

High Wycombe Town Committee Minutes

Date: 10 June 2014

Time: 7.00 - 8.50 pm

PRESENT: Councillor A R Green
(in the Chair)

Councillors M Hussain JP, K Ahmed, I Bates, R B Colomb, C A Ditta, R Farmer, S Graham, M Hanif, A E Hill, A Hussain, M Hussain, M E Knight, B E Pearce, C Shafique MBE and T Snaith,

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Z Ahmed, Mrs L M Clarke OBE, Ms R Knight, Ms P L Lee, Miss S Manir, S F Parker and Ms J D Wassell

ALSO PRESENT:

Mrs P Sawyer	Wycombe Sound
Mr C Phillips	Wycombe Sound
Cllr Alex Slater	

1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2014 be agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor S Graham declared an other interest in Item 5 (Community Asset Transfer of Bellfield Community House) as a trustee of the Hilltop Community Centre which had a lease with Wycombe District Council. Councillor Graham remained in the Chamber throughout discussions.

3 WYCOMBE SOUND - COMMUNITY RADIO FOR WYCOMBE

Mrs Philippa Sawyer (Programme Director) and Mr Chris Phillips (Managing Director) of Wycombe Community Radio CIC Ltd (Wycombe Sound) gave a presentation to the Committee detailing the outcomes of the 2013 pilot of the Wycombe Sound project and their plans for the station's future.

Members were reminded that the pilot had run from 9 December 2013 to 5 January 2014, with an aim to engage, inform, and encourage discussion on issues affecting the town, as well as to entertain. The station had been based in the centre of the town in a unit in the Eden Centre, which had been provided with assistance from HWBIDCo.

Mrs Sawyer outlined the successes of the pilot, which had included providing online content, offering volunteering and work experience opportunities, obtaining press coverage, building relationships with local businesses and involvement in community projects. In relation to the station's future plans Members heard that the aim remains to obtain a full licence from Ofcom; however, due to the number of applications currently being processed it was likely to be towards the end of the year before a full licence application could be made. In the meantime Wycombe Sound had applied for a further 4 week restricted service licence starting on 27 November 2014; the station would also move to a new community media centre in Bridge Street. Mrs Sawyer outlined her recent work in networking and improving revenue generation in order to ensure the longevity of the business. She expressed confidence that the case for the station being granted a full licence was strong.

Members endorsed the work of Wycombe Community Radio, agreed that the first pilot had been successful, and wished the team success with their work. Some concern was raised about the move to Bridge Street, being further out of the town centre, and Mrs Sawyer responded that due to the cost of unit space the Bridge Street centre represented a more realistic option. Some concern was also raised about transmitter coverage; Mr Phillips responded that permission for a stronger transmitter would be included within the Ofcom full licence application, and that in the meantime the station hoped to map coverage across the area. The station was also now available online for listeners outside of the coverage area.

The Chairman thanked the representatives of Wycombe Sound for an informative presentation and wished them well with their future plans.

4 COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER OF BELLFIELD COMMUNITY HOUSE

The Committee considered a report which proposed the Community Asset Transfer of Bellfield Community House to Action for Children on terms set out in the report.

Members sought confirmation that the proposal for a peppercorn rent was in accordance with Council policy, and received an assurance from the Head of Community that this was permissible within the Community Asset Transfer Policy, agreed last year. It was noted that the terms proposed were on a 'full repair and insuring' basis, so that there would be no on-going cost implications for the Council; additionally the lease would require the return of the asset in a maintained state at the end of the lease period of 25 years.

Members queried the proposal to offer a peppercorn rent where this had not been the case with other community centres such as the Reggie Goves Centre and Hilltop Community Centre. The Head of Community responded that different community centres across the district had different facilities and different ownership and operational arrangements, and therefore comparison was not possible.

In response to a suggestion the Head of Community agreed to organise a meeting involving ward Councillors and representatives from Action for Children.

Members supported the proposal for the Community Asset Transfer of Bellfield Community House on the terms set out in the report.

RESOLVED: That the Committee recommends to Cabinet:

- (i) That on the basis that the Council considers that the purpose for which the land is to be disposed of is likely to contribute to the achievement of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social, or environmental well-being in respect of the whole or any part of its area, or of all or any persons resident or present in its area, Bellfield Community House be leased to Action for Children for 25 years for £1 per year on a full repairing and insuring basis, with a rolling mutual break clause that could be exercised at 5 years subject to 6 months' notice (if not exercised at 5 years, then the next opportunity would be at 10, and so on); the terms to include use for community hire at rates affordable to the local community and comparable to similar venues; and
- (ii) That delegated authority be given to the Major Projects and Estates Executive, in consultation with the Head of Community Services and District Solicitor & Monitoring Officer, to agree Heads of Terms for an Agreement for Lease and Lease, and to agree final terms for the Agreement for Lease and Lease.

