

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

**Held on Monday 6 June 2016
at 6pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall**

Present

Councillor: Cllr C K Woodward (Chairman)

Councillors: C Brown
C Holliday
T J Morris

Non-Committee Members: Dr S E Bartington
P J Dorward (sub for H W Chirgwin)

Officers: Town Clerk Facilities Manager
RFO Democratic Services Officer
Communications Officer

C257 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for their absence were received from Cllrs Chirgwin and Enright.

C258 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

C259 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2016 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman
- b) there were no matters arising from the Minutes.

C260 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public present for this item.

C261 COMMITTEE VISION AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Town Clerk advised that budget provision had been made for benches and bins, but this item was for members to consider what they wanted the Committee to achieve this year.

A member commented that the Committee was a wide ranging one and it could be difficult to establish exactly what community services were. He thought that the Committee should enhance the town and its facilities with the resources available. He added that he had been at a recent event at which other Councils were looking at Witney Town Council as an example of how to run things. The Mayor commented that having visited other Councils he was proud of Witney Town Council.

C262 **EVENTS**

a) Community Events

The Communications Officer reported that the Community Fitness Fiesta had gone well, although it had been busier in the morning. Next year an entrance fee would be charged and therefore the booking would not be eligible for the subsidised hire rate. This year's event had raised £348 for LibFest.

An upcoming event was being planned for mental health.

The Beacon Lighting events had gone well and £681 had been raised for the Meadow Park Project at the Cogges event.

The Right Royal Rumpus had been a tremendous success, with face painting and soft play being especially popular. Ten children had attended in fancy dress and the Communications Officer requested that they all be rewarded with a gift voucher of some kind. Members liked this idea and proposed a gift voucher of £20 for each child, for a shop of the child's choice. A member also thought a letter from the Town Mayor to each child would be a nice idea.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the 10 children who had attended the Right Royal Rumpus in fancy dress be awarded a £20 gift voucher for a shop of their choice;
- 2) that the Mayor writes to each child and delivers the letters.

b) Witney Music Festival

The Facilities Manager reported that the organiser had had to revise their event plan but had done so in the 11th hour. The Chairman commented that due diligence had paid off. Another member thanked the officers for their hard work on this.

Cllr Dr Bartington entered the meeting at 6.17pm during the discussion of this agenda item.

c) Heritage Day

The Communications Officer had attended a meeting at the Blanket Hall to introduce the idea of Heritage Day. They had requested that the Town Hall be open for a day (8 September) to the public. The idea was to have something to engage people and she suggested the Oxfordshire Constabulary Record Book from 1847 would be something interesting. Members proposed filling the Council Chamber table with interesting artefacts. Officer/volunteers would be on hand to ensure careful handling.

A member asked if there would be a Heritage Trail as well. Another member said that there would be a new Medieval Heritage Trail set up.

RECOMMENDED: that the Town Hall Council Chamber be opened to the public on 8 September as part of Heritage Day, and officers should select interesting artefacts to display.

d) Schools In Bloom

The Committee received and considered a report from the Facilities Administrator, which included details of the new format to this competition.

The Facilities Manager advised that this year it should take one or two days to judge as there would be one standard item from each school.

RECOMMENDED: that Cllrs Brown, Chirgwin and Holliday judge the Schools In Bloom Competition, with Cllr Dr Bartington being reserve.

C263 **FINANCIAL REPORT**

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

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted.

C264 **UPDATE ON GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

The Facilities Manager advised that the report was the same as the one that had been considered at the Amenities Committee, with additional information about the decision that the Amenities Committee had made to employ an external advisor to consider the tenders. She had also included the feedback from the consultant.

Members were unsure why this issue had been raised at the Community Services Committee. The Town Clerk and the Facilities Manager explained that the contract covered areas of responsibility across both the Community Services and Amenities Committees.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted.

C265 **CHRISTMAS LIGHTS WORKING PARTY MINUTES**

a) Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 April 2016

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Christmas Lights Working Party held on 25 April 2016. There were no matters arising.

b) Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 May 2016

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Christmas Lights Working Party held on 25 April 2016. There were no matters arising.

c) Verbal Update from the Meeting held Earlier That Evening

Cllr Brown as Chairman gave an update on the meeting that had happened earlier. Matters discussed had included sponsorship and potential sponsors, the possibility of a grotto, and the Children's Light competition. The next meeting would be arranged after the service groups had met again.

RECOMMENDED: that the minutes be noted.

C266 **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION WORKING PARTY**

Councillors received and considered minutes of the Public Transportation Working Party held on 25 April and 23 May 2016.

a) Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 April 2016

The Chairman commented how good it was to see such wonderful debate taking place. Cllr Dr Bartington thanked the Officers for their work.

b) Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 May 2016

Cllr Dr S Bartington as Chairman of the Committee gave an update of the Committee's work so far. There had been in depth work to see what the town's needs were and what services could meet those needs. Negotiation had gone on with some providers and lift sharing initiatives. Stagecoach had now de-registered its town centre service affected by the withdrawal of County Council subsidies.

