

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
HELD ON 7th JUNE 2016
AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE

PRESENT:

Cllr B Rix – Chair
Cllr P Biernis
Cllr B Briars
Cllr F Foster
Cllr M Foster
Cllr M North
Cllr D Strachan

Mr M Thorn – Deputy Town Clerk, BTC
Mrs J Durn – Administrator

Members of public – 2

The Meeting took a minute silence in respect of Cllr G Wilson, who is sadly missed.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr D Albone, Cllr I Bond, Cllr Mrs H Ramsay, Cllr Mrs M Russell.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a)** Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item - none
- (b)** Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item - none

3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A period of up to 15 minutes is permitted to allow members of the public to ask questions that are pertaining to matters listed on this Agenda. (Members of the public will be allowed one three-minute slot).

There were no questions from Members of the public

4. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

- a.** Members received and approved the Minutes of the Town Centre Management meeting held on 16 February 2016 at the Offices of Biggleswade Town Council, The Old Court House, Saffron Road, Biggleswade.

5. MATTERS ARISING

- a.** Matters arising from the minutes of the Town Centre Management meeting held on 16 February 2016.

Page 1, item 5: Update on the request for a mini roundabout at the junction of Chambers Way/London Road: The Deputy Town Clerk will look into this and will circulate a response to Councillors.

- b. Page 2, item 6a iii: Biggleswade market car boot section: Cllr F Foster was not sure that the example of only one town, Dunstable, as an illustration of car boot shopping, was an appropriate way in which to approach a decision on this issue.
- c. Page 3, item 6d: Shop front programme: The Town Clerk and Cllr Mrs M Russell will be meeting with Mr Jason Longhurst, CBC Director of Regeneration on the 13th June.

This item is on the Agenda for discussion at that meeting and the outcome will be reported to Council.

6. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Biggleswade Market**

- i. Update on the Saturday Market, (statistics attached).

Members are asked to review the latest statistics for the Saturday market and the 6 month reduced fee policy that is currently in place.

Councillors reviewed the statistics and compared these to the figures for the previous year. It was agreed that the impact of the bridge works had undoubtedly had a serious effect on market trade, and it was therefore impossible to judge whether the financial incentives put in place had improved market attendance.

Cllr F Foster asked that the Minutes record his additional comments regarding the market statistics as follows:

"Market Statistics April-May compared to April-May 2016:

Attendance:

1. *According to the supplied figures in April/May this year we increased the total number of attendances of both Regular and Casual Traders from 163 last year to 182 this year.*
2. *Perhaps surprisingly, the figures show we have an increase in Regular Traders attendance in April/May to 129 this year from 85 last year.*
3. *And again surprisingly, the figures show that there has been a decrease in Casual Traders from 78 last year to 53 this year.*
4. *Overall in this period the total attendances of both Regular and Casual traders has increased by 19 – up by 12%*

Fees:

April – May 2015 £4948

April – May 2016 £3510

In Conclusion:

1. *It is encouraging that in April-May we have seen an increase in total trader attendances of 12%.*
2. *This increase in numbers seems to have come at a cost of 29% of our revenue year on year.*
3. *We need to consider if this trend will continue and if it does, whether the loss of revenue is a price worth paying in the shorter term to preserve and hopefully continue the increase in the number of traders – and revenue – in the longer term."*

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the reduced market fees remain in place for the next three months to allow the market to regain its' custom following the opening of the bridge. This item will be discussed at the next TCM on 16th August 2016. It was acknowledged that although the market is not provided wholly as a profit making entity, at the next meeting Councillors would like to see details of costs and income for both Saturday and Tuesday markets, together with an invitation to the Market Superintendent to attend the TCM in order to give a detailed report before any decisions on fees can be made.

ii. Market Rules and Regulations.

Following in depth discussion on this document, it was **RECOMMENDED** that the following amendments be made before being presented to Council:

To insert the Paragraph "If a Trader is absent from the market for three consecutive weeks, other than for holidays, sickness or bereavement, they will lose their regular trading position" to become the fourth paragraph under the heading "Trading Conditions", Page 1.

To remove the Paragraph "If a Trader is absent from the market for three consecutive weeks, they will lose their regular trading position" from Page 2.

At the end of Paragraph 6, Page 5, to insert the words "other than at the discretion of the Market Superintendent in extreme circumstances such as severe weather conditions."

At the end of Paragraph 9, Page 5, to insert the words "Charity stalls to be advised of the expected conduct of traders when booking."

iii. At the Town Centre Management meeting 16th February 2016, Cllr F Foster proposed that consideration be given to Biggleswade Market including a Car Boot section to attract more shoppers by utilising unused spaces on the Market Square, possibly using the spaces outside the White Hart.

Despite some reservations it was agreed that this idea could be looked at by the Working Group that will be set up to discuss the market rules and regulations. The working group consisted of Cllrs Mrs Madeline Russell, Mrs Hazel Ramsay, Frank Foster, Bernard Briars and Michael North.

It was recommended that this would be an Agenda item at the Town Centre Management meeting 19 July 2016.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that this matter be considered by the Working Group and with a view to bringing a proposal to the next Town Centre Management meeting.

b. **Rose Lane Car Park – Fencing**

Following the Town Centre Management meeting 16th February 2016, the Town Clerk was asked to obtain further quotations for Rose Lane car park fencing to include powder coating.

Members considered the quotations presented.

It was **RECOMMENDED** to accept quotation A for the sum of £7545.00 to include galvanised fence rails, subject to clarification from the Town Clerk that this fencing is of satisfactory quality.

c. Upgrade of Mobile CCTV Camera

Following in depth discussion, Councillors were pleased to approve an upgrade to the CCTV camera, using S106 money allocated to CCTV and approved by CBC.

It was **RECOMMENDED** to accept the upgrade, subject to confirmation from the Police that the camera specification meets expectations for evidence to support prosecutions.

BTC has received a request from Shefford Council, that despite the ancient technology, they would be happy to take the current camera. Councillors raised no objection to this request.

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

There are no items for information.

8. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

A period of up to 15 minutes is permitted to allow members of the public to ask question. (Members of the public will be allowed one three-minute slot).

There were no questions from Members of the public.

9. EXEMPT ITEMS

The following resolution will be moved that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

(Minutes 16 February 2016)

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council resolve to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

10. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

- a. Members received and approved the Minutes of the TCM held on 16th February 2016.

11. **MATTERS ARISING:**

- a. **From the Exempt Minutes of the TCM 16 February 2016: Item 10a Car Park Management:**

The Town Clerk and Cllr Mrs M Russell are meeting with Mr Jason Longhurst, CBC Director of Regeneration on the 13th June to discuss the reasons for BTC unsuccessful bid, despite bids of a similar nature being accepted. At this meeting the Car Park Management will be also be discussed. BTC have not yet received a quotation from CBC for Car Park Management.

Meeting ended 8.05pm