

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON 9TH FEBRUARY 2015 AT 7.30PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE

PRESENT: Cllr J Cordwell (Chairman), Canon R Axford (St Mary's Church), Cllr R Claydon, Cllr K Collins, Cllr C Galbraith, Mrs T McLusky (Beaumont-le-Roger Society), Mrs D Moss (Churches Together), Mrs P Smith (Fairtrade Town Group), Mrs J Tebb (Chamber of Trade), Mrs J Walshe (Heritage Centre/Town Hall Teas)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Y Milsom (Deputy Clerk)

758. Apologies: Mr G Phillips (Wotton Arts Association)

759. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 10th November 2014

Proposed by Mrs Walshe, seconded by Cllr Galbraith, that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th November 2014 be approved as a correct record. Agreed in favour.

760. Community Plan

a) 267 questionnaires had been completed and returned out of the 3000 issued. The results were now being fed into a spreadsheet for analysis and would be published in due course. Members asked about the proposal to create a car park behind the Fire Station and were informed that no planning application had yet been received.

b) Members agreed to submit their organisations' long-term plans so that these could be fed into the Community Plan update. The Chamber of Trade would pass on to its members the offer for a small number of traders to use the Tabernacle Auction Rooms car park for long-stay parking on non-auction days.

761. Budget

This Committee's budget for 2015/16 was confirmed as being £8000, to include £1000 for a new website and an allowance for weeding and tidying in the town. Members considered the website to be an important tool for communicating with people of the town.

762. Youth Liaison Group

The Chairman reported on youth provision in the town. Currently there are three different providers funded through different sources: Young Gloucestershire on Tuesday evenings, funded by the Town Council through SOSYP; Youth and Community Services on a Thursday evening, funded by Youth Liaison; and the Youth Forum funded by Stroud District Council. The three year SOSYP contract expires in August and the Town Council must now decide whether to continue provision of youth services through SOSYP or whether to contract directly. Youth Liaison Group bids for money from various sources to raise funds for youth provision and also holds fund-raising events such as the forthcoming sponsored walk and, in the Autumn, a curry evening.

763. Open Spaces Report

A report from the Town Clerk was noted on work to open spaces in the town. Members were very pleased with the progress. Further work in St Mary's churchyard was scheduled to be carried out on 17th February by the Cotswold Wardens, in addition to the volunteer work party planned for the spring. It was noted that polythene and polystyrene from the building site at Potters Pond had accumulated on Marchesi Walk, plus the yellow barriers had been thrown into the stream. The Deputy Clerk would report this.

764. Christmas Event

Unfortunately, the organisers of the Christmas event were not able to send a representative to this meeting. Members asked that their thanks be recorded and passed on to the organisers for a very enjoyable day, with a good turnout and atmosphere. It had also provided an opportunity for the Town Council to engage with the public.

765. Mediaeval Market

Plans for the Mediaeval Market were progressing. Permission from the Town Trust to use the Chipping Car Park had been requested and would be considered at the Trust meeting on 16th February. Permission would also need to be sought from Stroud District Council, who manage the car park. It was noted that the new lease for the car park between the Town Trust and the District Council, which includes provision for occasional use of the Chipping for special events, was not yet in place. However, there is a precedent for such use. The Clerk would write to Stroud District Council once permission from the Town Trust had been granted. The event is to be held on a Sunday, although the actual anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta is the Monday. A copy of the Magna Carta will be on display at the Heritage Centre. The Clerk would contact Mrs Walshe regarding the decision of the Town Trust as soon as it is known.

766. In Our Towns Grants

Members were reminded that grants are still available towards events in the town from the In Our Towns funding.

