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Town Clerk – Laura Chrysostomou

Minutes of a Meeting of the **Community Resources Committee** held in **The New Millennium Chamber, The Manor House, Church Street, Littlehampton BN17 5EW** on **Thursday 7 September 2023** at **6.30 pm**.

Present:

Councillor Lee – Chair

Councillor Butcher

Councillor Daws

Councillor Long

Councillor May

Councillor Tandy

Councillor Woodman

In attendance:

Felix Gillett - Community Resources Officer

Julia Edge - Museum Curator

Kieran Gibbins - Events and Town Centre Strategy Manager

Laura Chrysostomou - Town Clerk

Juliet Harris - Assistant Town Clerk

2023 to 2024

12. Evacuation Procedures

The evacuation procedures were noted.

13. Filming of Council Meetings, Use of Social Media and Mobile Phones

The procedures were noted.

14. Apologies

There were apologies from Councillors Blanchard-Cooper, O'Neill and Wiltshire who had other commitments. Councillors Woodman, Tandy and Butcher respectively attended in their place.

15. 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.

In addition, Councillors Woodman, Tandy, and Butcher declared personal interests across the agenda as members of Arun District Council.

16. Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting incorrectly stated that Councillor Blanchard-Cooper had declared an interest as a volunteer with the Turning Tides charity. This was an error, and it was agreed that it be removed.

It was therefore Resolved that:

Subject to this amendment, the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2023, previously circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

17. Chair's Report and Urgent Items

There were none.

18. Public Forum

There were no members of the public present, and no representations were made.

19. Working Groups - Notes

19.1. Sports Forum Notes

The Committee received the notes of the meeting, previously circulated, held on 31 July 2023, with no matters arising.

It was Resolved that:

The notes of the Sports Forum meeting held on 31 July 2023 be noted.

19.2. Allotments Working Group

19.2.1. The Committee received the notes of the meeting, previously circulated, held on 17 August 2023. The Assistant Town Clerk explained that the Working Group was comprised of Councillors, and representatives from the allotment sites including the Littlehampton Allotment and Leisure Gardens Association. Its main objective was to discuss ideas to improve the sites, advise and report on matters relating to the operation of the sites and make recommendations

to the Community Resources Committee based on its discussions. There were two recommendations arising from the August Working Group meeting regarding the level of allotment fee increase for 2025 and the Town Council's pest control policy.

19.2.2. The Committee proceeded to consider the recommendations individually.

The Assistant Town Clerk explained that Allotment legislation required annual fees to be set a year in advance. Understanding that the Allotment Strategy stated that the fees should be increased at a minimum of the rate of inflation, the site representatives had therefore proposed that they be increased by 8% for 2025. Acknowledging that the final decision would be made by this Committee, the proposal formed the first recommendation from the Working Group. Discussion of the proposal focussed on the ongoing maintenance issues, the rate of inflation and the Town Council's strategic objective to reduce the level of subsidy. This led to a brief discussion of the Town Council's Allotment Strategy which had also been debated by the Working Group who felt that the document needed further work. This was acknowledged by the Committee and the engagement with the site representatives in this respect was welcomed. However, conscious of the ongoing pressure on the Town Council's budget, the Committee considered that the rate of increase in fees should be maintained at 10% for a further year. It was therefore proposed that the fees for 2025 increase at 10%. This proposal was duly seconded.

It was therefore Resolved that:

The plot rental fees for 2025 be increased by 10% from £8.56p to £9.42p per rod.

19.2.3. The Committee then went on to consider the second recommendation from the Working Group who wished to see the Town Council embark on a complete review of the Council's policy and approach to managing pests and vermin, including the policy regarding the ban on killing foxes and the use or storage of traps by plot holders. The Assistant Town Clerk explained that this arose from the reported increase in pest issues at the Worthing Road site following the completion of the new road. Although sympathetic to the problems faced by Allotment holders, Members could not support the re-introduction of killing foxes as a means of controlling them. However, observing that the Town Council's current policy and approach to managing pests and vermin on the allotment sites had not been examined since 2018, the Committee did consider that this should be reviewed.

It was therefore Resolved that:

1. The Council's policy and approach to managing pests and vermin be reviewed and the outcome be reported to the October meeting of the Committee.
2. The notes of the Working Group meeting held on 17 August 2023 be noted.

