

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL
LEIGHTON-LINSLADE PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 1930 HOURS

Present: Councillors A Brandham – LLTC
 A Dodwell - CBC
 K Ferguson – CBC
 F Kharawala – LLTC
 T Morris - LLTC – in the Chair
 C Palmer – LLTC
 B Spurr - CBC
 G Tubb – CBC
 E Wallace – LLTC

Also in attendance: M Saccoccio (Town Clerk)
 V Cannon (Head of Cultural & Economic Services)
 M Jahn (Committee Officer)
 S Sandiford (Head of Democratic & Central
 Services)
 G Borelli (Chair, LB First)
 B Chandler (Chair, LB Connect)
 S Hughes (Community Engagement Manager,
 Central Bedfordshire Council)
 J Longhurst (Director of Regeneration and
 Business, Central Bedfordshire Council)
 M Howard (Programme Manager, Regeneration
 and Business, Central Bedfordshire Council)
 M Westerby (Head of Public Health, Central
 Bedfordshire Council)
 T Keaveney (AD Housing Services, Central
 Bedfordshire Council)
 Chief Inspector Hoque (Bedfordshire Police)
 Inspector Clarke (Bedfordshire Police)
 I Howarth (Beds Fire)

Members of the Public: 6
Members of the Press: 1

156/LLP APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Councillor B Walker and Tricia Humber (Community Forum Steering Group).

157/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 were made and no dispensations had been requested.

158/LLP PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The first question highlighted the concerns of a retailer from the High Street on the relocation of the taxis to the South Side of the street. Concerns were raised on whether this would become a permanent feature not a temporary one as suggested and that the number of taxis would cause problems parking/waiting using the loading bay along that side of the street. The question was asked as to when did the consultation take place and who took part in this consultation.

A member of the public and representative of South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth wanted to know if any council decision had been made in respect of a Freedom of Information request made to Central Bedfordshire Council regarding the future development of land south of the High Street as promised after the Partnership meeting held on 22 June 2017. The response received referred to "no Council decision being made". Clarification was sought as to whether any decision had now been made.

159/LLP MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee received the draft minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 22 June 2017.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 22 June 2017 be approved as a correct record and be signed accordingly.

160/LLP CO-LOCATION OF POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES

By invitation, Inspector A Clarke, Chief Inspector Hoque and I Howarth attended the meeting to provide a brief verbal update regarding the co-location of police and fire services in the town. The Committee was advised that the Community Police Team had now moved into the Fire Station Site and the Team consists of Sergeant Louise Bates, 7 Police Constables and 4 PCSO's. There had been increased visibility within the town since the move and 2 shoplifting arrests had been made, one of which was a prolific offender.

The first Street Meet would take place on the 15th September in Johnson Drive and had been promoted via twitter and facebook. A drugs warrant was ready for Monday and other warrants were waiting.

A question was raised concerning the location of a public enquiry office after the relocation of the police into the fire station. Chief Inspector Hoque replied that there was no plan to open an enquiry office within Leighton Buzzard at the present time. Enquiry offices were located at the main stations of Luton and Dunstable.

A brief verbal update was given by I Howarth (Beds Fire Service) stating that the Fire Service officers were being trained as first responders within the community

so they could be called upon to attend a minor incident instead of calling an ambulance to attend. They would be trained in trauma care and in the use of defibrillator machines.

Twitter and other social media would be used to promote events and services offered by these emergency services and members of the public could also comment on these sites.

RESOLVED to note the information.

161/LLP ENABLING DELIVERY IN LEIGHTON-LINSLADE

By invitation, J Longhurst and M Howard of Central Bedfordshire Council attended the meeting to provide an update in respect of matters including the potential future development of the south side of the High Street. A presentation was given which included some key statistics and an overview of the opportunities and challenges facing the town. The Committee was advised that Central Bedfordshire Council was continuing to promote Land South of the High Street informally. It was also advised that two parties have contacted the council regarding the Land South opportunity. Any development would be market driven, but it was recognised that the growth of a younger population would give rise to a broad range of needs and that a balance would need to be achieved, in terms of a potential cinema and casual dining. It was noted that only two thirds of the site was currently within the Council's control and the council would need to gain Executive decision before securing any interested parties for its land to enable a development.

In terms of future development on Bridge Meadow, the Council was continuing to engage with landowners and to promote the site, which was recognised as a potentially valuable canalside development linking Leighton Buzzard with Linslade.

