



HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE 5 SEPTEMBER 2023

MINUTES OF MEETING

Present: Councillor Cat Hornsey (Chair) and Councillors Griffiths, Hobbs, Potts, Proctor, and Stevens.

Attending: Steve Kerry Town Clerk, David Tristram External Funding and Community Support Officer.

CD2023/24.48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were noted from Councillors Boulter, Kenyon and Spencer.

CD2023/24.49 SUBSTITUTIONS

None.

CD2023/24.50 DECLARATIONS ON INTEREST

Councillor Proctor declared an interest in part of item 8, pre-consideration of the grant to the Royal National College.

As Mark from Sunshine Radio was present and had been waiting for the conclusion of the meeting with the Chief Executive of Herefordshire Council it was agreed to alter the agenda and take the Christmas Lights item next.

CD2023/24.51 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS' SWITCH ON EVENT - ENTERTAINMENT

The Clerk explained the previous funding arrangement whereby the costs of the event were met by the Council for staging, first aid, security, and litter clean up, but the fees of the artistes were met by Sunshine Radio out of sponsorship and advertising revenue from their live broadcast. Mark explained that sponsorship was getting much harder to find and that fees were rising sharply. Last year out of a £2,000 budget he had secured the services of Betty Boo, which had taken nearly half the budget. He would not be able to deliver the level of celebrity we are used to seeing at the event with the funds he is likely to have this year which will be no more than £2,000. By having a cushion of £3,000 from the Council he would be able to secure a decent headline act as well as some inter-active stilt walkers, gingerbread men, etc. to set a new theme. He also referred to a Barbie lookalike who will cost somewhere near £900 but enable the show to have a contemporary theme, "Frozen" is now very tired.

The Clerk added that there had been a small saving in the overall programme cost through the agreement of BBLP to the catenaries (support cables) remaining in place across the streets which reduced the workload for installation and the contract price of the lights had been slightly lower than budget. Any cost over-run from agreeing to a proposal of financial support for the switch on could be contained within other balances.

In answer to questions, Mark confirmed that the show would start with local acts including at least one school choir or band and would build up to the celebrity headliner nearer the switch on time, a well tried and popular format.

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

RESOLVED That £3,000 be allocated from the Christmas Lights budget to support the professional fees of performers engaged by Sunshine Radio at the Christmas Lights' Switch On event.

CD2023/24.52 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by Councillor Hobbs, seconded by Councillor Potts and unanimously

RESOLVED That the minutes of the meeting of 13 June be agreed as a correct record and signed accordingly by the Chair.

CD2023/24.53 PROCEDURES FOR GRANTS

The Clerk reminded members of the experiment of trying to resolve grants on the basis of applications alone and how this had dramatically shortened the time taken to come to decisions. As part of that process, this meeting would be asked to agree that the grants received contain sufficient detail in the applications to be able to come to a decision, without prejudice to what that decision would be when the Committee met again in its grants role on 18 September. Whilst successful in shortening the Monday meetings, this process was administratively cumbersome and in strict theory would require all members to receive all the information twice. In fact, he intended to ask members to bring the papers from this meeting to the grants meeting but would have some spare sets for absentees or anyone who forgot theirs. Having established that it is possible, in most cases, to come to decisions on the applications alone, he now suggested this becomes the normal practice.

The External Funding Officer added that he works with applicants to make sure they have all the necessary documentation to support their applications. He pre-checks the forms and asks for more information before the agenda is sent out, if there is anything missing.

Members felt the use of the application form alone would work in virtually all cases and there was certainly no appetite for going back to two all day Monday meetings in every grant cycle.

It was noted that if questions arose at a meeting, as an exception, a group might be asked to come and discuss their application at later meeting. The default position would be that applications should be complete enough to enable a decision on the form alone.

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

RESOLVED That the Committee uses Standing Order 26a to suspend Standing Order 7a to allow unfettered further consideration of this matter.

That in future, grant applications will be considered on written submission only, using the standard application form and supporting documentation which will be sent to all members of the committee in time for it to be read before the meeting.

That where confirmation of a fact or resolution of a related issue is required before funds are released then it may, at its discretion, give delegated authority for officers to release funds as agreed once the condition is met.

That where an application appears to have merit but is not sufficiently well supported to enable a decision to be made, the Committee will direct officers to seek further information from the applicant and review their response and make a final decision when it is available for a future meeting. Exceptionally, applicants may be invited to that meeting to answer any outstanding questions.

CD2023/24.54 HEREFORD IN BLOOM

The Clerk reminded the Committee of the resolution to support HiB in their programme of digging out soil and ballast from the large flower beds and replacing with new soil. This had been provisionally estimated at £5,000 for the smaller beds and up to £10,000 for the larger ones. The Committee had agreed in principle to support this, subject to quotes being received and an application being made to Awards for All to spread the cost. HiB had now received quotes for the large bed near the Post Office and Old House and they had come in lower than expected. The better of the two quotes for soil works, combined with the cost of planting, would be just over the Committee's grant limit of £5,000, so a grant of that amount would enable the work to proceed at little risk to the Group.

The Clerk also reported that since the quote details had been circulated to members of the Committee, Councillor Kenyon had emailed him, copied to all members, about the possibility of quoting for the work. It had been verified that Councillor Kenyon was not proposing that he should quote which would be a clear conflict of interest, but that he had contact with a ground works contractor who he felt might be able to improve on the quotes received thus far. Some members felt this was inappropriate and that the conversations about the job and quotes should not involve members of the Committee liaising with potential contractors. The Clerk confirmed that the contract would be awarded by HiB and not by the Council, the Council was simply being asked to provide the grant funding for the first bed to be upgraded.

After discussion, mainly on the questions of a possible third quote, and the potential for using volunteers for the planting to reduce costs, it was proposed by Councillor Hornsey, seconded by Councillor Proctor and

RESOLVED That following the agreement in principle at the last meeting that a grant of £5,000 be made to Hereford in Bloom for the proposed works to the Post Office planter.

That the Clerk makes HiB aware of the possibility of a third late quote, but that it is entirely at their discretion to award the contract to the firm they feel is best able to meet the specification and provide value for money.

Councillor Potts asked for it to be noted that he had voted against, and Councillor Stevens asked for it to be noted that he abstained on this matter.

CD2023/24.55 GRANT APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION ON 18 SEPTEMBER

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

RESOLVED That all the grant applications except the one from the Royal National College were sufficiently complete to be considered without the need for a presentation.

Having declared an interest Councillor Proctor then left the meeting.

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

RESOLVED That the application from the Royal National College was sufficiently complete to be considered without the need for a presentation.

Councillor Proctor then rejoined the meeting.

CD2023/24.56 UPDATE FROM EXTERNAL FUNDING AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER

The officer gave a brief update on the proposed changes to Awards for All which will be in place for November including higher limits on individual applications. He would be attending a briefing event in October to obtain more information and would be able to advise the Committee on the local implications once he had done that. The new company running the National Lottery had pledged a much higher percentage of donation to good causes than the somewhat derisory 27% achieved by Camelot.

The Clerk added that a recent round robin email among clerks to the larger parishes had enquired about the proportion of the overall budget made over to grants and community support. So far Hereford was showing higher than any other council, often much higher.

CD2023/24.57 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Data capture regarding community assets and facilities

Publicity and recognition for grants

Communication boards for schools and play areas

CD2023/24.58 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Monday 18 September at **9.30am** (Grants)

Tuesday 17 October at 6 pm (General Agenda)

Signed

Date