20. Officers Reports

20.1. Events Periodic Report

The Committee received a report, previously circulated, which provided feedback on the Summer 2023 events programme and updates on the preparations for the Town Show and Family Fun Day and the Remembrance Sunday event. Regarding the Screen on the Green event, it was noted that a follow up meeting was being arranged to review event security and options for staging the event in future. Looking ahead at the plans to mark Remembrance Sunday, it was noted that the second parade had been removed following feedback from the uniformed groups. This was considered sensible as the membership of these groups was relatively young.

It was Resolved that:

1. The outcome of the Summer 2023 events programme be noted.
2. The progress on the preparations for the Town Show and Remembrance Sunday events be noted.
3. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

20.2. Museum Periodic Report

The Committee received a report, previously circulated, which contained an update on Museum activities, engagement, and proposals for acquisitions.

It was Resolved that:

1. The acquisition of the items detailed in Appendix A, attached to the report be approved.
2. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

20.3. Museum Heritage Lottery Project Report

The Committee received a report, previously circulated, which set out the background to the Project, the aims, and objectives together with the work plan and budget. The Curator explained how the Museum Team would work with community partners to develop audience engagement using a range of communication channels including talks and focus groups. Members were also asked to note the Urgent Action that authorised the acceptance of the National Grant funding. The Assistant Town Clerk explained the Heritage Lottery Grant process and the need to demonstrate the Town Council's

contribution in terms of resources including the allocation of earmarked reserves and staff and volunteer time. It was noted that going forward, project progress would be included in the service periodic report.

It was therefore resolved that:

1. The Urgent Action authorising the acceptance of the National Grant funding of £37,468 be noted.
2. The aims, work plan and budget of Project Time Machine be noted.

Councillor Tandy declared a personal interest in the following item as the secretary and treasurer for the Keystone Centre Management Committee which has a Service Funding agreement with the Council.

20.4. Community Resources Officer Periodic Report

20.4.1. Members received a report, previously circulated, which highlighted work being undertaken by the Community Resources Officer to progress the projects and initiatives within the remit of this Committee. The report comprised updates on the allotments, service funding agreements, and community engagement. In addition, the Committee was asked to consider appointing a Task and Finish Group to carry out a review of the Grant Aid Criteria. This had been highlighted as a priority for the new Council and, following a meeting with the Chair of the Committee, terms of reference had been drafted and were tabled (copy attached to the Minutes) for Members consideration.

20.4.2. The Chair explained that the main objectives of the Group would be to explore alternatives to the current criteria and application procedure with a view to simplifying the whole process. Examples had been researched to help guide this work which it was hoped would deliver a mechanism for groups to develop community initiatives more aligned to need and the Town Council's objectives. It was proposed that the Chair lead the Task and Finish Group which would formulate proposals for the Committee to consider in October. Members were supportive of this way forward and alongside the Chair, Councillors Butcher and Long expressed an interest in participating in the Group. It was also thought that Councillor Blanchard-Cooper wished to be involved.

It was therefore Resolved that:

1. Councillor Lee be appointed as Chair of the Grant Aid Task and Finish Group, alongside Councillors Butcher and Long and Councillor Blanchard-Cooper if he wishes.
2. The Draft Terms of Reference be endorsed, and recommendations be brought back to the Committee for consideration in October 2023.

20.4.3. Turning to the remainder of the report, Members noted that the Sports Forum was going through an intense period of change. The annual Sports Awards would in future be aligned to the Sports Excellence Grants which was considered practical and it was suggested that the Southfields Jubilee Centre would be an ideal venue to host the event. This was noted and Members also hoped to see a wider range of sports represented on the forum in the future.

It was Resolved that:

1. The Assistant Town Clerk add a question to the survey being undertaken at the Town Show regarding the sports forum.
2. The contents of the report be noted.

20.5. Town Council Business Plan 2023 to 2027

20.5.1. The Committee received a report which contained feedback from the business planning workshops to identify priorities for inclusion in the Town Council's proposed Business Plan for 2023 to 2027. The Town Clerk explained the process for finalising the Business Plan. It was also noted that further detailed work would be undertaken to determine the level of resources and delivery time scales for consideration by Full Council in November. Feedback received to date had highlighted that the overarching strategy statements could be more clearly defined, and that presentation be orientated towards the public.

