

Minutes of a meeting of the Community Resources Committee held in The New Millennium Chamber, The Manor House, Church Street, Littlehampton, BN17 5EW on Wednesday 4 December at 6.30pm.

Present:

Councillor Tandy – Chair
Councillor Lee
Councillor Blanchard–Cooper
Councillor Wiltshire
Councillor Tilbrook
Councillor Long
Councillor O'Neill

In attendance:

Laura Chrysostomou – Town Clerk
Juliet Harris – Assistant Town Clerk
Felix Gillett – Community Resources Officer

2024 to 2025

51. Evacuation Procedures

The evacuation procedures were noted.

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

The procedures were noted.

53. Apologies

There were apologies from Councillor Daws.

54. 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 further declarations were made.

55. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 24 October 2024 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

56. Chair's Report and Urgent Items

- 56.1. The Chair congratulated officers on the successful opening of the K2 Youth and Community Centre and was pleased to report that the centre was attracting very positive feedback. He reminded the Committee that the Town Council would be supporting Small Business Saturday in the High Street on the 7 December and he looked forward to seeing members at the event.

57. Public Forum

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

58. Allotments Working Group

Members had before them minutes, previously circulated, of the Allotments Working Group meeting held on 21 October 2024.

It was resolved that:


The minutes of the Allotments Working Group meeting held on 21 October 2024 be noted.

59. Sports Forum

Members had before them minutes, previously circulated, of the Sports Forum meeting held on 30 September 2024. The Community Resources Officer provided clarification regarding the membership of the Sports Forum Executive Committee which was noted.

It was resolved that:

The minutes of the Sports Forum meeting held on 30 September 2024 be noted.



60. Officers Reports

60.1. Quarterly Business Plan Progress Report

60.1.1. Members had before them a report, previously circulated, providing an update on progress with delivering the goals as they related to the work of the committee. The Mayor expressed his personal thanks to officers for their hard work in delivering the K2 Youth and Community Centre and the success of its official open day which augured well for forthcoming hirers open day.

60.1.2. Members proceeded to review the action plan and discussion focused on progress with the delivery of the community centre and allotments in the Hampton Park development (North Littlehampton). It was noted that discussions at the recent North Littlehampton Advisory Group meeting had been productive. A further meeting of the Advisory Group was expected in the new year when it was hoped that there would be more clarity regarding the plans for these facilities and a timeframe for their delivery.

It was resolved that:

The Action Plan and update be noted.

60.2. Community Resource Officer Periodic Report

60.2.1. The Community Resources Officer presented a report, previously circulated, which contained updates on the projects and initiatives within the remit of the committee. In addition, the committee was asked to approve in principle that land on the Worthing Road Allotment site be made available to the Littlehampton Community Growers for a community orchard.

60.2.2. Members proceeded to consider the community orchard proposal to create an orchard on some of the uncultivated land adjacent to Nightingale Way on the eastern boundary of the Town Council's Worthing Road allotment site. To enable the project to progress the Littlehampton Community Growers had been formed and required confirmation from the landowner that the land they needed for the scheme would be available. This would also enable the group to move forward with formalising arrangements such as putting insurance in place and applying for grant funding as a properly constituted group. It was confirmed that the group would be responsible for delivering the project and be required to sign the Town Council's Allotment tenancy agreement. In doing so they would be required to adhere to the same terms and conditions as other plot holders. This initiative was welcomed and unanimously supported by the committee.

60.2.3. Regarding the current floral contract, members wished to explore options for more environmentally sustainable planting as part of the renewal. Finally,

members were pleased to note that the Town Council was progressing grant applications for defibrillators at K2 and Southfields.

It was therefore resolved that:

1. In principle, the uncultivated land adjacent to Nightingale Way on the eastern boundary of the Town Council's Worthing Road allotment site be made available to the Littlehampton Community Growers for the purpose of creating a community orchard.
2. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

60.3. Events Periodic Report

- 60.3.1. Members had before them a report, previously circulated, which contained feedback following the Remembrance Sunday event and an update on the Christmas High Street events. The Christmas Lights Switch On event due to take place on Saturday 23 November had been cancelled because of adverse weather conditions which had also seen the Christmas tree in the High Street come down. Fortunately, only the tree was damaged, and it had been safely removed, repaired, and re-installed with a reinforced base. Members expressed their thanks to officers and the Fire Service for managing the situation promptly and ensuring that the area around the tree was safe. Options to change the position of the Christmas tree were limited because of the position of the electrical pit in the pavement. This was however noted and would be reviewed by the Christmas Lights Working Group when it came to consider the plans for next year's display.
- 60.3.2. Officers were still exploring options with contractors who might be able to transfer their attractions to the Small Business Saturday event on Saturday 7 December. Where this was not possible, it was noted that cancellation fees would be incurred. Those who had hoped to have fundraising stalls on the day were invited to contact the Community Resources Officer for details of local community groups looking for donations.

