

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 2008 AT 7.30PM IN THE ROBIN ROOM, THE
CASTLE, HERTFORD**

PRESENT: Councillor Miss J C S Sartin, in the Chair

Councillors, Miss K P Darby, Mrs H P Durbin, Mrs D M Hone, D R Poole,
Dr L E Radford, P A Ruffles.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs N L Villa, Town Clerk
Mr S Davies, Responsible Finance Officer
Ms S A Mead, Marketing & Promotions Manager
Mrs S Cousins, Town and Tourist Information Manager
Miss M Challis, Assistant to Town Clerk

186. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Councillor Miss C J Geall.

187. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Miss J C S Sartin and P A Ruffles declared a prejudicial interest in item 8(b) as trustees of Hertford Museum.

188. **THE MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2008 were approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

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

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The action sheet be received and noted.

There were no matters arising.

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

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

191. **TOWN DEVELOPMENT – CCTV STATISTICS**

The Committee received a report detailing the latest CCTV statistics.

The amount of incidents noted for “missing persons/welfare concern” was considered high. The Town Clerk was asked to find out more information about this description.

It was agreed that the cameras provide increased security, but it was suggested that the statistics could be usefully shared with other organisations; for example domestic violence support groups.

Members requested that the Town Clerk arrange a visit to the CCTV control centre to allow Members to learn more about the practical application of the CCTV.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report on statistics from CCTV cameras around the town be noted and the Town Clerk was asked to research the data and present a report to Committee to ensure that the cameras are proving to offer good value for money.

192. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – TOWN AND TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

The Committee received an update on the activities of the Town and Tourist Information Centre.

It was clarified that souvenirs in the Town and Tourist Information Centre are sold at 100% mark-up, which covers any losses when prices have to be reduced or stock given away.

It was noted that the signage for the T & T.I.C (small blue pedestrian signs) is entirely separate from the Town Centre signs referred to in the previous meeting of this Committee on 15th September 2008 (Minute 200 refers). It was agreed that efforts should be made to ensure join-up of these two projects.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee approve the alterations to the projected budgets 2008/09 and the additional budget for 2009/10.
- b) The Committee agree to the cost of the new signage for the T & T.I.C in the Town.
- c) The Committee agree to the T & T.I.C becoming a direct member of the EET.

193. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS

The Committee has agreed in principle but has not committed to the addition of an outdoor theatre production as part of the 2009 events programme, due to a variety of possible restrictions; investigations are ongoing on these. Funding for the event will come from either charging the public for entry or applying for a grant.

It was noted that most events were under budget, which was a credit to the officers

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee acknowledge the success of the events since the last committee meeting.
- b) The Committee agree to the proposed event programme (subject to the additional financial support from sponsorship and grants) for 2009/10
- c) The Committee approve the exhibitor's charges for 2009/10.
- d) The Committee thank officers for their efforts in trying to secure public advertising opportunities for banners, and ask that they take any future opportunities that become available.

194. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – HERTFORD IN BLOOM REVIEW

The Committee received a report on the recent review of the Hertford in Bloom competition.

Members noted that Ware Town Council have entered the Anglia in Bloom competition, and have received support from other bodies as a result of this. The Marketing and Promotions Manager is keen to work with East Herts Council on this and will investigate, with a view to Hertford entering the competition in 2009.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee approve the changes to Hertford In Bloom, and award 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes to all categories, including "Best Kept Pub Floral Decoration"
- b) The Committee agree to provide two additional awards for the new categories.

195. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – FRIENDS OF HERTFORD CASTLE

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The report on the activities of Friends of Hertford Castle, and the notes from their last meeting be noted.

196. VENUES – HIRE OF VENUES

The Committee received a report detailing the latest hire statistics and the results of a customer satisfaction survey carried out among recent hirers. Most areas achieved excellent satisfaction results, with the exception of the toilets and kitchen.

