

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF CULTURAL & ECONOMIC COMMITTEE
MONDAY, 13 DECEMBER 2021 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Councillors A Dodwell (Chair)
 K Cursons
 G Perham
 M Freeman
 R Goodchild
 D Bowater
 S Owen (substituting for P Snelling)
 S Hemmings
 R Yates
 D Scott

Also in attendance: V Cannon (Head of Cultural & Economic Services)
 M Saccoccio (Town Clerk)
 S Sandiford (Deputy Town Clerk)
 L Farmer, TACTIC Manager – part meeting
 B Bodsworth, Town and Country Promotions Manager – part meeting
 S Jewell – Cultural & Economic Service Support Officer – part meeting
 M Jahn, Committee Officer
 Cllr V Harvey
 Cllr S Jones

Members of the public: 1 (left 20:04)

This meeting was held as an online, informal discussion meeting as a result of rising Covid infections and Government guidance to work from home where possible. Cllr Dodwell welcomed everyone to the session and reminded Committee members that following the discussion, decisions would be made via delegated authority to the Town Clerk with email approval from at least a quorum of committee members, in accordance with Standing Order 15 (c) (vii). Decisions made would be reported back to the next formal meeting of the Committee.

105/CE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Snelling substituted by Councillor Owen.

106/CE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Owen declared an interest as a member of Bassett Road PPG as mentioned in agenda item 5 Older Persons Sub Committee. No dispensations were requested.

107/CE QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A member of the public spoke regarding the Black History Month mentioned in agenda item 10 (Service Updates). Thanks were given to the officers for their support and work organising this event, which it was hoped would continue and grow in future years.

108/CE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

(a) The Committee received the draft minutes of the previous Cultural and Economic Services Committee meeting held on 13 September 2021.

It was informally agreed that the minutes were a correct record. Formal agreement would follow after the meeting in order that the minutes could thereafter be signed by the Chair.

(b) Minute reference 101/CE – Service Updates – it was confirmed that work was on going regarding the Children’s Trail.

109/CE SUB-COMMITTEE AND TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

The Committee received the draft minutes of Sub-Committee and Task and Finish group meetings for consideration.

Committee considered the recommendations made by the Older Persons Sub-Committee 18 November 2021:

- (a) that a total of £3,000 of earmarked reserves (970/9028) be allocated to Bassett Road Surgery Patient Participation Group in two separate payments of £1500 (2022 and 20224), to fund the production of two editions of the biennial Yellow Booklet.
- (b) To review the 55Up grant applicants and recommend to fund the 4 applicants who met the grant criteria.

The informal discussion was in support of the recommendations. It was noted that delegated decisions would be made after the meeting following receipt of email responses from committee members.

Committee considered the recommendations made by the Market Sub Committee on 2 December 2021:

- (a) To change the name of the farmers market to ‘Farmers and Producers Market’ to help explain the market’s product offer better to traders and

consumers alike.

- (b) RECOMMEND the amended Farmers and Producers Market Policy to Policy and Finance committee for endorsement.

The informal discussion was in support of the recommendations. It was noted that delegated decisions would be made after the meeting following receipt of email responses from committee members.

110/CE **EVENTS UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee received a detailed report and verbal update in respect of community events and some proposals for 2022 events.

The Christmas Festival Weekend was well received by members of the public with the light switch-on and fireworks on the Friday evening. Unfortunately due to the predicted high winds the Saturday activities were cancelled with the adverse weather policy invoked for the charter market. The Sunday festive market was able to go ahead as weather conditions had improved with 29 stalls including food vendors in attendance in the High Street. A survey would be released to gain feedback from members of the public via the Town Council's social media channels.

A Thanksgiving and Reflection Event was being planned for Sunday 6 March, 2022 and would feature stalls from groups within the town who had suffered a loss of income due to the Covid-19 pandemic. A LED screen would be provided for members of the public to submit photos or their experiences during the pandemic together with photographs of loved ones for a period of reflection during the event. Given the current increase in Covid cases due to the new Omicron variant, officers would continue to monitor guidance regarding ongoing restrictions and adapt plans or timing of the event accordingly if needed.

Members were informed that work continued with a third-party provider to make the Sands of Time trail available on the Buzzard Trails app and it was hoped the trail would launch early in the new year.

A question was raised by the Committee regarding the addition of recorded music in the High Street. Members felt the costs involved were high for a four-week period only and a suggestion was made that live music/entertainment might be a better option on specific occasion during the warmer months.

From the discussion it appeared most committee members were in support of the recommendation: to consider allocating an additional £1928.60 from earmarked reserves (970/9026) for music/entertainment in the High Street. It was noted that a delegated decision would be made after the meeting, following receipt of email responses from committee members.

111/CE THE GREENSAND TRUST

The Committee received and considered a letter from Jon Balaam, The Greensand Trust for funding of £2,180 to enable the Greensand Trust to re-build the Sands of Time/Sand Museum website.

Following the discussion it appeared most committee members were in support of the recommendation and it was noted that a delegated decision would be made after the meeting, following receipt of email responses from committee members.

112/CE TACTIC WORK UPDATE

The Committee received a written report and a verbal update on the work of the Teenage Advice and Information Centre including the Tang (Additional Needs) Group, young persons drop in, mentoring, schools offer and attendance data at the centre.

It was noted that the BACP Counsellor would no longer be available to provide a service as a volunteer to the young people but it was hoped this could be addressed in the not too distant future.

Members thanked TACTIC for their continued valuable work with young people in the area especially during the difficult time of the pandemic and the problems that had caused and for providing a very clear concise update report.

