

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE
COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 16 JUNE 2014 IN THE ROBIN ROOM, THE
CASTLE, HERTFORD AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT: The Mayor, Councillor C Geall, in the Chair at the start of the meeting

Councillors: P Boyle, Mrs B Haddock, Mrs B Mansfield, Miss I Sigmac
and A Stevenson.

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr P Ruffles (Part of the meeting)
Cllr A Turner
Ms N L Villa, Town Clerk
Ms P Carpenter, Civic Administration Manager
Miss M Bolton, Marketing and Events Manager

51. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Miss I Sigmac was elected Chairman for the forthcoming Civic Year. The Chairman then took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

52. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Councillor Mrs B Mansfield was elected Vice Chairman for the forthcoming Civic Year.

53. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs S Newton (Previous engagement) and Cllr Miss J Sartin (work commitment)

54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs B Haddock	DPI	Agenda Item 8(d) Charity Nomination, Hertford Sea Cadets and Newton Exhibition Foundation
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Cllr P Ruffles	DPI	Agenda item 8(d) Charity Nomination, Newton Exhibition Foundation
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55. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2014 were approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

56. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT DEALT WITH ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

Hertford Castle Website

It was noted that the Marketing and Events Manager was currently populating the site, which should be ready for launch in mid-July.

Basement Display

This project was progressing well and would be ready for the Heritage Open Day in September.

Notice Board - Sele

The notice board was ready and currently held at the Castle whilst awaiting permission to install from Highways. Permission was also awaited for re-painting of bollards in the town centre.

Town Signage

A quotation was awaited for ten finger posts and a heritage trail for the town centre and the Town Clerk would prepare a full report for the next meeting.

Fingerpost at Sainsburys

The Town Clerk had not been able to progress this matter and East Herts Council has stated that it has pursued the relocation of the fingerpost as far as it has been able and could take no further action.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The action sheet be received and noted.

57. QUESTIONS AND/OR STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

58. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – TOWN AND TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

The Committee received a report summarising activity at the Tourist Information Centre (TTIC).

The Committee noted that there had been an upward trend in several of the communication statistics to the TTIC. It was requested that future reports differentiated between the number of faxes and emails received. The Marketing and Events Manager agreed to report outside of the meeting regarding the reduction in coach/event ticket sales.

It was noted that 200 tickets had so far been sold for the Open Air Cinema, however it was expected that more tickets would be sold closer to the time. A discussion took place regarding the seated capacity of the lawn and the security for the evening. It was confirmed that the Police had offered assistance for the evening and the Screen providers had estimated that there was space for 3000, although this was doubted by the Committee. It was thought that it may be necessary to limit capacity to 1500, from both a comfort and security point of view.

The comparison of figures from other TIC's had proved interesting and the similar towns to Hertford reported similar visitor numbers. St Albans, as a city had a much larger footfall, but the Committee was surprised that Saffron Walden also had such a large visitor footfall, although it was pointed out that Saffron Walden was more of a tourist destination than Hertford.

The Committee was pleased to see the introduction of the boat trip/Castle tour initiative and hoped that this was something that would increase in popularity.

The planned refurbishment of both the exterior and interior of the TTIC was noted and the additional funding of approximately £1500 from the building maintenance reserve was recommended for approval. The Committee was advised that work was also required to improve the network connectivity to the TTIC.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **notes** the report.
- b) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance, Policy and Administrative Committee that the balance of the redecoration costs for the T&TIC, approximately £1,500 should be funded from the Building Maintenance Reserve.

59. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS

The Committee received a report on the events programme for 2014 as well as feedback of the events that had taken place.

The success of the Arts Festival and trail was noted, as was the Community Sports and Rafting Race. Concern was expressed that St John's Ambulance had left the site to deal with an emergency elsewhere, leaving the event without cover

during which time a minor injury occurred. The Town Clerk advised the Committee that all staff working on the events programme were first aid qualified.

The Committee was pleased to note that several sponsorship deals had been negotiated and it was hoped that this would result in lower expenditure on events. It was requested that the Finance Manager ensured that the income was noted correctly within the budget lines.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee of continuing discussions she was having with the Christmas Lights contractor regarding the invoice for the previous year's display. The Committee gave the Town Clerk discretion to continue the discussions with the Contractor and hoped that the infrastructure issues of the previous year would be resolved in time for the Christmas 2014 display.

No arrangements had yet taken place on the Christmas Gala or Santa's Grotto, however it was requested that there be two grottos this year, given there was not enough capacity in the TTIC last year. The Museum was suggested as a possibility as a second venue, which would be investigated

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **notes** the report.

Note: Cllr Ruffles left the meeting.

60. TOWN CENTRE UPDATE

The Committee received a report summarising the various projects designed to assist the economic health and development of the town centre.

