

PUBLIC HALLS COMMITTEE OF WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Held on Monday 2 June 2014
At 6pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Witney

Present

Councillor: R F N Curry (Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs J C Baker C Holliday (substitute for Ms M J C Curry)
 D S Enright C K Woodward

Officers: Town Clerk Democratic Services Officer

Also present: 1 member of the public

H240 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for their absence were received from Cllrs B J Churchill, Ms M J C Curry and T J Morris.

H241 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

H242 **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Holliday proposed Cllr Woodward as Vice Chairman. All were in favour. Cllr Woodward was duly elected as Vice Chairman for the Municipal Year.

H243 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2014 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

H244 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 MARCH 2014**

The Chairman drew members' attention to page 4, paragraph 2, and said that the Committee would need to start thinking about fundraising for the Corn Exchange by both the Town Council and the community. This would be an agenda item for the next meeting. The Chairman felt that the appropriate time to make a splash in terms of fundraising would be when the hall opened at the end of the year.

Cllr Enright entered at 6.05pm during the above discussion.

H245 **COMMITTEE VISION**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk. The Chairman stated that the primary issue this year would be getting the Corn Exchange open.

Cllr Woodward suggested that they took the priorities as listed in the report "as read" and that the Committee should concentrate on the Corn Exchange and then revisit the list in the new year.

The Chairman understood that the HLF would be meeting on 13 June to determine the result of the Council's application. The Corn Exchange Advisory Group was scheduled to meet on 23 June, the same day as the next full Council meeting. The Chairman asked the Committee what should be announced at Council as the Public Halls Committee would not have met before this. He asked what the Town Clerk would suggest. The Town Clerk informed the Committee that she was going to meet Jacqui Ibbotson to draw up two press releases on the potential outcomes of the HLF grant. She was sure from other large grants received that if the grant application was successful, there would be a press protocol to be followed.

Cllr Woodward proposed that an Extraordinary Public Halls meeting be held before the Council meeting on 23 June, to give members a chance to find out what had happened and to see press releases. All agreed this would be a good idea. The Chairman asked the Town Clerk to also give an update on the phase 1 project at that meeting – particularly the situation with regard to the asbestos removal and tendering the works. The Town Clerk added that the first estimate for the asbestos removal had made the agents reassess the project detail but they still thought that the whole of phase one should be put out to tender so that the Town Council in effect had a “shopping list”.

The Chairman felt it was important to know how the project would be funded and therefore an update on the tender was required. The Town Clerk said that the agents would bill across the year but until the tenders came back the Council would not know what it could achieve within budget.

The Chairman noted that funding sources were the sale of the Langdale Hall and there was an option to borrow money from PWLB or WODC, in the short term if needed. The Town Clerk commented that WODC would probably offer better rates. The Chairman said there would be no point in opening the Corn Exchange unless it was usable. Cllr Baker added that there was a need to take care that this did not conflict with the HLF project.

The Town Clerk reported that the agents for the Langdale Hall had given a timeline. They had submitted a request for a pre application meeting with WODC to discuss what uses the site could offer. The cost for this was within their fees. She highlighted the key milestones for Members.

Cllr Enright understood that this was all about timing and funding. He asked if the Committee was confident that the Council had the money to proceed with phase one of the Corn Exchange project as it did not yet know how much it would cost. The Chairman said that there was the possibility of borrowing money, and the Town Clerk added that there was £400,000 in earmarked reserves for phase one. Cllr Enright asked if he was correct in believing that phase one would not eat into the Langdale Hall sale proceeds. Cllr King confirmed that this was correct. The Town Clerk commented that in the experience of Madley Park Hall this illustrated that there could be considerable differences in tender prices between the lowest and the highest. The Chairman said that the important thing was to open a fully functioning hall. Cllr Baker added that the Council could “cherry pick” what they wanted from the tenders.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the Town Clerk's report be noted
2. that an Extraordinary Public Halls meeting be called at 6.30pm on 23 June 2014, subject to the timescales of the decision from HLF.
3. that the Committees objectives be as detailed in the Town Clerk's report, as follows:

- a) Phase 1 of the Corn Exchange project – to get a compliant building open and operational by the end of 2014;
- b) Sell Langdale Hall to part fund Phase 2;
- c) Depending on the outcome of the HLF grant application and the sale of Langdale to progress Phase 2 of the Corn Exchange Project

H246 **OPERATIONAL REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Facilities Supervisor as circulated with the agenda.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted.

H247 **DEFIBRILATOR SITING REQUEST – BURWELL HALL**

The Committee received and considered the correspondence as circulated with the agenda. It was a request from *Legacy for Legend* – a charity set up in response to a man who collapsed and died whilst playing football on Burwell Recreation Ground. The group wanted to site a defibrillator at Burwell Hall – they had the funds to pay for it and arrange installation.

The Town Clerk reminded members that the Town Council had agreed to site a defibrillator on the Town Hall, but as the Post Office/W H Smith had arranged to site one in the Woolgate Centre, the District Council Officer had advised the Town Clerk there was no need for one in such close proximity. The Town Clerk suggested that the defibrillator funded by the Town Council could be sited at The Leys instead. Cllr Enright queried the District Council's decision as he felt there should be more defibrillators in an area with more human traffic. The Chairman commented that people were more likely to have a heart attack whilst engaging in recreation than shopping!

Cllr King was concerned at the potential for vandalism in out of the way areas such as Burwell and The Leys. He was concerned they could be abused. Cllr Enright explained that in order to use the machines, you had to phone up for a code. Cllr Woodward felt that having one machine at The Leys and one at Burwell was a good plan as they would be equidistant. Cllr Holliday commented that the defibrillators would not work on anyone with a heartbeat. He was more concerned at the thought of not having one at Burwell than the potential for vandalism. The Town Clerk said that it would be ensured it could not be used as a stepping stone for access to the roof.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that it be agreed a defibrillator could be sited at Burwell Hall on the condition the exact siting would be agreed with the Town Council and that the charity were responsible for any injury that might result from misuse.
2. that the Town Council funded defibrillator be located at the Leys Recreation Ground

The meeting closed at 6.32pm.

Chairman