

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL
LEIGHTON-LINSLADE PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 10 APRIL 2014 AT 1930 HOURS

Present : Councillors S Cotter - LLTC
 D Hopkin – CBC - in the Chair
 A Dodwell – LLTC
 G Rolfe - LLTC
 P Snelling – LLTC
 N Warren – CBC
 K Sharer - LLTC

Also in attendance: M Saccoccio (Town Clerk)
 J Martindale (Partnership Officer)
 S Sandiford (Committee Officer)
 G Borrelli (LB First)
 B Chandler (LB Connect)
 S Hughes (Central Bedfordshire Council)
 J Longman (Central Bedfordshire Council)
 M Pyecroft (Central Bedfordshire Council)
 S Caldbeck (Central Bedfordshire Council)
 Cllr A Brandham
 Cllr G Perham
 Cllr T Brown

Members of the Public: 1
Members of the Press: 0

263/LLP APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillor D Bowater, Councillor A Shadbolt and Rev. P. Niemiec (Spokesperson – Community Forum Steering Group).

264/LLP DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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. No declarations of interest were made.

265/LLP DISPENSATIONS

No requests for dispensations had been received.

266/LLP PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no questions or comments from members of the public.

267/LLP MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Committee received the minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 13 February 2014.

Minute reference 258/LLP (Committee Objectives, Work Plan and Budget 2014-2015): a query was raised regarding whether the Policy and Finance Committee had agreed to the recommendation to commit £5,000 to upgrading the Town Council website. It was confirmed that this recommendation had been approved.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 13 February 2014 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.

268/LLP REGENERATION, BUSINESS SUPPORT AND TOWN CENTRE

(a) By invitation, Jason Longhurst (Director of Regeneration and Business Support, Central Bedfordshire Council) attended the meeting to give an overview of initiatives to encourage business and regeneration, including the Town Centre Delivery Plan and the proposed development south of the High Street.

The Committee was advised that the new directorate would take a regeneration approach and focus on pro-active business support. The intention would be to support existing centres and maximise the offer of the market towns in the area. Partnership working would be crucial in determining a clear understanding of assets, potential growth, areas of shared learning and sustainability.

The Committee raised specific points regarding the state of Waterborne Walk, the potential relocation of the fire station, the need to expand the retail offer and to also support non-retail businesses, the planned Grovebury Road retail development and how to attract employers to the new commercial land being made available within the eastern extension development. It was agreed that the eastern extension should be discussed further at a future meeting.

The point was made that the Town Council had clear aspirations for the town centre and should therefore be involved in early discussions regarding Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy contributions from developers. It was agreed that the Town Council should have an opportunity to shape the process and that there was an "open door" policy.

A query was raised regarding potential timing of development of the south side of the High Street. It was understood that this was a medium-term objective to be underway within a three to five year period. Central Bedfordshire Council had recently acquired two significant areas of land and this would help facilitate the regeneration process.

It was noted that the Committee has already resolved to spend £10,000 on a study to gather meaningful information regarding local shopping patterns and local businesses. It was agreed that officers should liaise directly to ensure this project progressed swiftly.

RESOLVED to note the information.

(b) The Committee was given a brief update regarding the Town Centre Delivery Plan. Additional funding had been confirmed from the Local Area Transport Plan budget and this would contribute towards the project to relocate the taxi rank and re-route the buses, as well as the proposed improvements to the town centre Mews and Alleys.

Updates and anticipated timescales were given with regard to the town centre parking study, street lighting improvements, signage improvements and environmental improvements to the mews and alleyways.

A point was made that while the parking study would be useful, the situation regarding town centre traffic congestion was perhaps a greater issue and a major factor in preventing residents from coming in to the town centre.

RESOLVED to note the report.

Central Bedfordshire officers were thanked for attending the meeting.

269/LLP BUSINESS UPDATE

G Borrelli, Chair of the LB First group, advised the Committee that LB First had recently launched a new website which contained lots of useful information as well as links to other local organisations. Work was underway regarding this year's Christmas Festival and the group was also working towards another "Independents Day" initiative on 4 July. Another new promotional initiative was "Red Saturday". On one Saturday per month, businesses would be offering incentives/discounts/promotions to encourage people into the town. The initiative would mainly be promoted via social media.

The Committee was advised that some town centre businesses had expressed concerns regarding the licensing of portable advertising boards. It was noted that licensing of A-boards was already a legal requirement and that the intention was to reduce clutter and potential safety hazards on the highway. Charging for licenses was a separate issue and a workshop was being held for Town Councillors on 23 April to discuss the draft policy and potential fee structure further.

B Chandler, Chair of the LB Connect group, advised that there was positive growth within the group and that members had been assisting with promotion of the upcoming Business Networking Event. It was interesting to note that many LB Connect member businesses did the majority of their work outside the town and it was hoped that the networking event would provide an opportunity to source more local business.

RESOLVED to note the information.

270/LLP COMMUNITY FORUM

The Committee received a brief interim report regarding the Community Forum event held on 22 March 2014 at the Duncombe Drive Day Centre, on the themes of "Healthy, Wealthy and Wise". 75 people had registered but a significant proportion of these were representatives of local groups and organisations with an interest in the topics under discussion.