The Committee expressed support verbally for the recommendations to note the report and to reverse the decision made on 7 December 2020 (Minute Reference 73/CE) to allocate £4,719.60 from earmarked reserves ((970/9020 & 970/9049) for contracted wellbeing services due to changed circumstances for the anticipated provider, as set out in the report. This would free up those monies to potentially source alternative services. It was noted that a delegated decision would be made after the meeting, following receipt of email responses from committee members.

113/CE COMMUNITY FORUM YOUTH SURVEY

The Committee received a report and verbal update to share the results of the Community Forum Survey of young people. Central Bedfordshire Council also carried out a survey and it was hoped these surveys would be combined and the results revisited in late January 2022.

Out of the responses received it was identified that gaming was one activity enjoyed by young people and it was proposed that gaming equipment be provided for the TACTIC centre so young people could have somewhere to access equipment in a safe supervised environment. Another suggestion made was the provision of a chess club which could be accessed on line or in person. An idea was expressed for placing of a portakabin on the land south of the High Street as a temporary building where some activities could

take place – gaming area, chess club or arts and crafts area – for young people.

After discussion the Committee appeared to be in support of the recommendations in the report:

- (a) To share the results of the Community Forum survey with Central Bedfordshire Council and request reciprocal sharing of the results from Central Bedfordshire Council's survey with Partnership Committee.
- (b) Further explore in more detail young people's feedback of local recreation parks to better service young people's needs and wants with a view to responding by way of enhancements to provision as identified through feedback. To allocate up to £500 for the work from earmarked reserves (960/9053).
- (c) Recommend to Leighton-Linslade Town Council's Policy and Finance Committee that £4,000 from Future Projects (925/9057) be allocated for the purchase of gaming equipment for use in the TACTIC service.

It was noted that a delegated decision would be made after the meeting, following receipt of email responses from committee members

114/CE **SERVICE UPDATES**

The Committee received and considered an update report on various projects and activities which included the town centre Wi-Fi, town centre footfall, Children's Trail, Black History Month, Welcome Back Fund. S106 Public Art Contribution, Town Centre signage/waymarking and promotion and staffing.

Members agreed the current signage/waymarking needed improvement to the entrances of the town the centre to help visitors navigate their way around and for Black History Month an exhibition on the Transatlantic Slave Trade could be secured along with showing related films.

A question was raised regarding the cleaning undertaken in the town by Central Bedfordshire Council and why it was thought extra cleaning was needed by the Town Council as part of the Welcome Back Fund. It was confirmed that Council had signed off the list of activities which included this work and that whilst cleaning was undertaken by Central Bedfordshire Council the town council would carry out extra cleaning in between to further enhance the visitor experience.

Following discussion members were happy to support the recommendations made, with some minor amendments which would be clarified after the meeting by email.

- (a) To allocate up to £1,500 from earmarked reserves (970/9026) towards delivery of Black History Month activities to be undertaken during 2022.
- (b) To allocate up to £3000 from earmarked reserves (970/9026) for

undertaking enhancements to town centre signage/waymarking.
Clarification on figures to be forwarded and confirmed by email.

- (c) To allocate up to £2000 from earmarked reserves (970/9026) for work to update and print the publication town centre Shops and Services Map and Directory.

It was noted that a delegated decision would be made after the meeting, following receipt of email responses from committee members.

115/CE **BUDGET REPORT**

The Committee received an update report on service budgets inclusive of the half year detailed income and earmarked reserves and considered the recommendations therein.

Following discussion it appeared most committee members were in support of the recommendations:

- (a) To allocate remaining earmarked reserve budget, £1,113.70 (970/9018), for expenditure to enhance town centre signage/waymarking.
- (b) TO RECOMMEND to the Cultural and Economic Services annual draft 2022-2023 budget to the Policy & Finance Committee.

It was noted that a delegated decision would be made after the meeting, following receipt of email responses from committee members.

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

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

A question was raised regarding why the changes to the Partnership Project List were not reflected in the document. It was confirmed the existing workplan was based on that agreed earlier in the year and that as the changes to the Partnership Project List had only been agreed by Council on 29 November 2021, any changes relevant to the Committee would be reflected in the work plan for 2022-23, to be presented to Committee at its March meeting.

117/CE **APPROVED DECISIONS**

Following discussion it appeared most committee members agreed to receive and note the decision taken since the previous meeting by delegation to the Town Clerk with email approval from a majority of the Committee members:

To agree to use earmarked reserves (970/9018) to the sum of £5,154.80 to fund free parking in Duncombe Drive and Hockliffe Street car parks on 4th, 11th, 18, and 24th December.

118/CE EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

As this was not a formal meeting, no resolution could be made to exclude the public. However, only councillors and officers of the Town Council were present in the virtual discussion meeting (the one member of the public having left at 20:04).

119/CE PROCUREMENT OF PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The Committee received a report to consider awarding of the contract for Production Management Services. Following discussion it appeared most committee members were in support of the recommendations.

- (a) To note the report
- (b) Subject to securing professional indemnity insurance to the value of £5,000,000 that BT Events be awarded a one-year contract for production event management services.
- (c) Subject to a successful review at the 6-month point, the option to extend the contract a further 2 years be granted with each additional year decided on an annual basis at the 6-month delivery point.
- (d) The contract to commence on 1st April 2022.

It was noted that a delegated decision would be made after the meeting following receipt of email responses from committee members.

The meeting closed at 2130 hours. Committee Members were advised that a list of decision requests would be circulated by email for their agreement or otherwise prior to delegated decisions being made.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 13 DECEMBER 2021.

Chair

14 MARCH 2022