

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE
COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 2 MARCH 2015 IN THE ROBIN ROOM, THE
CASTLE, HERTFORD AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT: Councillor Miss I Sigmac, in the Chair

Councillors: P Boyle, Miss C Geall, Mrs S Newton, Miss J Sartin and A Stevenson

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr P Ruffles
Ms N L Villa, Town Clerk
Ms T Carpenter, Civic Administration Manager

420. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs B Haddock (Unwell) and Cllr Poole (away)

421. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

422. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2014 were approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

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

Open Air Cinema

It was noted that a communication error had occurred which had led to the selection of the film 'Back to the Future' and as a result some members of the Committee were disappointed by the public's choice of the film to be screened. Nevertheless it was confirmed that tickets were selling at a steady rate.

Maidenhead Street

Members expressed disappointment that this item had not been included as an agenda item, with an accompanying report, however the Town Clerk reiterated the comments in the action sheet and stated that there had been no further progress to warrant a full report. A discussion ensued regarding the East Herts Council led Project Brief for Town Centre Enhancement, and under which Committee the matter should be discussed (Development & Leisure or Finance, Policy and Administration). The Town Clerk was of the opinion that the detail in the Project Brief document extended beyond the

scope of the D&L Committee and therefore as the FPA Committee dealt with policy she believed it sat more comfortably with that Committee. The Town Clerk's view was challenged on this point and it was confirmed that whilst the report would be referred to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee initially, its future oversight could, at a later date, be transferred to the Development and Leisure Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The action sheet be received and noted.

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

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

425. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – TOWN AND TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

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

The Committee was disappointed that the report contained commercially Sensitive information regarding cost prices and again requested that this information be removed in future reports.

It was reported that the new stock of umbrellas was proving to be a slow seller.

The TTIC stats again showed a reduction and the Committee requested that the officer time be utilised effectively between customers. The Marketing and Events Manager confirmed that she was maximising the officer time by setting additional tasks.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

426. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS

The Committee received a report with progress of upcoming events for 2015 and a review of the events that have taken place since the last meeting.

The feedback from the Valentine's Evening was noted, and whilst feedback from customers was good, nevertheless the event had been extremely time consuming and proved in the end to be not cost effective. It was agreed that the event should not be repeated in 2016.

It was requested that a consolidated list of sponsors be presented under Part 2 of the agenda for the next meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **notes** the report.
- b) The Committee would not authorise a Valentine's day event in 2016

427. 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 was pleased to note that the shop survey showed a consistently upward trend over the past five years and the distribution of businesses was fairly stable.

It was requested that the Christmas lights contractor be contacted to ensure the removal of the catenary wires, which it was felt made for an untidy appearance. It was further requested that the fairy lights in the trees in Parliament Square be lit in the evening.

The Committee noted the cost of the Tourism and Town Centre signage at £20,000, with £10,000 funding from East Herts Council and £5000 from the Highways Maintenance budget and it was requested that the remaining £5000 be funded from the New Homes Bonus

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee **notes** the progress made on delivering the Council's non-event Town Centre activities.
- (b) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that £5000 be set aside from the New Homes Bonus to fund the Tourism and Town signage
- (c) The Committee **reviews** the Town Centre Manager's priorities from 2015 onwards at the next meeting of the Committee.

428. GO HERTFORD WEBSITE

The Committee received a report recommending proposed changes to the GoHertford website. Whilst the Committee approved many of the recommendations within the report, concern was expressed that the proposals for the homepage made the website too events based, when the original intention for the website had been for a business hub. It was therefore felt that the business directory needed to be more prominent with a feature to encourage the businesses to add more content for themselves. A 'featured business of the week/month' promotion was recommended which could also be linked to a promotion. This would be a free feature which businesses could apply to take part in.

A consolidated events page was recommended which could promote town wide events and which could be auto populated. It was considered that this was something that the officers at the TTIC could oversee.

It was agreed that the advertising logos of the original sponsors could now be removed from the site.

It was RESOLVED that:

- (a) The Committee **recommends** expenditure of £5,000 to the Finance Policy and Administration Committee from the New Homes Bonus for updating of the GoHertford website.
- (b) The Committee **approves** the recommendations within the report

429. TOWN CENTRE WIFI

The Committee received a report outlining the research into how free Town Centre wifi can be delivered in Hertford. The Committee agreed to pilot the project in Maidenhead Street and Railway Street, using the contractor based in Bishop's Stortford at a cost of £13,000 plus ongoing revenue costs of £5,000 per annum. The Committee recommended to Finance Policy and Administration Committee that £20,000 be allocated from the New Homes Bonus to cover the cost of the initial set up and a contingency sum.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee **approves** a free wifi scheme along the main pedestrian way along Railway and Maidenhead Street.
- (b) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that £20,000 be set aside from the New Homes Bonus to fund the project.

430. VENUE HIRE REPORT

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

The Committee was pleased to note the impressive rise in wedding bookings and was also impressed by the quality of the Hertford Castle website. The Committee was however disappointed to note that lawn hire outside of weddings was still being publicised and were adamant that any form of commercial lawn hire was not appropriate.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

431. 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.

432. TOWN SIGNAGE/HERITAGE TRAIL PROJECT

The Committee received a report outlining a proposal for enhancement/augmentation of the existing finger post pedestrian signage and the creation of a Heritage Trail to guide visitors to key sites of interest across the Town.

The Committee approved the list of the buildings to be included in the trail and liked the proposed design of the signage, but requested that the plain gold finial be chosen as opposed to the painted one, which it was felt would wear.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee **approves** the proposal to install pedestrian signage and the proposed priority areas for signage.
- (b) The Committee **approves** the Heritage Trail and the proposed sites to be included.
- (c) The Committee **approves** the commissioning of the plain gold finial.
- (d) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance Policy and Administration Committee that £40,000 of the New Homes Bonus be allocated to this project.

433. PLANNING TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC - PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Committee had received copies of the minutes of the Planning Sub Committee meetings held on 8th December and 15th December 2014 and 5th January, 19th January, 2nd February and 16th February 2015

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the Planning Sub Committee held on 8th December and 15th December 2014 and 5th January, 19th January, 2nd February and 16th February 2015

434. FINANCE – THIRD QUARTER INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2014/15

The Committee received a report on the third quarter income and expenditure for 2014/15.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the third quarter income and expenditure for 2014/15

435. REVIEW OF SALARY APPORTIONMENTS

The Committee received a report outlining the apportionment of staffing costs across the service budget headings for the Development and Leisure Committee.

The Committee was particularly keen for the officers of the TTIC to indicate how much time was spent on various tasks including those relating to town centre promotions. The work on salary apportionments remains a work in progress with a view to eventually adjusting the percentages within the budget.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the report.

This being the last meeting of this electoral term, the Committee expressed its appreciation to Cllr Miss Sigmac for her chairmanship.

The meeting closed at 21:30