

HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (GRANTS) COMMITTEE 7th June 2021

MINUTES OF MEETING

Present: The Right Worshipful the Mayor Councillor Paul Stevens and Councillors Andrews, Boulter, Hey, Hornsey, Kenyon, Tyler, Wilcox and Williams

Attending: Steve Kerry, Town Clerk, Rebecca Huggett, Creative Manager River Carnival (part)

CD2021/22.1 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Councillor Hey nominated, and Councillor Hornsey seconded Councillor Boulter.

There being no other nominations it was put to the vote and, with one abstention

RESOLVED That Councillor Boulter be elected to Chair the Committee in the municipal year 2021/2022.

Councillor Kenyon nominated and Councillor Wilcox seconded Councillor Williams to be Vice Chair of the Committee.

Councillor Andrews nominated, and Councillor Hornsey seconded Councillor Hey to be Vice Chair of the Committee, but Councillor Hey declined the nomination.

On being put to the vote it was, with one abstention,

RESOLVED That Councillor Williams be elected to be Vice Chair of the Committee in the municipal year 2021/2022.

CD2021/22.2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were noted from Councillors Oliver, Carwardine and Owens.

CD2021/22.3 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES

Councillor Oliver had appointed Councillor Andrews as substitute.

CD2021/22.4 DECLARATIONS ON INTEREST

Councillor Boulter declared an interest in the item on the service level agreement with the Allotment Society as she is a member of HALGS.

CD2021/22.5 GRANT COMPLETION FORMS

Forms were received and noted from the Friends of Castle Green for the renewable heating scheme for the pavilion and Hunderton Community Gardens Association for Villa Street Gardens. The Mayor commented that it was very good to see forms coming in on time when there wasn't a further application, but simply because organisations were following through on the grant conditions. This view was endorsed by the Committee and the Clerk was asked to follow up the long outstanding forms for example the Lad's Club new changing rooms where it was known the project had been completed and the facility had been handed on to another sports club, but still no completion form.

CD2021/22.6 HEREFORD ALLOTMENTS AND LEISURE GARDENS SOCIETY (HALGS) SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT - DRAFT

Councillor Kenyon introduced this item with a brief account of the ongoing and very productive discussions he has been having with the Clerk with members of the HALGS Committee/trustees. Gradually the discussions had taken a more and more positive tone and progress was being made. The long lease is a remote issue and may be delayed for months if not years due to legal difficulties involving Herefordshire Council. Nonetheless the Intermediate Bulk Containers for water retention had been bought, the mower had been funded and HALGS were seeing the Council delivering on its proposals. He also referred to the work of the Climate and Biodiversity Committee and suggested that the Council should try and deliver change in its own back yard before suggesting how anyone else might behave. He thanked the Clerk for drafting the service level agreement (SLA) which he thought was a very good document.

In a lengthy discussion the following points were noted.

There is a typing error in paragraph 3.5 which should read “land to be identified for ...” not “from”.

Paragraph 5 should make it clear the agreement starts in 2021 and will be reviewed three months after the next general council elections, and every four years (three months after the general elections) going forward.

It was decided not to change paragraph 4.1 regarding multiple letting of plots to one person where there is no-one on the waiting list for that particular site, which reflects HALGS current policy.

Paragraph 3.3 was the subject of much discussion about the financial arrangements for the general grant and specific support for new initiatives in either environmental improvements or training for plot holders. The tone of the draft agreement was to move away from managing details of HALGS operations but instead offering a recurring, but possibly declining, general grant and capital investment in improving facilities. It was to enable applications for grants for such investment that was one of the major reasons for HALGS seeking the long lease, which meant that historic failures to register title to sites going back to before the abolition of the old City Council had to be corrected. If the Council was prepared to make the investment through specific grants the pressure on HALGS to seek external funding would be reduced.

It was also noted that during the three month notice period the grounds contractor is working on mowing and HALGS will be supplementing his efforts using their own machine purchased by the Council. HALGS do not advertise widely as there is a waiting list for most allotments but they are referred to on the Council’s website where their contact details are given and if and when new areas of land become available for allotments this could be ramped up. It was noted that a new site in Holmer and Shelwick Parish Council had been offered to HALGS and discussions are ongoing about them taking that on. It was also noted that beyond providing the land free of charge or at a peppercorn rent, Holmer and Shelwick Parish were not offering any financial support to HALGS.

The Clerk would try and find out if S106 monies could be used to develop new allotments or to improve existing sites.

The new SLA would place responsibility on HALGS to ensure that boundary hedges such as Holmer Road which abuts a footway would be pruned so as to avoid the footway being blocked by overgrowing vegetation.

Councillor Kenyon asked that he continue as the Council's member lead on this project to build on the productive relationship he has developed with HALGS.

It was proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Hey and with one abstention

RESOLVED That Councillor Kenyon continues to be the member lead on discussions with HALGS and that this role be recommended to Council to add to the list of representatives to external bodies.

It was then proposed by Councillor Wilcox, seconded by Councillor Williams and with one abstention

RESOLVED That paragraph 3.3 be amended to read "Make an initial grant to HALGS of £7,000 to be reviewed annually to contribute to water charges and running costs."

It was the proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Williams and with one abstention

RESOLVED That the draft agreement as amended be accepted and as the basis for discussion with HALGS and for any areas of disagreement to be reported at the next meeting of the Committee for final resolution.

It was noted that Councillor Boulter had abstained in all votes having declared an interest in the matters under consideration.