5 CEMETERY SITE OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Following a report to the Committee in March 2014 on site options for an additional cemetery, the report before the Committee updated Members on the results of a site options appraisal of a selected number of sites and sought members' views on options for progressing the project. It was noted that six parish / town councils had been asked whether they were interested in a joint scheme with the Town Committee and to identify potential sites within their areas. Downley and Hazlemere had expressed interest in a joint scheme, and Hazlemere had suggested the use of the site at Queensway.

After discussion Members agreed that four sites should be further investigated - Queensway; Abbey Barn land south of the M40; Terriers Farm; and Coates Lane. A Member request to carry out an initial assessment on one further site, which had not been included in the site options appraisal, was supported at the meeting, and this was land at Hillbottom Road.

It was noted that a full feasibility study on any preferred site would cost an estimated £20,000 per site, and that in relation to the Coates Lane and Queensway sites there may be potential to share some of the cost with the Parish Councils. Given that the current cemetery capacity was sufficient for some 20 to 25 years it was agreed that costs in relation to feasibility investigations should not be incurred at this stage, but that officers should ascertain the likely purchase price of sites not in Council ownership before a decision to commission a full feasibility study was made.

RESOLVED: That the Committee recommends to Cabinet that further investigations be undertaken in relation to the sites at Queensway, Abbey Barn land south of the M40, Terriers Farm, Coates Lane and Hillbottom Road, to include consultation with Parish Councils on the potential for shared costs and an assessment of land availability and likely cost.

6 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY FUNDING IN HIGH WYCOMBE UNPARISHED WARDS

The Committee was advised that at its 16 September 2014 meeting the High Wycombe Town Committee would be asked to recommend to Cabinet on the use of £200,000 CIL funding available for infrastructure improvements in 2015/16. Members were invited to put forward initial suggestions for schemes by 8 August 2014, and based on the suggestions received from both members and service providers a report would be brought to the 16 September 2014 meeting seeking recommendations for consultation and a decision by Cabinet.

During discussions members requested a tighter definition of eligible infrastructure in relation to CIL funding, as well as clarification on how community groups were to be notified so that they could bid for funds. It was also proposed that a sub-group be established to assess applications before they were brought to the Committee: officers were asked to consider how this might fit within the process. An information sheet for the Committee addressing these queries was requested.

It was also agreed to recommend to Cabinet that the High Wycombe Town Committee should receive 25% local allocation of CIL funds rather than 15%, given that this was possible and the town generated the bulk of development in the District.

Members requested a correction to paragraph 8 of the report in that the recommendation of the Committee in November 2013 had been in relation to a *contribution towards the feasibility study* for the upgrade of the Pastures Church, not the works themselves.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Committee recommends to Cabinet that the High Wycombe Town Committee are asked to make recommendations to Cabinet on an annual allocation of 25% of CIL funding generated from developments in the unparished High Wycombe area, rather than the 15% that is currently the case.
- (ii) That an information sheet be provided to the Committee addressing members' further queries.

7 ADOPTION OF WORDING / LOGO TO IDENTIFY PROJECTS IN RECEIPT OF FUNDING FROM THE HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE COMMUNITY SUPPORT GRANT

The Committee considered a report which proposed the development of a logo and / or form of wording to identify those projects which had been funded by the High Wycombe Town Committee Community Support Grant, to enable these to be distinguished from those projects which have been funded from the Council's General Fund.

Members considered that the proposal offered an opportunity to promote the work of the Committee within the community, and it was supported in principle. Members agreed that work to develop the proposal should be taken forward by way of an informal working group, and Councillors Green, Snaith, K Ahmed and Pearce volunteered to form the group.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That, subject to there being no legal issues preventing the matter, the proposal to adopt a form of wording and/or a logo to identify projects in receipt of funding from the High Wycombe Town Committee Community Support Grant be supported in principle; and
- (ii) an informal working group be established, comprising Councillors Green, Snaith, K Ahmed, & Pearce, the Head of Community, the District Solicitor, and a representative from Communications, to take forward this proposal, and a report be brought back to the Committee in due course for a final decision to be recommended to Cabinet.

8 HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE - FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the work programme be noted and items on a linking proposal with the Philippines and County Council grass-cutting be added to the work programme for the Committee's 25 November meeting.

9 INFORMATION SHEETS

RESOLVED: That the Information Sheet 02/2014 Budgetary Control Report Outturn 2013/14 be noted.

10 URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

The Chairman reported on his recent proposal to establish a group of members to participate in World War I commemoration events on behalf of the Town Committee and to assist with the development of events.

Chairman

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

Miss C MacKenzie	Principal Democratic Services Officer
Mr I Hunt	Democratic Services Manager
Ms E Lund	Democratic Services
Ms E Jewell	Head of Community