

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON 7th NOVEMBER 2016 AT 7.00PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE

PRESENT: Cllr A Kendall (Chairman), Cllr R Claydon, Cllr T Luker, Cllr A Wilkinson, Mr M Clarke (Under-the-Edge Arts and CALGS), Mr G Phillips (Wotton Arts Association), Mrs C Sweet (Dementia Awareness), Mrs J Walshe (Heritage Centre & Town Hall Teas), District Councillor Catherine Braun
In Attendance: Deputy Clerk Mrs Y Milsom No members of the public

834. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Canon R Axford, Cllr P Barton, Cllr P Smith, Mrs T McLusky, Mrs J Tebb

835. Declarations of Interest from Councillors – Mr A Wilkinson – Chamber of Trade

836. Public Forum – None present

837. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 12th September 2016

Proposed by Cllr Claydon, seconded by Mrs Walshe, that the Minutes of the meeting held on 12th September 2016 be approved as a correct record. Agreed in favour.

District Councillor Braun entered the meeting and was invited to join the Committee at the table

838. Community Action Plan

It had been agreed at the September meeting that themes 3 and 9 would be reviewed at this meeting.

a) Theme 3 – Tourism

Jeff and Janet Walshe had attended a meeting in Tewkesbury of managers of Tourist Information Centres, which had been useful in terms of networking. They learned of a cycle hire scheme in Oxfordshire, whereby cycles are stored in various locations and hired via a mobile phone app, which has been very successful and may be extended into other areas. A Tourism Network meeting was hosted by the Heritage Centre at the Civic Centre on 26th October 2016 and was well-attended. This network is looking at ways to attract visitors, as much of the existing branding and publicity for the Cotswolds does not extend beyond Nailsworth/Tetbury. Their Strategy document was discussed at length. The name, which will identify the area, has still not been decided although it was agreed that it should include Cotswold and Severn. The next meeting would be held in January 2017, but a smaller steering group would meet in the interim to work on strategy. Any events to be publicised should be sent to Leah Wellings at Dursley Town Council. A letter would shortly be sent to parish & town councils in the area requesting information in order to compile a parish by parish inventory of potential unique selling points relating to the area. This group believes that this area has a lot to offer visitors and that it is, at present, under-represented as a tourist destination. One of the key things they would like to progress is links to existing websites. Although the Group's aspirations will take some time to progress it is likely that they will, at some point, approach Councils for funding, so this should be noted for budget deliberations.

The Chamber of Trade is producing another map leaflet next year, hoping to print 25,000. They will be applying to Town Council for a grant towards this. The leaflet has been very successful and distribution to appropriate outlets had been improved. It was noted that the Heritage Centre footfall had nearly doubled, including a number of visitors from afar as a direct result of the leaflet. The Chamber of Trade is also working on improvements to the website.

It was noted that Stroud District Council is looking at cycling infrastructure in the area.

Mr G Phillips entered the meeting

It was confirmed that the cycle racks at Rope Walk were now installed as per item 10 of Theme 3.

Regarding item 2, encouraging more residents to provide bed and breakfast, it was noted that a number of

visitors to the One Stop Shop had expressed that they would have liked to stay in Wotton but could not find accommodation. Members agreed that there were more places available than advertised, including Air B&B which listed 6 properties in the town; and the lists supplied by the Heritage Centre and One Stop Shop. The Heritage Centre has a number of Bed & Breakfast properties on their list and it was agreed that the One Stop Shop would liaise with them to compare and update as required. It was noted that some potential businesses may be deterred by the costs and requirements of official registration as a Bed and Breakfast. The Clerk would check regulation requirements for Bed and Breakfast proprietors. It was suggested that tourist publications covering the Cotswolds should be asked to give this area due consideration. It was noted that the poster at Newark Park had not been displayed. The Park was now closed for the winter season and Mr Phillips agreed to pursue this when it re-opened.

