

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 18 JUNE 2012 IN THE ROBING ROOM, THE CASTLE,
HERTFORD AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT: The Mayor, Councillor Miss J Sartin in the chair at the start of the meeting.

Councillors: P Boyle, Miss C Geall, B Haddock, D Poole, Dr L Radford
Miss I Sigmatic, Dr A Stevenson and P Ruffles

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs N L James, Town Clerk
Ms T Carpenter, Civic Administration Manager
Mrs S Cousins, Town and Tourist Information Manager
Mr M Caton, Town Centre Coordinator
1 member of the public

65. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

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

66. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Councillor Mrs S Newton was elected Vice Chairman for the forthcoming Civic Year.

67. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Newton (Unwell) and Dr L Radford (Unwell). Apologies were also received in advance from Miss C Geall for late arrival.

68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr P Boyle	Prejudicial	Agenda item 8(d) Rock Charity Selection	Employee CHIPS
Cllr P Ruffles	Prejudicial	Agenda item 8(d) Rock Charity Selection	Trustee St Andrews Centre.
	Personal	As Above	Prev. Trustee Herts Aid and Involvement with all Applicants
Town Clerk	Personal	Agenda item 8(d) Rock Charity Selection	Involvement with Cadet Forces

69. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2012 were approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

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

Improvements to the Dungeon in Castle

An update on proposed further improvements to the dungeon area was requested, as indicated in the minutes of the meeting of The Friends of Hertford Castle.

Town and Tourist Information Centre Sales Strategy

The TTIC Manager provided a verbal update regarding sales of souvenirs, and confirmed that the regular shoppers for such items were generally children for school trips and some tourists. It was requested that information be provided to the next meeting regarding top selling and most profitable souvenirs, along with those items that didn't sell. The item would be removed from the Action Sheet.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The action sheet be received and noted.

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

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

72. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – TOWN AND TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

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

The Committee sought clarification regarding the income from the Themed Walks and the payment of the Tour Guide. It was confirmed that the split was 75/25% in favour of the Tour Guide and expenses were paid originally to cover the initial research for the walks.

It was confirmed that the Council insurance would cover the Olympic Torch whilst it was displayed on Council premises.

The TTIC Manager confirmed that the new Town Guide would be significantly different to the present guide and would be targeted at visitors as opposed to the current guide which was currently seen as a residents information guide. Whilst It was confirmed that visitors to the TTIC was split as 80% local to 20% visitor, the

majority of the information included in the current guide was available in other formats held by the TTIC.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **approves** the new supplier for the Town Guide for 2013.
- b) The Committee **notes** the remainder of the report.

73. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS

The Committee received a report on the planning progress for the 2012 events.

The Committee was pleased to note the success of the Jubilee beacon event and referred to the many favourable comments for the meticulous organisation of the event that had been received from the visiting dignitaries and members of the public. Thanks were extended to the Marketing and Promotions Manager and the staff for their work in ensuring the success of the event.

Spring Wedding Exhibition

It was noted that the fashion show had not taken place this year and members enquired whether it would no longer feature as a part of future exhibitions.

Teddy Bears Picnic

It was noted that the Teddy Bears' Picnic had been well attended with over 500 people present and had been well executed by the staff involved.

Carnival

The Committee had noted that the road closure signs for Carnival day had been erected and it was confirmed that an impressive number of organisations would be taking part on the day, with floats and stalls etc.

Rock at the Castle

Sponsorship for the main stage was again unlikely to be forthcoming. It was suggested that an approach be made to Cllr Willis to utilise his fundraising skills.

The bar supplier had been made aware of the likely increase in the bar fee from £200 to £250.

Entrepreneurs Network Workshops

It was confirmed that the next workshop would take place on Wednesday 20th June with two local speakers on the subject of Human Resources and Behavioural Personal Development. This was the topic requested by previous attendees of the workshops.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- c) The Committee **approves** the increase of the fee for Rock at the Castle bar services to £250.
- d) The Committee **notes** the remainder of the report.

Note: Cllr Miss Geall arrived at the meeting at 8.10pm.

74. 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 was concerned that the key priorities of the Town Centre Coordinator (TCC) had not been prioritised and it was agreed that these would be discussed outside of the meeting between the TCC and the Chairman and reported back to the next meeting of the Committee for approval.

The Committee noted the proposed soft launch for the website but required that the site go live at the earliest opportunity and preferably on 1 July 2012, whether all the information was available or not. A website was a constantly evolving facility and required regular updates anyway to stay relevant.

