

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON 5TH FEBRUARY 2018 AT 7.00PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE



PRESENT: Cllr A Wilkinson (Chairman), Cllr P Barton, Cllr R Claydon, Cllr T Luker, Cllr N Pinnegar, Cllr C Young, Mr M Clarke (UTEA), Mrs T McLusky (Beaumont-le-Roger Society), Mrs C Sweet (Community Dementia Link), Mrs J Tebb (Secret Gardens Trail); In Attendance: Deputy Clerk Mrs Y Milsom

886. Apologies

Apologies were received from Reverend Canon R Axford, Mr M Tucker, Mrs J Walshe, Mr G Phillips, Ms S Hunt, Cllr R Hale, Cllr P Smith

887. Declarations of Interest/Dispensations – None

888. Co-Option

It was agreed to co-opt Rob Garlicki, representing the Blues Festival; and Sue Hunt, representing Wotton in Bloom; although neither was present at the meeting. It was further agreed that Mrs J Tebb should continue as a co-opted member of the committee but as the representative of the Secret Garden Trail. Proposed by Cllr Luker, seconded by Mrs Sweet and agreed all in favour.

889. Public Forum – No public present

890. Minutes of the Town Regeneration Partnership Meeting Held on 14th August 2017

Proposed by Cllr Wilkinson, seconded by Cllr Barton that the Minutes of the Town Regeneration Partnership meeting held on 14th August 2017 be approved as a correct record. Agreed all in favour.

891. Community Action Plan

a) Culture Strategy – a constructive meeting of interested parties had been held in October 2017 and the conclusions arising from that meeting will form the essence of the Culture Strategy. Briefly, these are: Wotton has a strong, diverse cultural scene; a regular forum to exchange ideas is needed; an improved way of distributing information on events is needed; investigate ways to fill identified gaps and how to fund them; a need to promote Wotton as a culture/arts hub.

The Culture Strategy was not yet completed but the Wotton Notice Board Facebook page had been set up as a result of the initial meeting and was proving very successful. There were also positive signs of greater collaboration, including the first sculpture show which would coincide with the Secret Gardens Trail in late May. Further plans included turning the courtyard area at the Arts Centre into a garden.

b) Dementia Friendly Town – The Community Action Plan includes an aspiration to become a Dementia Friendly Town. Volunteers were needed to form a working group to progress the various actions required to achieve this. Mr M Clarke and Mrs T McLusky agreed to join the working group and Cllr P Barton is considering joining. It was suggested that Mr M Tucker of the Chamber of Trade should also be approached.

Mrs Sweet left the meeting

c) Other Action Priorities – Members discussed at length the pressing need for improvements at Old Town Toilets. Councillors spoke of the very high costs involved with either replacing or refurbishing the existing building and how a survey carried out by several councillors had shown the facility was little used. This was disputed and it was suggested that public toilets are an essential amenity for a market town. The Town Council was investigating various options in an effort to find an affordable solution. It was suggested that the Stroud Market Towns funding in the next agenda item might be a possible source for some of the funding; another suggestion was business sponsorship. Some towns were operating a scheme by which businesses agree to open up their toilet facilities to the public and this was another potential option. It was agreed that Council should prioritize seeking a solution to this issue.

892. Stroud Market Towns Project Funding - This will offer total match-funding of £50,000 each year for the next 4 years across the 6 market towns in the Stroud District for regeneration projects. The criteria were not yet known but possibilities would be explored once details were received.

893. Clubs & Groups Fair – Following the success of the first Clubs & Groups Fair two years ago, a second event was to be held at the Civic Centre on 14th April 2018. Invitations have been sent out and bookings are now being taken.

894. Wotton Market – It was noted that membership of NABMA expires at the end of March 2018, after which the Town Council will not have access to their advice. The Market Working Group had mostly agreed that siting a new market would be problematic without more car parking and had therefore deferred the necessary research pending the result of the Symn Lane planning application which would provide additional parking. However, some Working Group members disagreed with this assessment and it was decided to arrange another meeting of the Working Group to further explore possible sites and viability. The Chairman would email members of the Working Group to arrange a meeting as soon as possible.

895. Britain in Bloom – Wotton in Bloom had registered an interest in entering Britain in Bloom 2018, which will be judged in mid-July. They will designate an area of central Wotton and concentrate their efforts accordingly. The areas will need to look clean and well cared for and they hope the Town Council will take on and manage the street cleaning that will be needed in early July. They also wish to add 2 or 3 new flower tubs to the raised pavement area in Old Town and would like the Town Council to consider sponsorship of the tubs and the flowers to fill them. It was noted that the Town Council already contributed £2000 each year to Wotton in Bloom for watering of the hanging baskets. It was also noted that, mostly due to the demise of the Farmers Market, there was £1500 unspent in the Town Regeneration budget for this Financial Year. Research had been carried out on how much funding other local councils provided for floral displays and the results would be passed to the Chamber of Trade for discussion with the Town Clerk in due course. It was noted that the precept had seen a considerable increase this year due to repeated parish election costs and this would have a bearing on funding available for other projects. Costs were requested from Wotton in Bloom which would then go forward to Town Council for decision.

