

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Councillors

C Palmer
T Morris (Chair)
S Hemmings
S Owen
F Kharawala
R D Berry
A L Dodwell
V Harvey
E Wallace

Also in attendance:

V Cannon, Head of Cultural and Economic Services
M Jahn, Committee Officer
S Sandiford, Head of Democratic and Central Services
S Hughes, Community Engagement Manager, Central Bedfordshire Council
T Humber, Community Forum Group
M Jahn, Committee Officer
G Borelli, LB First
B Chandler, LB Connect
Cllr P Snelling
Cllr G Perham
Mr P Middleton, Highways, Central Bedfordshire Council
Mr M McDonald, Highways, Central Bedfordshire Council
Mr S Mooring, Central Bedfordshire Council
Mr Stephenson, Central Bedfordshire Council
Mr C Proto, Central Bedfordshire Council

Members of the public: 12

26/LLP APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from the Town Clerk.

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27/LLP 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.

Councillor Clive Palmer declared a personal interest as a member of Leighton-Linslade in Bloom and the Leighton Buzzard and District Archaeological and Historical Society. Councillor V Harvey declared an interest as a member of South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth and Councillor G Perham declared a personal interest as a volunteer with Leighton-Linslade in Bloom.

28/LLP QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC (3 minutes per person; maximum 15 minutes)

Six questions were raised by members of the public and community groups. The first question came from a member of Leighton Buzzard and District Archaeological and Historical Society as to whether a Heritage Centre could be located within the town. Historical artefacts have never been displayed permanently within the town and a Heritage Centre would provide a focus for residents and visitors to celebrate this history.

The second question came from two representatives from Leighton-Linslade in Bloom questioning the two plastic planters located on Roseberry Avenue as traffic calming measures. The use of plastic planters and flowers was not environmentally friendly and it was hoped they would be removed or replanted with real plants. Also, concerns were raised regarding the condition of the White House roundabout and surrounding 'flower' beds. The unkempt condition had been noted by the judges of Leighton-Linslade in Bloom as a poor entrance to a town where so much good work had taken place. At present no funding was available to enable the maintenance of the roundabout to be passed on to Leighton-Linslade Town Council from Central Bedfordshire Council, but discussions would continue to try to resolve the matter.

Four members of the public spoke of the proposed relocation of the taxi rank to Lake Street. Concerns were raised regarding the width of Lake Street and how the taxis would be able to turn around safely whilst negotiating buses and pedestrians. The likelihood of an increase in antisocial behaviour particularly around Peacock Alley where it would be dark and narrow was also questioned. It was felt the whole taxi rank location should be rethought

and a move towards electric charging points to cut emissions was suggested. The Committee advised the members of the public to write to Central Bedfordshire Council to register their concerns directly.

A member of the public also raised his concerns regarding parking around the Wharf area in Leighton Buzzard and the need for double yellow lines to enable residents to access their driveways and houses. The Committee advised to contact the Police on this issue to log their concerns.

29/LLP **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee received the new Terms of Reference for Leighton-Linslade Partnership Committee.

RESOLVED to adopt the new Terms of Reference as set out.

30/LLP **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Committee received the draft minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 5 September 2019.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Partnership Committee meeting held on 5 September 2019 be approved as a correct record and be signed accordingly.

31/LLP **ENABLING DELIVERY IN L-L (LAND SOUTH OF THE HIGH STREET) AND WESTLANDS**

The Committee received a presentation from Mr Mooring and Mr Stephenson from Central Bedfordshire Council on the land south of the High Street and issues in relation to the Westlands site.

Westlands was one of seven care homes returned to Central Bedfordshire Council by BUPA in 2014 and was not in good condition. A report was due for consideration by the Central Bedfordshire Executive next week on the future of the site, following consultation with residents. If a decision was made to proceed, the council would then go out to tender for the design and build of a new site on Hockliffe Street, which would provide an increased number of beds.

Further consultation would then need to take place on the future of the Duncombe Drive day centre. Incorporating a facility into the new care home site would allow for better provision for both current and future service users.

It was anticipated that if both proposals went ahead, there would be a six month procurement process and a 2.5 year build process, so completion was unlikely before the end of 2022.

The future of the care home and day centre were inextricably linked with the proposals for development on land south of the High Street. Central

Bedfordshire Council viewed the development as a one-off opportunity which must be done correctly, with an element of mixed uses to make it financially viable.

