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Minutes of the Community Resources Committee held on Thursday 10th September 2020 at 6.30pm

Present:

Councillor Tandy (Chair)

Councillor Molloy

Councillor Seex

Councillor Turner

Councillor Dr Walsh KStJ

The Mayor, Councillor Chace was also in attendance.

2020/2021

This meeting is available to view using the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0yLnseFIKuo&feature=youtu.be>

20. Virtual Meeting Protocol and Use of Mobile Devices

The Chair opened the meeting and explained how it would be conducted and the protocol that would be followed, including how any break in the proceedings due to technical difficulties would be managed.

21. Apologies

There were apologies from Councillor Blanchard-Cooper.

22. Declarations of Interest

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or personal and/or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the Agenda. The standing declarations were noted, and no other declarations were made at this point.

23. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd July 2020 (previously circulated) were confirmed as a true record and it was noted that arrangements would be made for these to be signed at a later date.

24. Chair's Report and Urgent Items

24.1. Remembrance Sunday and Christmas Lights Switch on events

- 24.1.1.** The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which outlined options to deliver Covid safe events for the annual Remembrance Sunday and Christmas Lights Switch on. The Town Clerk explained that the very recent change to the social distancing rules had shown how changeable these regulations could be and that decisions were needed if these events were to proceed albeit in different formats.
- 24.1.2.** Regarding the Remembrance Sunday commemorative event, no formal decision on the national act of Remembrance held at the Cenotaph had been made. It was therefore proposed that the traditional parade, gathering at the War Memorial and Church Service be replaced by a scaled back wreath laying and virtual church service. This was an important 'must attend' event for the local community and the many uniformed groups in Town. This was sad and whilst every effort would be made to ensure each group could send representatives, the plans would need to follow the social distancing guidelines. , Acknowledging the fundraising difficulties faced by the Poppy Appeal who would have to abandon street collections, it was also proposed that the Council make a Grant to the Poppy Appeal on behalf of the Town.
- 24.1.3.** The Christmas illuminations would still be installed in time for switching on Friday 20th November. However, the public switch on event, which was hugely popular, would be cancelled. Officers were working on plans that would still deliver much of the usual activities geared towards promoting the High Street and supporting local traders but in a different way, maximising the internet and use of social media. Members wished to explore the idea of a Christmas themed Drive in Cinema. Earlier investigations had highlighted that there were complex issues associated with this. Officers however would investigate this and other ideas further and report back to the Committee. Members acknowledged the need to adopt a pragmatic approach to both events and in the interests of public safety considered both proposals sensible. It was therefore **Resolved** that:

- 1. The revised event programme to commemorate Remembrance Sunday, be approved and authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to make the final decision on the format of the event, including the Health and Safety.**
- 2. A Grant of £1,000 to the Poppy Appeal on behalf of the people of Littlehampton be approved.**
- 3. The cancellation of the live Christmas lights switch on public event be approved and that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to agree and progress additional elements to the festive events package**
- 4. The financial implications be noted.**

25. Public Forum

- 25.1.** In accordance with the Remote Meetings Protocol introduced by the Town Council, members of the public who wished to address the Council or any of its Committees during a remote meeting should have emailed their representations one clear working day before the meeting. There was one:

Mr Chester asked:

- 25.2.** In light of the Littlehampton Gazette front page last week that there may be no Littlehampton Ferry service at all until a COVID19 vaccine is found has any money been paid or is agreed to be paid to the operators of the Ferry for the year 20/21. I recently noticed the Ferry service across the Thames between Twickenham and Ham in Richmond Upon Thames using the same kind of boat was running and doing well? Could not at least the ferry be hired out for River tours for household bubbles?

Response:

- 25.3.** In thanking Mr Chester for his questions about the Ferry, it was explained that although responsibility for the ferry falls within the remit of the Town Council's Policy & Finance Committee, the Assistant Town Clerk was happy to respond tonight. Firstly, no money had been paid to the Ferry operators in 2020 in line with the Service Funding Agreement. The Town Council had secured the mooring on the East Bank so that it could be used in the early part of the 2021 season. Questions about the use of the Ferry outside of it running as a ferry should be directed to the operators. The Town Council had always permitted the use of the boat for other trips to make the service more financially viable. The Assistant Town Clerk was sure that the Council would have no problems with using the East Bank mooring for such use.

