

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE TOWN COUNCIL REGENERATION PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE HELD ON 9th JULY 2018 AT 7.00PM IN THE CIVIC CENTRE



PRESENT: Cllr A Wilkinson (Chairman), Cllr P Smith, Cllr P Barton, Cllr T Luker, Cllr R Claydon, Cllr N Pinnegar, Cllr J Turner, Mrs J Walshe (Heritage Centre), Ms S Hunt (Wotton in Bloom), Mr M Tucker (Chamber of Trade), Mr G Phillips (Wotton Arts Festival) Mr R Garlicki (Wotton Blues Festival), Mrs T McLusky (Beaumont-le-Roger Society) In Attendance: Information Officer Mrs J Wyatt

916. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr M Clarke

917. Election of Chairman

Cllr Wilkinson was nominated as Chairman by Cllr Smith, seconded by Mrs Hunt, all in favour. Cllr Wilkinson was therefore duly elected as Chairman.

918. Declarations of Interest/Dispensations – None

919. Public Forum – No public present.

920. Minutes of the Town Regeneration Partnership Meeting Held on 14th May 2018

Proposed by Cllr Barton, seconded by Mrs Hunt that the Minutes of the Town Regeneration Partnership meeting held on 14th May 2018 be approved as a correct record. Agreed - all in favour.

921. Community Action Plan

a) Culture Strategy – Mr Clarke was not present at the meeting – no report received.

b) Dementia Friendly Town – Mr Tucker reported that he had attended a Dementia Awareness Week event to find out more about the Dementia Friendly Town plans and spoken to members at the Chamber of Trade AGM about inviting Mrs Sweet to talk to them about what could be done around the town and shops to help us become more dementia friendly. Mrs Hunt reported that the Memory Group Community Allotment had been highlighted as part of the Britain in Bloom entry.

c) Old Town Toilets – Cllr Smith advised that quotes for work to the toilets had been received from various organisations but were not considered accurate. Town Council was considering seeking quotes from architects with a view to drawing up a scheme so that accurate quotes could be obtained. Cllr Claydon advised that Town Council would appreciate the views of this meeting on what type of WC should be provided. Previous discussions had focussed on the possible provision of a unisex WC with disabled access as being the most cost effective to install and maintain. Cllr Luker favoured the provision of separate ladies and men's toilets and queried whether a structural engineer could be appointed to survey the existing structure and look at installing a pitched roof. This could be included in the architect's brief. Mrs Walshe pointed out that the toilets had considerable use by bus users and that a unisex toilet might be not be sufficient. Cllr Claydon referred to the usage surveys completed which indicated that a unisex toilet would be adequate.

The meeting concluded that a note should be sent to Town Council recommending that a structural survey be completed in order to obtain a view on whether the building should be improved or replaced. The brief should include a schedule for provision of a single unisex WC with disabled access. All in favour.

d) Community Action Plan – Cllr Claydon had updated the Community Action Plan following the last meeting and this was circulated to members. It was noted that relevant items for discussion were listed on the Agenda.

922. Cotswold Edge and Severn Vale Tourism Network – Mrs Walshe reported that the last planned meeting had been postponed. Wotton is to host the next meeting at the Swan Hotel in September.

923. Stroud District Council Tourism Meeting

a) Tourism Meeting - Mr Tucker reported that SDC had requested the meeting to establish what Wotton's requirements were in respect of tourism and attracting more visitors to the town. The omission of Wotton from the tourism map and other media produced by SDC had been discussed. Mrs Walshe queried the value of the holding the meeting as there are no longer any Tourism Officers at SDC to implement any initiatives.

b) Brown tourism signage - Mr Tucker pointed out that there is no signage to Wotton from the M5 either north or southbound. The Council had looked at applying for signage some years ago but it had not been possible. It was felt that an application should be positively explored. The Chamber of Trade is inviting Highways England to talk with them and extended an invitation to Council members to attend. A discussion took place about the Joint Strategic Planning Strategy. Highways England may need to review the design of Junction 14 due to increased traffic volume caused by new housing developments. This would also be an opportunity to review signage provision.

Cllr Wilkinson requested that Mr Tucker should circulate invites to councillors for the meeting with Highways England once the details are finalised.

924. Stroud Market Towns Project – Projects identified by Council for the Stroud Market Towns Project Funding were noted. The Town Clerk and Cllr Smith are due to meet SDC on 1st August to progress the applications.

a) Coach parking – Mrs Walshe commented that the Heritage Centre receives numerous enquiries from coach companies wishing to visit Wotton but no parking is currently available so the coach trips go elsewhere.

b) Old Town toilets – already discussed under Agenda Item 6c)

c) Greenway Route - funding is sought to progress the next phase of the project.

925. Town Map Boards and Leaflets – Mr Tucker reported that he had looked into the provision of new leaflets with a view to starting production in September in readiness for next year. Some updating and redesign is needed. In the meantime the existing map has been reprinted and copies are available. It was noted that the town map boards had been cleaned prior to the Britain in Bloom judging. Cllr Claydon advised that the only information needing to be updated is the Heritage Centre opening times and suggested that an insert be added to the maps whilst a more comprehensive update is considered. The provision of new boards is to be considered further at the next Town Regeneration meeting.

