

HAYWARDS HEATH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Environment and General Purposes Committee 18th December 2023.

Nick Chapman (Chair)
Alison Rees (Vice Chair)
Anne- Marie Cooke
Sandy Ellis
Stephanie Inglesfield
Deanna Nicholson
Duncan Pascoe
Leila Wilson

Apologies Absent***

Also present: Town Clerk, Events and Community Officer (ECO) and Responsible Finance Officer (RFO).

40. Apologies

None

41. Public Participation

None

42. Minutes

The minutes of the Environment & General Purposes Committee dated 6th November 2023 were taken as read, confirmed as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.

43. Substitutes

None.

44. Declarations of Interest

None.

45. Christmas Event 2024

The ECO presented an update on the Christmas events that had been held prior to the meeting of the Committee. It was noted that both events had issues with regards to their delivery so there was a need to review what the Town Council wished to offer in 2024. These issues, were specifically, that attendance was low at the Christmas Carols event with sixteen people not turning up who had booked on and that there were not enough volunteers to marshals at the fireworks to safely run the event as reported to Full Council. Members were also reminded that the Christmas Fireworks were provided to support the Orchards Shopping Centre with their Christmas activities and thoughts were moving towards looking at an alternative event to support such. Furthermore, it was noted that the Orchards Shopping Centre had a record turn out this year in terms of footfall through the afternoon, which should be supported next year and that other organisation in the Town were also reporting low turn outs at their Christmas events. Members were open to looking at a different format in 2024 and discussed options such as laser/drone show, closing South Road for an event, organising a best dressed shop competition, reviving the business Christmas trees project and the idea of floats/lantern display. Members were split on their support for fireworks as there was a fine balance between those people who attended and those opposed to fireworks on the grounds of the environmental affect and the distress cause to animals. Members also asked that consideration was also given to having the event on the Broadway or somewhere else in Town. However, discussion led Members to favour some sort of event of South Road to support the Orchards and capture their

foot fall. With the ECO and Town Clerk advising that a meeting was arranged with the Orchard Shopping Centre Manager later in the week, Members asked that the options for a 2024 event be brought back to the next meeting of the Committee.

Members **RESOLVED** that **the Christmas Event needed to be reviewed and delegated the discussions regarding future arrangements with the Orchards Shopping to officers who were asked to return with a proposal to Februarys Meeting of the Committee.**

46. Town Council Events 2024

Members were happy with the programme of events presented to the Committee and the costings associated, taking into account the work taking place to review Christmas arrangements. It was agreed that the monies presented for the carols and fireworks totalling £2,500 would be combined to pay for any new arrangements. It was also noted that the costs for the events programmes did not include any sponsorship that would be sought leading up to each event and would be offset against the budget presented and used to add value to each event where possible. It was questioned why there were no monies allocated towards twinning events within the budget. The Town Clerk responded that an allocation was made with the current budget for £2,5000, but no request was made to support an event/visit nor was the Town Council invited to meet a delegation in June. This coupled with no request being made for support for the next Council led officers to believe there was no requirement for such. After discussion it was agreed that it be better to have some monies in place so the Council could react if necessary so it was agreed to allocate £1,000 as it was felt an event could be held for such and £2,500 was a large amount. It was therefore agreed to increase the Committee's Budget under the next item on the agenda so that any visitors from the Town's twinned Towns could be hosted. Members were also reminding that Twinning was all around having friends on the continent and it was asked that the Town Clerk find out what was happening with Twinning Association activities in 2024.

Members **RESOLVED** the expenditure for Town Council events in 2024 as presented in the report for inclusion in the Environment and General Purpose Budget.

47. Environment and General Purposes Budget

The RFO present the budget making the Members aware of the following

- Burials income and expenditure was hard to gauge because it is based on demand. The figures presented were an average of last five years.
- Muster Green planting showed a significant increase due flower costs from Ford Prison, under its new regime, had significantly increased. The new prices from Ford Prison were tested by another provider who confirmed that the Town Council was getting had been getting a good deal in the past.
- Street lighting - the three-year fixed term agreement for power needed to be reviewed.

With this in mind and the requirement to add monies into the budget for Twinning Members unanimously.

RECOMMENDED the draft Environment and General Purposes Committee Budget, as presented, with the addition of a £1,000 budget for Twinning Activities, to the Policy and Finance Committee for inclusion in the 2024/2025 budget.

48. Young Enterprise Awards

Members were supportive of Cllr Pascoe's motion and requested that officers look into developing a criteria for the award. It was accepted that any award would be more complicated than the Community Awards that were already being progressed for the Town Meeting in April due to the need to monitor the financial element of any award and the need to bring local businesses into the project to support any recipient. However, it was agreed that the award would come forward when the aforementioned implications had been investigated and that a budget of £1,000 be recommended for inclusion in the Policy and Finance budget.

Members **RESOLVED** Cllr Pascoe's motion in relation to the introduction of a Young Enterprise Competition with a budget of £1,000 to be included when the Policy and Finance Committee consider the Town Council's 2024/2025 budget.

49. Britain In Bloom

In light of information still being pending from the Britain In Bloom organisers Members offered their support for an entry into the competition and looked forward to updates at the next meeting and moving forward.

Members **NOTED** the update.

50. Urgent Items

None.

Meeting closed at 9.02pm