annual event budgets, to commence in financial year 2020/21, by a total of £6,175 to reflect the additional costs experienced within the sector.

24/CE TEENAGE ADVICE AND INFORMATION CENTRE

The Committee received and considered a report to update members of work undertaken at TACTIC during May 2019 to August 2019, including attendance statistics. Linda Farmer was introduced as new Centre Manager.

Highlights included the youth work awards, for which around 50 nominations had been received, a youth crime project with four local schools, wellbeing and lunchtime drop-in sessions at a local middle school and the basketball project, which had proven popular and therefore indoor space had been secured to continue this activity during the winter.

The Committee expressed interest in finding out what the views of the young people were. As well as a current survey to seek young people's views, TACTIC compiled information through informal chat as well as 1-1 sessions. The young people were encouraged to lead the programme and on Wednesdays were given the choice of the topic for discussion in the "Wednesday chat".

It was agreed to put together a summary of young people's issues and views but ensuring there was no compromise of confidentiality.

It was proposed that the recommendations be approved, with the addition of a formal thank you to the young people who had assisted with the launch event for the Living History trail.

It was proposed that a minuted note of thanks be made in acknowledgement of the work undertaken by Tracey Quinn, former TACTIC Centre Manager.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to note the report**

- (ii) to request- £1123 (50% of total cost) from 'TACTIC' (970 9020) earmarked reserves to replace worn carpets within building.
- (iii) to request £978 from 'Donations' (970-9049) earmarked reserves to allow for the development of the Satellite Basketball project
- (iv) to formally thank the young people who had assisted with the launch event for the Living History trail.
- (v) To formally thank the previous TACTIC Centre Manager, Tracey Quinn for her work with TACTIC and the Council.

25/CE COMMITTEE WORKPLAN AND OBJECTIVES

The Committee received the Committee Objectives and Work Plan for 2019-2020.

A query was raised regarding lack of specific detail or timescales on the plan. It was noted that this was intended to be an overarching document.

The point was raised that Members were keen to include projects and activities for older people in the Council objectives for the four year term. As discussed at the Policy and Finance Committee, officers would undertake initial scoping work during the current year, for committee to then consider further what actions to take. It was suggested that officers liaise with Central Bedfordshire Council, following a recent Member briefing on the same subject.

RESOLVED to note the Committee work plan for 2019-2020.

26/CE BUDGET REPORT

The Committee received a budget update report for the revenue and earmarked reserves.

It was proposed that additional daytime screenings take place during the winter months as part of the Movies for the More Mature programme. It was further proposed that due to some teething difficulties with the Youth Film Club, the pilot be extended. This would be on the same basis as Movies for the More Mature, i.e. that all film screenings would be open to all but that those with Youth Film Club membership would pay a subsidised ticket price.

A proposal from the Rotary Club of Leighton-Linslade in respect of the 75th anniversary of VE Day celebrations was given consideration. It was proposed that funding also be made available to commemorate VJ Day in August, as this was felt to be equally important.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to note the report.
- (ii) to allocate up to £250 from the signage earmarked reserves (970/9028) for a brown tourist sign denoting St Mary's Church.
- (iii) to allocate up to £7,000 from earmarked reserves (970/9026) to

the VE Day celebrations 2020, for Rotary Leighton Linlade to secure historical entertainments and appropriately mark the historic day.

(iv) to allocate £900 from earmarked reserves (970/9026) to fund an increase in movie showings by three films, associated with the existing Movies for the More Mature scheme.

(v) to agree to review the annual budget for the Movies for the More Mature scheme following the pilot in readiness for financial year 202/21, from £4,500 to £5,400.

(vi) To allocate £2,400 from earmarked reserves to extend the Youth Film Club pilot scheme to enable a longer period of recruitment and assessment.

(vii) To allocate £4,000 from earmarked reserves (970/9018) to fund activity to commemorate VJ Day in August 2020.

27/CE YOUTH PROMISE GRANT EVALUATION

The Committee received and considered an evaluation report on the Youth Promise Grant Scheme. Twelve grants had been given for a variety of purposes, from sports to counselling. The report included progress on the delivery of activity as well as learnings from the scheme. It was pleasing to note that many recipients had achieved the desired goal of increasing their capacity and membership numbers.

It was noted that the scheme had involved a lot of work for officers and that groups required a longer period of time to deliver the proposed activities. Whilst supportive of the scheme, it was agreed to await the outcomes of the current young people's survey and any objectives which might arise from that. It was suggested that the grant scheme be considered again in summer 2020 so that if deemed appropriate, provision could be fed into the 2021-22 budget setting process.

RESOLVED to note the report and to give further consideration to a future grant scheme in summer 2020, to feed into the budget setting process for 2021-22.

28/CE SERVICE UPDATES

The Committee received verbal updates on a number of ongoing projects.

Best Bar None: it was noted that a successful awards evening had taken place and that eight venues in the town had received the 2019 award. The evaluation of this year's scheme would now take place and confirmation would be awaited from Central Bedfordshire Council regarding funding of the Co-ordinator post.

Electronic signage: action was awaited from Central Bedfordshire Highways in resolving the issue with the sign on the A505 bypass.

Architectural lighting: meetings had taken place with The Swan Hotel and Pizza Express. A visit to All Saints Church was hoped to take place soon.

Town centre WiFi: a site visit had taken place last week. Lamp column testing had to take place and this had a four week lead time, however it was hoped that implementation could then take place quickly.

RESOLVED to note the updates.

The meeting closed at 9.27 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2019.

Chair

9 DECEMBER 2019