

HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 6 February 2023

MINUTES OF MEETING

Present: Councillor Sue Boulter (Chair) and Councillors Paul Stevens, Cat Hornsey, Brian Wilcox and Rob Owens.

In attendance: Steve Kerry Town Clerk and Dave Tristram External Funding and Community Support Officer.

CD2022/23.57 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Kath Hey, Aubrey Oliver, Ange Tyler and Rob Williams.

CD2022/23.58 SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

CD2022/23.59 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hornsey declared a pecuniary interest in item 7a Marches Family Network grant application.

Councillor Stevens declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6a Hereford BID SLA.

CD2022/23.60 GRANT COMPLETION FORMS

The External Funding Officer reported that he had received a very thorough grant completion form from Vennture. He had also received a form from Hereford Lads Club. This related to a grant made nearly ten years ago, since then there had been a couple of complete changes of personnel. This has presented some difficulties in getting all the details, but they had done their best with what they had.

Both reports had been available for members to scrutinise before the meeting. There were no questions, and it was noted that the reports had been received and accepted.

CD2022/23.61 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

a) Hereford Business Improvement District – Christmas Events

The Chair welcomed Mike Truelove, the Chief Executive of Hereford BID to the meeting. He explained that the purpose of the Christmas programme had been to raise the profile of Hereford and attract footfall. In September, promotion of the Gift Card had begun and during the festive season itself there had been four entertainment days, Christmas trees, support for window displays, trails and competitions. In all £41,000 had been spent. 155,000 households had been targeted with a leaflet drop in the county, plus homes in Worcestershire, Shropshire, Gwent, and Gloucestershire. There had been 120 small trees with lights and a 15 foot LED lit tree at the bottom of King's Street, the promotion of free parking and "we're open late" evenings and a golden ticket giveaway. The hire of a generator to cope with an unexpected electricity deficiency in High Town had been an unforeseen additional cost.

This year footfall was down on last year, which was the first post COVID Christmas and saw a lot of pent up demand, in fact it was the best since 2016. This year rail strikes had not helped either. However, sales had been encouraging from the footfall.

In answer to questions the following additional information was provided. The evening events closed relatively early from around 5pm or 6.30pm nearer Christmas. The market packing up makes it look like High Town is closed even when it isn't. There are problems with buying the Gift Card online with no facility for picking up after paying online either. The Old Market had no budget for events this year, so BID had put some of their roving entertainment over there, in fact they covered the Old Market, Maylords, High Town and forty surrounding streets. There are 88,000 households in the county so nearly half the leafletting was out of county. It is not possible with current footfall software to say how many "external" visitors there were.

Due to changes in business rates the BID, like every other such organisation in the country, faced a serious drop in revenues; in Hereford's case £65,000 against their £200,000 pa programme. Mike confirmed that the business community value the Christmas lights and that those areas where councils or BIDs, have curtailed them, have suffered a drop in footfall as a result.

The Chair thanked Mr Truelove for his presentation.

b) Carnival Arts – Hereford River Carnival

The Chair welcomed Rebecca Huggett and Leo Caithness to the meeting. They explained that in 2021 they had started with a small event based on a treasure hunt and the giant heads procession. It had been important to keep the crowds down as COVID was still very much a consideration. This year, with assistance from government funding to restart cultural events in COVID recovery, it was intended to go far bigger. The Hereford Happening would be taking place as an interactive carnival type event, starting at Maylords, processing through the city to Castle Green. There were connections with local theatre and dance groups as well as local caterers. The purpose is to encourage people to come to the main carnival event in August. Boo La Croux and Hereford Pride would be leading the event, which was a step change upwards from last year, as will be the River Carnival itself. After the dog show on the main carnival day there will be lots of local groups involved in a music and dance event, followed by Rock The Boat at the Town Hall, with food for the volunteers and a ticketed event later. The aim is to keep on recruiting younger people to take this on and make it a long term project.