The Committee wished to point out that the Food and Drink Festival Twitter account was not to be used for promoting town centre events and activities in future. The GoHertford account was the appropriate medium to promote such activities

It was requested that in order to save repetition, the Town Centre update report did not include details of events which are also reported within the Events report.

The Committee felt that the table at the back of the report would more effectively be presented and read within either a bar or line chart, which could be emailed to members prior to the meeting in order that it could be read in colour.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee **notes** the progress made on delivering the Council's Town Centre Priorities and the planned activities for 2014.

61. ROCK AT THE CASTLE CHARITY NOMINATION

The Committee reviewed the applications to select a charity to benefit from Rock at the Castle.

Note: Having declared a DPI in two of the Charity applications Cllr Haddock left the room during the discussion on this item. Cllr Haddock did however address the Committee briefly before leaving the room, regarding the charity applications for the Hertford and Ware Sea Cadets and the Newton Exhibition Foundation.

Note: This item was considered last on the agenda to allow Cllr Mrs Haddock to leave the meeting.

The Committee considered the merits of each application, and made a shortlist by excluding the Isabel Hospice who, whilst a worthy applicant, would be benefitting as a recipient of the Mayor's Charity Appeal this year. Similarly, Carers in Hertfordshire was recognised as an extremely worthwhile beneficiary but already received funding from the County Council. Further exclusions included Teens Unite which appeared not to be a particularly local charity and, whilst the work of Midshires Search and Rescue was very much appreciated by the Committee, no members of the organisation resided in Hertford, therefore the grant criteria was not met. The application from the Hertford and Ware Sea Cadets did not meet the grant criteria to the same extent as the two remaining applicants, nor did it reach as many Hertford residents as Mudlarks and the Newton Exhibition Foundation

Following a vote on the remaining applications, Mudlarks was chosen as the Charity to benefit from Rock at the Castle.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **adopts** Mudlarks as the beneficiary of Rock at the Castle.

62. TOURISM STRATEGY

The proposed revised Tourism Strategy had been referred to the Committee for discussion. The strategy was designed to be a road map of intentions for raising the profile of Hertford to attract more visitors and tourists to the town centre. The delivery of the strategy would be the responsibility of the Marketing and Events Manager, in discussion with the Chairman.

A suggestion was made that a method to raise the profile of the market could be to target different markets and audiences and, with this in mind to possibly link to the Malaysian Festival held in Brickendonbury, which attracted visitors from all over the Country.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **adopts** the Tourism Strategy.

63. VENUE HIRE REPORT

The Committee received an update on the hire statistics for the Castle and Mill Bridge rooms.

It was noted that there had not yet been any expenditure from the increased marketing budget, however wedding bookings had increased, which was most likely due to the refurbishment of the Castle and the new wedding brochure. The Committee requested that a cost and profit system be added to the reports for future meetings to show whether the increased bookings were leading to profit.

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that several of the white goods in the kitchen required replacement, including the cooker, fridge and the dishwasher.

The Committee noted that the Cecil room would shortly be available for corporate hire and the recommended rate of £25 per hour, and a £35 out of hours' rate be adopted. The Marketing and Events Manager was given some discretion regarding the hire price given that the room at present did not have wifi connectivity.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **notes** the report.
- b) The Committee **approves** the proposed pricing structure for the Cecil Room.

64. FRIENDS OF HERTFORD CASTLE

The Committee had received a copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Friends of Hertford Castle held on 16 April 2014, and considered the suggestions made to be sensible.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee **notes** the minutes of the meeting of the Friends of Hertford Castle held on 16 April 14.

65. CCTV STATISTICS

The Committee received a report from the Finance Manager outlining the recent CCTV statistics

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **notes** the report.

66. PLANNING TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC - PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Committee had received copies of the minutes of the Planning Sub Committee meetings held on 3 March, 17 March, 31 March, 14 April, 28 April and 12 May 2014.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the Planning Sub Committee held on 3 March, 17 March, 31 March, 14 April, 28 April and 12 May 2014 be received.

67. FINANCE – END OF YEAR INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 201

The Committee received a report on the end of year income and expenditure for 2013/14.

The Committee noted the surplus in the Committee's budget at year end but sought clarification outside of the meeting regarding various overspends within the budget, and whether prior Committee consent had been granted for the overspends. The Town Clerk confirmed that the advertising overspend had been approved and the Town Centre Development income and expenditure would be investigated and the Finance Manager would respond to members outside of the meeting.

It was further requested that sponsorship income be listed as such in future reports.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee **notes** the end of year income and expenditure to 31 March 2014.
- (b) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that a balance of £1,346 be transferred from the General Reserve to the CCTV Maintenance Reserve.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm