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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, LETCHWORTH

ON WEDNESDAY, 8TH JUNE, 2022 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Councillor Daniel Allen (Chair), Councillor Sean Prendergast (Vice-Chair), Amy Allen, Simon Bloxham, Terry Hone, David Levett, Ian Mantle, Tom Plater, Adem Ruggiero-Cakir and Sean Nolan*

In Attendance: *Ashley Hawkins (Community Engagement Officer) Louis Mutter (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer)*

Also Present:

At the commencement of the meeting approximately 5 members of the public, including registered speakers.

44 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 0:58

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Phil Weeder, Tamsin Thomas and Morgan Derbyshire.

45 MINUTES - 9 MARCH 2022, 26 MAY 2022

Audio Recording – 1:10

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 9 March and 26 May 2022 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

46 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 2:07

There was no other business notified.

47 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 2:10

- (1) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (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.

- (3) The Chair made a statement regarding the passing of the former Executive Member for Housing and Environmental Health Councillor Gary Grindal and invited Members to speak. The Chair then held a minute silence.

48 LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY BID MANAGER

Audio recording – 9:05

Ms Alice Johnson and Cathy Andrews, Letchworth Garden City BID Manager, thanked the Chair for the opportunity to address the Committee and gave a verbal presentation regarding the issues and activities in Letchworth Garden City Town Centre which included:

- They have been rebranding the BID – wanted to combine Letchworth Garden City values and history with modern aesthetics to attract a new audience;
- Have launched a new website and listening to BID member suggestions for the website;
- The Food & Drink festival was the first main event not restricted by lots of COVID regulations; saw a 20,000 footfall that weekend;
- Working on a tourism strategy – in early stages with other organisations;
- Potential tourism information centre;
- Upcoming events include: Green Festival, Letchworth Festival, World Food and Music and Christmas Festival.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Terry Hone
- Councillor Simon Bloxham
- Councillor Thomas Plater

In response to questions the Letchworth BID Manager advised:

- The BID meets regularly with the Letchworth Heritage Foundation and have a member on the BID board – interactions are positive;
- The BID listens to feedback given on events in Letchworth and took a different approach to the Jubilee this year;
- The tourism strategy is being collaborated across various platforms because there was money available to BIDs through the Welcome Back Fund.

49 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 17:55

A verbal presentation was given by Ms Tanya Dickson on behalf of Culturewood CIC regarding their grant application, including:

- Ms. Dickson runs a small social enterprise based in Hertfordshire which hosts outdoor educational sessions for families and adults;
- The funding is for a new project – mental health and well-being classes which have been well received in Welwyn and Hatfield that will come to inhabitants of Letchworth;
- 8 sessions with up to 8 adults which take a therapeutic approach.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Daniel Allen
- Councillor Simon Bloxham
- Councillor David Levett

In response to questions Ms Dickson advised:

- The sessions are promoted in a number of ways including through organisations that work with Romanian immigrants, working with various local schools and beginning a relationship with the Hertfordshire Constabulary and first responders;
- The organisation is receiving no other funding for this project;
- Culturewood CIC bases their success on feedback from their clients.

50 GRANT APPLICATION - CULTUREWOOD CIC

Audio Recording: 23:30

Councillor Ian Mantle proposed and Councillor Adem Ruggerio-Cakir seconded and, following a vote it was:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £1,000 be awarded to Culturewood CIC to provide new sessions focused on adults mental health and well-being.

51 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording: 24:28

A verbal presentation was given by Mr Ray Wilson from Green Care at Norton CIC regarding their grant application. Mr. Wilson highlighted the following points:

- Mr Wilson is representing a social and therapeutic horticulture group, working with adults experiencing loneliness, long-term unemployment and associated mental health issues;
- Thanks to grant funding the organisation has expanded dramatically in the last 12 months;
- Now operate in three sites in Letchworth, including at Standalone Farm;
- Mr Wilson shared a case study which demonstrated how useful Green Care at Norton CIC can help people living in Letchworth;
- The food and flowers produced by the organisation are ethical and sustainable and are sold in the Standalone Farm shop;
- The walking tractor is needed to turn over a large piece of land that cannot be done manually with spades;

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Ian Mantle

In response to questions Mr Wilson advised:

- The walking tractor will be used constantly to organise land on permaculture lines involving the top 4 inches of soil being regularly tilled;
- They are being provided with a small shipping container on site to lock up the walking tractor.

52 GRANT APPLICATION - GREEN CARE AT NORTON CIC

Audio recording:34:10

Councillor Simon Bloxham proposed and Councillor David Levett seconded and, following a vote it was:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £1,050 be awarded to Green Care at Norton CIC to purchase a Grillo G55 Walking Tractor

53 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio Recording: 35:40

A verbal update was given by Mr Glyn Holt of Wilbury and Ickleford School and Parent Association regarding their grant application which was accepted in 2021. Mr Holt highlighted the following key points:

- Applied for a grant for £2,000 to buy a cabin on the Wilbury School site as an Eco Cabin;
- Planning permission has now been granted which has been the main delay in building the cabin;
- Now need to resecure the grant and apply for quotes;
- The TerraCycling runs through Transition Town and the funds go to the School PTA, and is all carried out in a shed on the site;
- Delays have been caused by COVID and the school having a massive building project which has now been completed;
- The cabin will carry on the role of being used for TerraCycling as a clean and tidy sorting base and a way of educating the school children;
- The cabin will also be used to sell uniforms to parents, hosting events and storing litter-picker.;

In response to a question from Councillor Terry Hone, Mr Holt advised that blister packs can only be recycled by pharmacies as they may contain tablets; any packs that are passed on are sent to Superdrug in the High Street.

54 GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

Audio recording: 46:00

The Community Engagement Officer informed the Committee that the Assistant Community Engagement Officer Danny Pearson was unable to attend this meeting of the Letchworth Committee and so he was filling in.

The Community Engagement Officer presented the report entitled 'Grant and Community Update' and noted the following:

- 8.21 is an update as to what the Community Engagement Team have been doing;
- 8.22 provides an update on grants that have been received previously;
- Upcoming events in Letchworth include: First ever colour fun run on Saturday 11th July; Armed Forces day and Garden House Hospice and Isabel Hospice fountain to fountain challenge on 25h June;

The Chair then recommended to hold a vote of thanks to the Grants & Community Team.

RESOLVED:

- That the Committee thank the Grants & Community Team for their continued hard work;
- That the Committee be recommended to endorse the actions taken by the Community Engagement team to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Letchworth.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- To ensure the Members are kept informed of the work of the Community Engagement Team

- 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.

55 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Audio recording – 49:55

Members had no updates or reports for the Committee.

The meeting closed at 8:21 pm

Chair

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