The Hereford Happening will be on 6 May, which is now of course Coronation Day too, on Castle Green (but without the Pavilion which will be under scaffolding). Cindy Dolloway will be co-ordinating the dancing groups. It is important not to overlap with the Coronation event and there are already negotiations for a big screen to enable people to watch the key moments between HH events. As part of the community Big Lunch idea, people will be encouraged to bring and share picnic food, with additional contributions from the Food Bank, and possibly Food Share at St Martin's too. Castle Green is the preferred venue with Bishop's Meadow as a fall back. Councillor Boulter offered the use of two generators from St Nicholas Community Association if they would be needed, which was accepted with thanks. They have already secured the loan of some equipment from Friends of Castle Green and there will be a

print shop for tee-shirts, mugs, etc. The timescale is not precise as the Coronation schedule has not been published in full.

It was confirmed that with the FoCG pavilion out of action for building work, power will need to be taken via the bowling green pavilion. The theme of the procession would be Creatures of the Earth. There are ways of counting how many people from outside the city and county come to the event.

The Chair thanked Rebecca and Leo for their presentation.

CD2022/23.62 SMALL GRANT APPLICATIONS

a) Marches Family Network – Play+ Project and Young Explorers Project

Having declared a pecuniary interest Councillor Hornsey left the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Rae Chambers to the meeting. Ms Chambers explained that the Network's Play Plus and Young Explorers' projects had been going since 1995. Half of the 219 children who come are from the city, and demand is rising fast. There are three types of sessions depending on disability level and for many there is simply no other provision of this kind available. In addition to sessions at Blackmarston, they organise trips out from the Merton Meadow car park. Trips are always over-subscribed.

In answer to questions the following additional points were noted. The City Council's money would be targeted at providing access for children from the City itself. There is support from Leominster in kind, the offer of premises, but no other town council is putting anything in at present. The staff cover 85 different conditions, but this means in fact children with 378 distinct syndromes as disabilities often come in complex clusters affecting each child differently. There are three Saturday sessions from 10.30am to 3pm in term time, and in the summer holidays the project tries to open four days a week. Half terms are covered as best they can. Constant training is required to cope with new combinations of complex needs. Families do not come on visits, the whole point is to give carers respite. The client age range is from 0 to 26 years old, although in fact links are usually made at around three years old. Blackmarston are very supportive; so far Barrs Court have been nonresponsive. Blackmarston is a very good venue.

The Chair thanked Rae Chambers for a very concise and detailed presentation.

Councillor Hornsey rejoined the meeting.

b) Hereford Lads Club – Maintenance of Perimeter Fence

The Chair welcomed Wayne Sheehan to the meeting. Mr Sheehan explained that the Club is based on Widemarsh Common which they own now, and the wooden boundary fence is at the end of its useful life, having had many patch repairs over the years. Eventually they would like to replace the whole thing, but cost and planning considerations preclude that at present. There are parts of the fence that get damaged by turning HGVs and caravans, which are especially vulnerable and to reduce this, the fence will be brought in slightly from the boundary. The old wooden footings of the fence are now largely rotten and need to be

replaced in concrete. As background he added that the Club is open to boys and girls despite the name and has about 212 children involved, paying a subscription of £20 per month, together with two senior teams who are loosely affiliated. The fence will be around two feet six inches high so it will be visible to motorists taking reasonable care.

The Chair thanked Mr Sheehan for his presentation.

c) West Hereford Pétanque Club – Build a Pétanque Terrain

The Chair welcomed Peter Clarke and Mark Jones from the Management Committee of the Club. They explained that this is a new venture for a new location for pétanque, which is presently played in several places mainly pub car parks or on spare ground. The project has been running since October and the club is affiliated to Pétanque England, which is the nationally recognised body. The club was set up by people who have been playing since 1992 in their area. Even though the venture is outside the city, half the club's membership of 13 come from Hereford. Three years ago, they had tried to create a terrain but it had failed due to lack of support from local sports clubs in making ground available and from local players. The only offer had been from Hinton Community Centre which had been able to set some space aside in the overspill car park, but this was not guaranteed access and was too close to houses as the game can be noisy. The presenters circulated a plan of the proposed site in Credenhill which is eminently suitable for their purposes.

Members asked about fund raising so far, which had yielded one rejection and several "pendings" until the end of February. It was stressed that the sport can be played by anyone of any age or ability and is ideal for mixed age competitions. It has good aerobic benefits but is quite low impact which assists older and less fit people to take part. It was noted that the application was for equipment which could be used for taster sessions in an attempt to raise membership and to this end the club had leafletted homes in Credenhill and has been in touch with the local primary school. This had not so far occurred in the city.

In answer to questions the following points were noted. There are indeed only six members currently based in the City involved with the club. The funding for equipment is optional to the main project of developing a terrain. Credenhill Parish Council have produced a letter of support but not backed it with any funding. If the facility is good, it could be used to boost membership and to host competitions, which is how Abergavenny got going. There is already a terrain at HALO, somewhat overgrown at present and not often used, but it has been used in the last few years and is still available. The club had not been in contact with HALO for some time. Some venues in the area have closed recently, but there is a league in the Marches and around 120 people are engaged, mainly at pub venues.

The Chair thanked Mr Clarke and Mr Jones for their presentation.

d) Hereford Hospital Radio – Extension of Service

The Chair welcomed Chris Hughes to the meeting.

Mr Hughes reminded members that HHR has been running for 50 years at various locations as the hospital has changed over the years. It is run by about 25 volunteers and was especially popular when COVID restricted visits, making it the only contact inpatients had with the outside world. The current project is to move the radio base to Gartner Hall at the Venns Lane site as the hospital is trying to maximise the use of the main site for clinical purposes. They

have been offered two rooms free of charge but nothing for equipment to enable an offsite operation. The health and wellbeing benefits of hospital radio are well documented, and they wish to extend coverage to old peoples' and community care homes as there is a significant issue with loneliness there and a good community based radio service can have a very positive impact.

In further discussion the following points were noted. The application is quite old for good reasons, they have now received a positive response from Everson Trust for some £24,000. It was noted that hospital radio has started many famous radio careers and some local broadcasting "celebrities" were identified. They have yet to approach other urban parishes and Dave Tristram will offer some advice on how to do this, as the reach is clearly well beyond the city population. The £24,000 will get them moved in, the additional grants sought from the City Council will enable a fully equipped station, and the service will provide itemised accounts of money spent if that is requested.

The Chair thanked Mr Hughes for the presentation.

CD2022/23.63 RESOLUTIONS – SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS

a) Hereford Business Improvement District

It was noted by members that the events had been really good and there had been lots of positive feedback on social media. The choice of entertainers was broad and appealing and the outreach beyond the confines of the City had been impressive.

It was proposed by Councillor Wilcox, seconded by Councillor Hornsey and, with Councillor Stevens abstaining having declared a non-pecuniary interest)

RESOLVED That the Service Level Agreement amount of £8,000 be released for Christmas 2023.

b) Hereford River Carnival

It was noted that the Carnival and the proposed Hereford Happening give very good value for money. There is an excellent range of events and very good feedback from people who have been to it in the past. The ideas this year, and the proposal to link in with the Coronation were very good indeed.

It was proposed by Councillor Hornsey, seconded by Councillor Owens and unanimously

RESOLVED That the Service Level Agreement of £10,000 be released for River Carnival 2023.

CD2022/23.64 RESOLUTIONS – SMALL GRANTS

a) Marches Family Network

Having declared a pecuniary interest Councillor Hornsey left the meeting.

Members commented that they had considered carefully whether this application met the higher standard required for a grant of over £3,000 and given that it is the only group working with a particularly important and difficult to reach client group they felt that it did. The Network is a well-established group with a sound structure and a good reputation for delivering what it promises. The lack of response from Barrs Court School was disappointing.