b) Theme 9 – Promote and Encourage a Welcoming and Inclusive Community

Item 5 (Dementia Friendly town) would be considered as a separate item later in the meeting. It was noted that the Clubs & Groups Fair would be held next year on 20/5/2017, this time at the Civic Centre rather than the Town Hall. Item 1 – a query was raised concerning the Town Council grants policy and whether it should be more widely publicised to organisations that applications needed to be received before annual budget deliberations, with payment in the following financial year. It was suggested that this could be publicised on the Facebook page, although it was noted that there was a danger of raising expectations as the grants budget was not large. It was noted that a Community Building document had been produced by GRCC and it was requested that this could be added to the Town Council website. It was further suggested that the list of Clubs and Organisations produced by the One Stop Shop and Heritage Centre should be added to the website [NB: Already included – link as follows: <http://wotton-under-edge.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Club-and-Organisation-List-August-2016.pdf>]. It was noted that the standard and cleanliness of community buildings in the town compared very favourably with those in other areas.

c) It was agreed to review Themes 6 and 7 at the next meeting.

839. Farmers Market – A report had been distributed which showed the views of the Farmers Market organiser, who considered that the smaller Farmers Markets were in decline possibly due to the number of farm shops around and also the pull of the much larger markets. He is doubtful that more stalls could be attracted here, having seen the same problem across most of the small markets in the area. It was agreed that offering free stalls was not the way forward. Members agreed that a much bigger, open air market should be introduced if a satisfactory space could be found in the Town Centre. It was agreed to defer this until the outcome of the anticipated car park planning application was known. It was further agreed to continue the existing Farmers Market in its present form in the interim, but that new stalls could be offered the upstairs, less profitable pitches for half price. This would be referred to Town Council.

840. Budget

It was suggested that the budget for town tidying should be increased. This was noted but would not be part of the Town Regeneration budget heading. It was noted that Stroud District Council would not yet confirm whether they would run their usual town/parish spring cleaning campaign next year. It was noted that there was £800 remaining in this year's budget which had not yet been allocated, although it was likely that the Walking Festival would require some funding, and that this would be ongoing as it was hoped that the Festival would become an annual event. The Clerk advised that grant applications should be submitted urgently to be included for consideration at this year's budget meeting. It was agreed to request a budget for Town Regeneration of £5500 for the Financial Year 2017/2018.

841. Dementia Friendly Town

To achieve the status of Dementia Friendly Town it was necessary to register with the Dementia Action Alliance. Registration involved completing a form to include background, history, aims and members and Mrs Sweet offered to organise this. It was agreed that the Town Regeneration Partnership would act as the steering group for registration as it included representatives from various groups in the town. The website

would be updated with the group's accomplishments and other organisations could join if they wish, completing a form with their individual aims. The Actions were suggested as follows:

- i) Hold Dementia Friends sessions for Town Council and Chamber of Trade. Sessions had already been held with Wotton Ladies Group and the Day Centre. Mrs Sweet would suggest a few dates, for evenings if possible, for inclusion on a future Council agenda.
 - ii) Spread awareness of the Dementia Action Alliance to members of the community.
 - iii) Advertise that we are dementia-friendly and advise on the website how to obtain more information.
- It was agreed that Cllr Kendall would assist Mrs Sweet with the Dementia Action Alliance application.

842. Progress Reports

a) Walking Festival – the programme of walks was almost complete and included some interesting ideas. It would take place on 5th, 6th and 7th May 2017 to overlap with the end of the Arts Festival, hopefully for mutual benefit. Quotes were being requested for logo, publicity materials, insurance etc. A possibility of free insurance cover for persons trained to lead health walks was being explored. A Facebook page and website will be set up.

b) Rope Walk Toilets Area – The work was now almost complete. The toilet doors would shortly be painted and the Town Clerk was meeting an artist with a view to adding a mural. Members commented that it looked very good and seemed well-used. District Councillor Braun had taken David Hagg and Carlos Novoth of Stroud District Council to view Rope Walk toilets and they had agreed that refurbishment and improved cleaning was needed. They had also been impressed with the improvements to the area outside of the toilets.

