

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL

SOUTH SIDE TASK AND FINISH GROUP

MONDAY 22 MARCH 2021 AT 1000 HOURS

Present: Councillors V Harvey
S Owen (Vice Chair)
T Morris
C Palmer (Chair)
S Hemmings

Also in attendance: V Cannon Head of Cultural & Economic
Services
M Jahn, Committee Officer
S Caldbeck, Central Bedfordshire Council

Members of the Public: 0

15/SS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Spurr.

16/SS 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.

Councillor Palmer declared an interest as a member of LB Society and LB Archeological and History Society. Councillor Harvey declared an interest as a Member of LB Society and LB Friends of the Earth.

17/SS QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

18/SS MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

(a) The group received the draft minutes of the South Side Task & Finish Group held on the 14 December 2020.

Minute ref 10/SS Venue Examples; a request was made to add to the minutes so the versatility and size of the venue was emphasised. The sentences below were added –

It was noted that the size of a venue could be influential to whether or not it was on the touring circuit, i.e. host national touring shows and performances. The Neeld did receive touring shows.

The venue had a bar/café which was seen as an important income stream. It was felt that more could be made of the facility to boost income further.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the South Side Task & Finish Group held on 14 December 2020 be approved as a correct record and would be signed at a later date when safe to do so.

(b) No updates were made as they would be covered in the remainder of the agenda.

19/SS SUMMARY PAPER – LEARNING AND OPTIONS

The Task and Finish Group received a summary document of all suggested options from previous meetings for further review and discussion. This document could be added to as a working document when new ideas/information received.

Members agreed that refinements and quantification would be needed on what facilities were preferred and what the precise demand would be. Sam Caldbeck agreed that a document like this was of use and that all facilities in the local area should be considered to eradicate duplication of use.

A suggestion was made by Councillor Owen that this document should be made into a working spreadsheet which could be updated by all members of the Task and Finish Group and would show what we have already in the town and what could be needed. All members agreed this would be a good option to follow and Councillor Owen volunteered to put this together before the next meeting.

Members also agreed the focus should still be the town centre as that is what the Task and Finish Group was formed to do and once the draft document had been agreed by the Group it could be shared with Central Bedfordshire Council. It was queried whether there should be a timeframe to complete the document by. Sam Caldbeck confirmed the planning was in early stages and the timeframe was not urgent as development of Land South would not be imminent. Once Cornerstones produced their Options Analysis then the work could move forward with eventual public consultation.

At present the Options Analysis was at a basic stage to establish a realistic option to deliver once this research had been completed more detailed recommendations and options could be sought.

Cornerstones had been asked for development options for Land South either as a commercially viable project or part-funded. A second set of experts had been asked to look at the development from a purely commercial view and once all had been completed they would be brought together and a practical way of offering the facilities required would be suggested.

A suggestion was made that using a vacant property, if a suitable one becomes available within the town centre, might be an option to test the audience. Community groups could use the space and this could be monitored and if successful would be a good indication of what facilities were wanted in the town.

Sam Caldbeck agreed this would be an option worth looking into. Members agreed this should be managed by the Cultural & Economic Services Committee if progressed, as it was beyond the remit of this Task & Finish Group.

RESOLVED to note the information.

20/SS UPDATE ON OPTIONS ANALYSIS – SOUTHSIDE DEVELOPMENT

Members were informed that the Options Analysis was yet to be received and should realistically be completed by April 2021. Once this had been completed it would be brought back to this Group and Cornerstones could be invited to attend.

It was confirmed that the inclusion of Incubator Business Space would also be included within the site which would help with commercial funding of the facility.

Based on current market conditions a mixed use scheme may not be viable at present on this site but once conditions improve this could change. Discussions with the various landowners of the site were continuing and any development would improve the land for these landowners.

Vivien Cannon and Sam Caldbeck to liaise on the date of the next meeting in April 2021.

RESOLVED to note the information.

21/SS UK LEVELLING UP FUND

The Task and Finish Group received a verbal update on the options of funding available from the Government.

The new Levelling Up fund had wrapped a lot of funds together which included the Future High Street Fund. There were now 3 priorities when applying for the Levelling Up Fund, 1 being the highest and 3 the lowest. Leighton-Linslade had been given a level 3 priority. This meant it was still possible to apply for funds but the higher your priority the more likelihood of success. Also schemes and bids had to be ready to go which would probably exclude applying in our current position for this area of work although Central Bedfordshire Council may have other appropriate schemes to consider putting forward on a Highways/transport theme for example. Other funds might become available by the time Land South comes to fruition.

RESOLVED to note the information.

22/SS EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded on the grounds of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. The public and press to withdraw from the meeting

during consideration of detailed discussion regarding: unadopted 2016 Development Study.

23/SS DOCUMENTATION FOR LAND SOUTH OF THE HIGH STREET

It was confirmed the document provided had never been adopted and was just provided as an information document for this group and would not be circulated widely. It was not up-to-date and conditions had moved on since it was produced.

RESOLVED to note the information.

The meeting closed at 1136 hours.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 MARCH 2021.

Chair

TBC

DRAFT