

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY, 23 MARCH 2009 AT 7.30PM IN THE ROBIN ROOM, THE
CASTLE, HERTFORD**

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

Councillors, D R Poole, Dr L E Radford, and P A Ruffles.

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

276. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Councillors, Miss K P Darby and Miss C J Geall

277. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

278. **THE MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2009 were approved as a correct record and the Chairman authorised to sign the same.

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

2012 Olympics

It was confirmed that John Fuller (EH Olympic Co-ordinator will be speaking at Hertford Civic Society's A.G.M.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The action sheet be received and noted.

There were no matters arising.

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

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

281. 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.

It was suggested that EH use progressive planting on roundabouts i.e. winter crocuses are replaced with daffodils, to improve their appearance.

EH have confirmed that business rates will not apply if boarded up shop fronts or empty shop windows are used to brighten the appearance of the town. The property agent currently contracted by Hertford Town Council is contacting owners of empty properties in the town for permission to access for this purpose.

Shops have indicated that they will open on Friday, and events will be organised around the town to encourage people to use the restaurants and shops.

The ideas considered so far, were described as imaginative and there has been no negative response to any suggestions.

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.

282. SPECIAL EVENTS – OPEN AIR THEATRE

The Committee received a report summarising the Open Air Theatre event proposed for July 2009.

It was proposed that two performances be run on the day.

Due to funding from "Awards for All", the event can be free of charge, although measures need to be in place to account for audience numbers and to control the exit of the first audience and the entrance of the second audience.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The Committee approve the proposed two performances at an Open Air Theatre as an addition to the programme of events already approved for 2009 and
- (b) The Committee records its thanks to "Awards for All" for the grant funding of £2050.

283. SPECIAL EVENTS – ICE RINK

The Committee received a report providing details of a proposed ice rink event to take place in November/December 2009 at Hertford Castle.

Ice Force UK appear to be a professional company who have covered all eventualities in their managing of their projects. They have provided references and a draft legal agreement which has been checked by the Town Council's solicitors.

It is anticipated that the ice rink will have a considerable impact on bringing people into the town.

Although the rink could potentially be opened from 10.00a.m. to 10.00 p.m. daily, it is anticipated that Hertfordshire Police will prefer the rink to close at 9.00 p.m. This timing will work in conjunction with the working hours of the Community Police, and may avoid the use of the main Police Force.

A 9.00 p.m. closing time may prove better for customers moving from the Castle into the Town to use the restaurants.

The timings will be negotiated with the local police at a later date.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee approve, subject to obtaining satisfactory references and legal agreements, to invest £15,000 to provide a real ice rink in the grounds of Hertford Castle leading up to Christmas 2009

284. SEVERE WEATHER

Councillor Durbin expressed concern at the dangerous pedestrian conditions around the town during the severe weather in February, and the increased number of casualties. Many pavements were not gritted; pedestrians were walking in the roadway to avoid hazardous, slippery conditions on the paths.

It was reported that EH did attempt to grit some paths, but snow re-covered treated areas very quickly. It was also reported that the County Council had limited salt/grit supplies

It was **RESOLVED** that:

The Town Clerk contact Hertfordshire County Council to try to ensure that main pedestrian through-routes, and areas with a high percentage of elderly residents are gritted during severe weather.