A decision regarding significant investment into development of a new older persons care facility was expected to be made by Central Bedfordshire Council's Executive in Spring 2018, following a consultation process. A development proposal for land south of the High Street was anticipated by summer 2018.

Support was expressed for the proposed development but concerns were raised about the length of the process, which had been under discussion for several years. The Committee was advised that an average timescale to bring something to the market was 6-7 years. Concerns were expressed about the potential impact of the retail parks on the sustainability of the town centre. The Committee was advised that the retail park offer, which would include a major food retailer, was part of the wider retail offer for the whole area and that a balance was crucial for the town centre, with leisure facilities needed to attract a younger demographic into the town.

RESOLVED to note the information.

162/LLP ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND HOMELESSNESS

By invitation, M Westerby and T Keaveney of Central Bedfordshire Council attended the meeting to provide an update in respect of homelessness and antisocial behaviour. The Committee was advised that Central Bedfordshire Council was working with the Leighton-Linslade Homeless Service to enable them to improve their service, with a focus on health and safety foremost.

Concerns were raised regarding the location of the night shelter and the adequacy of services provided for the homeless during the day. Kilgour Court offered supported housing as a progression from the night shelter. Questions were raised on what support and activities were offered to the residents of Kilgour Court during the day. They had complex needs ranging from drug/alcohol abuse to mental health issues. Progression had been made following the takeover of Kilgour Court by the Council, with better outcomes being achieved for individuals, but longer term solutions were being sought for affordable housing and intensive support services.

A more detailed report would be presented to the next Partnership Committee on the 30 November with other social care services being invited to attend.

RESOLVED to note the information.

163/LLP CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received an update report from Central Bedfordshire Council on matters relating to the parish, including information in respect of social care, health and housing, crime figures, antisocial behaviour, business rates, car parking, transport matters and services for young people. The matter of business rates relief was discussed and a consultation was currently taking place, accessible via the Central Bedfordshire website.

The Committee thanked Sarah Hughes, Community Engagement Officer CBC, for her full and clear report.

RESOLVED to note the report.

164/LLP BUSINESS SUPPORT

The Committee received a brief presentation from B Chandler, Chair of the LB Connect business networking group showing how the group worked and what support they offered to small businesses. This was a non-profit organisation run by volunteers assisting local businesses with information and support. The Committee watched a video detailing the work of the LB Connect group.

RESOLVED to note the information.

G Borelli of LB First spoke regarding his concerns about the lifting of the restrictions of a food hall being approved for the retail park in Grovebury Road. Further concerns were expressed about the blocked drains in the High Street and when they would be cleared before the severe weather in the winter months. Sarah Hughes stated that the gulley motor was due to come to Leighton Buzzard by the end of this year.

RESOLVED to note the information.

165/LLP TAXIS

The Committee received a report in respect of taxis in the town centre and the possibilities for relocation of the taxi rank from the High Street. It was reiterated that a number of options had been considered and recognised that this was an ongoing problem. A short term solution was needed to accommodate the street market and it was proposed that a pilot scheme be run under an experimental order for six months. The Licensing team would lead a consultation on potential longer term solutions.

RESOLVED to:

1. Note the report.
2. Endorse the relocation of the taxi rank to the opposite side of the High Street on a temporary/pilot basis from 23 September, Market relaunch day for 6 months.
3. Endorse ongoing work to determine an alternative location for the taxi rank subject to (a) public and stakeholder consultation (b) funding.

166/LLP COMMUNITY FORUM UPDATE

The Committee received a brief verbal update. It was anticipated that a Community Forum event would take place with a Highways focus, but further details and timings were to be confirmed.

RESOLVED to note the information.

167/LLP COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PLAN

The Committee received and gave consideration to the objectives and work plan for the municipal year 2017-2018. Further to the earlier discussion at the meeting, it was agreed that a more detailed report on homelessness issues would be presented to the Partnership Committee at the next meeting on 30th November.

RESOLVED to note the report.

168/LLP BUDGET REPORT

The Committee received a brief report regarding budgets, including a three-month budget monitoring report for the period April-June 2017.

RESOLVED to note the report.

169/LLP MARKET TOWNS REGENERATION FUND

The Committee received a brief verbal update in respect of the three projects approved for funding through the Market Towns Regeneration Fund: the market relaunch, architectural uplighting and electronic signage.

RESOLVED to note the information.

The meeting closed at 21:48 hours.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THIS IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2017.

Chair

30 NOVEMBER 2017