

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2015 AT 1930 HOURS

Present: Councillors S Cotter – LLTC
 A Dodwell - LLTC
 D Hopkin – CBC - in the Chair
 J M Freeman – LLTC (substituting for P Snelling)
 A Brandham – LLTC (substituting for G Rolfe)
 G Perham – LLTC (substituting for K Sharer)
 B Spurr - CBC

Also in attendance: M Saccoccio (Town Clerk)
 V Cannon (Head of Economic Development)
 J Martindale (Partnership Officer)
 S Sandiford (Committee Officer)
 G Borrelli (LB First)
 B Chandler (LB Connect)
 S Hughes (Central Bedfordshire Council)

Members of the Public: 5
Members of the Press: 0

347/LLP APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillors K Sharer (substituted by Councillor G Perham), P Snelling (substituted by Councillor J M Freeman), G Rolfe (substituted by Councillor A Brandham), D Bowater, N Warren and A Shadbolt, and from Rev. P. Niemiec.

348/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.

349/LLP DISPENSATIONS

No requests for dispensations had been received.

350/LLP PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no questions from members of the public.

351/LLP MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee received the minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 11 December 2014.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 11 December 2014 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.

352/LLP MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Committee received the draft minutes of the Economic Development Sub-Committee meeting held on 8 January 2015.

RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the Economic Development Sub-Committee meeting held on 8 January 2015.

Minute reference 119/EC: a query was raised regarding progress with Central Bedfordshire Council's market towns initiative. Officers advised that a meeting had been held with CBC officers that week and that a new approach to negotiating joint priorities was being established, with all regeneration projects under review and a focus on delivery.

Minute reference 118/EC: consideration was given to the recommendation made in respect of the Spring Business Networking Event.

RESOLVED to allocate £2,007 for the Spring Networking Event from budget codes 970/9027 (EMR TCM Business Development) and 503/4510 (TCM Business Development).

353/LLP COMMITTEE WORK PLAN AND OBJECTIVES

The Committee received a copy of the Objectives and Work Plan for 2014-2015. It was noted that the Greensand Trust would now present a final version of the Green Infrastructure Plan to the Committee at its April meeting.

It was agreed to add an item to the April meeting in respect of delivering the recommendations arising from the town centre survey.

A query was raised regarding the status of the Central Bedfordshire plans for development of the South Side of the High Street. Purchase of two sites had been completed in 2014 and delivery of the mixed use but predominantly retail scheme would be driven by interest from the commercial sector as well as economic factors. It was agreed to invite Jason Longhurst of Central Bedfordshire Council to attend the next committee meeting.

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

354/LLP TOWN CENTRE SURVEY

The Committee received a report regarding the working party meetings which had been held to review the findings of the town centre survey undertaken during 2014 by M-E-L Ltd. A number of specific areas had been reviewed including communications, markets, parking, lighting and entertainment. The Committee was asked to consider endorsing, in principle, a number of

recommended actions. Further work would then be undertaken to ascertain delivery costs and timescales for the identified projects.

A verbal outline was given of the discussions held by the working party and the rationale behind the final, key recommendations. The group had aimed to focus on actions which were potentially deliverable by the Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council and would help keep the town centre a vibrant, attractive and welcoming environment for residents and visitors.

A budget report for the year to date and the forthcoming financial year had been circulated and it was noted that there had been significant underspend in 2013-2014.

The Committee expressed support for the projects proposed but underlined the fact that existing projects also needed continued focus. A concern was expressed regarding delivery of further entertainment/events in the town, given restricted resources and it was noted that greater community involvement would be a key factor.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to note the report**
- (ii) to endorse, in principle, the recommendations outlined in section 5 of the report (see Appendix A)**
- (iii) to await more detailed information regarding delivery costs and timescales for the identified projects at the next meeting**

355/LLP CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL UPDATE

The Committee received a report from Central Bedfordshire Council including information on community safety, leisure, highways and transportation, social care, youth services, schools, waste and community engagement. Highlights included an increase in membership at the refurbished Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre, an increase in ticket sales following the launch of online booking for the Library Theatre and a new volunteer awards and celebration event to take place on 2 June at the Grove Theatre.

It was noted that the Regeneration and Business Directorate was leading a project group involving Assets, Highways and other parts of the Council to drive forward the Town Centre Delivery Plan.

RESOLVED to note the information.

356/LLP BUSINESS GROUPS UPDATE

B Chandler, Chair of LB Connect, advised the Committee that their current focus was the Business Networking Event taking place on 23 April 2014 at Astral Park. It was hoped that this year's attendees would be able to book online via the new Town Council website.

The Committee thanked LB Connect for sponsoring the event.

G Borrelli, Chair of LB First, advised the Committee that the group had been working closely with the Town Council recently on a number of projects including the town centre survey review, the development of a tourism leaflet, the defibrillator project and the Christmas Festival. Group members were keen to see progress on the development of the south side of the High Street and had noted that the Central Bedfordshire Economic Development Strategy had no specific policy on Leighton Buzzard town centre, causing concern that the project did not lose any focus.

The Chair advised that the Economic Development team at Central Bedfordshire continued to focus on developments in the town and that the Leighton Linslade Development Framework would be moving to the next stage.

RESOLVED to note the information.

357/LLP REVIEW OF CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL WEEKEND

The Committee received a post-event review of the 2014 Christmas Festival Weekend, including information on the market, food court, switch-on of the Christmas lights, entertainment and attractions, publicity, budget, stewarding and comments received from residents. Planning for the 2015 event was due to start towards the end of February/early March.

RESOLVED to note the report.

