

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

**Held on Monday 14 December 2015
at 6pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall**

Present

Councillor: Cllr C K Woodward (Chairman)

Councillors: Dr S E Bartingdon J M Doughty (from 6.20pm)
H W Chirgwin C Holliday
D S Enright

Non-Committee Members: C Brown (sub for J M Doughty until 6.20pm)
Mrs B J Churchill (sub for J S King)

Officers: Town Clerk Democratic Services Officer
RFO Communications and Events Officer
Works Contracts Supervisor

Also present: 1 member of the public

C625 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for his absence was received from Cllr J S King.

C626 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

C627 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman
- b) there were no matters arising from the Minutes.

C628 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The member of the public present did not wish to speak.

C629 CONSULTATION – A4095 CURBRIDGE ROAD (WITNEY) – PROPOSED 30MPH SPEED LIMIT

The Committee received and considered a consultation from Oxfordshire County Council on a proposal to change the speed limit on Curbridge Road. Members felt that this was a good idea and common sense.

A member commented that he would like to see a 20mph speed limit across the town, with exceptions such as Burford Road. The Town Clerk asked if he would like it raised at the forthcoming Traffic Advisory meeting in January and he thought this would be a good idea.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the following response be submitted to OCC: *that the Town Council is supportive of the proposal to change the speed limit on Curbridge Road.*
- 2) that the proposal to see a 20mph speed limit in the Town be raised at the forthcoming Traffic Advisory Committee meeting in January.

C630 TREES ADJACENT TO THE LEISURE CENTRE

The Committee received and considered the reports of the Works Contracts Supervisor concerning Town Council owned trees at the Leisure Centre which were diseased and dying. Remedial work was not a possibility on some trees and the trees were currently posing a health and safety risk. The situation had been discussed and the plan of action was for 4 trees to be felled and the stumps treated and remedial work carried out on some.

The Works Contracts Supervisor informed the Committee that the work was due to go ahead the following day. The Committee thanked him for arranging this so quickly.

RECOMMENDED: that the report and the action taken be noted.

C631 CIVIC EVENTS REPORT

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications and Events Officer. She explained that if the Council wished to hold an event for the Queen's 90th Birthday, it would need to let the Lord Lieutenant know. She proposed that an event along the lines of the advent fayre could be held, but the Council should be mindful that the Music Festival was scheduled for 12th June so any event would need to be on 13th June. It would be appropriate to hold the event at Burwell as this was the QEII Field.

A draft events diary for 2016 was circulated at the meeting, and the Communications & events Officer commented that some events were still to be confirmed. The Chairman congratulated officers for work on the carol service and commended the choirs and the town band.

The Town Clerk reminded members that they needed to consider a budget for any celebration of the Queen's 90th Birthday. Members considered the type of event most appropriate and a member proposed £1,000 as a budget and anything left over could go back into reserves.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the report be noted;
- 2) that a budget of £1,000 is set aside for a celebration of the Queen's 90th Birthday.

C632 CHRISTMAS EVENTS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Communications and Events Officer. Further to her report she added that the amount spent on the Advent Fayre has been £492. The Chairman thanked councillors and officers for their work on this and one member thanked the Communications and Events Officer in particular.

The Chairman hoped that all councillors had seen the Christmas market and encouraged members to visit. This would provide the Council with a profit in the region of £800.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted.

C633 LIGHTS DISPLAY AND CHRISTMAS TREE

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk.

The Chairman noted his surprise at the cost of the Christmas tree.

The Town Clerk said that she had had a lot of feedback on the Christmas lights – both positive and negative. The Chairman thought that the whole point of amalgamating the lights from Welch Way roundabout was to have a spectacular display leading up to the Christmas tree. He missed the lights on the town hall and the Como Lounge. Marriott's Walk and the Woolgate Centre looked good but the towns could be better. He would like to see a cheaper tree and the saving to be invested into better lights. The Town Clerk reported that the lights were rented and the contract had been the cheapest at the time of tendering.

A member recalled that the Council used to own its own lights and thought that there should be a long-term strategy to build up a stock of Council lights again. He admitted there would be issues with storage. The Chairman replied that he was not sure that this made financial sense.

Cllr J Doughty entered at 6.23pm.

The Town Clerk explained that the Council had spent £5,000 per annum having the lights checked and fixed. By renting a different display could be arranged every year. The Chairman thought that the lights had looked good in the first year but now they were a little tired. The Chairman proposed that the Christmas Lights Working Party should meet once per cycle of meetings. He thought that sponsorship should be sought. Ideally businesses should contribute.

A member reported that she had had complaints about Corn Street not having any lights and the fact there was no switch on. Another member said that he had been at the Charity Switch On evening and it had been very good.

Members discussed the issue further and the Chairman proposed that the Christmas Lights Working Party should set a budget for the forthcoming year. The Town Clerk pointed out that there was not time to hold a meeting before the budget was set. A member proposed £35,000 for the Christmas Lights and the tree for the forthcoming financial year.

The Communications and Events Officer reminded the Committee that the Council had used to hold a Mayor's reception after the switch on which had been a useful way of building up sponsorship.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the report be noted;
- 2) that the budget for next year's Christmas Lights be set at £35,000 and the Christmas Lights Working Party should meet once a cycle starting in January 2016.

C634 REVENUE BUDGET & CAPITAL/SPECIAL PROJECTS PROGRAMME: REVISED BUDGET 2015/16 AND ESTIMATES FOR 2016/17

The Committee received and considered the report of the RFO. A member commented that the Council had spent almost £4,000 on events this year, which was fantastic value for money. He queried why only £3,000 had been allocated for next year. The Town Clerk explained that the whole budget was never spent, so it rolled over to the following year, hence only £3,000 had been set aside.

It was noted that earlier in the meeting £1,000 was set aside for the Queens 90th Birthday celebrations and £35,000 had been proposed for the Christmas Lights budget. These figures would be incorporated into the draft budget for presentation to the Policy & Resources Committee.

The Town Clerk was still working on bins, benches and bus shelters. In report to a Members question the Town Clerk confirmed that the bus shelter at the Burwell Shops had been removed due to constant vandalism. The shelter around the corner had been hit by a car which had not been insured. She was trying to establish the ownership of the bus shelter at Marriott's Walk which was positioned incorrectly (it was a stop at which people ascended from the bus and not alighted) and there was a possibility that this would replace the shelter at Curbridge Road end of Burwell.

A member had been to the college and they were keen to decorate shelters using printed sticky plastic sheets. If people liked the shelters they may be less prone to vandalism. He proposed that money should go into the budget for a new shelter at the Burwell shops.

The Town Clerk drew members' attention to the e-mail she had received about reduced financial support for CCTV. There was a discussion on what the Committee considered appropriate coverage. A member reported that Blackpool was using volunteers to run the CCTV programme and perhaps something similar could be done locally as it was working in other parts of the country. Another member wanted professionals to do the monitoring.

A short discussion followed with members agreeing that they did not wish to see reduced hours of monitoring and felt that the Town Council contributed enough already.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the report be noted;
- 2) that £1,000 is budgeted for the Queen's 90th Birthday event;
- 3) that the Christmas Lights budget is increased to £35,000;
- 4) that the Council respond to the Public Protection Manager stating that it would maintain its annual payment of £10,000 but it did not wish to see reduced monitoring.

The meeting closed at 7.05pm.

Chairman