843. Christmas Festivities

Mrs Walshe had visited traders to inform them of arrangements for the Christmas shop window competition. She had also collected five vouchers of £10 kindly donated by local businesses for the Highly Commended prizes. The Chamber of Trade was facilitating provision of Christmas trees for traders, at a cost of £25 with the stipulation that the lights must be maintained throughout the Christmas period. These will hopefully be in place sometime during the last week in November. The Town Council is once again giving a grant of £10 per tree. The Christmas event will take place on 3rd December from 4-7pm and will include stalls, funfair rides, fancy dress, a bake-off competition and much more.

844. Reports from Partners

a) Under-the-Edge Arts - A number of events were planned during December, including a Super Saturday of events to tie in with the Christmas event. They will have a large Christmas tree with lights this year, donated by the Rorys Wells charity and Matara, which will be erected at the Chipping end of Rope Walk in time for the Christmas event. This month sees the Edge Factor talent show; there will be a ceilidh in the New Year; the Spring into Summer marathon on 1st April; a Spring Gardens, Art and Sculpture trail during the Arts Festival on 30 April and 1st May. For this, they are working on co-promotion with the Wotton Secret Gardens Trail team, whose event is on 28th May 2017. With one exception all of the gardens/venues are different for the two events. A landscape architect is devising a scheme to improve the appearance of the Rope Walk end of the Chipping Hall. They will shortly liaise with the Town Trust to extend the lease. Financially they made a loss of £3000 this financial year so they are planning fundraising and new schemes for 2017 to remedy this. The Blues Festival was very successful and received a lot of positive feedback. It involved a great deal of work for the organisers and it is possible that a new group will be set up to organise this in the future. They continue to develop community outreach and will be pleased to help develop an arts and crafts strategy as outlined in the Community Plan. They are pleased to note that the lease of the shop window in Church Street has been extended.

b) Town Hall Teas – Over £9000 has been raised over the 2016 season, all slots for 2017 are booked and there is also a reserve list. The A-Boards need some attention, mainly the effects of damp on the posters and some of the Perspex needs replacing.

c) Heritage Centre – The ‘Wotton on the map’ exhibition has been very successful. Throughout the summer months they have had an average of 600 visitors per month. New cabinets are arriving shortly, which will provide better access to exhibits for children and disabled visitors. They are involved in, and have contributed funding towards, a project started by the Youth Liaison Group to film and record older residents of Wotton. A grant towards the equipment was provided by Stroud District Council to the Youth Liaison Group and young people were being sought to undertake the project as part of the grant requirements. The Heritage Centre is having a stall at the Charities Fair and will be open for the Christmas event, plus will have a stall in Market Street. The Calendar is on sale and the shop now sells small items directly related to Wotton. They will promote community events, with window displays, posters, ticket sales. They will shortly have a leaflet printed; and they are liaising with the British School regarding visits to the Centre and hope to expand this to all schools in the area. They have attended a sorting of Gazette photographic negatives and brought back three boxes for evaluation. They will return in the New Year for another sort. This is a massive task involving many thousands of negatives relating to the town.

District Councillor Braun left the meeting

d) Arts Association – The New Year’s Eve concert will take place in St Mary’s at 6pm as usual, tickets available from It Takes Two. Both the sculpture trail and the Walking Festival have been organised during the festival period and it is good to work in conjunction with other town organisations. St George’s Day will be celebrated on 22/4/2017. Next year’s festival will run from 26th April to 7th May and will include the band on the hill, Historical Society Sixties Fashion event and much more.

845. Any Other Brief Reports – There were no other reports.

846. Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on 6th February 2017. The Chairman thanked members for attending and wished them a Merry Christmas.

This completed the business of the Town Regeneration Partnership.

Signed:

Dated:

Chairman of the Town Regeneration Partnership