It was therefore resolved that:

The feedback following the Remembrance Sunday event and the update on the Christmas High Street events be noted.

60.4. Museum Periodic Report

- 60.4.1. Members had before them a report, previously circulated, which detailed updates on recent museum activities and engagements. The Mayor thanked the Museum Team for collating information from the archives to share with the North Macedonian Ambassador during their recent visit. Members also welcomed the engagement and positive feedback regarding the Museum's display at the K2 open day.

It was resolved that:

The contents of the report be noted.

61. Finance Reports

61.1. Committee Budget Monitor

61.1.1. Members considered a report, previously circulated, highlighting significant variances from budget income and expenditure relating to the Community Resources Committee budget for 2024 to 2025. Observing the £1,286 general grant budget underspend it was considered sensible that this be earmarked and used to underpin next year's budget.

It was therefore resolved that:


1. The £1,286 underspend in the 2024 to 2025 General Grant Budget be used to underpin the General Grants budget in 2025 to 2026.
2. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

61.2. Venue Hire Fee Charge Proposals 2025 – 2026

61.2.1. The Committee considered a report, previously circulated, setting out proposals for room hire charges for the forthcoming financial year. The report included the current fees and proposals to increase prices for both the Southfields Jubilee Community Centre and K2 Youth and Community Centre by five percent for consideration. This level of increase was proposed following research undertaken by officers and aimed to ensure that the prices of the Town Council's venues remained competitive against other comparable facilities in the area.

61.2.2. Regarding the Stage by the Sea venue, it was noted that bookings were managed by the District Council. It was also noted that provision to bring electricity to the venue was planned as part of the sea front regeneration works. Members therefore wished to review the booking arrangements once this work was completed.

It was therefore resolved that:

1. The level of room hire charges be increased by 5% percent for 2025 to 2026.
 2. The Stage by the Sea booking arrangements be reviewed after completion
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of the sea front regeneration works.

3. Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk to apply discounts and offers on an individual basis and as appropriate to further the Town Council's Community Centre's Action Plan objectives.

61.3. Committee Draft Budget Proposals 2025 to 2026, 2026 to 2027 and 2027 to 2028

61.3.1. Members considered a report, previously circulated, setting out proposals for this committee's budget for the next three years. The Town Clerk explained the background to the budget setting process and how the precept calculation was impacted by annual changes in the number of households from which council tax was collected. The projected increase in the Council's overall budget for 2025 to 2026 was currently 6.69 percent modelled on last year's household figures. It was noted that the current projected precept figure for 2025 to 2026 was subject to change as the December budget setting progressed.

61.3.2. The committee budget had been drafted to take into consideration estimated increases in costs for the coming year and projected forward to 2028. Members proceeded to review the Community Resources budget proposals in more detail and the following points were noted:

- The net expenditure on the Southfields Jubilee Centre for 2025 to 2026 had reduced from the previous year due to changes in staffing arrangements which had reduced the level of staff costs apportioned to this cost centre. Most other aspects of the Centre's budget would remain similar or increase in the coming years.
- The Town Council was working with the Sports Forum to explore alternative provision to enable wider participation in sports activity and that a Sports Funding Budget had been retained at £2,000.
- Nominal sums were budgeted for the annual Pancake Olympics and Easter Out and About events to support them should alternative ways of delivering them come forward.
- The budgets for the 'Summer Launch Events' and 'Summer High Street Events' had been combined to create the Summer High Street Events Budget.

It was therefore resolved that:

1. The draft Committee budget for 2025 to 2026 and the projected budgets for 2026 to 2027 and 2027 to 2028 be approved and recommended to the Policy and Finance Committee.
2. The Committee's Earmarked Reserve Position be noted.
3. The contents of the report be otherwise noted.

62. Exempt Business

There was none.

The meeting was closed at 7.10pm.

Chair