

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF CULTURAL & ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 12 MARCH 2018 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Councillors S Cotter (Chair)
 G Perham (Vice-Chair)
 D Bowater
 C Chambers
 M Freeman
 F Kharawala
 S Rahman
 C Palmer

Also in attendance: M Saccoccio, Town Clerk
 V Cannon, Head of Cultural and Economic
 Services
 T Quinn, TACTIC Manager
 S Sandiford, Head of Democratic and Central
 Services
 B Bodsworth, BT Events (part meeting)
 G Borelli, Chair LB First
 Cllr T Morris

Members of the public: 5
Members of the press 1

83/CE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received and were accepted from Councillor A Brandham, substituted by Councillor C Palmer.

84/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 and no dispensations had been requested.

85/CE QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Four members of the public spoke during the public session. Three spoke in relation to the street market (agenda item 10). A statement was read out by a market trader representative stating that traders wanted a fair system for rents and that many did not agree with the proposed long service discount. This had been reflected in a petition submitted to the Council on 6 March. It was stated that communications were felt to be misleading due to some errors.

A second speaker and market trader spoke to suggest that the Council should allow traders to form a co-operative and run the market themselves.

A member of the public and town centre retailer questioned the justification for use of Central Bedfordshire Council grant monies for the market relaunch project and whether there would be evidence to show the project had benefitted the market. It was noted that the retail sector was experiencing challenging times and that everyone wanted the market to succeed.

A member of the public and representative of LB First spoke about the Christmas lighting contract, due to be reviewed later in 2018. A request was made to consider additional lighting for areas such as Ropa Court and North Street.

Members of the public were thanked for attending the meeting and for their comments. The 4 market traders then left the meeting.

86/CE **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The Committee received the draft minutes of the previous Committee meeting held on 10 January 2018.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cultural and Economic Services Committee held on 10 January 2018 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.

87/CE **SUB-COMMITTEE AND TASK GROUP MINUTES**

The Committee received the draft minutes of the Market Sub-Committee meeting held on 1 February 2018.

Minute reference 097/MK: several recommendations made by the Market Sub-Committee were given consideration.

RESOLVED to endorse the revised Market Cancellation Policy.

RESOLVED to endorse the minor amendments to the revised Community/Charity Pitch Policy.

RESOLVED to endorse the creation of a Community Tuesday Speciality Market to take place once per month.

RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the Market Sub-Committee 1 February 2018.

88/CE **TEENAGE ADVICE AND INFORMATION CENTRE**

The Committee received an update report regarding TACTIC activity during December 2017 to January 2018, including the youth work programme, external hire of the Centre outside operating hours, satellite projects,

agencies, individual support, staffing and attendance.

It was noted that attendance had increased; this was felt to be because of a greater awareness within the wider community of the TACTIC offer but also a greater awareness of issues affecting young people, particularly mental health issues.

The Committee was advised of concerns regarding the potential loss of funding for youth counselling services, despite a growing requirement for this service and increasing waiting lists.

TACTIC staff and young people were thanked for their recent celebration event to note the 15th anniversary of the Centre. This had been well organised and the exhibition on the history of the building had drawn in a wider audience.

RESOLVED to note the report.

89/CE **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

The Committee received a progress report on community events including the Outdoor Cinema Event at Mentmore Park in April, the annual Music in the Park concert programme, the Big Lunch Festival in June, the Linslade Canal Festival in July, Living History Day in October and the initial planning for the Christmas Festival. The potential for corporate sponsorship of events was discussed.

It was noted that the Royal British Legion and other partners were leading on the events to commemorate the centenary of the end of World War 1 in November 2018, but that the Town Council would be leading on the beacon lighting part of the commemoration.

RESOLVED to note the report.

90/CE **BEST BAR NONE**

The Committee received a verbal update on the delivery of the Best Bar None Award Scheme, designed to improve standards within licensed premises. Having trained six assessors in January, assessments of the licensed premises were currently underway and would be followed by a People's Vote in April. It was anticipated that an awards presentation would be held in June.

The Committee was reminded that the Best Bar None Co-ordinator also facilitated the scheme in Dunstable and Houghton Regis, with a contribution being made by those town councils. Funding had been secured to extend the post until the end of March 2019, which would allow time for future arrangements to be given consideration.

RESOLVED to note the report.

91/CE YOUTH PROMISE GRANT FUND

The Committee received a verbal update on the new grant scheme. To date, four applications had been received. Additional information was being sought from all four applicants. The grant steering group would assess applications in advance of the next Committee meeting.

The point was reiterated that clear measurable outcomes needed to be established prior to approval of any grant funding.

