

## COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 26<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024 AT 6PM IN THE TOWN COUNCIL'S COMMITTEE ROOM LOCATED IN THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON

**PRESENT:** Councillors Birch (Chair), Holland-Delamere (Vice Chair), Ashraf, Hallam, Hibbert, Lane, Miah, Marriott and Soan.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Mrs J Thorneycroft (Assistant Town Clerk), Miss F Barford (Democratic Services Officer), Miss J Haines (Events & Projects Officer) and Mr C Osborn (Community Engagement Officer).

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mr Clive

### 49. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted by Councillors Alwahabi and Russell.

### 50. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No declarations were made.

### 51. TO AUTHORISE THE CHAIR TO SIGN THE FOLLOWING MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

#### a) COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023

**RESOLVED:** The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023 as a true and accurate record.

#### b) EXTRAORDINARY COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 8<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2024

**RESOLVED:** The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous extraordinary meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 as a true and accurate record.

### 52. TO RECIEVE THE MINUTES OF THE GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 14<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024

The Chair explained a number of grants were reviewed and was pleased to inform members all Councillor Community Fund applications were approved. The Chair continued, some General Community Grant applications were declined however, some were approved.

**RESOLVED:** The minutes of the Grants Sub-Committee meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024 be approved and adopted.

### 53. EVENTS AND PROJECTS UPDATE

The Chair referred to the Events and Projects Report outlined within the agenda. The Chair explained any text highlighted in yellow should be noted by Committee members.

A Councillor explained the supplier, Festive Road had ceased trading and as a result the Town Council had acquired the dragon puppet as an alternative to it being disposed of. The Councillor added that the Diwali Puppets were saved and now within the possession of West Northamptonshire Council (WNC).

The Chair stated the Eid Event was to go-ahead and they were currently sourcing stalls and traders to partake. She explained the Town Council has proposed to sponsor the Northampton Pride Stage or the parade this year.

A Councillor posed there was discussion around the funding of the Diwali Event. The Assistant Town Clerk explained some further investigation was to take place to gain further information on the Diwali funding issues.

#### 54. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS UPDATE

Please refer to the full report outlined within the agenda. The Chair explained that NTC had inherited the Christmas Lighting from the former Northampton Borough Council and some had become tired and needed replacement. The Events and Projects Officer (EPO) stated some new Christmas lighting had been purchased in 2022 and 2023 and Northampton Town Council had been gradually including additions where lighting was beyond repair.

The EPO stated the Christmas lighting that had been inherited was estimated to be at least 10-years-old, and had exceeded its life-span or no longer sustainable.

A Councillor commented on the miniature Christmas tree trial that had been installed briefly during Christmas 2023 and asked why they had been removed. The Assistant Town Clerk explained a representative of Balfour Beatty requested they be removed due to concerns on wind tolerance and safety.

The Chair explained the various options outlined within the Christmas Light Report and the options would be given full consideration of the Christmas Working Party.

A Councillor posed whether more Christmas lighting be installed from Abington Park to Weston Favell. The Chair explained that Christmas lighting was very costly however, we could request if some businesses wished to sponsor however, the EPO would continue to research smaller LED alternatives, similar to the miniature Christmas trees that could be installed.

A Councillor requested if more Christmas lighting could be placed in the outer-wards.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed, to delegate authority on the scope of works for Christmas Lighting to the Events & Projects Officer and the Assistant Town Clerk in consultation with the Christmas Working Group and all plans would be reported back to this committee.

#### 55. CHRISTMAS TREES UPDATE

The Chair referred to the Christmas Tree update outlined within the agenda.

The EPO explained the tree usually placed in the Market Square had been placed at Becketts Park during Christmas 2023 and many people had commented positively therefore, it was proposed that this tree be included as part of the general Christmas programme.

**RESOLVED:** As per the Christmas Tree report within the agenda, it was agreed to locate a fifth, 40-foot Christmas tree on the Market Square, on the condition there was enough space to allow for this.

