

Economic Development Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, 07 September 2016 at 18:30

PRESENT: Councillor B Coleman (in the Chair), M Coleman, Grant, Hammond, Jeal, Thurtle, A Grey, K Grey, Pratt, Reynolds, Wainwright, Walch, Walker.

Councillor A Grey substituted for Councillor Stenhouse, Councillor M Coleman substituted for Councillor Hanton.

Mr A Carr (Group Manager - Tourism & Communications), Mr D Glason (Group Manager - Growth), Mr R Gregory (Group Manager - Neighbourhoods and Communities), Mr R Read (Director of Neighbourhoods and Communities), Mr G Jones (Information Manager), Mrs K Watts (Transformation Programme Manager).

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Stenhouse and Hanton.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors B Coleman, Wainwright and Walch declared a personal interest in St Georges Trust.

In line with the Constitution they were allowed to speak and vote on this matter.

3 MINUTES

Councillor Hammond's name was added to the Minutes.

The Minute on Item 6 regarding appeals was clarified. Members agreed with the Monitoring Officers advice to keep the status quo.

4 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising that are not covered by the agenda.

5 FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan was agreed.

6 CULTURE STRATEGY

A briefing on the new Culture Strategy was presented.

The Committee received the report from the Group Manager Neighbourhoods and Communities.

A Member asked if the cost of the Strategic Project Manager would be met from existing budgets. It was reported that there would not be an additional cost as the Borough Council would be putting in a bid for additional funding.

A Member asked how many responses had been received to the consultation. It was reported that 47 of the responses were confirmed to be from residents.

A Member asked if we received funding would it be on-going. It was reported that there would be no on-going liability.

RESOLVED:

The Cultural Strategy be approved.

7 GREAT PLACE SCHEME

The Committee received the report from the Group Manager Neighbourhoods and Communities.

It was noted that the Council as a Non Profit Organisation is eligible to bid for funding but will do so as part of a wider partnership of cultural organisations, it was also reported that an approach had been made by Waveney Council with

regard to a joint submission.

A Member asked if the Committee could make the recommendation or if it needed to go to Policy and Resources. The Committee were advised that under the Constitution they were able to make the recommendation.

A expression of interest needs to be submitted in October with the full submission in January 2017.

RESOLVED:

That an Expression of Interest to the Great Place Scheme be made.

8 WINTER GARDENS RESTORATION PROGRAMME

The Committee received the report from the Group Manager Neighbourhoods and Communities.

It was noted that a press release had been issued due to public interest.

The Committee were advised that this would be a 2 stage submission. Stage 1 would be the initial application that needed to be submitted in November 2016, if this was successful a robust plan would need to be submitted with a decision expected by September 2017. The second stage would be looked at nationally not regionally.

Following discussions with Heritage Lottery Fund the Council would need to fund some initial feasibility work ahead of stage 1.

It was noted that the stage 2 submission must contain a substantial business plan and the end use must be sustainable.

A Member asked if the Borough Council had the skills to put the plans together and if not successful can the Borough Council be assisted to de-list the building. It was reported that the Principal Conservation Officer and his team had the skills and this would be supplemented by buying in services of experts. It was not likely that we would be able to de-list the building due to its national importance. it was also noted that its final use does not have to be heritage based.

A Member asked who would decide if the end use was sustainable. It was reported that this Committee would make that determination in the first instance.

A Member asked for clarification on the timescale and was advised that Stage 1 would be submitted in November 2016 and the result would be known by December 2016, stage 2 would be known by September 2017.

RESOLVED:

That approval for the initial funding be agreed and that a robust submission be prepared and submitted.

9 EVENTS

The Committee received the report from the Group Manager Tourism and Communications.

RESOLVED:

The Committee voted to endorse the progression with the events programme and to agree the events detailed for 2017.

10 EASTER FAIR

The Committee considered the report presented by the Transformation Programme Manager.

The Chairman reminded members that there was a caveat on the Financial Breakdown.

A member asked why the Showmans Guild had not attended all the meetings. It was reported that no explanation had been given by the Guild.

A member asked why the Fair was costing the Council money and should not the full cost be charged to the Guild. It was reported that this was part of the discussion to be held with the Guild along with safety following the incident at Kings Lynn.

A member asked if the loss of revenue from parking had been taken into account. It was confirmed that the figures included losses from parking.

A number of members indicated that they wanted the event to be cost neutral for the Council.

RESOLVED:

1. Ask officers to further investigate alternative management options
2. Request officers to work up increased fees and charges proposals for 17/18 budget setting process.

11 GO TRADE INTERREG FUNDING APPLICATION

The Committee received the report from the Transformation Programme

Manager.

It was noted that the initial bid failed at phase 2 but feedback from this highlighted the areas that needed further development.

RESOLVED:

That officers resubmit the application following the advice for further development.

12 ICE RINK

The Committee received the report from the Group Manager - Tourism and Communications which provided a final update on the work undertaken in scoping the running of an Ice Rink in the Town Centre for the second year..

A member noted that it encouraged people to visit the town centre but traders needed to adjust their opening times to take advantage of this increased footfall.

A member noted that this would cost the Council over £100,000 per year for the next three years to run.

A member asked if other avenues had been explored as we needed to look at more cost effective options.

A member stated that the figures as presented were misleading.

It was reported that other avenues had been explored but the cost differences were minimal.

A member stated that it was not always possible for traders to change their opening hours. they also expressed concern that advertising would not be taken up as this was in addition to other projects being considered.

A member noted that we subsidise other events and we do this for the benefit of the area. We need to create the appropriate atmosphere and project like this one will do that.

A number of members asked how the cost to the council could be reduced.

it was reported that this could be achieved by increasing the hire costs.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal to hold a Ice Rink over the next three years be not approved.

13 TOWN CENTRE SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

The Committee received the report from the Transformation Programme Manager.

Members were reminded that this was an outline proposal and that they were being asked to endorse the scheme.

A member asked why owners were not being required to keep their shop fronts up to standard. it was reported that a list of shops that didn't keep up to standard would be drawn up and enforcement action would be taken.

RESOLVED:

That the report be approved.

14 TOWN CENTRE HERITAGE MAP DEVELOPMENT. pdf

The committee received the report from the Transformation Programme Manager.

RESOLVED:

That approval be given to fund a Town Centre map project, to be delivered through the Preservation Trust as part of the Town Centre Initiative, totaling £5,000.

15 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The committee received the report from the Group Manager - Growth.

RESOLVED:

That all measures be monitored during the next quarter.

16 THIRD RIVER CROSSING

The Group Manager - Growth gave a verbal update to the Committee .

It was noted that a bid for £1M was successful and that the business case would be progressed.

A member requested a breakdown of traffic movement from the original figures and it was agreed that this would be supplied.

17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No items had been referred to the Chairman for consideration.

The meeting ended at: 20:30