

Droitwich Spa Town Council

MINUTES of the meeting of the COMMUNITY AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE held at the Community Hall on Monday 26th September 2022 at 8.24 pm.
Meeting deferred from original scheduled date of 12th September 2022.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs C Bowden (Chairman)
Councillor EJ Bowden
Councillor DM Craigie
Councillor NR Griffiths
Councillor AH Laird
Councillor RJ Morris (Vice Chairman)
Councillor CM Murray
Councillor GA Duffy (Ex officio)

NON-MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors RG Beale, GR Brookes, Mrs J Chaudry, RP Hopkins, A Humphries, DJ Morris, WT Moy & AM Sinton.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors, Mrs K Fellows & J Grady.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were none received

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125. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor RJ Morris declared a non – pecuniary interest in agenda item 4 for the Grants recommendations for the reason that both applicants are known to him. Councillor Morris is the Chairman of the Grants Appraisal Panel but was not able to attend the last meeting on the 5th September 2022 when the two applications were first considered.

126. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY & AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 4TH JULY 2022

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Community & Amenities Committee held on 4 July 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

127. GRANTS APPRAISAL PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS (5TH September 2022).

To receive and consider the recommendations of the Grants Appraisal Committee meeting held on 5 September 2022 [*schedule attached with agenda*]. To resolve the following offer details.
There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED 1. To approve the grant award offer of £750.00 for the Westlands Residents Association (Community Garden project for outdoor furniture) including the conditional guarantee required to cover replacement of the asset in the event of damage from fire, theft or vandalism- as an alternative to a suitable insurance policy not being provided by the Group.

2. No award offer at this time for the Droitwich First Responders application submitted by Mr James Macdonald for the reasons outlined on the presented schedule and explained by the Town Clerk.

128. QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE EVENT & CELEBRATION- 4TH JUNE 2022.

Queen's Platinum Jubilee Event & Celebrations 4th June 2022. To receive the overview report attached with the agenda for the Event and Project. A separate summary together with attendance evidence has been collated and submitted to the Arts Council online in order to fulfil the requirements which are conditional from the performing arts aspect funding [*report attached with agenda for information*]. There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

129. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY ARRANGEMENTS 2022

Remembrance Sunday arrangements 2022. A meeting took place of the Steering Committee for the Poppy Appeal and Remembrance Sunday on 11 September and the Town Clerk attended. It is anticipated that the arrangements will proceed as normal this year and the date is Sunday 13th November 2022. Following requests the poppy lights illumination and soldier silhouette for the frontage of St Richards House will be in place again throughout November. There will also be some seasonal colour winter hanging baskets at St Richards House to complement the lights and the War Memorial planters on Victoria Square will be specially prepared for the Remembrance period. There were no questions arising [*for information*].

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

130. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND SWITCH- ON 2022

Christmas Lights & Switch on 2022. The date for this year is Saturday 26th November and it is anticipated that the usual format for the event arrangements will take place. Programme details will be finalised and ready for publicity during October. It is anticipated that the Switch on Ceremony will take place slightly later this year around 6pm in order to schedule the Ising Choir performance arrangements. There were no questions arising [*for information*].

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

131. HERITAGE CENTRE ACTIVITIES PROGRAMME

Heritage Centre Activities Programme. The attached summary of organised activities is being finalised and made ready for publicity for the period through the autumn to Christmas & New Year. There were no questions arising [*details attached with agenda for information*].

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

132. HERITAGE APP PROJECT – COMMUNITY LEGACY

Heritage App Project – Further meetings of the Steering Group took place with the Service Provider on 20th & 27th July to update on progress. As recently reported the redesigned format, graphics and presentation of the App are impressive. These include DDA compliant features. The videos and content have been realigned to ensure free running and eradicate any distortion, stalling or freeze framing. The map is now 2 dimensional and the points of interest markers embedded with a clearer definition. Data draw issues have been addressed through transfer of the videos to a You Tube format rather than being integral within the App itself. The remote access to the Heritage Trail from any standalone location is another enhanced feature.

The current position is that the App is being relaunched in both App Stores (I Phone and Android) which is complex and requires further testing in order to ensure all bugs and defects are identified and addressed before a full public relaunch. The Service Provider anticipates this should be completed through September to then enable the relaunch shortly afterwards (details to follow). This will conclude and deliver on the Community Legacy funded aspect of the Heritage App project (Phase One – Deliverable Working App). The public launch will be

aligned with the new version Town Mini Guide & Pocket Map which is being developed simultaneously in house. This will ensure both printed and digital media are made available together for the Heritage offering and promotions, maintaining an access for all approach.

Phase Two as part of the working Heritage allocated budget will then work on further enhancements for the App over a six month timescale including additional points of interest, links to active travel (e.g real time bus routes, mapping & timetable content), further content uploaded from the Heritage archive & collections and a working study & feedback programme for users with visual impairment (linked to Hereford College and RNIB) *[for information]*.

An update for the Full Launch will be provided shortly.

Councillor A Humphries read out the following statement.

Questions for Council Meetings

C&A Committee

The legislation we are now relying on is Equalities Act 2010, not the DDA 1995.

