

WALLINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES

of the

Virtual TEAMS meeting of Tourism and Economic Development on 8th June 2020 at 7p.m

PRESENT

The Mayor, Councillor Lee Upcraft

Councillors Dolton, Hughes, McGregor and Sinkinson

Mrs Sue Ross of The Town Information Centre,

Mr Richard Prunier, Tourism Business and Community Manager (Voluntary)

The Town Clerk, Mrs Paula Lopez

Responsible Finance Officer: Michelle Taylor

Senior Officer in Attendance, Mrs Barbara Atkins (Minute Taker)

Officer: Tracey Collins

54. CHAIRMAN

It was Proposed by The Mayor, Seconded by Councillor Dolton and

RESOLVED: THAT Councillor Hughes is elected Chairman of the Tourism and Economic Development Committee for the 2020/2021 Municipal Year.

55. TO ADVISE THOSE IN ATTENDANCE OF THE PROTOCOL FOR THE MEETING

Councillor Hughes went through the Protocol for the meeting.

56. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Rennie and The Mayor advised that he would be leaving the meeting at 8pm for a Civic engagement. Councillors Davies and Wilder were not present.

57. ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC

There were no admissions of the public.

58. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

A Councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in our Council's Standing Orders Code of Conduct (Item 13) in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under code of conduct and his right to participate and vote on the matter (guidelines are available at the meeting and all Councillors have received a copy prior to the meeting) Information for each Member was available at the meeting.

There were no declarations of interests.

59. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – (Total 15 Minutes)

There was one member of the public present who did not wish to speak.

60. VARIANCE OF ORDER OF BUSINESS

There was no variance in order of business.

61. MINUTES

It was Proposed by Councillor McGregor, Seconded by The Mayor and

RESOLVED: THAT the Minutes of the Tourism and Economic Development Committee meeting held on the 2nd December 2019 as set out on pages 176 to 182 of the Minute Book, copies distributed to Councillors, copy attached to the minute book be signed as a correct record.

62. MATTERS OUTSTANDING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

i) **Minute 444 refers - £3,000 for Christmas Event** – Does the committee want to proceed with the following recommendation - It was Proposed by Councillor Hughes, Seconded by The Mayor, Lee Upcraft and **RECOMMENDED: THAT** the Town Council work with the Wallingford in Business Committee and put £3000 towards the event. The alternative being that the Town Council run the event themselves.

Councillor Sinkinson gave an overview as to how the above recommendation had come about. Members had a detailed and full discussion concluding that the Town Council should assist with this event financially, sourcing volunteers, offering support and advice but the Town Council did not have the resources to run the event. Members concluded their discussion stating that planning should start now regardless of Covid-19 and that Councillor Sinkinson should, along with Mr Prunier speak to the current lead organiser, Elaine Hornsby with regards to coordinating and running the Christmas event. It was stated that the event should be aimed at the residents of the town, children and the businesses.

It was Proposed by Councillor McGregor, Seconded by Councillor Dolton and

RESOLVED: THAT Wallingford Town Council has a budget of £3,000 for the Christmas Event which may be bid for. **THAT** Councillors help to support the event and assist with sourcing volunteers to run the event.

ii) **Minute 445 refers – Event Document** - Does the committee want to proceed with the following recommendation - It was Proposed by The Mayor, Lee Upcraft, Seconded by Councillor McGregor and **RECOMMENDED: THAT** the Town Council put a budget of £1000 together for a document to be used by users of the Town venues. This money will come from General Reserves.

The Mayor outlined that this recommendation was to enable the Town Council to produce a small brochure that would promote the Council's assets. Members had a discussion concluding that work on this should start immediately. It was Proposed by Councillor Hughes, Seconded by Councillor Sinkinson and

RESOLVED: THAT Wallingford Town Council has a budget of £1,000 (from General Reserves) to produce a small brochure to promote the Council's assets and venues. Mr Prunier and Councillor Sinkinson to work together to have the brochure ready for when Covid-19 lockdown finishes.

iii) **Minute 448 refers – Market Administration** – Mr Prunier to provide an update with regards to bringing the administration in house using the Rialtas system.

Mr Prunier reported that the Rialtas system could cope with Market Administration but that more work is required regarding the Pros and Cons of this against other avenues.

Action: More information required: Decision deferred. Future Agenda Item Market Administration.

63. THE TOWN INFORMATION CENTRE

(i) **Staff:** The Town Clerk reported that one member of the Town Information Centre's staff had resigned just before Covid-19 lockdown and that currently recruitment was on hold. However, an application had been received from someone who knew of the possible vacancy.

(ii) **Opening of the Town Information Centre following lockdown:** The office staff had numerous conversations regarding reopening the Centre and had concluded that due to the small area of the office along with the other tenants occupancy, the risk of the public and leaflets being contaminated it would be best not to open until the rest of the leisure industry comes out of lockdown (4th July 2020). A full risk assessment is being conducted.

