

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE
COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 17 JUNE 2013 IN THE ROBIN ROOM, THE
CASTLE, HERTFORD AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT: The Mayor, Councillor P Moore, in the Chair at the start of the meeting

Councillors: P Boyle, Miss C Geall, Mrs B Haddock, Mrs B Mansfield, Dr
L Radford, Miss J Sartin, Miss I Sigmac and A Stevenson.

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

63. 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

64. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

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

65. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Poole (Previous engagement) and Cllr P Ruffles (previous engagement)

66. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs B Haddock	DPI	Agenda Item 8(d) Charity Nomination, Hertford Sea Cadets and Newton Exhibition Foundation
Town Clerk	Declarable	Agenda item 8(d) Charity Nomination, Hertford Sea Sea Cadets

67. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2013 were approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

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

Noticeboard – St Andrew Street

To note that this notice board was now in situ.

Weddings at the Castle

It was noted that the new signage for weddings at the Castle was in hand. This would be a purpose made sign, with room for slotting in the names of the couples getting married.

Basement Displays

It was noted that the stocks display in the basement had been enhanced and was proving popular at open days.

Events

Members sought information regarding the raft building event in August and wondered if it was an addition to the events programme. It was confirmed that it was a one off Mayoral event being organised with the help of the Sea Cadets and the Canoe Club.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The action sheet be received and noted.

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

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

70. 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 to note the continued downward trend in all methods of contact to the TTIC but noted that this could have been as a result of the poor weather. The Committee sought an update as to whether the statistics had improved with the improved weather. The very detailed 'Day in the Life' report had provided a very good overview of the daily workload of the TTIC and it was noted that the TTIC was very much a local resource, as well as a tourist resource.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

71. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS

The Committee received a report on the planning progress and events programme for 2013 as well as feedback of the events that had taken place

The Easter Egg trail had proved successful and had been welcomed by the traders, and similarly the English Celebration had been well received. It was thought that this would be repeated in 2014.

The Teddy Bears' Picnic had again been a popular event, however it was felt that this could be enhanced with the addition of a PA system to announce and highlight the various events which were taking place throughout the afternoon.

It was disappointing to note that again no sponsorship had been received for Rock at the Castle, however staff would continue in their efforts to seek sponsorship up to the date of the event and this would be a task that the new Marketing and Events Manager would be required to concentrate on in 2014.

The Committee noted that there appeared to be no event planned in the Town Centre between the English Celebration and the Food and Drink Festival. The Town Clerk advised members that the Town Centre Co-ordinator had been working hard to bring a Continental Market into the Town over the Carnival weekend, however due to licensing issues with East Herts Council it had not been possible to bring the idea to fruition. A suggestion to utilise all of the busking sites on the Saturday before Rock at the Castle was proffered and thought to be an easily arranged event.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

72. TOWN CENTRE UPDATE

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

The Committee noted the installation details and costs for the new notice board on the path adjacent to Sainsburys, and whilst disappointed to note that the costs associated with the licence agreement with Sainsburys were particularly high, nevertheless considered it was important to have signage in that area to direct people along the footpath to the town centre. The current fingerpost at the site had been installed behind a tree and was now barely visible as a directional sign. It

was noted that the footpath was generally well used and provided a pleasant walk into the town centre.

The Committee also considered a proposal to erect occasional promotional banners in the town to advertise Town Council events, however the costs associated with obtaining the necessary planning permission and the manufacture, erection and removal of each banner were considered prohibitive.

The GoHertford website was an ideal promotional resource which needed to be promoted and used more effectively, with the businesses being persuaded to use it. Leafleting and Google Ads were considered as methods for promoting the website. The website needed to be updated on a weekly basis, with all Town Council press releases being added as a matter of course, along with news items welcoming any new businesses in the town. Information regarding the Hertford Entrepreneurs Network should also appear on the front page.

