

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON 22ND SEPTEMBER 2014 AT 7.30PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE

PRESENT: Councillor June Cordwell (Chairman), Mrs H Brewer (Christmas Event), Councillor R Claydon (Mayor), Councillor Clair Galbraith, Mrs T McLusky (Beaumont-le-Roger Society), Mrs D Moss (Churches Together), Mrs J Tebb (Chamber of Trade/Wotton in Bloom), Mrs J Walshe (Heritage Centre, Town Hall Teas, Cinema), Councillor A Wilkinson

IN ATTENDANCE: Deputy Clerk Mrs Y Milsom

735. Election of Chairman

Cllr Claydon, as Town Mayor, took the Chair for this item and nominated Cllr June Cordwell to undertake the role of Chairman for this committee. There were no further nominations. Proposed by Mrs Walshe, seconded by Cllr Wilkinson and agreed all in favour to elect Cllr Cordwell as Chairman. Cllr Cordwell then took the Chair.

736. Apologies

Reverend Axford, Mr G Phillips, Mr V Jotcham, Mrs Pam Smith, Cllr P Smith, Reverend Wharin

737. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 12th May 2014

Proposed by Mrs Walshe, seconded by Cllr Claydon, that the minutes of the meeting held on 12th May 2014 be approved as a correct record. Agreed all in favour.

738. Remit of Committee

The Remit of Committee for this Partnership, as approved by Town Council in June 2014, was noted.

739. Community Plan

A draft questionnaire was circulated to members for their comments. It was intended that the final version of the questionnaire would be circulated to each household in the Town, and drop-off points would be organised for their return after completion. It was suggested that the Wotton Directory could both promote and deliver it. Suggestions for amendments to the questions were noted and it was hoped that the final version would be approved by Town Council at its October meeting. Progressing the Community Plan would also require input from the organisations represented at this committee and members were asked to provide plans for their organisations to cover the next few years. Beaumont-le-Roger Society had decided that their input should concentrate on what affects them. Their specific need is for a hall with a suitably spacious kitchen and decent cooker to hire for social events in the town. This was noted.

740. Weeding/Tidying Around the Town

Members were asked to consider the idea of employing a person during the summer of 2015 to carry out weeding and tidying tasks around the town. It had emerged that Gloucestershire County Council would no longer spray or remove weeds unless they were affecting a structure for which they are responsible. The result was that weeds were in evidence around all of the streets in Wotton, generating understandable complaints from residents about the poor appearance of the town. There is no capacity within the current staffing levels of the Town Council to attend to this work. Members were enthusiastic about the idea of employing someone to undertake such work and, after some discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Wilkinson, seconded by Mrs Tebb, to recommend this to Town Council. Agreed all in favour.

741. Mediaeval Market

Mrs Walshe gave details of a proposed Mediaeval Market to be held in the Chipping on Sunday 14th June 2015 to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta. This would be both a

civic event in the town and a fund-raiser for the Heritage Centre and would include stalls, entertainment, competitions and so on. Market Street and the Chipping would need to be closed and the car park would also need to be closed for the day. Assistance with road closure and insurance costs was needed and, after some discussion on how this could be approached, it was suggested that a grant application should be made to the Town Council to cover these costs. The Clerk would forward the Grant Application form and details of an insurance company specialising in this field to Mrs Walshe. A written request to the Town Trust would be required in respect of use of the Chipping and, if agreed in principle, further permission from Stroud District Council would be sought as to closure of the car park for the day.

742. In Our Towns Grant

The grant of £1000 from this project still has not been received. The Clerk was asked to contact either Claire Snow or Pippa Stroud for further information and to request an extension on the time limit for use of the grant given the delay in its distribution.

743. Budget for 2015/2016

A sum of £1721 was remaining in the budget for the financial year 2014/2015 after all anticipated expenditure had been deducted. This did not include the £10 grants to traders for putting up Christmas trees as were given last year. It was suggested that an amount of £500 should be budgeted for the grants, providing their being approved by Town Council at the October meeting. Next year's budget would also need to allow for employing a person to weed and tidy the town as discussed earlier. These costs were not yet known. Proposed by Cllr Wilkinson, seconded by Mrs Tebb, that a budget of £7000 should be requested for the next financial year. Agreed in favour.

