

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2012 IN THE ROBIN ROOM, THE CASTLE,
HERTFORD AT 7.30PM**

PRESENT: Councillor Miss J Sartin in the Chair

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr Miss I Sigmac
Mrs N L James, Town Clerk
Ms T Carpenter, Civic Administration Manager
Miss M Challis, Marketing and Promotions Manager
Mr M Caton, Town Centre Coordinator
PC Owen Davies, Herts Police
1 member of the public

421. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Newton
(Previous engagement) and Dr A Stevenson (Business Commitment)

422. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

423. THE MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2011 were approved as a
correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

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

Hertford Live!

It was confirmed that the application to alter the Busking Licence was currently
being processed by East Herts Council

Photography in The Castle

It was requested that a letter be forwarded to the Friends of Hertford Castle to
outline the changes made to the policy around photography in the Castle.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The action sheet be received and noted.

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

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

426. CCTV STATISTICS AND POLICING UPDATE

PC Owen Davies attended the meeting to provide members with information concerning the value of CCTV to the Police.

PC Davies advised members that CCTV was a big deterrent, particularly to troublemakers during the night time economy. CCTV was also a valuable evidential tool which had secured several recent convictions and was useful for tracking shop lifters in the town centre. It was however stressed that crime figures were particularly low in the area with the East Herts area showing a decrease in crime.

PC Davies also provided information to the Committee regarding levels of police officers available for a typical busy night in Hertford, which allowing for shift changes could be up to 10 in number with the additional assistance of up to 6 officers from the specials constabulary.

The Committee expressed concern regarding the increased level of graffiti in the town and the length of time it took for it to be removed. PC Davies agreed to investigate whether this was a matter he could undertake with the assistance of the Probation Service.

427. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – TOWN AND TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

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

The Committee requested detailed information on the proposed sales strategy following the sale of the Olympic and Jubilee merchandise, with clear proposals on methods of maximising sales revenue, including the purchase of new merchandise. Members further requested that future reports included information regarding profits on merchandise, as well as income.

It was suggested that the window for hire be swapped to the other window of the shop in order to enable the merchandise to be seen from the outside, or steps taken to ensure that the display in the window for hire is kept to a size that does not fully obscure the view into the shop.

It was noted that all calendars had been sold this year and that 280 appeared to have been the correct order level.

The Committee was pleased to see the new format for the weekly newsletter, but requested that hyperlinks be added for clicking through to the organisations' websites listed in the newsletter.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Committee notes the report.

428. TOURISM AND PROMOTION – HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL EVENTS

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

The Committee noted the potential involvement of Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts Council in the Jubilee beacon lighting event and requested that steps were taken to ensure there was no confusion in the interaction between the Councils at the event itself. It was confirmed that a meeting was due to take place in the week to clarify the arrangements for the event.

It was confirmed that there had been many enquiries for the street party information pack, and seven Hertford residents had so far been eligible to receive the bunting and balloon packs. Hanbury Manor had kindly agreed to sponsor this initiative.

Carnival

Arrangements for the Carnival remained on track. The Carnival route had now been confirmed with both the Police and Highways, with 'forming up' arrangements still needing to be addressed. It was confirmed that Mr Bill Cox had been appointed Chairman of the Carnival Committee.

Rock at the Castle

The Committee suggested minor alterations to the application form at question 16 to request that applicants complete the question in a set number of words, or roughly an A4 page preferably cross referenced to the criteria, this would ensure that all applications were standardised.

The guidance note should be altered to indicate the financial position at the previous year end, instead of 'at the time of application'

It was requested that a press release be issued once the changes to the application had been approved.

Entrepreneurs Network Workshops

It was confirmed that the next workshop would take place on Friday 2 March with Mark Prisk MP being the guest speaker. A more targeted marketing campaign had so far resulted in a higher level of interest in the event.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee approves the application form for the Rock at the Castle Charity subject to the changes indicated above.
- b) The Committee notes the remainder of the report.

429. 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 Town Centre Coordinator reported that he was making progress in his objectives but not as quickly as he had hoped. The business community was now taking ownership of the various strategies and a constructive relationship had been built with East Herts Council on parking issues. The Committee was pleased to note that East Herts Council had announced that it was freezing car parking charges for next year.