Four Christmas Lights Contractors had been shortlisted and would be presenting to the Working Group on 4 July 2013.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee **notes** the progress made on delivering the Council's Town Centre Priorities and the planned activities for 2013/14.
- (b) The Committee **proceeds** with the installation of the new noticeboard at the Sainsbury's site.
- (c) The Committee **approves** the draft licence agreement with Sainsbury's and authorises the Town Clerk to sign the same.
- (d) The Committee **does not** progress the planning process for the display of promotional banners in Maidenhead Street.

73. ROCK AT THE CASTLE CHARITY NOMINATION

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

Note: Having declared an interest in two of the Charities Cllr Haddock left the room during the full 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.

The Committee considered the merits of each application, and made a shortlist by excluding the Street Pastors who, whilst worthy applicants, had benefitted from a grant from the Council in the last two years. Similarly, Mudlarks was again recognised as an extremely worthwhile beneficiary but already benefitted from work at the Council. Further exclusions included Teens Unite which appeared to have a healthy bank balance and Today Onwards Community Interest Company which was a business. The work of Midshires Search and Rescue was very much appreciated by the Committee, however no members of the organisation resided in Hertford.

Following a vote on the remaining applications, the 2nd Bengo Scout Group was chosen as the Charity to benefit from Rock at the Castle.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The 2nd Bengo Scout Group be the beneficiary of Rock at the Castle.

74. VENUE HIRE REPORT

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

The Committee requested that future reports provide a simple figure for gross margin and profitability in order to assess the break even figure in venue hire.

There was no clear indication as to why the bookings were down but it was hoped that the radio advert would translate the interest currently being shown into future bookings.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

75. FRIENDS OF HERTFORD CASTLE

The Committee had received a copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Friends of Hertford Castle held on 17 April 2013, and was disappointed to note that the Chairman had resigned.

It was confirmed that Cllr Mrs Haddock would attend the next meeting of the Friends as the Council's representative, and had some ideas for basement displays. The Museum would also work with the Friends regarding future displays.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(a) The Committee **notes** the minutes of the meeting of the Friends of Hertford Castle held on 17 April 13.

76. CCTV STATISTICS

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

The Town Clerk advised that following a recent road traffic incident in Fore Street, she had been led to understand that three of the four cameras in the vicinity were not operational. It was requested that information be sought to ascertain how long it took to get issues with the cameras sorted out.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

77. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

The Committee was requested to consider setting up a working group to investigate the feasibility of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for Hertford.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The following members form a working group for an exploratory meeting to establish the need or desire for a Neighbourhood Plan for Hertford: Councillors Stevenson, Mrs Mansfield, Wilson and Ruffles.

78. PLANNING TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC - PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Committee had received copies of the minutes of the Planning Sub Committee meetings held on 11 February, 25 February, 11 March, 25 March, 8 April, 22 April, 7 May and 20 May 2013

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the Planning Sub Committee held on 11 February, 25 February, 11 March, 25 March, 8 April, 22 April, 7 May and 20 May 2013 be received.

79. FINANCE – END OF YEAR INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2012/13

The Committee received a report on the end of year income and expenditure for 2012/13.

The Committee was pleased to note the surplus in the Committee's budget at year end.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee **notes** the income and expenditure to 31 March 2013.
- (b) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that a balance of £1200 should be added to the Town Development budget (code 6036) for 2013/14 for signs for Sainsbury's car park commissioned in 2012/13 that were omitted from the year end accruals.
- (c) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that a balance of £1636 should be added to the Hanging Baskets budget (code 6037) for 2013/14 for rental charges in 2012/13 that were omitted from the year end accruals.

80. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

In view of the confidential nature of the following item, which relates to the business matters of other individuals and organisations, the public shall be excluded while the following item is discussed. This is in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by the Local Government Act 1972.

81. HERTFORD CASTLE VENUE HIRE

The Committee had received a report outlining proposed new wedding and corporate hire packages for the Castle.

Following a detailed discussion it was agreed that the proposed new packages be trialled for a limited period of 6 months and a full cost analysis be provided to the Committee at that time.

It was RESOLVED that:

- (a) The Committee **approves** the proposed Castle corporate and wedding packages for a trial period of 6 months, following which a full cost analysis be presented to the Committee.
- (b) The Committee **notes** the report.

The meeting closed at 9.35pm