744. Christmas Event

The plans for an event similar to the one last year were progressing well and the organisers were trying to make it as self-funding as possible. They requested that the Chamber of Trade take on organising the Christmas trees for the street and this was agreed by Cllr Wilkinson in his capacity as President of the Chamber of Trade. Insurance and the road closure are now organised.

745. Reports from Partners

a) The Chamber of Trade is doing well and now has 109 members. A film of Wotton is being made, a new leaflet produced and a tourist information website is being set up. It is hoped to produce a new leaflet again next year, and for it to be professionally distributed as this is key to its success. Parking is under review. A Christmas dinner/dance is being held at the Royal Oak; David Baird from the Heritage Centre is giving a talk on the First World War on 11th November; and a champagne and canapes evening is being held at Newark Park.

b) Wotton in Bloom has been very successful this year and there have been a lot of compliments about the floral displays. As the hanging baskets are still looking beautiful they will stay up until the end of the month, an extension on what had originally been planned.

c) Churches Together – the Holiday at Home scheme was reduced from two days to one this year due to numbers being down. Members agreed that this was a growing trend in the town, with several clubs for older people having to close and it was suggested that the entertainment provided in sheltered accommodation may account for some of this. However, there were many older people still living in their own homes and it was acknowledged that their non-participation was a communications problem rather than a lack of facilities. The Village Agent was suggested as a good point of contact.

Cllr A Wilkinson left the meeting

It was also noted that, although there was a Carers Group in the Town, it was for carers only and not for carers and their charges, which could be limiting for some people. It was agreed that questions should be included in the Community Plan questionnaire with regard to these issues. Other activities being organised by Churches Together include their Annual Prayer Meeting on 3rd November; the Living Crib in association with the Christmas event; and the distribution of a Christmas card to households detailing the services over the Christmas period.

d) Town Hall Teas – the new A-boards have been very popular and the Partnership was thanked for providing them. 2015 is fully booked, with a reserve list of 11. Mrs Walshe is producing a list of guidelines to be given out in the One Stop Shop to the groups when they collect the Town Hall key.

e) The cinema transition is still progressing through its initial year, with three Directors from the former voluntary organisation overseeing the business. There is still a role for volunteers but this is very much reduced. The National Theatre Live shows are proving very popular. The final decision on the future of the cinema will take place next March, but whatever is decided, the assets will always belong to the town.

f) Heritage Centre – They have applied for accreditation and should know by November whether or not they have been successful. Footfall has increased, helped in particular by being open on Sunday afternoons when Town Hall Teas takes place. They plan to add ‘Museum’ to their name as some people have been unclear about what they do. They have a new display screen; many of their old photographs have been restored and saved on discs and can be shown on the new screen; and Facebook and Twitter have greatly increased interest in the Centre. Their biggest challenge is trying to raise the funds for running costs, which are £6500 per annum and for which grants are not available. Research has shown that many Town Councils give significant funding to their town museums/Heritage Centres. The Wotton Calendar will be produced as usual but will be raising funds for the Heritage Centre this year rather than for the cinema. They have produced a new flyer; they have applied for Gift Aid; they are holding a talk by Mark Horton in October in the Town Hall; and they are supported by TSB Bank as part of the bank’s charitable work remit.

g) Members were reminded that Wotton in Bloom will be having a stall at the Charities Fair in November.

h) Beaumont-le-Roger – They are taking part in the Christmas event, sharing the Town Hall with the Rotary Club. They would also like to thank Wotton in Bloom for putting on such a lovely display of hanging baskets.

746. Any Other Reports

None

747. Dates for Future Meetings

Further meetings were arranged for 10th November 2014; 9th February 2015; and 11th May 2015.

The Chairman thanked members for attending.

This completed the business of the Town Regeneration Partnership Committee.

Signed:

Dated:

Chairman of the Town Regeneration Partnership Committee