26. Officer's Reports

26.1. Museum Periodic Report

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which set out the focus of work in the Museum since June and also showed the positive impact of the new website and social media activity on public engagement. Highlighting the significant progress made with the Collections Documentation Project, the Assistant Town Clerk explained the work that was about to begin on the Museum Forward Plan. This was the next stage of the Action Plan which envisaged work to embed the new procedures developed during the Project and a staffing review alongside the continuation of the work to record the Collection. With this in mind, research into additional funding sources had highlighted an opportunity for grant finding that could support this work. Members were very pleased with the progress that had been made with the Project in recent months and supportive of the way forward. They also

supported the Curator's recommendations regarding the list of proposed acquisitions, and it was therefore **Resolved** that:

1. **The Museum update, progress with the Collections Documentation Project and updated Action Plan be noted.**
2. **The recommended acquisitions set out in Appendix B of items be approved.**
3. **The proposal to progress the Artfund Respond and Reimagine grant be approved.**
4. **The contents of the report be otherwise noted.**

26.2. Community Resources Report

26.2.1. Members had before them a report (previously circulated) and received a presentation with an update on progress with the key projects, contracts, and services within the remit of the Committee. The report also provided further insight into the impact of the pandemic on local voluntary groups and sought a decision on the allotment rental fees for 2022 which needed to be set a year in advance.

26.2.2. Regarding the refurbishment of the Rosemead Park play area, having appointed the contractor in July, the Committee had also agreed that the scheme be extended to widen the appeal of the of the Park. A standalone basketball wall, larger trampoline and more inclusive and sensory equipment had therefore been added to the scheme. A discussion ensued regarding the revised design. Councillor Turner expressed her extreme disappointment that the revised scheme did not have a sensory path. She maintained that this was an important provision and urged reconsideration of this aspect of the scheme. This view was reinforced by several Members and a discussion ensued on how this could be achieved. It was observed that whilst the current budget and timetable left very little room for change, it might be possible to improve the scheme at a later date should additional funding come forward. A number of options were discussed around changes to the surface and altering the route of the path. It was therefore **Resolved** that:

Options for a sensory pathway as supplement to the scheme be explored with the contractor and reported to the Committee at the next meeting.

26.2.3. Regarding the allotment rental fees for 2022, Members considered the rising costs of running the sites and the inflationary pressure on the Town Council's budget. It was **Resolved** that:

- 1. The plot rental fees for 2022 be increased by 2.5% from £7.40 to £7.59 per rod.**
- 2. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.**

26.3. Service Funding Agreements (SFA's) and Holiday Activity Support (HAS) Grants Update

Councillor Tandy declared a personal interest as Treasurer/ Secretary of the Keystone Centre Management Committee as they had an SFA.

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which provided an update on the progress with the delivery of the HAS Grants and SFAs during Covid-19. The pandemic had disrupted the delivery of some of this year's planned HAS schemes and one group sought an extension to their grant as they would be unable to deliver their scheme this year. The continuation of restrictions on public gatherings had impacted on the delivery of some key events that were supported through the SFAs although many of the services had continued. Officers were in contact with the Groups concerned and monitoring the situation. It was therefore **Resolved** that:

- 1. The request from The Friends of Mewsbrook Park to extend their HAS Grant for a further year be approved.**
- 2. The update regarding the 2020 HAS Scheme activities be otherwise noted.**
- 3. The Covid-19 impact on Service Funding Agreements be noted.**

26.4. Visitor Maps

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which outlined exploratory work conducted by Officers to introduce a town map and dispensers in the town. Councillor Seex described how this had been deployed successfully in other Towns and could be linked to other installations for example artwork, to promote tourism. Observing the potential benefits to Town of the rise in domestic tourism, Members discussed how this might be achieved for the Town. There was support for developing vinyl artwork panels in prominent locations that would also encourage visitors to explore Town combined with a map. It was noted that Officers were also working with the District Council to develop an interactive visitor "app" which aimed to promote the Town culturally, educationally, and economically. Members considered there could also be demand for a portable map although it was acknowledged that dispenser installations could be problematic. It was therefore agreed that resources should focus on developing the new interactive medium and options for vinyl panels and artwork installations be researched. It was therefore **Resolved**:

1. **Not to take forward further work on the map and dispensers**
2. **Options to create vinyl panels and artwork installations be researched and included for consideration as part of the budget discussions.**

26.5. Keystone Centre

Following the completion of a tender process in August, a consultant had been appointed as Employers Agent to provide technical and contractual project management services in respect of the planned new Centre. The contract for this role was expected to be signed shortly. In the meantime, the architects had been liaising with the District Council regarding the validation requirements for the planning application and a brief for the outdoor leisure facilities. It was **Resolved** that:

The update be noted.

27. Finance

27.1. Finance Report

The Committee received a report (previously circulated) which highlighted variances from budget in the areas in the remit of the committee. These largely related to the organisation adapting to the new ways of working in response to the COVID 19 pandemic. Revenue was also coming under increasing pressure as income from room hire and carparking was significantly under budget. Overall, the impact of the pandemic on the Council's overall finances at present was balanced by the cancellation of the summer events programme however, it was thought that this would significantly affect next year's budget. Officers continued to closely monitor the situation and with this in mind work had already started on preparing next year's budgets. It was **Resolved** that:

The report be noted

28. Exempt Minutes

The Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd July 2020 (previously circulated to Members of the Council) were confirmed as a true record and it was noted that arrangements would be made for these to be signed at a later date.

29. Exempt Business

There was none.

The meeting closed at 7:47pm.

CHAIR