Mrs Walshe will provide the Council with the current information so that the insert can be produced.

926. Car parking charges – Cllr Smith reported that a paper has been produced to be considered at the next Town Council meeting. This will form the Town Council's response to SDC on their proposal to introduce parking charges. Mrs Walshe advised the meeting that on a recent holiday to Wales she had to pay for parking at every car park. Mrs Walshe expressed the view that shoppers go elsewhere because spaces are taken up by residents. Introducing parking charges would free up more spaces for shoppers. Additionally, the Town Council could consider buying the Symn Lane site and provide parking without housing, then recover the costs through parking charges. Cllr Smith raised the possibility of having an initial period of free parking after which a charge would be made. He pointed out that Wotton has a large number of volunteers who could be lost if they have to pay for parking. The cost of buying the land would still be prohibitive. The Council will discuss the issue on Monday and people are welcome to come and give their views as it is a public meeting. Cllr Barton referred to a government website which encourages car parking charges but emphasises the need to take local needs and the proximity of competing towns into account. Mrs Hunt pointed out that it is unfortunate that SDC are treating all towns the same when some have more to lose than others. A discussion followed about how members of the public could influence the decision by responding to the SDC consultation.

927. Britain in Bloom – Mrs Hunt advised that the Britain in Bloom judging had now taken place. The two clean up events had been a great success with over 50 people taking part. The town had benefited from over 1000 hours of voluntary work during preparations for the competition. Plants had to be replaced in

the War Memorial tubs because due to a misunderstanding they hadn't been watered, but these had now been included in the Wotton in Bloom watering schedule. They would be watered until the hanging baskets are taken down but then responsibility would be passed back to the Town Council. A request was made that Mrs Hunt should advise the Town Council when the watering stops. An invitation had been received to attend the award ceremony in September. There are photographs of the town's floral displays on a number of national websites and visitors are known to have come to Wotton to see the flowers. Cllr Wilkinson thanked Mrs Hunt for all the Wotton in Bloom group's efforts and congratulated the group on their success.

928. Updates

- a) Litter bins** – It was noted that the Wotton Lions had repainted all the litter bins and bollards.
- b) Cotswolds Gateways Project** – Cllr Claydon advised the meeting that work to implement the project would include the installation of new notice boards in the town. Route markers will need to be installed on the new walking and cycling routes and some path repairs will need to be completed. The Cotswold Wardens are expected to be involved in the work.
- c) Cotswolds AONB Hare Trail** – Mrs Walshe reported that the Heritage Centre had a hare and two leverets. Visitors following the Trail had been coming to Wotton to look for the hares. Mrs Walshe wished to emphasise Renishaw's role in sponsoring the initiative.

929. Reports from Partners

- a) Blues Festival** – Mr Garlicki reported that good progress is being made in planning for the festival with everything on track. All the acts and venues are booked, sponsors confirmed and programme nearing completion. Wristbands will be used to measure footfall. Many traders will be opening for the event. It was noted that market stall and road closures are not planned for this year as there had not been much response from local businesses and groups. Cafes will be provided with a list of musicians and can invite them to perform if they wish. Mrs Walshe advised that the Heritage Centre would be pleased to offer the space adjacent to the Centre for a performance. She requested that publicity material be provided to the Heritage Centre in plenty of time for it to be displayed. Cllr Turner will check if flyers can be displayed in the Co-op.
- b) Beaumont-le-Roger Society** – Mrs McLusky advised that a 17 year old boy is being hosted in Wotton for two weeks this summer.
- c) Chamber of Trade** – Mr Tucker reported that the car parking arrangement at the Wotton Auction Rooms were operating well. Ten businesses are using the car park regularly and there had been no issues on auction days.
- d) Wotton Arts Festival** – Mr Phillips reported that the AGM is due to take place on 11th October. The group will be seeking support for their 50th anniversary festival in 2020.
- e) Town Hall Teas** – The programme is running well this year with over £6,000 raised by groups so far. All slots for next year are already allocated with a reserve list in place.
- f) Heritage Centre** – Visitor numbers have been similar to last year at over 6,000. Shop sales are up on last year. New document display systems and a map chest are in place and the old furniture have been auctioned, raising some small amounts of money for the Centre. Volunteers continue their work on the database with a view to enabling members of the public to access the information online in the future. Redecoration of the back office and research room is planned. Several KLB students have completed successful work experience programmes at the Centre. Town Hall Teas and the calendar continue to be the Centres only source of regular funding. Curator Mr Baird also gives talks and guided tours. Mr and Mrs Walshe continue to attend the Cotswold Tourist Information Office Managers meeting with Wotton due to host the next meeting.

930. Any Other Brief Reports

No reports were given.

931. Any other business

Mr Tucker referred to the subgroup looking at re-establishing a market and asked if council representatives could meet with the NABMA in order to gain some benefit from its membership before it expires. Cllr Smith advised that the payment to the NABMA had been fine for cancellation rather than a renewal but the current membership status should be checked.

931. Next Meeting Dates - The next meeting will be held on 12th November 2018.

This completed the business of the Town Regeneration Partnership Committee.

Signed:

Dated:

Chairman of the Town Regeneration Partnership