CD2022/22.7 HEREFORDSHIRE VENNTURE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

This item was deferred as no proposal has been received from Vennture.

As the representative of River Carnival had arrived it was agreed to take that item next and consider the item on Speed Indicator Devices after that.

CD20221/22.8 RIVER CARNIVAL – THREE YEAR SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

The Chair welcomed Rebecca Huggett the Creative Director of Hereford River Carnival to the meeting and invited her to present her proposal.

Ms Huggett stated that the application was based on, but built on from the work on, the grant application for 2020. The group were looking to restart in May 2022 with a river carnival on the first Bank Holiday in May, but with an earlier lantern parade in February and an Autumn half term event as well. Having a three year SLA would be enormously valuable in persuading other funders of continuing community support and should be seen as pump priming investment.

In a detailed discussion, several members thanked the River Carnival for keeping going despite the disruption of Covid, and also commented on what a thorough and well presented case had been put forward in the proposal for an SLA. It had all the information necessary for members to make a decisions.

In answer to questions it was confirmed that approaches had been made to Blackmarston School, and would be made to Barrs Court so that children with special educational needs could be included in a positive and safe way in the carnival. Wider contact with youth groups and schools and colleges would be part of the work of a planned outreach worker to support the management group – and it was suggested that contact be made with the Youth Council to engage them and their many contacts with the project. Work was also going on with the Autism Society to create an autism friendly quiet area when the carnival is on. Generally policy is to work with existing groups like the Kindle Centre rather than re-inventing the wheel.

Members noted that the Council is often challenged to make more use of the river as an amenity and attraction and that the carnival attracts a great deal of positive comment, and its return was much anticipated.

It was then proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Stevens and unanimously

RESOLVED That the Committee recommends to Council the approval of a three year SLA at £10,000 per annum (a total of £30,000) to support the Hereford River Carnival.

CD2021/22.9 SPEED INDICATOR DEVICES

The Clerk explained that his report gave some background on costs and process, the proposal for consideration was from Councillor Tyler.

Councillor Tyler then introduced her proposals for a SID to be installed in Whittern Way and possibly with others on Folly Lane and Pilley Drive. Since 2006, when her involvement with the North Tupsley Action Group started, she had been aware of speeding and anti-social driving in the area and it was an ongoing issue. Over 5-6 years the previous ward member Marcelle Lloyd-Hayes had got a residents' parking area and a traffic management order in place which had introduced chicanes and humps at one end of Whittern Way. This had been effective on part of the road, but on the lower half past the Whitehouse and towards Ledbury Road many drivers were still building up excessive speed and causing a nuisance and a hazard. Cllr Tyler is therefore looking for funding for speed assessment and then for installation of a SID to try and bring speeds down. She also referred to a recent accident in which one driver had damaged six cars by colliding whilst driving at excessive speed.

A number of members responded and the points made are listed below.

The management of speed is part of the wider highway authority function of Herefordshire Council, with enforcement being the responsibility of the Police. It may not be appropriate for the parish council to seek to move into this area.

There is no clear data on the effectiveness of SIDs which are not enforcement cameras and do not generate penalties, versus occasional police presence and speeding fines or community speed reduction schemes using volunteers and hand held speed guns.

The city's residential streets should all have a generic 20 mph limit and once that is in place slower moving traffic tends to bring speeds down as potential speeders get stuck behind those who are observing the limit.

The recent accident in Whittern Way was caused by a drunk driver and drivers who are affected by drink tend to be unaware of their speed and impervious to SIDs as warning devices.

Although local residents often call for SIDs it is often local drivers who are the worst speeders as they know the roads, strangers tend to be more circumspect especially on winding roads like Whittern Way.

There may not be enough evidence of persistent speeding in Whittern Way to justify SIDs, the most recent survey was too old to be valid but had not indicated a major problem then.

SIDs tend to reduce marginally the speed of conscientious drivers who are close to the limit but have inadvertently crossed it slightly but the “boy racer” mentality seems to take perverse pride in triggering the devices and sometimes drivers actually speed up to make the SID flash.

It was proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Wilcox and unanimously

RESOLVED

That the Clerk write to the cabinet member at Herefordshire Council, Councillor Harington to ask what progress is planned with the city-wide implementation of a 20 mph limit in residential roads in Hereford.

That the Clerk writes to all members of Council asking for them to put forward details of areas in their wards where speeding is a persistent problem and especially where residents might be sufficiently concerned to co-operate in a community initiative using a hand held speed gun working in teams of trained volunteers.

That the Clerk seeks information on the wider community safety initiatives that used to be covered by meetings with Supdt Thomas based on concerns raised through Neighbourhood Watch.

CD2021/22.10 COMMUNITY PROTECTION OFFICER DRAFT CONTRACT

The Clerk reported that despite being promised at the beginning of May this had still not arrived from Herefordshire Council, it was believed to be with their legal department. Members noted this had been outstanding now for several years and Herefordshire’s response was unacceptable. It was agreed by acclamation that the Clerk should write to the Chief Executive asking for his urgent intervention to get this idea moving.

CD2021/22.11 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

A planning day in September to look at the longer term work of the committee to feed into the Council’s business plan.

Consideration of having some grants meetings on Monday mornings and some on Monday or Tuesday evenings to facilitate maximum attendance by members.

Reports from follow up enquiries to the item on speed indicator devices.

CD2021/22.12 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

6th July 2021 6 pm (main agenda)

19th July 2021 10-00 am (grants)

Signed

Date