

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Hitchin Committee held in the Peter Morrison Hall,
Benslow Music School, Benslow Lane, Hitchin
on Tuesday, 5th June, 2018 at 7.30 pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 - 36 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Richard Thake.

2 MINUTES - 6 MARCH 2018

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 - 1 minute 23 seconds

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 6 March 2018 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

3 MINUTES - 17 MAY 2018

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 - 1 minute 35 seconds

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 17 May 2018 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

4 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 - 1 minute 45 seconds

There was no other business notified.

5 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 - 2 minutes 19 seconds

- (1) The Chairman thanked those who had attended Town Talk and welcomed those who were speaking at Public Participation;
- (2) The Chairman welcomed Hector, a student working with Committee Services for a week to find out how Council's work;
- (3) The Chairman thanked Councillor Harris for her Chairmanship last year and those who were no longer on the Committee – Former Councillors Alan Millard, Frank Radcliffe, Ray Shakespeare-Smith and Adrian Smith;
- (4) The Chairman welcomed the new Members to this Committee, Councillors Clare Billing, Val Bryant, Sam Collins and Mike Hughson;
- (5) The Chairman reminded Members that, in accordance with Council policy, this meeting was being audio recorded, members of the public may use their own devices to record the meeting or take photographs, but ensure that the meeting was not disrupted;

- (6) The Chairman drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question;
- (7) The Chairman stated that he was proud to be serving as Chairman of this Committee. The Hitchin Committee worked well, in a collaborative way, to meet the needs of the residents and he hoped that this would continue in the future;
- (8) The Chairman welcomed Councillor Michael Weeks, Executive Member for Waste, Recycling and Environment, who would be answering questions regarding the waste contract;
- (9) The Chairman advised that he had asked for a report on Churchgate and had received the following response from the Deputy Chief Executive:

“There is nothing that is able to be reported in time for this meeting. Work continues to try to establish whether there is a deliverable proposal and, if so, how it would be delivered. Further to the recent Members Information Service note we expect to have the analysis of the consultation responses available soon and will notify members in advance of this being published. I anticipate that by the date of the next meeting there will be more information to report to you and if there is a need for any substantive decisions by Full Council prior to the next Hitchin Committee meeting it may be possible to have an extraordinary meeting, subject to the requirements of the Council's Constitution.”
- (10) The Chairman advised that he had agreed to take the Item entitled Hitchin Bid Manager immediately following Public Participation.

6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - 11TH HITCHIN (HOLY SAVIOUR) GUIDES

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 - 6 minutes 54 seconds

Prior to the presentation Councillor Paul Clark declared a declarable interest in that his wife was Divisional Commissioner of the Girl Guides.

Ms Jo Clinch, 11th Hitchin (Holy Saviour), Guides thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of their grant application.

The Chairman thanked Ms Clinch, Kirsten and Kesia for their presentation.

7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - BRITISH SCHOOLS MUSEUM

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 - 17 minutes 42 seconds

Prior to the item being discussed Councillor Nicola Harris declared a declarable interest as she was the Council representative on the British Schools Museum.

Sam Mason, Manager of the British Schools Museum, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee.

The Chairman thanked Mr Mason for his presentation.

8 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - HEADWAY

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 - 25 minutes 32 seconds

Mr John Archer, Headway Herts, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of their grant application.

The Chairman thanked Mr Archer for his presentation.

9 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - HITCHIN CHRISTIAN CENTRE

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 – Session 1 - 34 minutes 56 seconds

Ms Jazz Minhas, Community Co-ordinator and Mr Phil Jackson, Centre Manager, Hitchin Christian Centre, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of their grant application.

The Chairman thanked Ms Minhas and Mr Jackson for their presentation.

10 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - JOCA HITCHIN

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 - 44 minutes 24 seconds

Prior to the item being discussed Councillor Simon Harwood declared a declarable interest as he was the Council's representative on the King George V Playing Fields User Group and was a family member of the Hitchin Rugby Club. He did not believe that this would prevent him from listening to the presentation.

Prior to the item being discussed Councillor Paul Clark declared a declarable interest as he was the Vice-President of the Hitchin Rugby Club. He did not believe this would prevent him from listening to the presentation.

Mr Richard Lucas and Mr Laurie Ray, JOCA Hitchin, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of their grant application.

The Chairman thanked Mr Lucas and Mr Ray for their presentation.

11 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - RHYTHMS OF THE WORLD

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 – 54 minutes 48 seconds

Mr John Brierley and Mr Alan Tomlin, Rhythms of the World, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of their grant application.

The Chairman thanked Mr Brierley and Mr Tomlin for their presentation.

12 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - HITCHIN RAIL COMMUTERS

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 - 1 hour 2 minutes 45 seconds

Ms Ros Southwood and Ms Becky Farrow, Hitchin Rail Commuters, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee regarding the problems faced by commuters and other rail users following the introduction of the new rail timetable.

The Chairman thanked Ms Southwood and Ms Farrow fir their presentation.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Hitchin Committee agree and issue the following statement:

The Hitchin Committee is deeply concerned that the rail industry has failed to look after the interests of Hitchin residents in the planning and subsequent implementation of the Railplan 20/20 timetable changes.

In particular, the Committee is shocked that the changes have clearly been ill thought out, led to many hundreds of cancellations and ignored the warnings and concerns voiced by Hitchin Commuters over many weeks and months. This has led to huge amounts of stress and anxiety for travellers and their families with no certainty on journey times and regular overcrowding, which is likely to continue for weeks to come.

Ticketing arrangements are clearly confusing, inconsistent and irrational and need urgent attention and rationalisation.

