

Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the meeting of the COMMUNITY AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber at St Richard's House, Victoria Square, Droitwich Spa on Monday 2 March 2020 at 6.26 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs C Bowden (Chairman)
Councillor EJ Bowden
Councillor DM Craigie
Councillor Mrs K Fellows
Councillor NR Griffiths
Councillor RJ Morris (Vice Chairman)
Councillor WT Moy (Ex- officio)
Councillor CM Murray

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors RG Beale, GR Brookes, Mrs JM Chaudry, G Duffy, J Grady, RP Hopkins and AM Sinton.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors A Humphries & AH Laird

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Mr Alan Davey represented as a private individual and advised that he wished to observe the discussion for Agenda Item 4 – Mayflower 400 and specifically the replica ghost ship project update. This request was acknowledged by the Chairman.

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296. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor RJ Morris declared a non –pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 4 – Mayflower 400 Event in his capacity as Wychavon District Council portfolio holder and that WDC are match funding the capital for the Event.

Councillor GR Brookes declared a non- pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 4- Mayflower 400 Event& the “ghost ship” update having supported with a County Council Divisional monies contribution and also with regard to association with the Droitwich Arts Network.

Councillor G Duffy declared a non- pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 4- Mayflower 400 Event & the “ghost ship” update in his capacity as the Town Council nominated representative for Droitwich Arts Network.

298. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY & AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 JANUARY 2020

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community & Amenities Committee held on 13 January 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

299. MAYFLOWER 400-TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE

Mayflower 400 Event – To receive a full update on the arrangements for the Community Event taking place on 4 July 2020. *[supporting press release & interim programme information*

attached with agenda]. The Town Clerk made reference to the information provided and advised that further media releases will follow as the programme and plans for the event now evolve. The first press release was issued on 14 February 2020. Elected Members were invited to attend the monthly Steering Group Meetings facilitated by Mrs Caroline Davis from OPUS Events if they desire to so. The next Steering Group meeting takes place on Thursday 19 March at 10.30am in the Council Chamber at St Richards House.

To reference the current position regarding the request for £3,000 funding from Droitwich Arts Network towards their project to build and exhibit a quarter scale replica Mayflower “Ghost” Ship. The Town Clerk explained that as previously reported Mr Alan Davey had represented to Council Officers in September 2019 a proposal put forward on behalf of Droitwich Arts Network to control and build a quarter scale replica Mayflower ship to be used as a component exhibit at the forthcoming Mayflower 400 Event on 4th July. From September 2019 various meetings had taken place with Mr Davey and representatives of the Droitwich Arts Network. The Town Council have supported the proposal in principle and committed to a funding contribution of up to £3000.00, subject to all statutory governance being in place. The governance includes suitable insurance cover, a full project costing and contingency plan, risk assessment and method statements. In addition Mrs Caroline Davis from OPUS had stipulated the professional guidance that a Structural Engineer’s validation and sign off for the exhibit will be required prior to any display in the public realm. The Town Clerk affirmed that these conditions were essential for safe delivery of the project and were minimum industry wide requirements, rather than conditions imposed by the Town Council itself. Regrettably the governance had not been achieved to date as fit for purpose despite several interventions. Other concerns have emerged whereby the proposal differs considerably to the actual constructed replica so far. A key concern is the decision by the Group to change from the original modular wood build replica to a stainless steel welded skeletal hull construction manufactured by a local commercial fabricator, without any prior reference to the Town Council. This aspect itself has caused a huge impact on the projected financial scope of the project. Finally the Town Clerk updated that as at 5 March 2020 the Treasurer of Droitwich Arts Network has notified by email that the project had no longer any affiliation with their Group and had been effectively misrepresented to the Town Council. The Chairman invited Mr Davey to speak at the meeting. With best intention Mr Davey was disappointed and very frustrated. The Town Clerk tried to respond on the concerns expressed by Mr Davey without success. With best intention the Town Clerk advised that he could only reiterate the Town Council’s position on this project based on the discussions and information provided so far. As matters now stood the Town Council cannot support or be associated with the project any further in its present guise. The outstanding matters are very well documented and further progress can only be made following satisfactory achievement of the governance factors and coverage of the financial shortfall to make the project realistically viable. The Town Clerk also expressed concerns towards potential; reputational risks, whereby an approach had been made to a local business as part of the build without referral, consent or any licence from the Town Council.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

