

**MINUTES OF THE EVENTS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 12<sup>TH</sup>  
JANUARY 2009 AT 8.43pm FOLLOWING THE PLANNING MEETING**

**PRESENT** Councillor T. Bloomfield  
H. Cadd  
Mrs. P. Desorgher  
P. Hirons  
D. Isham  
A. Mahi  
H. Mordue (Mayor)  
M. Smith  
Mrs. P. Stevens  
R. Stuchbury (Chairman)  
In attendance Cllr. W. Whyte  
  
For the Town Clerk Mrs. K. McElligott

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor R. Newell.

**654/2009 DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda.

**655/2009 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Members accepted the minutes of the last meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008, ratified on at the Council meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

**656/2009 ACTION REPORTS AND UPDATES**

The Action List had been circulated with the agenda.

*Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **AGREED** to move to item 18.1 to be taken next for the convenience of Cllr. Whyte.*

**657/2009 TO CONSIDER THE LIKELY EFFECT OF THE CLOSURE OF  
WOOLWORTHS ON TRADE IN THE TOWN, AND IF ANY MEASURES CAN BE  
TAKEN TO ENCOURAGE FOOTFALL IN THE SHOPPING CENTRE**

A number of letters and emails had been received from local residents and traders expressing concern at the closure of Woolworths and suggesting possible replacement retailers, Wilkinson's being very popular as having a similar broad product range to Woolworths. Cllr. Whyte had contributed detailed views and suggestions on the Town Council's role and help from other authorities.

Members discussed the situation, pointing out that this was a national problem and predictions had been made that as many as 1 in 6 retail outfits could be closed down by the end of the year. New retailers needed to be encouraged into the town, but high retail rents and business rates were a problem, as Buckingham was viewed as being in a wealthy area. Rents were subject to market forces and the rates were set by the Government. Many of the retail premises' owners were not local, and the property was part of a portfolio and if unoccupied the loss of rent could be set against tax. They were therefore unlikely to agree to a rent reduction until business picked up.

The Chairman pointed out that the Council was also a trader by running the markets and that market revenue could be affected if customers went elsewhere because some goods were no longer available in the town shops. A large empty premises such as Woolworths (and the Woolwich which is unoccupied still) in the town centre affected the retail atmosphere. If positive moves were made to start the development of the land behind Market Hill, the units could be available for when the economy recovers.

Proposed by Cllr. Smith, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **RECOMMENDED** that the Council or the Events Committee arrange a meeting with the Economic Development Officers of AVDC and BCC, Aylesbury Vale Advantage, the Buckingham Traders Association, the Buckingham Business Club and the Economy Group to discuss action and support for existing traders and the promotion of the town centre shopping facilities.

Cllr. Whyte indicated that he would like to attend such a meeting for the Buckingham Plan; Cllrs. Isham, Smith and Whyte are members of the Economy Group. The Chairman would be the Mayor (if a Council-led meeting) or Cllr. Stuchbury (if a Committee-organised meeting). All correspondents would receive a reply indicating that such a meeting was being planned.

#### **658/2009 (641) TO RECEIVE AND DISCUSS WAITROSE SPONSORSHIP FOR 2009**

Bugle Communications had responded that Waitrose had decided to delegate the marketing budget to individual stores rather than operate it centrally from head office. It was suggested that we contact the store direct. Members agreed.

**ACTION THE CLERK**

#### **659/2009 (635) TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE YOUTH DRAMA PROJECT**

The Chairman reported that – now that their Christmas productions were over – the two senior schools and the Youth Group would be meeting to finalise details. The performance date was booked and he would be looking for Councillor help on the night.

Should further expenditure be required the Committee agreed that the Chairman, the Mayor and Cllr. Smith could sanction it. The County and District Councillors and the Mayor would be formally invited to attend.

**ACTION THE CHAIRMAN/THE CLERK**

**660/2009 TO RECEIVE AND DISCUSS A REPORT ON AN EXPLORATORY MEETING WITH NIC BRENNAN, BCC EXTENDED SERVICES, HELD ON 16<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2008**

Mr. Brennan's report of the meeting with an outline of the brief of Extended Services had been circulated with the agenda. The Chairman reported that he had held a brief meeting with Mr. Brennan to find out about this funding source and who might be eligible. He felt the Committee could facilitate a meeting for eligible organisations and asked for Members suggestions – BTCV and the Heritage Trust were suggested as organisers of activities for young people. Members **AGREED** that such a meeting be organised, the Chairman to be supported by the Mayor and Cllr. Cadd (as a County Councillor).

Cllr. Whyte suggested that perhaps the Council needed to draw up a Community Cohesion Plan with a view to targeting available monies and making best use of assets such as the Bowls Club pavilion which were under-used at present.

**ACTION THE CHAIRMAN/THE CLERK**

**661/2009 (649) TO DISCUSS AND AGREE A SUITABLE CIVIC GIFT FOR THE APRIL TWINNING VISIT**

Members discussed the merits of an engraved crystal jug and glasses and a china jug to match the plate made locally and presented some years ago. Commissioning a Lilliput Lane model of the Old Gaol was also suggested. The Gaol shop currently had some crystal on sale which might be suitable – the Mayor to investigate. The Chairman would look into the costs of the hand-made jug.

