

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2014 AT 1930 HOURS

Present: Councillors D Bowater - CBC
 S Cotter – LLTC
 A Dodwell - LLTC
 D Hopkin – CBC - in the Chair
 P Snelling – LLTC
 G Perham – LLTC (substituting for K Sharer)

Also in attendance: M Saccoccio (Town Clerk)
 V Cannon (Head of Economic Development)
 J Martindale (Partnership Officer)
 S Sandiford (Committee Officer)
 P Curtis (LB First)
 B Chandler (LB Connect)
 Cllr J Bone
 S Chapman (Central Bedfordshire Council)
 J Balaam (The Greensand Trust)
 T Humber (Churches Together)
 Rev. P Niemiec (Community Forum)

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

333/LLP APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors K Sharer (substituted by Councillor G Perham), G Rolfe and N Warren and from Sarah Hughes, Sam Caldbeck and Paul Salmon of Central Bedfordshire Council. G Borrelli of LB First had also sent apologies and would be substituted by P Curtis.

334/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.

335/LLP DISPENSATIONS

No requests for dispensations had been received.

336/LLP PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no questions from members of the public.

337/LLP MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee received the minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 23 October 2014.

Minute reference 326/LLP: the Committee was advised that the Licensing Committee could only curtail licensed hours for known serial offenders, where complaints had been received and the police involved. However, initiatives such as PubWatch and Best Bar None were in place to counter antisocial behaviour issues arising from late night opening hours.

Minute reference 327/LLP: the status of the defibrillator project was queried and it was noted that the equipment was due to be delivered to the Fire Service in December, with distribution in early January. The Town Council would be responsible for installation.

Minute reference 329/LLP: an update was requested regarding works to the town centre Mews. The results of a lighting feasibility study were due in mid-January and quotes for signage had been sought. Landowners had been contacted with regard to permission for works to proceed and to seek a financial contribution towards the improvements.

Minute reference 331/LLP: a query was made with regard to winter salting. A report would be presented to the Town Council at its next meeting on 26 January 2015.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 23 October 2014 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.

338/LLP MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Councillor S Cotter gave the Committee a verbal update regarding the town centre residents' survey conducted by M-E-L Ltd and presented to the Committee at its last meeting. Five key themes had been identified and a meeting would be held on each theme, to determine key points for improvements. The five meetings would have taken place by the next Partnership Committee on 12 February 2015.

RESOLVED to note the information.

339/LLP COMMITTEE WORK PLAN AND OBJECTIVES

The Committee received a copy of the Objectives and Work Plan for 2014-2015.

RESOLVED to note the Committee Objectives and Work Plan for 2014-2015.

340/LLP COMMUNITY UPDATE

(a) Rev. P. Niemiec gave the Committee a verbal update on behalf of the Community Forum Steering group. Having sought advice from various parties, the steering group proposed to hold a forum for Young People in October 2015 and a forum for Health in February 2016. The mandate for the Health forum would be made clear in publicity for the event. Terms of reference for the steering group would be reviewed in early 2015.

RESOLVED to note the information.

(b) Tricia Humber of Churches Together spoke briefly to the Committee to provide an update in respect of establishing a local Credit Union branch. A summary report was circulated. The Money Matters credit union would be launched in January 2015 with the first host being Barclays Bank. Once established in that location and depending on numbers, further hosts and sessions would be sought. The service would be run by volunteers and initially be paper based but then moved onto computers. A grant had been awarded by Central Bedfordshire Council to the Dunstable Deanery to support the initiative.

RESOLVED to note the information and to welcome the credit union initiative.

341/LLP NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

By invitation, Sally Chapman of Central Bedfordshire Council attended the meeting to discuss Neighbourhood Planning. The scheme had been introduced by Government in 2011 and there were now fifteen designated areas within Central Bedfordshire, although no plans had been published as yet. As another layer of planning policy, Neighbourhood Plans were designed to help smaller communities allocate or protect parcels of land. The process was long and complex, requiring community involvement and a referendum.

It was noted that some very detailed planning guidance already existed within Central Bedfordshire and that a number of strategies and plans were already in place for Leighton Buzzard and Linslade, including the Big Plan, Town Centre Development Plan, Development Frameworks and Green Infrastructure Plan.

A query was raised regarding whether creation of a Neighbourhood Plan would secure Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding for parish councils. The Committee was advised that CIL could not be implemented until the Central Bedfordshire Development Strategy was in place and that parishes would still receive CIL funding even without a Neighbourhood Plan, albeit at a lower rate (15% rather than 25%).

The Committee was advised that following the submission of the CBC Development Strategy in October 2014, hearing sessions would take place in February and April 2015.

