

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY, 22 JUNE 2009 AT 7.30PM IN THE ROBIN ROOM, THE
CASTLE, HERTFORD**

PRESENT: The Mayor, Councillor D R Poole in the Chair, for the start of the meeting.

Councillors, Dr L E Radford, P A Ruffles and Miss J C S Sartin.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs N L Villa, Town Clerk
Ms S A Mead, Marketing & Promotions Manager
Miss M Challis, Assistant to Town Clerk

46. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Councillor Miss J Sartin be elected Chairman for the forthcoming civic year.
Councillor Miss Sartin took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

47. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Councillor Dr L E Radford be elected Vice Chairman for the forthcoming civic year.

48. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors Miss K P Darby, Mrs H P Durbin and Miss C J Geall

49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor P A Ruffles declared personal interests in agenda item 13 (Medlock Fountain, Hertford Town Centre) as a member of Hertford Civic Society, and also agenda item 16(b) (Community Grant applications) relating to Miss Emily Byrt – Youth Music Theatre UK as he has links as Chairman of Herts Arts Partnership and Jan Carter Dance.

Councillor Miss J Sartin declared a personal interest agenda item 13 (Medlock Fountain Hertford Town Centre) as a member of Hertford Civic Society.

50. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2009 were approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

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

Castle Redecoration phase 3 will remain under the jurisdiction of the Development and Leisure Committee until plans have moved forward to costing stage, at which point the item will be passed to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The action sheet be received and noted.

There were no matters arising.

52. **QUESTIONS AND/OR STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

53. **TOWN DEVELOPMENT – CCTV STATISTICS**

The Committee received the latest CCTV statistics for Hertford.

The Town Clerk was requested to compile a comparison of larger council funding levels for CCTV in order to assess Hertford Town Council's contribution against councils of similar size.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The CCTV statistics report be noted.

54. **TOWN DEVELOPMENT – HERTFORD TOWN CENTRE**

The Committee received a report which gave update on the progress of the various council projects designed to assist the economic health and development of the town during the current financial difficulties.

The busking pitch licenses have now been received. The Town Clerk will establish a process for the booking of pitches and sourcing of buskers.

Part of the old Woolworths store has a new proprietor and is due to re-open 27 June, reportedly selling a range of products similar to that of Woolworths. The proprietor was prompted to the site after seeing an article in the Mercury regarding the Town Council's letter to encourage Wilkinsons to consider the site as a prospective store.

Courtyard Arts and Hertford Art Society are very keen to take on the project to paint displays on boarded up shop fronts.

The Chairman, Town Clerk and Marketing and Promotions Manager have identified various locations in the town for potential planters and street furniture following the award of £15,000 from East Herts Council towards town Centre Enhancements. Work is also progressing on identifying areas for replacement signage which will augment the Hertfordshire Highways programme of sign replacement in the town centre which is currently underway.

Positive feedback has been received from retailers regarding opening especially for Fun Day, despite poor weather which did affect the event.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report on progress made on the Town council's projects to support the economic development of the town centre be noted.

55. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – TOWN AND TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

The Committee received a report summarising activity at the Town and Tourist Information Centre.

The overall report was very positive with increases in the number of visitors and sales of event tickets.

The Town Council currently uses four logos and the Town Clerk was requested to provide a more complete report as to the use of these logos for the next meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(a) The report summarising activity at the Town and Tourist Information Centre be noted.

(b) The Committee congratulate staff at the Town and Tourist Information Centre for their positive statistics.

56. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS

The Committee received a report summarising the Town Council's events.

Members are keen to be more involved in deciding events for 2010/11.

If a Medieval weekend event and Open Air Theatre is to be held in 2010, funding would not be available through an Awards for All Grant and therefore this would have to be budgeted for or alternative funding sought.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report summarising the Town Council's events be noted.

57. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – FRIENDS OF HERTFORD CASTLE

The Committee received a report on the activities of Friends of Hertford Castle and minutes of their recent meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Friends of Hertford Castle report and minutes be noted.
- (b) Friends of Hertford Castle be thanked for their excellent stewarding at events and tours.

58. VENUES

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

Prospective wedding clients are now being offered costing and menu details from a range of caterers in order for them to better gauge the cost of a wedding at the Castle.

The Mill Bridge Rooms continues to have a lack of bookings, although enquiries and two provisional bookings have been made for the time during the closure and refurbishment of Castle Hall from April 2010.

The Mill Bridge Rooms is also in need of general outside decoration to improve the appearance and this will be considered during the next budget cycle.