RESOLVED to note the information.

92/CE MARKET

The Committee received a report and was asked to consider the recommendations therein regarding proposed market pitch fees.

The Committee was reminded that management of the street market was a discretionary service to the community and that as such, there was no legal requirement for consultation. However, in line with good practice, the Town Council had undertaken consultation over a period of time.

The Committee was reminded that a previous fee structure had been agreed in 2017 but it had been agreed to defer implementation of any increases until 1 April 2018 to allow time for traders to plan and budget accordingly.

Ongoing discussions had taken place in respect of the agreed fee structure and the revised proposals were as a direct result of feedback given by traders and trader representatives. The fee for additional space beyond the maximum of three standard pitches had been reduced from £2.10 per square metre to £0.50 per square metre. In addition, it was recommended to award traders a long service discount on pitch fees.

It was reiterated that no pitch fee changes had been implemented since the Town Council took over the running of the street market in 2012, but that the time had come to standardise fees and ensure a fair and transparent fee structure which would apply equally to every trader.

Under the revised proposals, 8 out of 30 permanent traders would see no change in their pitch fee. 11 would see a reduced fee as a result of the long service discount, and 11 would see an increase, which would be implemented in a gradual process depending on the amount of the increase. Up to 24 months would be allowed in order for rent equalisation to be achieved.

Committee members expressed support for the proposals but recognised that the complexity might be difficult for some to clearly understand. Councillors asked that each trader be given clear, personalised communication as to the nature of their own fee and how the

recommendations would affect these.

A query was raised regarding turnover of traders. It was noted that the market industry was one with frequent fluctuations and that it was a particularly challenging retail environment at present. This very fact had necessitated the market relaunch project, with every effort being made to ensure the market would change, grow and develop in order to survive into the future.

On being proposed and seconded, the four recommendations being put to the Committee were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

1.1 To endorse the proposal that Casual market traders pay £23 per pitch at 3m x 3m per pitch.

1.2 To endorse that additional square metre space taken above the standard maximum space of 27 square metres is charged at .50p per metre.

1.3 To endorse recognition of trader's 'long service' for permanent traders by offering a whole pitch fee discount according to years served:

- i. 5 years and over: 5% discount**
- ii. 10 years and over: 10% discount**
- iii. 15 years and over: 15% discount**
- iv. 20 years and over: 20% discount**

1.4 To endorse an incremental approach for permanent traders to achieve the new pitch fee owed from 01/04/18 over a period of up to 24 months based on the approach set out below:

- i. Month one: pay current fee plus up to £4 (applied to all traders relevant to their individual circumstances.**
- ii. Month two onwards: traders with greater than £4 pitch fee increases will pay monthly incremental increases of 10% per month of the remaining difference.**
- iii. Month two onwards: traders with greater than 45% pitch fee increases will pay monthly incremental increases of 5% per month of the remaining difference, over a period of 24 months.**

93/CE COMMITTEE WORK PLAN & OBJECTIVES

The Committee received the Committee objectives and work plan for the current year, in accordance with the Town Council's Three Year Plan, as well as a proposed plan for the forthcoming municipal year.

RESOLVED to note the Committee objectives and work plan for 2017-2018 and for 2018-2019.

94/CE BUDGET REPORTS

The Committee received a system generated budget report for the revenue budget and earmarked reserves, as well as an additional sheet outlining any committed expenditure and the amounts remaining available.

RESOLVED:

- i. **To note the report.**
- ii. **To carry forward unspent funds from the Community Access Defibrillator budget line 101/4554 into the earmarked reserve for this purpose (970/9022), to facilitate the ongoing costs of maintenance and kit replenishment.**

Following on from the earlier discussion regarding provision of services at TACTIC, it was proposed and seconded that any underspend within the TACTIC revenue budget (104) be carried forward into the TACTIC earmarked reserve (970/9020) and that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to authorise expenditure of up to £6,000 for future service provision. This was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED that any underspend within the TACTIC revenue budget (104) be carried forward into the TACTIC earmarked reserve (970/9022) and that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to authorise expenditure of up to £6,000 for future service provision.

95/CE MARKET TOWN REGENERATION FUNDED PROJECTS UPDATES

The Committee received a verbal update on Market Town Regeneration Fund projects including the market relaunch, electronic signage and architectural lighting. An update was also given on the High Street Improvement Scheme.

Some concern was expressed regarding project completion timescales but it was noted that many elements of the projects were outside of the control of the Town Council and dependent on other parties.

RESOLVED to note the information.

The meeting closed at 9.23 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 12 MARCH 2018.

Chair

13 JUNE 2018