We call upon Network Rail, Thameslink and Great Northern to publish the risk assessment carried out prior to these changes, details of its consultations with users and details of the remedial actions it will take to correct mistakes and careless timetabling and ticketing, which are clearly to the detriment of many groups of train travellers.

We will work closely with residents and with local Rail Groups such as Hitchin Rail Commuters and Hitchin Rail Users Group to help ensure remedial and new train timetables are fit for purpose and that disastrous changes like this can never happen again.”

- (2) That the above statement be sent to Bim Afolami MP, Network Rail, Thameslink and Great Northern Railways.

13 WASTE AND RECYCLING CONTRACT

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 – 1 hour 40 minutes 54 seconds

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Weeks, Executive Member for Waste, Recycling and Environment, and thanked him for agreeing to attend this meeting.

Councillor Michael Weeks, Executive Member for Waste, Recycling and Environment, thanked the Chairman for the invitation to address the Committee and gave a verbal presentation regarding the issues and problems that had occurred since the introduction of the new waste contract.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Weeks for agreeing to attend the meeting and commented that Executive Members attending local meetings to answer questions was very important.

The Chairman announced there would be a short comfort break.

14 GRANTS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 2 – 16 seconds

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards from the Development and Visioning Budgets be noted;

- (2) That the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being Hitchin be endorsed;

REASON FOR DECISION: To keep Members of the Committee apprised of the latest developments in community activities in Hitchin.

15 GRANT APPLICATION - 11TH HITCHIN (HOLY SAVIOUR) GUIDES

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 2 – 6 minutes 29 seconds

Prior to the item being discussed Councillor Paul Clark declared a declarable interest in that his wife was Divisional Commissioner of the Girl Guides.

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £1,500 be awarded to 11th Hitchin (Holy Saviour) Guides from the 2017/18 Discretionary Budget towards the cost of providing summer activities, outings and equipment.

REASON FOR DECISION: To improve services provided by local organisations and groups which are accessed by the community.

16 GRANT APPLICATION - BRITISH SCHOOLS MUSEUM

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 2 – 6 minutes 44 seconds

Prior to the item being discussed Councillor Nicola Harris declared a declarable interest as she was the Council representative on the British Schools Museum.

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £1,320 be awarded to the British Schools Museum from the 2017/18 Discretionary Budget towards the cost of essential roof maintenance.

REASON FOR DECISION: To improve services provided by local organisations and groups which are accessed by the community.

17 GRANT APPLICATION - HEADWAY

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 2 – 6 minutes 53 seconds

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £1,500 be awarded to Headway from the 2017/18 Discretionary Budget towards the cost of providing therapy sessions.

REASON FOR DECISION: To improve services provided by local organisations and groups which are accessed by the community.

18 GRANT APPLICATION - HITCHIN CHRISTIAN CENTRE

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 2 – 13 minutes 21 seconds

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £2,500 be awarded to the Hitchin Christian Centre from the 2017/18 Discretionary Budget towards the cost of providing a debt centre, job club and life skills training.

REASON FOR DECISION: To improve services provided by local organisations and groups which are accessed by the community.

19 GRANT APPLICATION - HITCHIN RUGBY CLUB

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 2 – 13 minutes 54 seconds

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Prior to the item being discussed Councillor Simon Harwood declared a declarable interest as he was the Council's representative on the King George V Playing Fields User Group and was a family member of the Hitchin Rugby Club. He did not believe that this would prevent him from taking part in the debate and vote.

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £1,000 be awarded to Hitchin Rugby Club from the 2017/18 Discretionary Budget towards the cost of setting up their own arm of JOCA.

REASON FOR DECISION: To improve services provided by local organisations and groups which are accessed by the community.

20 GRANT APPLICATION - RHYTHMS OF THE WORLD

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 2 – 15 minutes 22 seconds

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £3,756 be awarded to Rhythms of the World from the 2017/18 Discretionary Budget towards the cost of providing a one day community event.

REASON FOR DECISION: To improve services provided by local organisations and groups which are accessed by the community.

21 HITCHIN BID MANAGER

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 1 – 1 hour 27 minutes 19 seconds

Prior to the item being discussed Councillor Judi Billing declared a declarable interest as she was a Director of Hitchin Initiative. She did not have a pecuniary interest in Hitchin BID and therefore would remain in the room for the presentation.

Mr Tom Hardy, Hitchin BID Manager, thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the Committee and gave a verbal presentation on the issues and activities in Hitchin.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hardy for his presentation.

22 ISSUES AND EVENTS IN THE HITCHIN AREA

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 2 – 15 minutes 38 seconds

The Chairman advised that this item was to cover issues such as the waste and rail problems, which had both been discussed at this meeting.

Walsworth Festival

Councillor Lovewell gave a report regarding the 44th Walsworth Festival.

23 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AT FUTURE MEETINGS

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 2 – 15 minutes 34 seconds

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Service Director - Resources be requested to present a report regarding the former Hitchin Museum building (Charnwood) to the next meeting of this Committee, to include information on the issues discussed above;
- (2) That the Environmental Health Manager be requested to provide a report regarding air quality in Hitchin to the next meeting of this Committee.

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REASON FOR DECISION: To keep the Hitchin Committee apprised of issues affecting the area.

24 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Audio Recording – Start of Item – Session 2 – 19 minutes 55 seconds

RESOLVED: That Members be requested to forward written reports regarding their work with outside bodies to the Acting Committee and Member Services Manager, these reports will be circulated to all Members of the Committee and included in the next available agenda for information.

REASON FOR DECISION: To keep the Hitchin Committee apprised of the work and activities in wards and associated with outside bodies.