

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 20 JUNE 2011 IN THE ROBING ROOM, THE CASTLE,
HERTFORD AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT: The Mayor, Cllr Mrs S Newton in the Chair at the start of the meeting.

Councillors: P Boyle, Miss C Geall, M McCormick, D Poole, Dr L Radford and P Ruffles, A Stevenson and Miss J Sartin

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr P Moore
Cllr Miss I Sigmac
Cllr R Willis
Ms T Carpenter, Civic Administration Manager
Mr S Davies, Finance Manager
Miss M Challis, Marketing and Promotions Manager
Mrs S Cousins, Town and Tourist Information Manager
1 member of the public

70. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Miss J C Sartin was elected Chairman for the forthcoming civic year. The Chairman then took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

71. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

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

72. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

73. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr J Sartin	Prejudicial	Part of Agenda item 9(a) TTIC report	Museum Trustee
P Boyle	Prejudicial	Agenda item 9(c) Rock Charity Selection	Employee of one of applicants
P Ruffles	Prejudicial	Part of Agenda item 9(a) TTIC report and Agenda item 9(c) Rock Charity Selection	Co author of the book and Trustee of one of the applicants
Cllr Mrs S Newton	Prejudicial	Agenda item 9(c) Rock Charity Selection	Chosen Mayor's Charity is applicant
Cllr D Poole	Prejudicial	Agenda item 9(c) Rock Charity Selection	Beneficiary from Mayor's Charity is applicant (09)
Cllr Miss C Geall	Personal	Agenda item 9(c) Rock Charity Selection	Relative is Trustee of one of applicants.

74. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2011 were approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

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

It was confirmed that additional outlets for the sale of the 2012 Calendar would be sought.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The action sheet be received and noted.

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

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

77. TOWN DEVELOPMENT

(a) CCTV Statistics

The CCTV statistics were noted and members recognised that the figures underlined the usefulness of the cameras therefore justifying the Council's expenditure towards the funding of the equipment.

It was noted that three of the lamp columns required repainting and delegated authority was granted to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, to expedite the work.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(a) The CCTV report and statistics be noted.

(b) That delegated authority be granted to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman to approve expenditure for the repainting of three lamp columns.

78. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – TOWN AND TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

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

It was noted that the people counter had recently broken, however it was felt that the keeping of manual records was more accurate and it was there agreed that the

device should not be replaced. The recent TTIC statistics clearly indicated that previous statistics based on the people counter records were not accurate given that the device picked up any motion in the doorway, therefore artificially inflating the visitor numbers.

It was requested that future reports contain statistics of only the past rolling three years and that the content of the tables be reviewed and simplified.

The entry doors to the shop continued to be a problem in that they were too heavy for people to open. Two quotations to replace the doors with a single door had been obtained and the most favourable quotation was in the sum of £1710 (incl VAT). The Committee recommended the approval of the work with the expenditure being met from the Building Reserve.

The Committee was asked to consider a request that TTIC keeps any profit it makes from the sales of the book 'Hertford Through Time'. This publication was co-written by Cllr Ruffles and Jean Riddell, in association with the Hertford Museum, with the view that profits from the sales support Hertford Museum. Members considered that it would be against the spirit of the project for the profit from the sales to go to the TTIC and therefore declined the request.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **approves** the replacement of the front double doors with a single door at a cost of £1710 and **recommends** to the Finance Policy and Administration Committee that the expenditure be funded from the Building Reserve budget.
- b) The Committee **declines** the request for the TTIC to keep the profit from its own sales of the copies of "Hertford through Time".
- c) The committee **notes** the remainder of this report.

Note: Having declared a prejudicial interest Cllrs Miss Sartin and Ruffles left the room prior to the discussion regarding the sale of the book 'Hertford Through Time'. During the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, Cllr Dr L Radford took the Chair.

79. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS

The Committee received a report summarising the Town Council's events since the start of the 2011 events programme along with details of the preparation for the remaining programme for 2011 and an initial draft of events for 2012.

The Committee was pleased to note the success of both Fun Day and the Teddy Bears' Picnic and it was particularly noted that the events programme catered for a variety of age groups, from very young children to adults.

The cost/benefit of the Wedding Exhibitions was questioned in terms of attracting wedding bookings to the Castle and it was noted that three bookings had been made at each of the last two wedding exhibitions, thus justifying the event in the programme.

The Committee was disappointed to learn of the introduction of the market licence fee for larger events by East Herts Council, costing £21 per event with an additional fee of £50 payable for over 10 commercial stalls. This licence fee would impact not only on the Council's own community events, but also school fetes and other community days. It was requested that a letter be forwarded to East Herts Council expressing the Council's regret at the charge and requesting that consideration be given to waiving the fee for such community events. In the meantime it was agreed that the fee should be absorbed for the 2011 programme, but regretfully, passed on to traders in 2012.

It was noted that a sponsor was still sought for Rock at the Castle, and this was proving difficult at present. Should no sponsorship be found, the full cost of the event would have to be met from the remaining 2011 events budget.

A cost for the delivery of the stalls for the Christmas event was proving difficult to obtain and it was agreed to approach the Town Clerks of Sawbridgeworth and Bishop's Stortford to ascertain the procedure used by their Councils. It was further recommended that Cllr Mrs Hone (East Herts Council) be contacted for her assistance in this matter. Expenditure of £600 for the booking of Jack FM, as a focus for the entertainment on the evening was approved from within the current budget.