Mrs Tebb left the meeting

896. Updates

- a) It was noted that a sign indicating “shops/toilets” is now in place near the Arts Centre.
- b) The Town Council had agreed to provide painting materials to renovate the litter bins in the town centre. Stroud District Council hope to engage Leyhill prisoners to carry out the work but it may be necessary to arrange volunteers for the task.
- c) It was noted that the funding bid for the Cotswold Gateways Project, which includes Wotton, has been submitted, with a response expected in March 2018.

897. Rentable Studio Space – A suitable workspace was being sought to bring together art and craft artisans, somewhere for carving, welding and other creative activities. The main requirement is for somewhere waterproof and large enough to accommodate the activities and equipment. A place within the town would be preferred.

898. Reports from Partners

a) **CALGS** – Mr Clarke requested that CALGS representation be removed from this committee as the Coombe allotments were no longer in operation.

b) **Under The Edge Arts** – Trading has been very tough and they expect to lose £5-6,000 at the end of this Financial Year. Audiences are a little lower but the main problem has been the lack of success with grant applications. Securing grants and funding were priorities for the forthcoming year. The Spring into Summer event programme was nearly ready and the event would take place on 24/3/2018 from 6am to midnight. They are collaborating with the Arts Association to hold an event during the Arts Festival week; and with the Walking Festival to include an Art Walk.

Mrs Tebb returned to the meeting

A sculpture event is planned and their big fund-raiser, the Shakespeare event, will be held at Warners Court in Charfield in July.

c) Beaumont-le-Roger – The exchange was visiting Wotton on 18th May 2018. Publicity via the Wotton Notice Board on Facebook had been very successful, with a lot more children involved this year. Mrs McLusky has resigned from her position as secretary and, although she was still involved with the Society, it was uncertain whether she would continue as representative. A new representative would be considered for co-option if applicable.

d) Wotton Secret Gardens Trail – Plans were in place and it will be advertised on the Wotton Notice Board. There will be teas and a plants stall as before. It is usually a good event and brings in lots of visitors.

e) Stroud District Council Tourism publicity – Wotton had not been included in a video and leaflet commissioned by the District Council showcasing tourism in the Stroud District. This had been highlighted to Stroud District Council and Wotton will now be included in future publicity.

f) Heritage Centre – a written report had been circulated, concerning grants received for equipment to assist with the conservation work; updates of the Society's policies, necessary for applying for re-accreditation; the next exhibition on 'The Good Old Days of Education in Wotton'; continuing progress on digitising the museum's collections; plans to photograph the most appropriate objects held so that images can be displayed in the reception area.

g) Tourism – a written report had been circulated, concerning various tourism meetings attended, including the Stroud Councils Tourism Task Force, the Dursley Tourism Network and Cotswold Tourist Information managers. Disappointment had been registered in the lack of mention of Wotton in the Stroud District Tourism video, and Wotton being missed off a new tourism map. Statistics showed a reduction in visitors to the Heritage Centre this year and this trend had been mirrored across the Cotswolds.

h) Recreational Trust – a written report had been circulated, detailing the affiliated groups, changes to committee membership, grants awarded, and the review and signing of the Licence and Agreement documents between the Recreational Trust and the Bowls Club.

i) Town Hall Teas – a written report had been circulated. All the slots for 2018 were taken. Booking for the 2019 slots will be open on 1st March 2018. The Teas groups have expressed their gratitude to the Town Council for allowing free use of the Town Hall.

j) Wotton Arts Association – a written report had been circulated, detailing the successful New Year's Eve concert; celebration of St George's Day scheduled for 21st April; Ali Vowles agreeing to become patron of the Association and to open this year's festival on 27th April; and information on the programme of events for this year's Festival, which includes concerts, poetry, film, exhibitions, talks, Turning the Tables and a Teetotal Pub Crawl to find the sites of hostelryes past and present.

899. Any Other Brief Reports

a) Concern was noted regarding the number of empty shops in the town and the need for landlords to encourage new tenants.

b) The Chamber of Trade hope to produce a new town leaflet this year.

900. Next Meeting Date - The next meeting would be held on 14th May 2018.

This completed the business of the Town Regeneration Partnership Committee.

Signed:

Dated:

Chairman of the Town Regeneration Partnership