1. Why were the videos integral to the app initially? It's common knowledge that having these sorts of things built in whether that's app or website will increase the load times and in the case of the app make the app size be much larger than it should be
2. Has this and other changes increased the costs?
3. Why wasn't the app properly tested in the first instance, which has led to such extensive changes? Was the brief for the project not fully realised when submitted?
4. Is this now just another example of able-bodied people telling disabled people what is right and good for them rather than engaging with them especially as there had been a direct offer to do exactly this.

The Town Clerk acknowledged the points made and reaffirmed the general update outlined with the agenda. The App project had been tested and subject to due diligence & testing from inception and throughout. The Heritage Team had worked closely with both Service Providers and the other wider stakeholders (Regional Digital Marketing and WDC). The video formatting, App design features and functionality are specialist technical aspects dealt with by the Professional Service Providers. Cllr Humphries comments and feedback have been passed on. The changes to the final design had not cost any additional money and the funding drawn down from the WDC Community Legacy Award is to plan and correct to the application applied for and granted. WDC are fully appraised and it is expected to sign off the CLG project post launch and final testing/snagging. The Equalities Act 2010 considerations included within the App for launch will be clarified with the Service Provider and the specification details will be relayed. The anticipated Phase two of the Heritage Project will include additional costed considerations which have been mentioned previously- for example the proposed collaboration with Hereford College and RNIB.

RESOLVED That the information be noted.

133. VISIT DROITWICH SPA.COM USER DATA

Visit Droitwich Spa User Data- To receive the attached summary of user data and statistics which help determine the take up and interest levels for the Tourism Website and linked social media.

The data analysis shows that online enquiries and visitor numbers continues to grow and are very positive. By way of example the period in early June 2022 leading up to the Queens Platinum Jubilee Weekend confirms that over 20,000 specific enquiry searches were registered through the website for events *[report attached with agenda for information]*.

The Town Clerk updated that the Heritage Team were working with Regional Digital Marketing to develop a showcase feature for the tourism website. This involves virtual tours

of features and attractions which can be accessed remotely. The proposals are to include Heritage aspects for example a panoramic overview of the Town Centre looking from the vantage point of St Augustine's Church Tower at Dodderhill, general tours of the different Church buildings and some Business & Commerce presence. It was updated that Droitwich Golf Club had recently joined the project to feature a tour of the Club and Facilities. The showcase online tours are very popular across all dynamics of users and the example of the existing Google based digital tour of Lido Park was mentioned as an example and aspiration – having currently achieved over half a million online viewers. Further details for the On line Showcase project will follow shortly. There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

134. ARBOREAL SURVEY AND CATEGORY ONE RECOMMENDED WORKS

Arboreal Survey and Category One Recommended Works- As previously updated the four year cycle arboreal survey was arranged for summer 2022. The precaution was taken slightly earlier than due because of the frequency of storms in the winter 2021/2022 and the impact on Town Council land holdings and mature trees. The Survey was completed on 22 June 2022 and the accompanying report categorised various recommendations as follows,

1. Urgent – as soon as practical
 2. Urgent- within 12 months
 3. Long Term Maintenance – within 36 months
- M. Monitor

All Category 1 recommendations have been actioned on 5th August 2022. The remaining recommended action points will be incorporated within the ongoing maintenance cycles and regime. There were no questions arising [*for information*].

RESOLVED That the information be noted

136. SUPPORT FOR UKRAINIAN COMMUNITY

Support for Ukrainian Community - Following recent updates a meeting took place on Thursday 18 August between Officers and Droitwich CVS. A welcome event hosting Ukrainian families is being organised through the Heritage Centre in September and will include organised activities for children, refreshments and a guided Town Walk. A second event is planned for October and a wider invitation to participate in the programme of Half Term Scholl Holiday activities being planned. It is hoped that these informal gatherings will also provide an opportunity for the Ukrainian visitors to practice their English language skills, away from schools and workplace environments.

The attached information sheet from CVS relates to support connections for the Ukrainian Community. The form is for wider networking and circulation to help encourage individuals, groups and organisations within Droitwich Spa to register towards assisting with the local support and relief efforts. [*CVS form attached with agenda for information & networking*]
There were no questions arising.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

137. DEPUTY TOWN CLERK (COMMUNITY & AMENITIES VACANCY)

Deputy Town Clerk – Community & Amenities Vacancy. The vacancy has been posted throughout August and closed as of Friday 2nd September. Three applications have been received and these are being considered for interview. It is anticipated that interviews will take place on 28th September 2022. There were no questions arising [*for information*].

RESOLVED That the information be noted

138. FLOODING IN QUEEN STREET

Flooding in Queen Street – Following recent reports of further flooding issues affecting business premises in Queen Street an approach has been made through Worcestershire County Council Highways to help interpret the issues and options towards a solution. By way of support Councillor GR Brookes has arranged for a levels survey by the WCC Highways Department. This will check the soffits and invert of both WCC Highways and Severn Trent Water assets against the lowest points. In turn this will help determine the capacity and operational scope of the gullies, pipes and culverts in the event of flood surge conditions and any potential impact on the adjacent premises. It is anticipated that further information following the assessment work will be available to update at the next scheduled Community & Amenities Meeting (7th November 2022). There were no questions arising *[for information]*.

RESOLVED That the information be noted

The meeting concluded at 20.42

Chairman of Committee
7 November 2022

Chairman of Council
12 December 2022