Central Bedfordshire officers were planning to bring a draft action plan back to Committee at its February 2020 meeting as requested. It was anticipated that some form of community engagement, via a workshop or drop-in session, would take place prior to that.

Committee members expressed their view that the site should come forward as a single entity rather than piecemeal and that there should be early engagement with partners. It was noted that the 2012 development brief was considered technical guidance rather than a planning document and that the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan needed to be finalised before a planning document would hold any weight. A question was asked about preparation of a commercial document to support the development proposals. Central Bedfordshire officers advised that a robust business case would help leverage funding and investment and that although there was some relevant in-house expertise at the council, external frameworks were likely to be involved to provide additional expertise.

RESOLVED to note the report.

32/LLP **HIGHWAYS AND PARKING**

The Committee received a presentation from Mr M McDonald and Mr P Middleton from Central Bedfordshire Council on the maintenance of the High Street and parking in the town centre. Assets had to be maintained in the most efficient and sustainable manner – doing the right work at the right time extended the lifespan of highways assets. The Council's structural maintenance budget was £10m per year and approximately £700k had been spent in Leighton-Linslade in the last year (for delivery of 6-7 schemes).

A maintenance plan for the Leighton-Linslade area was being updated and would be available on the Central Bedfordshire Highways portal once completed, showing which roads would be resurfaced/repared in the coming year. A number of schemes were anticipated.

A question was raised regarding the problems encountered with parking outside schools. Members were informed that twelve Parking Officers covered the whole Central Bedfordshire area, which included over 100 schools. Enforcement officers had a 'hotspot list' of schools where dangerous parking occurred and rotated visits to these schools as a priority to address problem parking.

The Committee asked what was being done to help the traffic flow and parking problems within the town and were advised Steve Lakin sent his apologies for tonight's meeting but this would be discussed at the next Planning & Transport Committee Meeting.

The timescale for the anticipated area wide car parking study could not be confirmed.

RESOLVED to note the information.

33/LLP **STANDING ITEMS**

- (a) **Taxis** – a 28-day consultation on the potential relocation of the taxi rank to Lake Street was taking place at present and the findings would be reported back. If appropriate, a longer 3-month full public consultation would commence.
- (b) **Market Town Regeneration Fund** – in respect of the architectural uplighting project, discussions were taking place with All Saints Church and planning advice sought to ascertain which buildings would be suitable.
- (c) **Antisocial Behaviour and Homelessness** would come back to the next Partnership Meeting on 6 February 2020. It was noted that the Town Council had added a page to their website to provide information to the public of services available within the town.

34/LLP **BUSINESS GROUPS UPDATES**

The Committee received a brief update from LB Connect and from LB First.

Bob Chandler, LB Connect, informed the Committee that LB Connect had recently donated £2,500 to Buzzard Buses.

Gennaro Borelli, LB First, thanked Leighton-Linslade Town Council for its support with the Christmas Festival in the town over the coming weekend. Coming up on 7 December would be Small Business Saturday and finally for this year the Christmas Eve Market which would hopefully encourage residents to shop locally.

RESOLVED to note the information.

35/LLP **COMMUNITY FORUM UPDATE**

The Committee received a verbal update from Tricia Humber, Community Forum Steering Group regarding what services young people would like in Leighton-Linslade. Topics highlighted included knife crime and safety, County lines and mental health support. It was suggested perhaps an early evening Street Pastor Watch Group would prove helpful for the younger teenagers. Further discussion on this topic would come back to the February 2020 meeting of this Committee.

RESOLVED to note the information.

36/LLP **COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES AND WORKPLAN**

The Committee received and considered the objectives and work plan for the municipal year 2019-2020.

RESOLVED to note the information.

37/LLP BUDGET REPORT

The Committee received a brief report regarding the current year budget to date.

The members agreed that any unused money be put into earmarked reserves to assist with future Community Forum activities as needed.

RECOMMENDED to the Town Council's Policy and Finance Committee:

- 1.1 the retaining of an annual budget for the Community Forum activities at £500 per annum for the financial year 2020/21.**
- 1.2 to keep existing earmarked reserves and to carry forward unused funds from budget year 2019/2020 into the same earmarked reserves code (960/9034) to assist in the delivery of future Community Forum activities.**

The meeting closed at 9.56 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2019.

Chair

6 February 2020