767. Reports from Partners

a) Churches Together – The Christmas card detailing church services over the festive period was, as usual, delivered to households in the town. The Living Crib was held as part of the Christmas Event this year and seemed to work well in its new format. Photographs of the Living Crib were put up on Facebook and this proved to be very popular. A week of prayer for Christian Unity was held from 18th to 25th January and was well-attended. The Lent Talks are starting on 25th February at 7.30pm in the Baptist Church and some interesting and high profile speakers would be discussing various themes on the subject of ‘Looking at the Kingdom of God’. On Good Friday the Walk of Witness would start at 9.30am and the sunrise service would take place as usual on Easter Sunday.

b) St Mary’s Church – Christingle had been very successful, with around £1352 raised for the Children’s Society. It has proved so successful that it may be necessary to put on two services in the future. The New Year’s Eve concert was a sell-out and around 350 people attended the recent Mozart/Haydn concert. The church is in use in some capacity each day and schemes are being considered for re-ordering the building to enable it to serve the community in a more versatile way. It is the biggest internal space in the community. Drawings and plans are available to view on Facebook and a wide range of feedback has been received.

c) Wotton in Bloom – They are meeting on 25th February to discuss arrangements for the forthcoming season. The flowers will be the same as last year as they were very successful. Fund-raising is ongoing.

d) Chamber of Trade – The proposal for a new car park is being developed. The Chamber is in the process of developing a new leaflet. Last year’s leaflet had been very successful and had brought a lot of people into the town. Currently there are few empty shops and it had been announced recently that Renishaw are going to renovate the old Stoke’s Bakery shop, which is all encouraging news.

e) Cinema – The handover to the new proprietors was due to take place on 31st March 2015. The business was currently breaking even. The Clerk was asked to include an item on the next meeting agenda for the cinema as further news would then be available.

f) Town Hall Teas – All the slots for this year are booked. Bookings for next year will start at the beginning of March.

g) Heritage Centre – Footfall has increased significantly. A lot of fund-raising events are being held to help cover the running costs and the Wotton Calendar raised over £550. A £7500 Heritage Lottery Fund Award is being spent on items such as the overhead projector, large wall screen, lighting improvements, a touch screen and printer for the extensive photograph collection, plus other IT equipment. Other grants have been received to upgrade the display cabinets, heating system and to improve the Centre's frontage. Other grants are being pursued, including one to provide entertainment at the Mediaeval Market. In March there will be a display on the Cotswold Collotype, followed by a Magna Carta display. They have almost 700 followers on Facebook, which is an excellent way to distribute information on a regular basis.

h) Fairtrade Town – Fair Trade Fortnight runs from 23rd February to 8th March. Two businesses in the town have been put forward for Fair Trade awards.

i) Holy Cross Church - Holy Cross Church now holds mass at 5.30pm on Saturdays rather than on Sundays.

j) Beaumont-le-Roger Society – This year's visit to France will include 32 people on the coach plus a further 19 people travelling by car.

k) Arts Association – A report was noted detailing the plans for the forthcoming 45th Arts Festival, including various concerts, talks and cinema event. The St George's Day celebrations would take place on 25th April. They would like permission to hang some small banners from the Christmas Tree holders in the town and it was confirmed that they should contact the individual shop owners for this.

l) Treasure Trails – These commercially-produced maps are a fun way to explore towns by following the various clues and are available for £6.99. A map for Wotton-under-Edge is available. Information was passed to the Heritage Centre.

m) Mobiloo – details were circulated of a mobile unit which could be hired to provide disabled toilet facilities at events.

n) Sports Foundation – The skate park should be finished by next week. They are now looking to raise £140,000 to provide a safe path down to the sports site. They would like the speed limit on New Road to be reviewed in view of the likely increase in pedestrians on the narrow footway.

o) Gloucestershire Market Towns Forum – There are two European rural funding streams available to assist businesses, employment and agricultural enterprises. Wotton is classed as rural and so would be eligible for such funding.

768. Any Other Reports

Invitations will shortly be sent from the Heritage Centre for the launch of its new projector and screen.

This completed the business of the Town Regeneration Partnership Committee

Signed:

Dated:

Chairman of the Town Regeneration Partnership Committee