The proposed events programme for 2012 was noted.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **approves** a professional market for the Christmas Gala
- b) The Committee **approves** the hiring Jack FM to provide the focus of entertainment for the Christmas Gala.
- c) The Committee **notes** the first draft of the events programme for 2012.
- d) The Committee **notes** the remainder of the report.

80. ROCK CHARITY SELECTION

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

The Committee received a report setting out details of the six charities which had applied to benefit from the 2011 Rock at the Castle event.

The six applicants were:

Ancient Charities of Hertford
Children's Integrated Playschemes (CHIPS)
HertsAid
Keech Hospice Care
Mudlarks
Midshires Search and Rescue

The Committee noted that HertsAid would benefit from the Mayor's Charity Appeal this year and Keech Cottage had similarly benefitted in 2010. It was further agreed that the application from CHIPS would be referred to the Finance Policy and Administration Committee for consideration under the Council's grants scheme, given that the amount and items claimed fell under that criteria. It was further considered that the impact on Hertford residents of the Midshires Search and Rescue was not large and covered a much broader area. However the Committee was highly appreciative of the support the organisation provided at Council events, and the Council would look to recognise this support through alternative means.

Following a close vote between the Ancient Charities of Hertford and Mudlarks, the Ancient Charities of Hertford was approved as the chosen charity for Rock at the Castle, although it was expected that the Charity should provide more than two volunteers to work at Rock at the Castle.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **approves** the Ancient Charities of Hertford as the charity to benefit from Rock at the Castle 2011.

Note: Cllr Miss Geall wished it to be noted that she voted against the resolution.

81. HERTFORD IN BLOOM COMPETITION 2011

The Committee received a report providing an update on the preparations for Hertford in Bloom 2011. It was noted that entries to the competition were slow at present. The Hertford in Bloom showcase at the Hatfield Countryside Show was noted and the fact that the prize giving would take place in Hatfield. Whilst it was considered that the showcase was good opportunity to promote Hertford nevertheless some disappointment was expressed that the presentations would take place outside of the town. Clarification would be sought that the winners of Hertford in Bloom would be given free access to event.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **notes** the progress made towards Hertford in Bloom Competition 2011

82. TOWN CENTRE UPDATE

The Committee received a report summarising the various projects designed to assist the economic health and development of the town during the current financial difficulties and the appointment of the Town Centre Coordinator was noted.

The Committee noted with disappointment the decision of East Herts Council to withdraw the proposal to allow Town Councils to remove fly posters in the town centres. Fly posting in Hertford was an increasing problem which blighted the town, and it was therefore hoped that East Herts Council would arrange to remove the fly posting as a matter of urgency. As this had been a decision of the Executive Member at East Herts Council it was considered that any approach to

request reconsideration of this should be made by Members as opposed to Officers. The Chairman agreed to action this matter.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

83. FRIENDS OF HERTFORD CASTLE

The Committee received a report providing an update of the activities of the 'Friends of Hertford Castle'. The Committee expressed their appreciation for the good support base provided by the 'Friends'.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee **notes** the report

84. VENUE HIRE REPORT

The Committee received an update on the hire statistics for the Castle and Mill Bridge rooms and to request that Members consider increasing charges to cover the costs of employing two members of staff for late night private bookings at the Castle.

Following an incident at a recent wedding reception in which an officer had been verbally abused and pushed by a guest who was under the influence of alcohol, concern had been raised that an officer working alone in such circumstances would have no colleague to provide support or act as a witness. A remote call-in system was in operation monitored through Broxbourne Borough Council, however inevitably, the response is delayed, during which time any officer working alone would remain at risk in potentially difficult situations. In the circumstances it was proposed that two officers were employed for late receptions and parties at which alcohol was to be consumed. This would incur an increase in expenditure of £15 per hour.

The Committee recognised the necessity to eliminate lone working in such circumstances and were happy to accede to the proposal, resulting in an immediate increase in evening hire fees, however, this should be reviewed over the next six months, with a view to seeking an alternative, more cost effective method of cover in the future. Any booking that had already been made would be honoured to the original quotation.

The Committee was pleased to note the increase in hirers of the Mill Bridge Room, which it was thought was generated as a result more visitors to the room attending parties etc.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

a) The Committee **approves** the employment of two officers at late night receptions at the Castle

- b) The Committee **approves** the increase in hire fees to cover the cost of the additional staffing for the next 6 months.
- c) The Committee **notes** the remainder of the report.

85. CARNIVAL

The Committee received a verbal report confirming that arrangements for the Carnival were progressing and that the date had been set for 24th June 2012.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee notes the verbal update.

86. PLANNING TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC - PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The minutes of the Planning Sub Committee held on 14 February, 28 February, 14 March, 21 March (reconvened from 14 March) 4 April, 11 April, 26 April and 24 May 2011 be received.

87. FINANCE – END OF YEAR INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2010/11

The Committee received a report on the end of year income and expenditure for 2010/11. The Finance Manager confirmed that the budget had ended on a favourable variable of £14,000 which was largely as a result of the reduced cost of the CCTV provision.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee **notes** the report on the income and expenditure to 31st March 2011.
- (b) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that the balance of £4,483 should be added to the current budget provision of £15,000 for the Town Development Fund in 2011/12.
- (c) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that a balance of £14,010 be transferred from the General Reserve to the CCTV maintenance reserve.
- (d) The Committee **recommends** to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that the cost of the replacement door to the TTIC be met from the Building Reserve.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