It was proposed by Councillor P Snelling and seconded by Councillor D Bowater that no further action be taken in respect of Neighbourhood Plans. On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED to take no further action in respect of Neighbourhood Plans.

342/LLP TOWN CENTRE DELIVERY PLAN AND CAR PARKING STUDY

The Committee received a report from Central Bedfordshire Council regarding the town centre parking study undertaken earlier in the year. Surveys had been undertaken of six areas of the town centre, on both a market day and a non-market day.

The conclusions drawn from the surveys were that off-street car parks were generally operating at capacity on a Saturday (market day), that volumes were significantly higher on a Saturday than a normal week day, that employee parking on residential streets was not identified as a major issue and that a significant number of users were exceeding the permitted parking length of stay in the on-street parking areas in the immediate town centre.

It was noted that Central Bedfordshire Council had recently purchased the former Cattle Market site with a view to creating an additional 60-80 spaces adjoining the existing Duncombe Drive car park. It was anticipated that the new spaces would be operational by the end of March 2015.

RESOLVED to note the report.

343/LLP GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

By invitation, Jon Balaam of The Greensand Trust presented to the Committee a final consultation draft of a Green Infrastructure Plan for Leighton-Linslade. The aim of the plan was to provide a spatial vision for the future environment of the parish, which when delivered would help support happy, healthy and vibrant communities with good access to green spaces and routes. The plan would act as a guidance document for the local community, the local planning authority and by developers. The plan had been developed over a period of several months, following consultation with the community at drop-in sessions, a stakeholder workshop, the Canal Festival, Rushmere Summer Fayre, two professional stakeholder sub-groups and a survey (both electronic and paper based), with over 168 people engaged in the process.

It was noted that that Plan could already be used, in its draft form, as a reference document to inform current and future planning applications. The draft Plan had been presented to the Ouzel Valley Park Steering Group earlier that day and the group had endorsed the principles within the Plan.

The Committee expressed thanks for the production of a robust document and requested time to review further and ensure the Plan fitted with Town Council aspirations. It was noted that final amendments needed to be made and that one or two maps were outstanding. It was agreed that a final version should be brought back to the Committee at its next meeting for formal endorsement.

RESOLVED to note the draft Green Infrastructure Plan and to await a finalised version at the next Committee meeting.

344/LLP 2015-2016 BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Committee received a report highlighting considerations for the 2015-2016 committee budget, along with a summary of activity and budget to be included for the three key areas of Big Plan projects, Town Centre management and Economic Development.

It was noted that the Town Council was currently reviewing long-term aspirations for Parson's Close Recreation Ground and that officers recommended use of Partnership funding for a temporary beach facility in 2015.

RESOLVED to endorse the use of £35,000 to fund a temporary beach in Parson's Close Recreation Ground for the 2015-2016 summer season.

RESOLVED to endorse the proposed update of Big Plan II, in the form of an addendum to the existing document, as outlined in the report.

RECOMMENDED to the Town Council to approve the proposed Partnership Committee budget for 2015-2016.

345/LLP BUSINESS GROUPS UPDATE

P Curtis of LB First thanked all those involved in the recent Christmas Festival weekend. It had been a successful event with good weather and the food court had been busy. A small number of negative comments had been received regarding the switching on of the Christmas lights and the fact that people in the High Street could not clearly see or hear those on stage.

B Chandler, Chair of LB Connect, advised the Committee that members continued to report business growth and that new members had also joined LB Connect. A cheque had been presented to last year's charity for just over £2,900 and fundraising had now started for the next year's charity.

RESOLVED to note the information.

346/LLP CHILDREN'S LITERARY TRAIL

The Committee received an update report regarding the Children's Literary Trail in the town centre, which was launched in 2012 and included a series of artworks celebrating children's stories. Details were provided on recent activity, including an approach by a local resident to use their media skills and experience to promote the Trail. An initial trial fee had been negotiated for the "Children's Trail Guardian". A number of project ideas and recommendations were outlined in the report for consideration.

RESOLVED to:

- (i) note the report.**
- (ii) use the remaining allocated funds from 970/9027 (Earmarked Reserves Town Centre Management £1,000) and 503/4509 (Town Centre Management/Children's Trail) to undertake the project ideas outlined in the report.**
- (iii) Allocate £2,000 in the 2015-16 Town Centre Management/Children's Trail budget, to extend the work of the Children's Trail Guardian for a further year.**
- (iv) Allocate a further £4,000 from the Town Centre Management budget in 2015-2016 for future publicity and maintenance of the Trail.**

The meeting closed at 2137 hours.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 DECEMBER 2014.

Chair

12 FEBRUARY 2015