In order to improve charity and non profit making organisation hire, it was proposed to offer the Mill Bridge Rooms at a nominal fee of £15 per morning/afternoon or £25 per day.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee approved the proposal to try and boost charity and non profit making organisation hire by offering the Mill Bridge Rooms at a nominal fee of £15 per morning/afternoon or £25 per day.
- (b) The Committee note the report on Hertford Town Council Venues.

59. FAIRTRADE SIGNAGE

The Committee were asked to consider a request from the Hertford Fairtrade Group to fund signage which highlights Hertford as a Fairtrade Town.

A number of designs provided by the Fairtrade Foundation were considered, but it was agreed a simple enamel sign that could be fixed under existing signs on roads entering Hertford was more in keeping with the current heritage style signage.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee approve, in principle, the installation of an appropriate addition to the town signage, subject to a more detailed information of cost implications.
- (b) The Committee delegates authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, to make a final decision on the matter when further details regarding cost implications become available.

60. ICE RINK UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the proposed Ice Rink event to take place in November/December 2009.

With the lack of sufficient information and verifiable references regarding Ice Force UK, the required investment for the project could not be justified. Alternative providers have been sought without success.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The update on the proposed Ice Rink event be noted.

61. MEDLOCK FOUNTAIN, HERTFORD TOWN CENTRE

The Committee received a letter from Hertford Civic Society giving information about the Medlock Fountain in Salisbury Square and suggesting that Hertford Town Council and East Herts. Council may have entered in to an informal agreement to accept maintenance responsibility for the fountain when it was constructed. The Civic Society would now like to formalise this agreement by conferring ownership of the fountain to the Town Council.

There is no record of Hertford Town Council or East Herts Council having any formal or informal agreement with the Civic Society regarding the Medlock Fountain or its maintenance. Eastern Arts Association offered a grant towards the building of the Fountain, on the condition that Hertford Civic Society took on the responsibility of future maintenance.

However, whilst the Council does not accept ownership or maintenance responsibility, it was suggested that it does have a moral responsibility for the fountain as a focal point in the centre of the town.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee acknowledge receipt of the letter from the Civic Society
- (b) The Committee delegate authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, to commence discussions with the Civic Society and East Herts Council to assess the most appropriate way forward to ensure the fountain

can be a source of pride for the town and a focal point in the conservation area

- (c) The Committee instruct the Town Clerk to provide a full report on the outcome of discussions to the next meeting.

62. ROUNABOUT DEVELOPMENT

The Committee received details from East Herts Council regarding roundabout development.

Whilst the Committee welcomed East Herts Council's view that "the strong rural character of East Herts was not compromised" in the roundabout redevelopment schemes, the current sponsorship signs on Hertford's roundabouts are considered crude and basic and do not enhance the roundabouts' appearance at all. The Committee was supportive of sponsorship, providing subsequent funding is used to improve the appearance.

The Committee would like East Herts Council's roundabout development programme to be extended to Hertford Heath/Foxholes roundabout on the A414, Campfield Road/Willow Mead roundabout on the A414 and the mini roundabout at the bottom of Gallows Hill.

The central reservation along Gascoyne Way (A414) would also benefit from the installation of baskets of flowers to the railings to enhance their appearance.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) Details received from East Herts Council regarding roundabout development be noted
- b) The Town Clerk be instructed to reply to the consultation detailing the above discussions.

63. PLANNING TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC - PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Minutes of the Planning Sub-Committee meetings of 2 February, 16 February, 2 March, 16 March, 30 March, 13 April, 27 April, and 8 June 2009 be noted.

64. FINANCE – YEAR END ACCOUNTS FOR 2008/09

The Committee received a report on the year end accounts for 2008/09.

There were no untoward items which needed to be brought to the Committee's attention.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report on the year end accounts for 2008/09 be noted.

65. **FINANCE – COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS**

The Committee considered a number of Community Grant applications.

The Committee considered the following applications and **RESOLVED** in accordance with its powers under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 that the Committee should incur the following expenditure, which in its opinion is in the interest of the area, or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure:

Miss Emily Byrt – Youth Music Theatre UK be awarded £150 as a donation towards costs of taking part in a drama project during the school holidays.

The Folly @ The Folly (formerly The Castle Street Party) be awarded £250 to cover costs of stewarding and security for a community event.

Courtyard Arts Centre & Gallery be awarded £800 towards the renewal of chairs at the centre.