

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF CULTURAL & ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2020 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Councillors A Dodwell (Chair)
 K Cursons
 D Bowater (Vice-Chair)
 G Perham
 M Freeman
 R Goodchild
 P Snelling
 T Morris (substituting for S Hemmings)

Also in attendance: M Saccoccio, Town Clerk
 S Sandiford, Head of Democratic and Central
 Services
 V Cannon, Head of Cultural and Economic
 Services
 M Jahn, Committee Officer
 S Jewell
 A Harrison, Markets Manager
 L Farmer, TACTIC Manager -part meeting
 Ben Bodsworth, Town and Country Promotions
 Manager – part meeting
 Ms T Murphy, NMTF -part meeting
 Mr B Dyson, NMTF -part meeting
 Cllr Spurr – part meeting
 Cllr Owen – part meeting
 Cllr Harvey

Members of the public: 0

63/CE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Hemmings (substituted by Councillor Morris). In the absence of the Vice Chair, it was agreed that Councillor D Bowater act as Vice Chair for this meeting, in case of any technical issues affecting the Chair.

64/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. No declarations were made.

65/CE QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from the public

66/CE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- (a) The Committee received the draft minutes of the previous Cultural and Economic Services Committee meeting held on 7 September 2020.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cultural and Economic Services Committee meeting held on 7 September 2020 be approved as a correct record, to be signed at a later date when safe to do so.

- (b) Minute ref 56/CE Business Support - it was confirmed a Keeping it Local Banner had been put up by the bus stops in West Street as requested.

67/CE SUB COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Committee received the draft minutes of the Market Sub-Committee meeting held on 27 February 2020 for consideration.

Minute ref 41/MK Cashless Payments – it was confirmed this had been taken to Policy & Finance Committee and having been ratified, was now in use on the market.

RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the Market Sub-Committee meeting held on 27 February 2020.

68/CE NATIONAL MARKET TRADER FEDERATION

Ms T Murphy and Mr B Dyson were invited to attend the meeting from National Market Trader Federation. The Committee were informed the NMTF is a not-for-profit, independent organisation providing advice and representation for market and street traders. They can serve to represent traders on national issues and at the local level. The NMTF gathered views of all the market traders and provided a non-biased liaison platform with the Council. Any problems could be overseen and discussed with traders and officers to reach an acceptable solution if and when problems arise.

The Committee were informed that markets had adapted well to the COVID restrictions and Leighton Buzzard market had provided a good safe environment for shoppers once the lock down restrictions were lifted. It was felt that younger people were now shopping at the market with the trend for shopping locally becoming more popular. Patterns of behaviour were changing with less commuting and quality of products found on markets was now more important to shoppers.

Members felt there was generally less negativity between the traders and the Council which provided a more positive atmosphere within the market.

Thanks were given to Ms Murphy and Mr Dyson for attending the meeting and the support they provided to the market traders.

RESOLVED to note the information.

69/CE OLDER PERSONS TASK AND FINISH GROUP

- (a) The Committee received the approved minutes of the Older Persons Task and Finish Group meetings held on 1 October 2020 and 15 October 2020.

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Older Persons Task and Finish Group meetings held on 1 October 2020 and 15 October 2020.

- (b) The Committee received the draft minutes of the Older Persons Task and Finish Group held on 29th October 2020.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Older Persons Task and Finish Group held on 29 October 2020 be approved as a correct record, to be signed at a later date when safe to do so.

- (c) The Committee received a report on proposed activities for Older People and considered the recommendations contained therein.

Members fully supported the recommendations and agreed a dedicated sub-committee should be formed to carry on the work in the medium and long term, particularly once the current Covid-19 safety restrictions had been lifted. A suggestion was also made to look into extending the project offer to the surrounding Parishes and how this could be implemented.

Thanks were given to the officers and Task and Finish Group members for their hard work on this project.