20.5.2. The Committee proceeded to discuss the emerging proposals in more detail and agreed that further work could be done to make the document more accessible. They highlighted the need to replace some of the terminology with plain English, making a clearer distinction between aspirations and procedure and focussing on developing key priority statements. Members also considered that a summary of the objectives would help to support their engagement with residents, generating a sense of involvement which would encourage them to interact more with the Council. These observations were noted and would be taken forward as part of the ongoing work to develop the final Business Plan. The Committee was otherwise content that the list of goals identified as being within the remit of the Committee were accurate. It was noted that it is useful to have the whole Action Plan for reference.

It was therefore Resolved that:

1. The Committee's comments regarding improvements to the Strategy be noted and taken forward as part of the ongoing work to develop the final Business Plan.
2. The list of goals in the Action Plan identified as being within the remit of the Committee, Appendix B be endorsed and recommended to the Policy and Finance Committee for progression.
3. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

21. Finance

21.1. Committee Budget Monitor

21.1.1. The Committee received a report, previously circulated, which highlighted significant variances from budget in income and expenditure related to the Community Resources Committee budget for 2022 to 2023. The Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk provided clarification on a number of points relating to the allotments and museum budgets and outlined some of the factors which impacted the level of income from room hire at the Southfields Jubilee Centre. It was noted that the figures contained in the budget monitor sometimes differed to those stated in the financial implications of the periodic service reports which aimed to show the anticipated final position regarding a particular event or service. Overall Members welcomed the detail that the new style of presentation provided and thanked the Finance Team for delivering this in the report.

It was therefore Resolved that:

The report be noted.

22. Exempt Business

There was none.

The meeting closed at 7:50 pm.

CHAIR

Task & Finish Group: DRAFT Terms of Reference

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| Name of Group | Grant Aid Criteria Review Task & Finish Group (T&FG) – Sept 2023 |
| Decision making body to whom it will report | Community Resources Committee (CRC) |
| Remit/Purpose | <p>To review the grant aid criteria, application and review process and make recommendations based on its findings to CRC in October 2023.</p> <p>To give Members the opportunity to undertake a more detailed piece of work to explore alternatives and review other practices, enabling a tangible input into the decision-making process required at CRC.</p> <p>The group itself will not make decisions; these will always be made by the Community Resources Committee.</p> |
| Structure | The Standing Orders of Council will generally apply but at the discretion of the Chair, greater latitude will be permitted to allow members to fully discuss issues in a less formal or prescriptive manner. |
| Objectives (and how group will work to achieve them) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the purpose for Grant Aid: Improving Littlehampton, strengthening and empowering the community • Consider the criteria and application process and explore alternatives: e.g. whether to implement different categories and what these might be (e.g. Sports, Community, Arts + 1 other); a very simplified process with the total sum available divided equally among all applicants; a tiered process with a basic criteria and different levels of award within that e.g. capped at a minor sum (£500/£1,000), a second level that has a medium sum, a CRC Champion major award for that year and the rest gets split simply amongst 4 categories. Points based scoring? • Explore how we can broaden the applications received: Including how the criteria is defined to encourage wider participation. • Define how they will be monitored, evaluated, and actively encouraged to promote the partnership: E.g., presentations at meetings? |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the link between Grant Aid and the Service Funding Agreements |
| Reporting to | This Task and Finish Group will function as an advisory group reporting to the Community Resources Committee. |
| Key timescales and duration | This is an ad hoc group established for a limited time, which is proposed to complete its work by the October 2023 CRC. |
| Group Membership | <p>4 Members to be part of the group.</p> <p>Membership of the T&FG shall consist of four councillors from the Community Resources Committee. Substitutes for the above members of the group may attend as and when required.</p> |
| Group Chair | Chair to be selected by CRC |
| Meeting dates | The timing and number of meetings will be dictated by the volume of business for the T&FG. The group could arrange thematic meetings to ensure that it addresses all relevant issues in a focused and manageable way. |
| Scope of work (detail work areas in and out of scope) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope is in line with the remit of the Community Resources Committee when considering Grant Aid. • Scope of work will explore criteria, application, and review processes. • Setting a budget is outside the scope of this group. • Scope of work includes considering the link to Service Funding Agreements but excludes reviewing the SFAs as this will come towards the end of the current SFA three-year agreements. |
| Resources | Time and commitment from Councillors Research and policy checking by Officers. |
| Lead officer(s) | The Community Resources Officer is appointed to support the group |
| Key stakeholders / interested parties and engagement process | N/A |