The Mayor suggested that the custom of exchanging gifts might be discontinued as displaying the gifts was becoming more difficult. He would discuss this during the April visit.

**ACTION THE MAYOR/THE CHAIRMAN**

**662/2009 (632) TO REVIEW THE 2008 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS & CAROLS**

Members agreed that the three religious leaders would be invited to the 2009 event (noting that there will be a new incumbent at St. Peter and St Paul's by then).

*Cllr. Whyte left the meeting*

Criticism was also levelled at the angle of the tree outside the Gaol: AVDC would be asked to look at the housing and amend it so that the next tree stood – and remained – properly upright.

Eon would be prompted again for their costs for the Bridge Street feeder; no expansion of the installed lights would be considered until this figure was known.

**ACTION THE CLERK**

*The following items were postponed due to lack of time:*

**663/2009 TO REVIEW THE FRENCH MARKET (NOVEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup> 2008)**

**664/2009 (630) TO REVIEW THE 2008 CHRISTMAS PARADE**

**665/2009 (634) TO REVIEW THE 2008 COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING FAIR**

**666/2009 (639) TO AGREE A DONATION TO THE AIR AND ARMY CADETS FOR THEIR ATTENDANCE AT THE 2008 BONFIRE**

Members agreed a donation of £150 to each Cadet organisation as they had both worked all day, despite the weather.

**ACTION THE CLERK**

**667/2009 TO DISCUSS REQUIREMENTS AND AGREE THAT THE OFFICE SHOULD SEEK QUOTATIONS/COSTS FOR:**

- i) hanging baskets and planters (summer and winter)
- ii) bin or skip provision/litter clearance after the May and August music festivals
- iii) skips for the River Rinses
- iv) removal of road signs etc for the Charter Fair
- v) post-Fair litter clearance
- vi) entertainment for the Teddy Bears Picnic & Community Fair
- vii) Sealed Knot appearance at the Bonfire
- viii) Firework Display
- ix) provision of signs for Freedom Parade, Charter Fair and Christmas Parade
- x) provision of barriers for Charter Fair and Bonfire
- xi) town centre signage (details to be sought from Cllr. Whyte)

Members **AGREED.**

**ACTION THE CLERK**

**668/2009 TO AGREE TO SET UP MEETINGS WITH THE APPROPRIATE PARTIES TO DISCUSS:**

- i) the Charter Fair
- ii) the Christmas Parade
- iii) the Festival Fortnight
- iv) Remembrance Parade

Members **AGREED.**

**ACTION THE CLERK**

**669/2009 TO DISCUSS AND AGREE THE SENDING OF LETTERS AFTER PRECEPT TO ALL EVENT COLLEAGUES WITH DETAILS OF THE BUDGET AGREED, ROAD CLOSURE COST TO BE DEDUCTED, ETC.**

Members **AGREED.**

**ACTION THE CLERK**

## **670/2009 TO RECEIVE THE BUDGET FIGURES AND DISCUSS AND AGREE THE PRECEPT REQUEST**

The current budget figures and proposed precept request had been circulated with the agenda. The Chairman explained why some had budgets been kept at par and others grown by small amounts. The £500 buffer for the Buckingham Summer Festival would be rolled over into next year as there had been no call on the fund this year. Members agreed that there was no need to budget for photo copyright for the new town map as photos were now available in-house. Small budgets were allocated to FairTrade and the Pancake Race; the latter would not be run in 2009 and could be planned later in the year for 2010 (but would fall within this next fiscal year).

Members disagreed with the Mayor's estimate of £800 for the Freedom Parade and felt that £1300 would be appropriate. [*Clerk's note: this is not an Events budget head – it is under 131 Major Projects*]

*Cllr. Stevens left the meeting.*

The estimated market income was reduced to £30,000 to reflect the current economic situation. Members agreed £4000 for Market Entertainment & Promotion as per Min. 650.2, Cllr. Hirons dissenting. The budgets as modified are attached to these minutes.

*Members and the Clerk agreed to carry on past 10.00pm, and discussion and reporting of the following items was curtailed accordingly.*

## **671/2009 MARKETS & TRADE**

671.1 To discuss and agree whether the pitch rents for the Farmers' Market traders who attended Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January should be waived as a gesture of goodwill.

Agreed. The day had been exceptionally cold; 6 traders had attended.

671.2 To receive reports on the markets

No report.

671.3 To discuss whether the Market SubGroup should have permission to spend from budget heads 4227 and/or 4229, subject to Committee approval of the proposed use

The Chairman had proposed this; Cllr. Smith felt it was unnecessary and if further funding was required it would be brought to the Committee for decision.

671.4 (636) To receive an update on the Buckingham Bag project

The bags had been delivered and the launch date was to be arranged.

671.5 To receive a report on a complaint made by a trader

*Postponed.*

## **672/2009 PRESS RELEASES**

None agreed.

**673/2009 CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

There were no Chairman's items for information.

Meeting closed at: 10.13pm

CHAIRMAN ..... DATE .....