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

RESOLVED That a grant of £5,000 be made to Marches Family Network to support their Play+ and Young Explorers Projects.

Councillor Hornsey re-joined the meeting.

b) Lads' Club

Members agreed that the fence definitely needed replacing. The Clerk was asked if this could be covered from the Environmental Improvements budget rather than from grants. He agreed that it could, and that the budget was under the control of this Committee so a permissive resolution allowing it to be paid from whichever fund has the largest available balance would be in order. He thought it likely that this was Environmental Improvements.

It was proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Boulter and unanimously

RESOLVED That the sum of £2,964 be approved for the fence project at the Lads Club, either from the Community Grants or the Environmental Improvements budget, at the discretion of the Clerk to use whichever budget has the largest unspent balance.

c) West Hereford Pétanque Club

Members noted a number of concerns about this application. The very small membership meant it was in fact an application for £500 per capita for the City resident members, and it would only be relevant if and when the terrain was built, which might not happen. Some of the details such as 50 copies of the rule book were inexplicable, especially for a simple game with only 13 people currently members. The recruitment effort was not impressive. Although advised to stress the benefits to the City when they presented their application this hadn't been picked up well. HALO offer an obvious existing alternative and with very little investment could be the site for a new club.

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

RESOLVED That no grant be made in respect of the application from the West Hereford Pétanque Club and that the External Funding and Community Support Officer offers some guidance on how to improve their application should they wish to re-apply when the construction phase is funded.

d) Hereford Hospital Radio

Members noted that this was the only way in which volunteers could train in radio production and presentation and apart from the enormous benefits to inpatients it offered a really valuable entry to the industry. The proposed extension to community care homes was warmly endorsed. Any grant should be with the proviso that a full itemised list of spending is provided as indicated in the discussion with the applicants.

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

RESOLVED That a grant of £3,000 be made to Hereford Hospital Radio and that a fully itemised list of expenditure be provided when the grant is used.

CD2022/23.65 KING'S CORONATION

The Clerk introduced his report explaining that it was based on a letter from the King's Private Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant which set out his expectations. Although it was permitted to

refer to the letter it was not considered appropriate to copy it in its entirety and add it to the report. However, everything being suggested was consistent with the letter and had been discussed in some detail with the Lord Lieutenant who supports the proposals made. The later suggestion from the Secretary of State about councils organising a large event e.g. “The Mayor’s Coronation Lunch” was difficult because although the event would be after the elections, the promotion and publicity for it would fall in the period before the elections where councils are required to be particularly careful not to do anything that might promote support for, or opposition to, any candidate or group of candidates. Identifying the Mayor with an event like this could be seen as promoting him as a candidate, or indeed excite opposition to him personally from people who did not wish to see public funds spent in this way. Either way it risked politicising what should be a national celebration. Therefore, the Clerk had not modified his proposals in the light of the Secretary of State’s further letter.

After a brief discussion in which the proposals were endorsed, it was proposed by Councillor Wilcox, seconded by Councillor Boulter and unanimously

RESOLVED That the Committee noted the information received about the King’s intentions regarding local celebrations of the coronation.

That the Committee agrees to allocate up to £10,000 of the General Reserve to support local groups and individuals in putting on events as part of the Big Lunch, and delegates authority to the Clerk and the External Funding and Community Support Officer to approve individual grants from this amount of up to £500 per venue.

That the Committee noted the publicity around the availability of grants will need to be carefully worded to ensure it is seen as an officer-managed, city wide initiative and not in any way something which local councillors are involved in apart from initiating the project.

That the Committee agree to support the Hereford Happening with a sum of £1,500 from the Events budget to fund the installation of a big screen as part of that event.

CD2022/23.66 DATES OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Monday 6 March 2023 Grants Meeting 10am

Monday 5 June 2023 Grants Meeting 10am

Tuesday 13 June 2023 Community Development Meeting 6pm

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting.

Signed

Date