(iii) **Mrs Ross of the Town Information Centre's Report is attached:** Mrs Ross outlined her report and gave an overview of the statistics. Covid-19 Lockdown had caused a 17% reduction in people coming into the Centre during quarter 4 but over the year this was a 6% reduction. Mrs Ross discussed the new merchandise that is being sourced for the Centre as well as current stock. Members discussed and Councillor Sinkinson stated that he believed a long term strategy was required and that he was happy to meet and discuss this with Mrs Ross. Councillor Hughes thanked Mrs Ross for her report.

64. MARKETS TOWN COORDINATOR (MTC)

i) **MTC's Handover Document:** The Town Clerk updated members on the work which was outstanding which included St George's Day (cancelled due to Covid-19); Stop and Chat Benches along with appropriate signage; Diary of Events; Bunting (completed now); new Town Information Centre Merchandise (complete now); Arts Working Party Strategy (to go to Full Council); River Users Survey (to be progressed?) and a Town Hall Guide. Members discussed in particular the Arts Working Party and the projects that needed progressing. It was concluded that initially the Arts Working Party should present a report to Full Council for approval in principle for the proposed strategy for using the fund. The Town Clerk advised that she was aware that Councillor Beatty had been in discussion with Councillor Lester regarding the use of some of the funds for the proposed Agatha Christie statue and it was intended that this would also be discussed. Councillor Beatty had advised that he had support from Councillor Lester and will ask for approval to use some of the Public Arts money for this project. Following which the working party should then report to the Tourism and Economic Development Committee.

ii) **The Diary of Events** – The Tourism, Business & Community Development Manager, Richard Prunier reported that following a discussion with the publisher he had ascertained that the major part of the cost was the creative and this could be reduced if a template for all editions was produced. The frequency of the publication was discussed.

1958 Hours – Here The Mayor left the meeting

Members concluded that Mr Prunier stays with the current publishers and obtains quotations for the same frequency but a more formatted issue of leaflet is produced.

65. MARKETS

i) **Auditors Report** – The Responsible Finance Officer reported that in accordance with the auditor's report she had requested that each stallholder of the Charter Market provide the Town Council with a copy of their insurance documents and a note of their contact details. Some of the traders had complied and the administrator would be following up on those that had not been received.

ii) **Young Traders' Market** – The Tourism, Business and Community Manager, Mr Prunier asked for approval to arrange a Young Traders' Market and he outlined that this was to support young entrepreneurs to incorporate market trading into their business models. The prospective market traders are aged 18 to 30 years old and have lots of exciting ideas and Mr Prunier believes there is only one other Young Traders' Market in Oxfordshire. The Markets are not in conflict with other markets and are often run at totally different times such as 4.30pm to 7pm. Members discussed in detail and it was Proposed by Councillor Dolton, Seconded by Councillor Mc Gregor and

RESOLVED: THAT Mr Prunier investigates and arranges the exciting proposal of a Young Traders' Market, both exploring and ensuring that it has a different vibe and time to the other markets currently being held in Wallingford. The aim should be to not only to engage young entrepreneurs but also to involve Wallingford's own young people as traders and customers.

66. TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE

The Town Clerk reported that the Town Council needed to comply with the following accessibility regulation by September however did not know if this deadline might be extended due to Covid-19.

Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018

The Town Clerk also reported that staff have trouble uploading documents onto the current website and that other IT providers have not been able to carry out an audit on the site as the code used is one belonging to the website provider and is not a recognised code. Richard Prunier had been assisting in trying to make the website more useable. The Town Clerk reported that there is some allocation in the budget, and this should be used to purchase a new website if felt appropriate rather than try and repair the existing one. Members had a detailed discussion and it was noted that the current website not only had to provide transparency for Council but it also had tourism and businesses to cater for too, consideration should be given to splitting this function. Members agreed that the Town Council must be compliant by September and if necessary, a new website provider should be commissioned to develop a new website.

Action: The Town Clerk to research the requirements for accessibility and to explore other providers of websites.

67. THE TOURISM, BUSINESS & COMMUNITY - TOURISM, BUSINESS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MANAGER UPDATE

- i) **Wallingford Business Forum:** Mr Prunier reported on the first Business Forum Meeting, what it is and why it deserves Council support. Mr Prunier also stated that it should have aims and ambitions and a code of conduct. Members discussed and concluded that it needed to be worthwhile, focused, report true facts and that a Council Focus Group should indicate how the Council can work with the businesses and support them. It was further stated that Mr Prunier can now arrange the next meeting and send out an agenda that focuses on how to open the town following lockdown, the relaxing of lockdown and how can the Town Council support the businesses.
- ii) **Town Signage and Presentation** – Mr Prunier showed Members a presentation of the current signage in town and the ways it could be improved such as adding walking times to the finger post destinations. Mr Prunier also stated that the town entrance signs needed to be updated and improved and that these and the river signs should link together. New signage of course would be expensive.

**2100 Hours – Here Councillor Sinkinson left the meeting.
Meeting no longer quorate**

- iii) Communication output from Council; focussing on digital – Covered in Minute 66 above.

- iv) The Town Centre; widening the debate – Defer until after the next Business Forum Meeting

68. FUTURE EVENTS

Members to discuss – Deferred

69. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Market Administration

Website

Signage

The Town Centre; widening the debate

Meeting ended at 2105 Hours as it was no longer quorate