**NOTED**

#### 56. FIREWORKS UPDATE

The Chair referred to the Fireworks Report within the agenda. She continued to highlight that a deposit was required to secure the booking of the firework display. The Assistant Town Clerk stated it was estimated that 18,000 people had attended Fireworks 2023.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to enter a 3-year contract and payment plan with the current fireworks supplier.

**RESOLVED:** It was approved to delegate authority to the Officers in consultation with the Town Council's Firework Working Party and any plans would be reported back to this committee.

#### **57. STATEMENT TO THE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

**RESOLVED:** As per the report outlined in the agenda, the Assistant Town Clerk would send the agreed statement with the requested amendment to the Northampton Town Centre Business Improvement District.

#### **58. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER UPDATE**

The Community Engagement Officer outlined within the report the work he'd undertaken since assuming the role and requested approval. A Councillor raised the Youth Summit were well established and posed whether a Youth Council was required.

A Councillor raised it was the responsibility of Councillors to engage with young people within their ward and relay their views. In response to a question, the Community Engagement Officer explained, he had contacted local Youth Groups who would willingly engage and other local authorities that have youth councils in-situ.

A Councillor explained he had engaged with young people and was surprised at their constructive ideas and believed it would be beneficial. In response to a question, the Community Engagement Officer stated from his research most youth councils include young people aged between 13-17 years old.

In response to a question, the Community Engagement Officer stated the survey software had previously been used in the Moulton Leys Consultation previously.

**RESOLVED:** As outlined in the report within the agenda, the expenditure be approved from the Community Needs Analysis Budget Code.

#### **59. PROPOSED PROJECTS AND IDEAS TEMPLATE**

The Chair referred to the 'proposal form' included within the relevant report.

The Chair explained the form would enable a consistent process for Councillors or Community Groups who wish to apply for events within the outer-wards. She continued previously some events required a high-volume of Officer time that was overlooked within the costings and intended that groups steered by a committee apply.

The Assistant Town Clerk explained a new budget code would be formulated for 'Out of Town Projects'.

In response to a question, a Councillor stated that the Council had not costed Officer time from their allocated grant funding. The Assistant Town Clerk explained the form would provide a starting-point on the true costs of projects or events requested and ensure value.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed a trial be undertaken of the proposed Projects and Ideas form and be reviewed at a later stage.

#### **60. COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER'S SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT REPORT**

A Councillor highlighted whether the amount of engagement could be considered positive for a Town Council of this size. In response, a Councillor posed whether monies could be allocated towards some social media marketing to target specific demographics.

The Assistant Town Clerk stated there was reduced activity and engagement over January 2024 as it was a relatively quiet month. A Councillor stated that impressions should also be included within future social media engagement reports rather than just reach and following. A Councillor explained further analytics would be beneficial in pin-pointing what posts generated high or low engagement.

The EPO stated the high amount of engagement in December 2023 correlates with the Freedom of Northampton Event. A Councillor added, the Freedom Event was successful due to young people being present and their parents wishing to engage on social media.

*ACTION: The Communications Officer to investigate ways of promotion and expanding reach of the Town Council's social media presence and provide some costings.*

**NOTED**

**61. WESTON FAVELL CENTRE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL UPDATE**

A Councillor explained on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 there would be a meeting with community groups to discuss and plan how to contribute to the Weston Favell Centre's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. A Councillor highlighted the importance of the wider-Weston Favell area and the memories of the community when celebrating the anniversary.

A Councillor explained the official anniversary of Weston Favell was in October 2024. A Councillor suggested that photographs and video footage of the centre and area be used to promote and honour the anniversary. In response to a question, once the planning group had met, there could be potential to apply and source further outside funding.

**NOTED**

**62. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION FOR NEXT MEETING**

No discussion was held under this agenda item.

**MEETING CONCLUDED 19:24**

**X**

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Councillor J. Birch  
Chair of Community Services Committee