RECOMMENDED to the Policy and Finance Committee:

- (i) that £30,000 of the current £37,000 in Earmarked Reserve (Community Projects for older persons and younger persons activities 925/9507) be committed to fund the delivery of the following project themes for the current financial year in support of the older persons agenda:
- Digital inclusion
 - Directory/information hub of activities and services.
- (ii) that the anticipated project costs (up to maximum of £50,000) for the financial period 2021/22 be met from the 5 year Financial Plan – “Future Projects” for the purposes of:
- Digital inclusion
 - Directory/information hub
 - Older Persons Visual identity – branding of work
 - Direct support of local community activity groups

RESOLVED to create an Older Persons Sub Committee to assist with the progression of work and to bring forward detailed recommendations for Committee consideration, comprising Councillors Owen, Goodchild, Freeman, Perham, Cursons and Morris and to conclude its business on 31 March 2022 when its need and purpose could be reviewed.

70/CE COMMUNITY EVENTS UPDATE

The Committee received a report to update members on the Events programme and outline plan for the 2021 season with the additional complexities due to Covid-19 restrictions. The events included Living History, Christmas Festival, Big Lunch, Canal Festival, Music in the Park and Business Networking Event.

It was hoped the Big Lunch would take place in 2021 but officers were undertaking location feasibility studies to look at alternative venues where social distancing and track and trace would be easier to implement. Free tickets would be issued with the possibility of running the festival over two days considered.

Music in the Park would take place between June and September 2021 in Parson's Close but ticketing options were being investigated for safety reasons and the performers would not be able to use the bandstand. The Business Networking Event would be moved to September 2021 when it was hoped restrictions would allow indoor events to take place.

Members agreed to postpone a decision on whether to hold the 2021 Linslade Canal Festival until the next Committee meeting on 1 March 2021.

The creation of a Task and Finish group was proposed to review the format of the Living History event, with the aim of using the budget allocation more effectively to create a legacy for the town.

Thanks were given to all the Events Team for their continued hard work in these challenging times.

RESOLVED:

- (a) To endorse the proposed date of the first weekend in June for the Big Lunch Food Festival in 2021 subject to local or national restrictions.**
- (b) To defer a decision regarding postponement of the Canal Festival in 2021 and replacing it with a film festival weekend on the last weekend of July subject to local or national restrictions until the next meeting of the Cultural and Economic Services Committee on 1 March 2021.**
- (c) To endorse the proposal to hold the Band concerts throughout June to September in Parson's Close Recreation Park subject to local and national restrictions.**
- (d) To endorse the creation of a Task & Finish Group to review the Living History Event. Members of this group would be Councillor Cursons, Dodwell, Bowater, Perham, Snelling, Harvey and Freeman.**
- (e) To endorse the delay of the Thanksgiving event and to allocate £5,000 delivery budget from the Community Projects earmarked reserve (970/9057)**

RECOMMENDED to Council that £5,000 underspend from the 2020-21 Christmas budgets (£2,500, 101/4511 & £2,500 101/4408) be carried forward into the Community Projects earmarked reserve (970/9057) for the trial of recorded music in the High Street during an appropriate period in 2021.

71/CE **TACTIC WORK UPDATE**

The Committee received a report providing an update of work at TACTIC in August, September and October 2020 and future project work during the coming months.

Members were informed that the number of Mentoring cases had increased, with 18 current cases and a waiting list of 11 created, anxiety being the key problem over the past months. The Tactic Additional Needs Group had still managed to meet once a week as TACTIC offer a supportive service to the group. The Schools Offer had now been resumed with sessions being offered in Cedars Upper School and Vandyke Upper School, covering subjects such as Protective Behaviours, Healthy Relationships and anxiety.

A suggestion was made to research setting up a Gaming tournament group which would keep young people in contact with each other without meeting up. Thanks were given to TACTIC staff for the comprehensive report and their continued hard work with young people during this challenging time.