300. BUS SHELTERS PROVISION

Bus Shelters Provision – To update that various enquiries have been received from constituents during January and February this year to request consideration for additional shelters and relocation of some of the existing structures. The Town Council owns and maintains approximately 25 shelters throughout the Town and makes fiscal provision for essential repairs and maintenance as a component of the annual estimates, budget setting and precept. The current annual Community & Amenities cost centre provision for street infrastructure, which

includes bus shelters is £3000.00. This level is maintained for the forthcoming Municipal Year 2020/2021. The value was slightly exceeded during the current Municipal Year mainly due to incidents of vandalism and vehicle collision damage. Regrettably for all cases last year there were no opportunities for Civil Recovery for any of the repair costs incurred. The approximate cost of a single replacement shelter ranges from £3k to £5k+. The emerging costs and the ongoing requests may necessitate further informed consideration of options when making the next Municipal Year (2021/2022) estimates for precept setting. These considerations commence in late November/ December this year *[for information]*. Councillor GR Brookes suggested that the Town Crest could be incorporated into the manufacture of any newly commissioned bus shelters going forwards.

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

301. VE DAY CELEBRATIONS ARRANGEMENTS

VE Day Celebration Arrangements- Friday 8th May 2020. Pursuant to Minute Reference 235 of the Meeting of the Community and Amenities Committee which took place on 13 January 2020 to receive a further update on the emerging arrangements.

The Town Clerk reported on behalf of Councillor A Humphries that tentative arrangements were progressing for a suitable anniversary celebration to be held as a component of the St Richards Festival on Friday 8th May 2020 in Vines Park. The proposal has been put forward to position a marquee for the Royal British Legion – Droitwich Spa Branch to host a reception and oversee a formal flag raising ceremony in order to mark the anniversary in a befitting way. There would also be the opportunity for the Royal British Legion to showcase within the public realm and local community for their causes and charity work. It was further reported that consideration for the cost of the marquee hire and provision can be made from the remaining unallocated funds in the current Municipal Year Community & Amenities Grants monies, subject to receipt & underwriting of a completed application and the relevant supporting details. Further details on the emerging plans are anticipated from the Royal British Legion – Droitwich Spa Branch and through the media in due course.

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

302. COPCUT PARK FOOTPATHS PHASED IMPROVEMENTS

The Town Clerk updated that replacement of a further section of the internal footpath network within Copcut Park. As in 2019/2020 this is part of the ongoing phased review to accord with the regular maintenance responsibilities and mitigate against any claims arising from slips, trips and fall incidents. The park is used regularly by many people and is a busy thoroughfare between Celvestune Way, Worcester Road and the Copcut Rise developments. The phasing is reviewed on a risk basis to start each Municipal Year, conducive towards replacing the worst potholed and worn out sealed footpaths with more adaptable compacted Cotswold Stone. This ensures a better solution for longevity, routine maintenance and protects against tree route ingress damage. A section adjacent the large pedestrian footbridge leading to Colford Walk in the Worcester Road section of the park has been identified as needing most urgent attention. Fiscal provision has been made within the budget setting for 2020/2021 and the suggested approach is similar to that in spring 2019. To this effect a nominated Town Councillor should accompany DSTC officers at a suitably convenient time to verify the

proposed works prior to further arrangements being taken forward. Councillor RJ Morris advised that he was happy to support at a convenient time to suit

RESOLVED That the information was noted. That the Town Clerk liaise with Councillor RJ Morris to arrange a time to inspect the footpaths & to prioritise the next section of footpath repairs.

