

CREWE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting of the Community & Environment Committee, held in the East Committee Room, Municipal Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe on TUESDAY 25th JUNE 2013, commencing at 7.00pm

PRESENT

Councillors:

D Bailey	C Bratherton	J Bratherton	M Carline
C Cull	P Martin	B Minshull	N Walton

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S Brookfield

2. To Approve the Minutes of the Community & Environment Meeting held on 13 June 2013

Resolved CE/ 7

That the minutes be agreed as a correct record.

3. Presentation Sue Togay –Town Centre Manager Cheshire East

Members received a presentation and report from Ms Togay on the costs associated with providing Christmas Lights for Crewe Town. Among other points it was noted that the current Christmas Lights are stored at Pym's Lane; the largest proportion of the costs is labour and that there may be a need for the Town Council to arrange to store them in future. It was noted that previously in the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich the lights were solely funded by the Council although increasingly the Town Councils of the Borough are looking at partnership working to spread the cost. Ms Togay advised that Crewe has 15 cross-road features with additional side of building displays. It was noted that with a little additional investment it would be possible to refresh the overall display. Currently there are no contributions to costs from individual businesses in the Town.

In 2012 the Crewe Charter Trustees increased the grant for lighting and Christmas decorations and also gave £1k towards a reduction of crime initiative.

Turning to the switching on of the Christmas Lights, Ms Togay advised that this will be co-ordinated alongside late night opening. The Lyceum Theatre has also agreed to play an active part. Members were pleased to note that this was being co-ordinated by Ms Togay on behalf of the Town.

Members were invited to note that the opening event with fireworks was an important part of the Christmas offer. There are also Christmas trees, one in the Municipal Building and another in the Town Square. Members felt very strongly that the Municipal Building tree should be provided by Cheshire East Council given the lack of presence within the Municipal Building of the Town Council.

Ms Togay stated that the present tree in Market Square would once again be removed and this time the area would be paved over. The costs associated with this will be covered by Cheshire East Council.

With regard to the overall condition of the Retail Offer in Crewe Ms Togay stated that there had been benchmarking exercise undertaken on retail profitability over the years with Crewe coming out as a rising business area with vacancy rates running at 19% with a National Average of 14%.

It was acknowledged that should the Council agree financial support for the Christmas Lights the profile of Crewe Town Council would be raised by Crewe Town Council Mayor and CE Mayor sharing a platform and making it clear that the Town Council had made a considerable input.

Resolved CE/ 8

It was agreed that the Finance & Resources Committee be invited to support financial assistance for Christmas Lights up to a maximum of £15k.

Ms Togay drew members attention to the organisation currently underway to ensure that the celebrations for Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day run smoothly. This is in partnership with the Principal Authority and the British Legion. Members felt that Ms Togay had a valuable role to play facilitating the partnership working around this and other Town Centre initiatives.

Members expressed concern at the wear and tear on the eclipse around the war memorial and Ms Togay agreed to speak to Assets at Cheshire East Council to assess the cost, a report of which will come back to the committee for consideration.

Members thanked Sue warmly for her input.

Resolved CE/ 9

It was agreed that the Finance & Resources Committee be invited to support a proposal that the Town Council explore the cost implications of funding the Town Centre Manager for 1 day per week.

Resolved CE/ 10

It was further agreed that Cllrs J Bratherton and C Cull would meet to discuss Christmas arrangements with Alsager Town Council with a view to sharing best practice.

Resolved CE/ 11

It was further agreed that an ad hoc working part consisting of Cllrs J Bratherton and N Walton be formed to work with Ms Sue Togay on Town Centre Community matters.

4. Crewe Youth Council

Cllr Bailey reported verbally on the newly created Youth Council and agreed to produce a written paper to be appended to these minutes.

There will be a further meeting on the 4th July which Cllr Bailey will attend and will report back on. It was noted that Congleton was held as an example of excellent practice of youth engagement and had developed an active Youth Council. It was envisaged that the Youth Council would have an active programme of engagement with the young people.

5. Allotments

Members discussed the general position with regard to the transfer of Allotments and felt it was important to clarify situation. It was acknowledged that through the Finance and Resources Committee Cllr K Hickson is looking into the transfer in detail and members anticipated a report from him in due course. It was noted that there was to be a meeting of the Allotments Society with Elaine Dodds (South East Parks Manager of Cheshire East Council) and it was anticipated that Cllr Hickson would attend the meeting if commitments allowed.

6. To note the date of the next Meeting of the Committee:

Tuesday 23rd July 2013, 6pm in the Marshfield Bank Community Centre when Dawn Clark LAP Manager for Cheshire East Council will be in attendance.

Chairman's Signature:.....	Date:
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