Discussions took place at the event on the three themes and attendees were invited to leave thoughts or questions on any other matters on the "grafitti board". A report detailing the discussion points and the results of the 38 completed feedback forms would be brought to a future Committee meeting.

RESOLVED to note the report.

271/LLP PROJECTS UPDATE

The Committee received reports providing update information on town centre improvement projects, signage projects and Big Plan II projects.

RESOLVED to note the reports and to endorse the continued use of "Town Ranger" services, as required.

272/LLP COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PLAN

(a) The Committee received a copy of the objectives and work plan for 2013-2014.

RESOLVED to note the information.

(b) The Committee received a copy of the draft objectives and work plan for 2014-2015. This report was in an abbreviated form to focus on the key aims for the year and it was proposed that only the two main pages would be provided to the committee at each meeting.

RESOLVED to approve the draft Committee work plan and objectives for 2014-2015.

273/LLP TRAFFIC MEASURES AT SOULBURY ROAD, LINSLADE

The Committee was asked to consider a recommendation made by the Sustainable Transport Committee at its meeting held on 27 February 2014 (Minute Reference 129/ST): to consider allocating funding of up to £3,000 from the Big Plan Projects budget (502-4522) to undertake a feasibility study for traffic calming measures on Soulbury Road, Linslade.

A report generated by Central Bedfordshire officers was circulated to the Committee. It was recognised that a significant amount of traffic data for Soulbury Road was already held and therefore rather than undertaking a

feasibility study, the report recommended a partnership approach towards funding installation of a speed camera on Soulbury Road.

This would be part of a pilot programme being trialled by Central Bedfordshire Council and as such, a contribution of £13,000 was being requested (rather than the total cost of £42,000 for a camera and installation). Central Bedfordshire Council would meet the remainder of the costs.

The camera would be triggered by sensors in the road and would work in both directions.

It was suggested that £3,000 be funded from the Partnership Big Plan Projects budget and that a recommendation be made to the Policy and Finance Committee to fund the remaining £10,000 from the Highways Schemes budget, which had not been spent during 2013-2014.

It was suggested that a timely decision was needed and that, in the event the recommendation was not approved by the Policy and Finance Committee, the Partnership Committee should seek to meet the total cost from the Big Plan Projects budget.

It was proposed by Councillor A Dodwell and seconded by Councillor P Snelling to endorse the installation of a digital camera on Soulbury Road and to fund a £13,000 contribution to the total cost. On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED to endorse the installation of a digital camera on Soulbury Road, Linslade to reduce traffic speeds and to fund a £13,000 contribution to the total cost in one of the following two ways:

- (i) **£3,000 from the Big Plan Projects budget (502/4522) with a recommendation to the Policy and Finance Committee to fund the remaining £10,000 from the Highways Schemes budget (409/4800)**
- (ii) **should this recommendation be refused, to fund the remaining £10,000 from the Big Plan Projects budget and earmarked reserve (502/4522 & 965/9028)**

RECOMMENDED to the Policy and Finance Committee to fund £10,000 towards installation of a digital camera on Soulbury Road, Linslade from the Highways Schemes budget (409/4800).

274/LLP RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EVENTS SUB-COMMITTEE

(a) The Committee received a report and considered a recommendation made by the Events Sub-Committee at its meeting on 3 December 2013 (Minute Reference 97/E): to examine the possibilities for use of a public address system in the town centre during events.

It was agreed that officers should continue to investigate options and bring further information back to the Committee.

RESOLVED to examine the possibilities for use of a public address system in the town centre during events.

(b) The Committee received a report regarding the 2014 Christmas event and considered a number of recommendations made by the Events Sub-Committee at its meeting on 17 February 2014 (Minute Reference 110/E).

It was noted that windy weather and power cuts in December 2013 had resulted in disruption to the timers on the Christmas lights. A detailed electrical inspection was due to be undertaken in April 2014 and it was intended to replace timers and make any necessary improvements to electrical infrastructure from the funds remaining from the 2014-2014 Christmas lights budget (earmarked funds available £13,000).

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Town Council leads on the 2014 Christmas Weekend event.**
- (ii) the Town Council enters into a Memorandum of Understanding with LB First and other interested parties, to work together in establishing a strong community event.**
- (iii) the Town Council considers the medium term planning for this event, by establishing a five-year business plan**
- (iv) a budget of £12,000 plus £5,000 for staff overtime be allocated to the 2014 event**
- (v) the existing Christmas Lighting contract be extended for a further year (to then run for a five-year period alongside the five-year business plan).**

275/LLP ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Committee received update reports regarding Economic Development/Business Initiatives undertaken during 2013-2014, street market initiatives and the Business Networking Event due to take place on 30 April 2014.

It was noted that recommendations regarding economic development activity for 2014-2015 would be made by the CBC Regeneration and Business Support team to the Economic Development Sub-Committee at its meeting on 15 May 2014.

RESOLVED to note the reports.

276/LLP EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded on the grounds of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. The public and press to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of detailed discussion regarding: town centre environment (Operation Swan) update.

277/LLP TOWN CENTRE ENVIRONMENT

The Committee received a verbal update regarding improvements to the town centre environment.

RESOLVED to note the information.

The meeting closed at 2144 hours.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 APRIL 2014.

Chair

5 JUNE 2014

DRAFT