303. WEST PROJECT & BEYOND- PEDESTRIAN UNDERPASS REFURBISHMENT PROPOSALS

West Project and Beyond – Pedestrian underpasses refurbishment proposals. Pursuant to Minute reference 215 of the Full Meeting of Council which took place on 16 December 2019 and resolved to financially contribute to the Wychavon District Council lead project from unallocated New Homes Bonus funds. To receive a further progress update from the Town Clerk following a meeting with key stakeholders scheduled for 27 February.

The Town Clerk updated that the meeting had taken place on 27 February with Mr Peter Rose (Director – Tiller Research) , David Manning (Community Programmes Manager – Strategy & Communications ,Wychavon District Council) and Caroline Treadwell (Arts Officer, Wychavon District Council). The timelines and action plans to complete the 7 underpasses including the three designated by the Town Council are now being formalised after provisional discussion. Pivotal to the project is the requirement to set up a Steering Committee for all stakeholders to be represented. Technical aspects including design, materials, artwork, community group involvement and the procurement and commissioning of artists are now to be taken forward. There is a funding shortfall attributed to upgrade of the underpasses lighting to LED, which is the desired and most practical approach to be coordinated within the main renovation and improvements works. The additional funding is hoped to be sourced through various other contributions including possibly the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner, County Council Divisional Funding and DSTC Community Grants. More information and media releases will follow in due course as the project proceeds further. There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

304. HERITAGE MANAGER VACANCY

Heritage Manager Vacancy – The Town Clerk reported that following advertisement of the vacancy for two weeks during February 2020 applications have been short listed for interview on 3 March 2020. The interview panel comprises Councillor AM Sinton (Leader), Councillor A Humphries (Chairman of Resources Committee) and Mrs Sarah Davies – Heritage Manager in role, supported by the Town Clerk. Interest in the vacancy has been mixed and there are three good candidates short listed for the interview day *[for information]*.

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

305. BAND CONCERTS 2020

Band Concerts 2020 - The 2020 Schedule of concerts is anticipated to be received during April and will be circulated in due course. Tentative arrangements are in course to collaborate with the Air Training Corps local branch to support with the arrangements for setting out and gathering the chairs. Arrangements are also being progressed to fit a suitable voltage reducer to enable safe access to the power supply for the band stand conducive to using a small PA

system for announcements. It is hoped to confirm all these arrangements during April prior to the first Sunday concerts in May *[for information]*.

Councillor RJ Morris mentioned that it would be nice to include the High School Band, Worcestershire Youth Orchestra Musicians and the Salvation Army Band as additions to the Summer Programme. The Town Clerk noted the request and confirmed that enquiries would be taken forward to investigate options. It was explained that the Town Council arrangements were coordinated each year by a producer for the scheduling of the various bands.

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

306. COMMUNITY HALL UPKEEP

Community Hall Upkeep – The Town Clerk confirmed the following works which require attention and have some fiscal provision allocated for within the new Municipal Year budget, commencing 1st April 2020. These matters are considered important to maintain the fit for purpose operation of the Centre, over and above daily caretaker tasks. The work has been identified and prioritised from the routine inspections. There were no questions arising *[for information]*.

- Some renovation of the John Corbett Room external window frames to preserve structural integrity and for longevity. One frame will require complete replacement.
- Some internal painting and plaster work in the John Corbett Room.
- Varnishing of the worn floor surface in the Main Hall. Estimates are to be sourced to gauge options available and financial scope.
- Repair of roller blinds for large windows in the Main Hall
- Consideration towards replacing the standard internal tube lighting to more energy efficient LED components for both large halls, suggested by Councillor GR Brookes.

RESOLVED That the information was noted.

The meeting concluded at 7.05 pm

Chairman of Committee
08 June 2020

Chairman of Council
20 April 2020