358/LLP CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2015-2016

The Committee received a draft Calendar of Meetings for 2015-2016, including six proposed meeting dates for the Partnership Committee and four proposed meeting dates for the Economic Development Sub-Committee as detailed below.

Partnership Committee: Thursday 18 June 2015
Thursday 3 September 2015
Thursday 22 October 2015
Thursday 17 December 2015
Thursday 11 February 2016
Thursday 14 April 2016

Economic Development Sub-Committee:
Thursday 4 June 2015
Thursday 24 September 2015
Thursday 26 November 2015
Thursday 10 March 2016

RESOLVED to approve the proposed meeting dates, subject to checking that there was no clash with any Central Bedfordshire meetings.

359/LLP BIG LUNCH 2015

The Committee received a report regarding the third Community Big Lunch event, to be held on Sunday 7 June 2015. It was proposed that the event should have a Food Festival theme and incorporate a "Great Leighton Bake-Off". The event was at an early stage of planning but entertainment, food vendors and suppliers were currently being sourced.

The Committee was asked to approve the use of any income from the event to be put towards the event itself, with any surplus carried forward to the following year.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to note the report**
- (ii) that income generated from the event (e.g. pitch fees from stall holders and food vendors) be put towards the delivery costs of the same event, in addition to the allocated £10,000 budget.**
- (iii) That any surplus income be carried forward into the next financial year for use at future Big Lunch events, for the five year period agreed for the event's delivery.**

Publicity for the event was discussed and a revision to the current "Partnership Committee" logo was suggested. A consensus of opinion was that no additional logo was needed, but that publicity material for Partnership projects should simply include both Council logos, which were both clearly identifiable to the public. It was agreed that a slogan of "working together" could be used where appropriate.

RESOLVED not to use a Partnership Committee logo but to ensure all publicity and promotional material for projects arising from Partnership should feature the logos of both the Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council.

360/LLP MARKET BURSARY SCHEME

The Committee received a copy of the current market bursary scheme guidelines and was asked to consider a recommendation made by the Market Sub-Committee on 8 January 2015 (Minute Reference 105/MK): *that the Market Bursary scheme be amended to specify that recipients must trade on the Leighton Buzzard market for at least twelve months, rather than six.*

The Committee was advised that a review of the market as a whole was currently underway and that information was being sourced from market organisations to help determine the average duration of new traders to a market. It was suggested that rather than extending the duration of trading, it might be preferable to reduce the amount of the bursary given.

It was agreed that a proper structure was needed for applicants to submit a business plan and cash flow projection. It also needed to be clarified that bursary funds could not be used to purchase stock.

It was agreed to continue with the existing scheme guidelines until such time as the full review had been completed, when information would be brought to committee for further consideration.

RESOLVED to await recommendations regarding the Market Bursary Scheme following a review by officers.

361/LLP LEIGHTON-LINSLADE DEFIBRILLATOR PROJECT

The Committee received an update report in respect of the Leighton-Linslade defibrillator project. Following discussions with the Leighton Buzzard First Responders, it was proposed that the initial five defibrillators be acknowledged as town assets and that a Service Level Agreement would be drawn up to establish roles and responsibilities for both parties.

Defibrillators had now been installed at the Astral Park Sports and Community Centre and Mentmore Pavilion and community awareness training was due to be arranged once all five defibrillators had been installed.

RESOLVED:

- (i) to note the report
- (ii) to endorse the commitment of a further two years of funding at £1,000 per year, in addition to the existing commitment, from budget code 503/4505 (Town Centre management), to run concurrently with the Service Level Agreement between the Town Council and the First Responders.

The meeting closed at 2100 hours.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY 2015.

Chair

16 APRIL 2015

APPENDIX A

RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE TOWN CENTRE SURVEY

Communications:

- a) To secure two variable electronic messaging/signage systems in the Town (Estimated costs for one would be in the region of £6000 plus installation and traffic management costs)
- b) To establish a Town Centre Social Media strategy

Markets

- a) Update the visual look of the market through branding and uniformed canopies. (Cross-reference with wider markets review) (Review capital markets budgets)
- b) Evaluate the current layout of the market to identify possible improvements.
- c) Review the product offering of the Market and source new traders and increase 'high-end' products.

Car Parks (inc.Parking)

- a) Work with CBC to review the possibility of introducing pay on exit car parks for both Duncombe Drive and the Library/Theatre. (Town Council to discuss costs with CBC)
- b) Review the local application of the current enforcement strategy for illegally parked vehicles and explore local solutions, e.g. memorandum of understanding between the local authorities for managing market vehicles on High Street.

Lighting

- a) Arrange a full lighting review of the town centre highlighting key issues and costs for replacements and repairs. (Cross-reference with work undertaken to secure future Christmas Lighting schemes). (The Town Council are already working with CBC regarding the lighting issues and evaluating the projects and costs. We aim for this to be funded through the Town Centre Delivery Plan project)
- b) Review outcome from CBC Lighting Replacement programme and highlight lighting areas that need improvements or replacing.
- c) Research the costs to provide uplighters to historic buildings and trees. Identify key locations. Town Council Officers will explore the costs and locations to deliver this project.

Entertainment

- a) Increase volume of events and footfall into the town centre. Explore ideas generated by Ollie Vees. (i.e vintage fair, charity rides, Hot Rod events) Review dates, costs and internal resources to aid or deliver specific key events and working with community groups and organisations to assist with delivery of events and where appropriate, e.g. space and theme, integrate within the historic market and specialist events.
- b) Increased themed markets and provide entertainment to enhance the market atmosphere including rural crafts, demonstrations, music, displays etc. To explore budget share between Markets and Partnership Committees pending confirmation of cost estimates and outcome of market review activity.