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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES ON WEDNESDAY, 8TH DECEMBER, 2021 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Councillor Daniel Allen (Chair), Amy Allen, Kate Aspinwall, Simon Bloxham, Morgan Derbyshire, Gary Grindal, Terry Hone, David Levett, Ian Mantle, Mike Rice and Adem Ruggiero-Cakir*

In Attendance: *James Lovegrove (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer), Louis Mutter (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer) and Claire Morgan (Community Engagement Team Leader)*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting no members of the public or registered speakers.*

13 WELCOME

Audio recording – 13 seconds

The Chair welcomed those present at the meeting.

The Chair announced that Councillor Paul Clark, Deputy Leader of the Council and Leader of the Lib Dem Group, had passed away and a minutes silence would be held in his memory.

14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 2 minutes 36 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sean Prendergast.

15 ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIR FOR REMAINDER OF CIVIC YEAR 2021/22

Audio recording – 2 minutes 44 seconds

The Chair called for nominations for Vice-Chair of the Letchworth Area Committee for the remainder of the civic year 2021/22.

Councillor Ian Mantle proposed Councillor Gary Grindal as Vice-Chair and was seconded by Councillor Amy Allen.

Following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That Councillor Gary Grindal be elected as Vice-Chair for the Letchworth Area Committee for the remainder of the civic year 2021/22.

16 MINUTES - 13 OCTOBER 2021

Audio Recording – 3 minutes 45 seconds

Councillor Daniel Allen, as Chair, proposed and Councillor Amy Allen seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 13 October 2021 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

17 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 4 minutes 29 seconds

There was no other business notified.

18 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 4 minutes 33 seconds

(1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio and video recorded, with the audio recording available via Mod.Gov and the video available on YouTube.

(2) The Chair 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.

19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 4 minutes 53 seconds

There was no public participation.

20 GRANTS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

Audio recording – 4 minutes 58 seconds

Councillor Ian Mantle declared that he was a member of the committee which administered Mrs Howards Hall and therefore he would not engage with discussions relating to this part of the report.

The Community Engagement Team Leader presented the report entitled 'Grant Applications and Community Update and advised Members of the following:

- There had been support offered to the newly created group of Hong Kong Chinese who had settled in Letchworth and a welcome event had been held on 7 December 2021.
- There was a suggestion that government funding was available for English language classes and the Community Engagement Team Leader had investigated funds available.
- North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum was financially supporting some of these English language classes until government funding was available.
- The Capital Grants awarded £10,000 to Letchworth Corner Sports Club and most of this money had now been delivered. The Community Engagement Team Leader would visit the site in January and release the remaining 10% of funds if conditions met.
- £36,000 had been awarded to replace the heating system at Mrs Howards Hall and once lease issues were resolved, the grant funds would be released.
- North Herts African Caribbean group had been awarded funds for a large scale in person events, but these were scaled back due to the pandemic, and instead a series of smaller or online events were held.
- There had been £100k requested from the Health Protection Board funding and there were many applications for these funds and a further £100k was requested. These funds were to cover a whole range of issues affecting groups.

- Housing Support Grants (previously Winter Support Fund) offered £30k for food provision and £40k for utilities and this would be distributed in liaison with food banks, citizens advice and social landlords, as well as the Council's own departments.
- Arts and Culture Networking Group would take place on 13 December via Zoom.
- Chair's Community Recognition Award was expanded and would now be for all people doing community work, not just voluntary work. The application forms for this was available online.
- Holocaust Memorial Day was confirmed for 27 January, with an in-person event in the Council Chamber and streamed via Zoom as well. This year's theme is 'One Day'.
- Confirmed there were no grant applications to this committee and encouraged Members to pass on details of grants to groups they are working with.
- Updated Members on the outstanding grant funds available for the remainder of this financial year and would share the deadline with Members via email following the meeting.

The Chair thanked the Community Engagement Team Leader for the work they had been doing.

Councillor Morgan Derbyshire proposed and Councillor Gary Grindal seconded and, following a vote, it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee endorse the actions taken by the Community Engagement team to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Letchworth.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

(1) To ensure the Members are kept informed of the work of the Community Engagement Team.

(2) This report is intended to inform Members of the financial resources available. It draws attention to the current budgetary situation by assisting in the effective financial management of budgets. This ensures that all actions are performed in line with the Authority's Financial Regulations, the Council's Constitution, and the guidance of the existing Grants policy as agreed by Cabinet in January 2020.

(3) The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims of the Council Plan.

21 LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY BID MANAGER

Audio recording – 16 minutes 34 seconds

The Chair advised that the Letchworth BID Manager was unable to attend the meeting to provide an update.

The Chair advised that there was a Christmas Market in Letchworth on Saturday 18 December 2021.

22 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Audio recording – 16 minutes 52 seconds

There were no updates from Members regarding Ward Matters and Outside Organisations.

The meeting closed at 7.47 pm

Chair

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