Cllr Dr Bartington wanted to explore how the Town Council could run a town centre bus service. Obviously it could not afford the same degree of subsidy as offered by OCC. The Town Travel Representative had produced a 32 page report including an ideal route. The initial idea would be to run a twice weekly service.

In response to the Chairman's question, Cllr Dr Bartington advised that £10,000 would be enough to provide a service. The Chairman thought this would be a positive news story as the Town Council was trying to improve and not cut services.

Another member agreed but was mindful it was not in this year's budget. He proposed that it should be included next year. Ideally it would be nice not to have any interruptions to service. He proposed that the best route be delegated to the members of the Working Party. The Mayor should be included. The Town Clerk explained that the delegation to spend such an amount shouldn't really be delegated to a Working Party, and advised that this committee was the overarching committee to which it reported. Due to time constraints the Chairman suggested that the Working Party should report directly to Policy and Resources Committee.

The RFO asked if this meant that members wanted her to find £10,000 from the current year's budget and this was confirmed. The Town Clerk thought that it could possibly come from rolling capital/special projects budget.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1) that the minutes of the Working Parties of 22 April and 13 May 2016 are noted;
- 2) that £10,000 is taken from the current year's rolling capital/special projects budget to provide a subsidised town centre bus service, and that the determination of the best route is delegated to the members of the Public Transportation Working Party and the Mayor.

C267 **COMMUNICATIONS**

a) Marketing the App

The Communications Officer suggested that Witney TV films could be embedded in the app and also a radio button linking to Witney radio. Witney Radio had been granted an FM licence from December. Members were keen on the idea but were concerned to protect the app. They asked for a report to be presented to the next Policy and Resources Committee detailing an agreement between the Town Council and the third parties.

The Communications Officer asked the Committee if it would like to purchase 2 pop up banners at £35 each to advertise the app. Members agreed. A member suggested that the Town Council might have a banner at the Carnival to advertise the app.

b) Newsletter

The Communications Officer explained that she had planned to put the results of the recent survey into the newsletter but there were simply too many. In fact only 1 out of 4 comments related to the Town Council. This could be a good opportunity to clarify “who” does “what”. The Chairman offered to work with the Communications Officer on this.

Cllr Dr Bartington had written a piece on Heritage Day and would write something about the bus services. There could also be a small piece about the Beacon lightings and the Royal Rumpus. The Communications Officer said that there had been a suggestion from an officer that there could be a regular letter from the Mayor. The Mayor agreed to do this.

c) Press Coverage

Members noted the Communications Officer’s updated analysis on press coverage.

d) Noticeboard

The Communication Officer explained that the central noticeboard by the Woolgate Centre had been removed during the refurbishments. WODC had offered to pay for a new one but it would need to be sited elsewhere. Current plans were for it to be sited adjacent to the cycle compound outside the Town Hall, which would assist with directional signage identifying the Town hall.

A member reported that a resident had asked him for a proper notice board on the Deer park estate, and he had been trying to establish the ownership of the one in question in the neighbourhood centre. The Town Clerk suggested that a noticeboard could be put on the new ATC building. A member thought this would be welcomed and that the ATC would probably maintain it. The member would feed this back to the resident.

RECOMMENDED:

- a) that report on an agreement between Witney TV and Radio and the Town Council to protect the app be brought to the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting;

- b) that 2 pop up banners be purchased at a cost of £35 each;
- c) that the Mayor writes a regular “letter in the newsletter”;
- d) that a new noticeboard be procured or offered by WODC, and installed outside the Town Hall as suggested above;
- e) that the Town Council investigates the possibility of putting a noticeboard on the new ATC building on Deer Park.

C268 BUS SHELTERS

In the absence of Cllr Enright the Town Clerk updated members of the dialogue with Abingdon & Witney College in respect of bus shelter art projects, and reported that there was a meeting scheduled for 14 June with the college and Officers from WODC. Cllr Enright has approached WODC for funding towards this project.

The Town Clerk added that she had had a request from a resident who had asked for seating in the bus stop at Staple Hall. A member proposed that the Public Transportation Working Party should look at this once they had dealt with the bus services. Members agreed with this.

RECOMMENDED: that the Public Transportation Working Party look at the possibility of seating in the Staple Hall Bus Stop and that this is relayed to the resident who had made the request.

C269 DEFIBRILATOR

The Town Clerk informed members that the owner of Nortons and Waites Deli had fundraised for a defibrillator which he wished to site on the mobility shop/public toilets in Langdale Gate. The Town Clerk had requested permission from the property owner (WODC) on behalf of Mr Waite, however they would only agree if the Town Council agreed to take responsibility for it, by entering into a licence. A member commented that in terms of financial implications, the maintenance cost for a defibrillator was around £30 per year. Members thought that this was acceptable. They asked that the defibrillator locations were added to the app.

RECOMMENDED: that the Town Council enters into an agreement with WODC to take responsibility for a defibrillator sited on the mobility shop/public toilets in Langdale Gate and that the locations of defibrillators be put on the app.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.

Chairman