The layout of the toilet and kitchen facilities are considered to be unsuitable for many functions held at the Castle; however due to budget restraints, this may not be addressed in 2009/10. The architects Kirby Cove are currently producing plans for a revised layout of the ground floor for Members to consider and these changes will be considered for inclusion in the draft budget for 2010/11.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee agree to the change in the pricing structure for all weddings and ceremonies from 1 January 2009.
- b) The Committee agree the tariff increases for 2009/10.
- c) The report on the hire of venues be noted.

197. VENUES – HERTFORD MUSEUM – HIRE OF MILLBRIDGE ROOMS

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Councillor Dr L E Radford take the Chair for this item.

Councillors Miss J C S Sartin and P A Ruffles left the room.

The Committee received from the Museum a request for a reduction in the hire charge of the Mill Bridge Rooms and hires the Museum may wish to undertake during the redevelopment closure.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee agree to request from the Museum to reduce the cost of hire to £5.00 per hour for all hires to the museum during the closed period but that the Museum be asked to accommodate regular bookings (paying the full rate) for the duration of its use of the Mill Bridge Rooms.

Councillors Miss J C S Sartin and P A Ruffles returned to the room and Councillor Miss J C S Sartin resumed the Chair.

198. PLANNING TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC - PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Minutes of the Planning Sub-Committee meetings of 15 and 29 September, 13 and 27 October, and 10 November 2008 be received and noted.

199. FINANCE - BUDGET SUMMARY OF SERVICES MANAGED BY THE DEVELOPMENT AND COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The budget summary of services as managed by the Development and Leisure Committee be noted.

200. FINANCE – DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2009/10

The Committee received a draft budget for 2009/10 outlining a number of optional projects with associated costs for Members to consider undertaking in the next financial year.

The Chair clarified that the proposed 'Town Development Fund' was designed to assist economic development in the town in partnership with East Herts Council and was not for signage as described. There will be a meeting with East Herts District Council w/c 1 December to discuss this proposal further.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee agree to the optional project for the inclusion in the ongoing budget planning.

The creation of a new post for providing administrative support to the Marketing and Promotions Manager was included as a separate item on the agenda and should be discussed at that point, (Minute 204 below).

201. FINANCE – EARMARKED CCTV RESERVE

The Committee received a report and further details from the Finance and Administration Manager concerning the serviceable life and maintenance costs of the CCTV. It was noted that the cameras were now several years old and would require replacement in the next five years, which would represent a significant cost and it was therefore recommended that an earmarked reserve be created to cover the cost of repair and replacement.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee agree to the creation of an earmarked CCTV Reserve and at the end of each financial year transfer any unspent contingency for CCTV repairs and maintenance into the reserve.
- (b) The Committee review the projected closing balance of the CCTV Reserve whilst setting the budget for 2009/10 and future years and if necessary make provision for the reserve to be increased even if no items of capital expenditure are expected in the immediate future.

202. FINANCE – 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:

- (a) Hertford Film Club

The Town Council purchase the equipment as described in their application and loan it to the group free of charge until the group becomes an established organisation.

This is to be reviewed in 12 months, when the Council will consider donating the equipment to the group providing that they produce a Constitution which states that the equipment will be returned to the Council, should the group close.

(b) The Capricorn Majorettes

The application for £200 towards the cost of new costumes and equipment be declined as the group was awarded a grant of £300 in March 2008.

An approval of a second grant in a 12 month period would contravene item 4.6 of the Town Council's Grants Policy.

It was also felt that the group did not appear to be actively fundraising throughout the year.

203. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

It was **RESOLVED** that:

In view of the confidential nature of the following items, which relate 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.

204. STAFFING WORKLOAD

The Committee received a report and recommendation on the current staffing at the Council and **RESOLVED**:

- a) To recommend to Finance, Policy and Administration Committee, the appointment of an assistant to the Marketing and promotions Manager, for a fixed term of two years.