It was confirmed that a meeting was due to take place this week to determine the preferred bidder for the creation of the dedicated town centre website. It was hoped that the website could be launched in time for the July events. The website would be self maintained, with no long term obligations to the design company.

It was confirmed that whilst the Olympic flame was travelling through Hertford on 7 July the route had not been publicised. The Council had been asked to erect bunting and banners on behalf of East Herts Council and it was expected that the Fire Brigade would assist in this regard. The Committee emphasised that it would not wish to incur expenditure in this.

Discussions took place regarding arrangements for the 2012 Christmas Gala which included ideas to have a child friendly attraction in the town instead of Jack FM in order to keep members of the public in the town for a longer period of time. The possibility of starting the event earlier in the afternoon to give the market stall holders a longer trading period and delaying the Christmas tree light switch on to 6pm were also under consideration.

The proposal to bid for Town Centre Enhancement funds from East Herts Council in order to repair the paving on the western side of Fore Street was noted, as was the possibility that Hertfordshire Highways may now be funding the area in question. A suggestion to place bollards on the pavement outside Millets in order to prevent buses mounting the pavement and damaging the paving was also considered. The very tight deadline of the end of March for preparing a bid for Town Centre Enhancement funding was noted.

The Committee noted that the Summer hanging baskets would be red, white and blue themed to commemorate the Jubilee, and it was requested a map of the current locations of the baskets be circulated in order to ascertain whether any of the locations required alteration.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee **notes** the progress of the Town Centre Coordinator's priorities.

- (b) The Committee approves the proposal to bid for Town Centre Enhancement funding to repair the area of paving to the western end of Fore Street.

430. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the contract for the provision of Christmas Lights from 2010-2013 inclusive.

It was noted that the Christmas Tree displays in St Andrew Street had been lit but that the lighting was very low level, and this issue would need to be addressed along with other infrastructure improvements for the forthcoming year.

In terms of enhancing the lights display, if funds allowed after infrastructure upgrades, suggestions were made for two cross street displays in Bull Plain and additional lights at the eastern end of Fore Street.

The Committee was disappointed that the lights had not been taken down earlier after the end of the Christmas season. The Clerk advised that the Company was contractually required to take the lights down prior to 15th January, and actually took them down on 15th. For this reason along with the delay in time it took for the Company to act on lighting problems the Clerk advised that she had secured a discount on the Contract for 2011.

It was requested that the under spend on the Christmas lights budget be carried over into the next financial year.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **RECOMMENDS** to Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that any under spend on this year's budget be carried over into next year.
- b) The Committee approves the proposal to review the locations of the existing display.

431. 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 benchmarked the income against the budget in order that the financial position could be readily viewed.

The Committee noted that the licence for Civil Marriages and Partnerships required renewal at a cost of £1200, and although it was not budgeted expenditure it was noted that this cost could be funded from hire income, given that this had exceeded expectation.

The Marketing and Promotions Manager advised the Committee that she was currently investigating the benefits of applying for a licence for the Council to sell alcohol. It was requested that a full report outlining the options be referred to the next meeting of the Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee **approves** the hire tariff for the Castle as a film location.
- b) The Committee **approves** the application to renew the Approval as a Venue for Civil Marriages and Partnerships.
- c) The Committee **notes** the report.

432. FRIENDS OF HERTFORD CASTLE

The Committee had received a report outlining the activities of the Friends of Hertford Castle.

It was noted that the Elizabeth I doll had been purchased and would be displayed in the Robing Room.

Work to tidy the basement display would commence in the Spring.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

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

433. CARNIVAL

This item had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

434. PLANNING TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC - PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

It was noted that Sainsbury had arranged a site visit for Councillors on 21st March 2012. It was requested that a letter be forwarded to Sainsbury's to ascertain whether the visit could be accommodated on a Saturday to allow all Councillors to attend.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The minutes of the Planning Sub Committee held on 14 November, 28 November, 12 December, 19 December 2011 and 3 January, 16 January and 30 January be received.

435. FINANCE –THIRD QUARTER INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2011/12

The Committee received a report on the third quarter income and expenditure for 2011/12. The Committee was pleased to note that all expenditure had remained within budget.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

(a) The Committee **notes** the report on the income and expenditure to 31st December 2011.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.