It was noted that the grant from the East Herts Council Town Centre Enhancement fund in order to provide Town Centre signage had been received. It was requested that consideration be given to installing more professional signage on the Castle Gates on the days when weddings were held in the Castle. Signage with replaceable names, similar to the fixed sign for staff in the foyer was considered more appropriate than the laminated signs currently used.

A suggestion was made that the Council became more proactive in seeking new businesses to the Town through writing to large multi-nationals when possible premises become vacant. It was requested that the TCC examine the possibility and report back to the Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee **notes** the progress of the Town Centre Coordinator's work programme subject to a review of the priorities.

75. CHARITY SELECTION ROCK AT THE CASTLE

Note: Having declared prejudicial interests Cllrs Boyle and Ruffles left the room during the discussion on this item.

The Committee received a report setting out details of the five charities which had applied to benefit from the 2012 Rock at the Castle event.

The applicants were:

- Courtyard Arts
- CHIPS
- Herts Aid
- St Andrew's Centre
- 936 (Hertford & Ware) Squadron ATC

The Committee noted that HertsAid had benefitted from the Mayor's Charity Appeal in 2012 and 2009 and that CHIPS had recently benefited under the Council's community grant scheme. It was considered that the funding likely to be raised from Rock would not make a significant difference to the funds required for the St Andrew's Centre and that since funding required for the replacement minibus for the ATC was not required for 3-4 years, it was felt that an application to the Council's community grant scheme at that time would be more appropriate.

Following careful consideration of all applications, Courtyard Arts was selected to benefit from the Rock at the Castle collection. Courtyard Arts had a strong community engagement policy and worked with many disadvantaged local people, both young and old. It was however felt that more than 12 bucket collectors would be needed for the day and requested that they should seek additional volunteers.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **approves** Courtyard Arts as the nominated charity to benefit from Rock at the Castle 2012.

76 . VENUE HIRE REPORT

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

It was requested that a feedback form for weddings/parties and corporate hirers be issued and once completed passed to the Committee for information. It was felt that such forms could provide important information for the Council regarding suggestions for improvements to the facilities and also act as a marketing tool for promoting the venues through displays of positive comments on notice boards or on the website (subject to receipt of client permission)

The Committee expressed concern that permission had been granted for the use of a marquee at a wedding without reference to the Committee, however it was explained that the marquee was a very small marquee which would be placed on the apron of the lawn adjacent to the conservatory, and was merely an overspill area for guests at the wedding and had proved profitable. On this basis the Committee raised no objection to the hire, but requested that future enquiries for marquees be referred to the Committee for approval.

The Committee considered that corporate hire was possibly under marketed and felt that efforts should be explored to increase day time hire to avoid impacting on the officer time in the evening.

The Committee was pleased to note that bookings continued to look solid and requested that future reports show comparison figures with the same period the previous year.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

77. FRIENDS OF HERTFORD CASTLE

The Committee had received a report outlining the activities of the Friends of Hertford Castle which had largely been discussed earlier in the meeting. The Committee enquired whether the Friends had resolved the issue with the use of the Travellers Chair to their satisfaction and that all guides were happy and were able to manage the arrangement.

It was noted that the Chairman had already met with the Friends and would be attending future meetings of the Group.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

78. PLANNING TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC - PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Committee noted the planning application for Waters Garage had been withdrawn but it was confirmed that a new application was likely. The ongoing issue regarding the flagpole on Shire Hall was also noted as well as the Council's response to the SLAA consultation.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The minutes of the Planning Sub Committee held on 13 February, 27 February, 12 March, 26 March, 10 April, 23 April, 8 May, 21 May and 28 May 2012 be received.

79. CCTV STATISTICS

The Committee received a report outlining the CCTV statistics for 2012.

It was noted there had been a reduction in incidents, which was in line with the County trend of a 17% reduction of crime rates overall.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

80. FINANCE –END OF YEAR INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2011/12

The Committee received a report on the end of year income and expenditure for 2011/12 along with a request for budget rollovers in the CCTV and Christmas lights budgets. The Committee was pleased to note that expenditure had remained well within budget.

The Committee acceded to the budget rollovers but noted that since the CCTV reserve maintained a healthy balance, there would be no requirement for additional funds in 2013/14.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee **notes** the report on the income and expenditure to 31st March 2012.
- (b) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that a balance of £4403 should be added to the current budget provision of £23690 for the Christmas Lights Displays in 2012/13
- (c) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that a balance £10456 should be transferred from the General Reserve to the CCTV Maintenance Reserve.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.