RESOLVED:

- (a) To endorse that a total of £4,719.60 be allocated from TACTIC earmarked reserves to commission CHUMS to deliver the Talk-space Wellbeing Service in 2021/22, and that it is split into £3,855.60 from 970/9020 and £864 from 970/9049.**

RECOMMENDED to Council:

- (b) To carry forward unused funds from budget line 104/4100 (maintenance) into the TACTIC earmarked reserves (970/9020) to facilitate future building repairs and maintenance.**
- (c) To carry forward unused funds from budget line 104/4014 (projects) into the TACTIC earmarked reserve (970/9020) to assist with project work delivery in 2021/22.**

72/CE **PIGEON MANAGEMENT**

The Committee received and considered a report regarding options for Pigeon management in the town. This was a difficult, long-standing problem and it was felt a long term approach could reduce the flock size but it was unlikely that they would be eradicated.

Members agreed the introduction of an Artificial Breeding Programme and a Pigeon Management Grant Scheme would offer a combined approach to greater effect.

RESOLVED:

- (a) Subject to the necessary agreements in place and an appropriate location identified and secured, that the Town Council installs and manages an artificial breeding programme to control the pigeon population within the town centre.**
- (b) To establish a one-off grant scheme of £34,000 (Future Projects, 925/9033) for independent shops to assist with the installation of pigeon proofing scheme on their premises.**
- (c) To delegate authority to award grants to the Town Clerk in conjunction with the Committee Chair and Vice Chair, to facilitate the timely delivery of works.**

73/CE BUDGET REPORT

The Committee received and considered the draft Committee budget for 2021/2022. Unused budget for this year would be moved to earmarked reserves to be held until required.

RECOMMENDED to the Policy and Finance Committee to approve the draft Cultural and Economic Services budget for 2021-22.

RECOMMENDED to Council:

- (a) To carry forward unspent funds from the 2020-21 Community Access Defibrillator budget (101/4554) into the Defibrillators earmarked reserve (970/9022) for ongoing maintenance and kit replenishments for community defibrillators.**
- (b) To carry forward unspent funds from the 2020-21 Public Conveniences Repairs & Maintenance budget (413/4100) into the Public Conveniences earmarked reserve (970/9055) for ongoing maintenance of the Public Conveniences.**

74/CE STANDING ITEMS AND GENERAL UPDATES

The Committee received a report to inform of on-going service activity. Members were informed the Architectural Lighting of All Saints Church had been delayed because a protected species of bat had been found in the spire. It was recommended the project to uplift the spire be discontinued and discussions held with Central Bedfordshire Council to reallocate funds. A question was raised regarding the postponement by CBC regarding the installation of a Changing Places facility in the foyer of the multi-storey car park and that this should be followed up so it does not become permanently suspended. Councillor Dodwell would follow this up with CBC.

Another highlighted problem was the non installation of benches in the High Street which were promised by CBC in July. Also no bollard had been installed at the bottom of the High Street, with only temporary plastic barriers in use. Both had been chased up on many occasions but no solution

reached.

RESOLVED:

- (a) To utilise the remaining allocated Town Centre Promotion earmarked Budget (970/9018) £1,609.80 to create a Town Centre promotional video.
- (b) To allocate the remainder of the Living History Trail funding of £11,608 (925/9506), to fund the transfer of The Sands of Time (edited version) onto The Buzzard Trails App and additional promotional materials to continue the Buzzard Trail promotion.

75/CE **COMMITTEE WORK PLAN AND OBJECTIVES**

The Committee received the Committee Workplan and Objectives for 2020-2021.

A question was raised regarding the piped music not being included on the work plan. Members were informed this was part of the events overall plan and would be run as a pilot event for a month and if successful it could be made permanent.

RESOLVED to note the Committee Workplan and Objectives for 2020-2021.

76/CE **TOWN CENTRE PEDESTRIANISATION**

The Committee received and considered an update report on the pedestrianisation of Hockliffe and Lake Street.

Members were informed that the traffic regulation order in the town at present was a "TTRO" or "temporary Traffic Regulation Order" to provide experimental restrictions for traffic management purposes relating to the High Street and its environment.

It was agreed that members could share the report if residents had questions they wanted answered but the overall responsibility lay with CBC and they should be referred back to them.

RESOLVED to note the report.

The meeting closed at 10.13 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2020.

Chair

1 MARCH 2021