



AYLESBURY
TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of a meeting of the Communities Committee held on
Tuesday 6 February 2024, in the Council Chamber, Aylesbury Town Hall,
5 Church Street, Aylesbury HP20 2QP at 7pm**

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7.00pm.

In the Chair: Cllr Tim Dixon

Present: Cllr S Bateman
Cllr N Mehta
Cllr A Sherwell
Cllr D Summers
Cllr M Willis

Officers: Ruth Mayhew (Senior Communities and Events Officer, Committee Clerk),
Siobhan Collins (Events Officer), Dan Reynolds (Events Officer)

1. Apologies for absence

To receive and accept apologies of absence from Town Councillors.

Resolved: To accept apologies from Cllr A Christensen (prior commitment)

2. Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were raised.

3. Minutes

Resolved: The committee unanimously agreed to accept and sign the minutes of 28 November 2023 as a true record.

4. Matters arising

The Senior Communities and Events Officer reported on the following items.

Officers reported that confirmation has been received from Buckinghamshire Council (BC) that they are hoping to provide a Bucks Family Festival in 2025, after which BC councillors will review and decide if it worked without WhizzFizz being in the name. Councillors agreed that plans for a revived WhizzFizz festival should be put on hold until 2025, when it is hoped that BC will relinquish the WhizzFizz brand name and appropriate budget can be allocated, to create the vision event discussed at the November 2023 meeting.

Meetings with Community Pride in Aylesbury are going very well, with regular and suitable information sharing. Funding sources and event content are on track to achieve viability deadline of 24 May.

Initial contact with Aylesbury Church Network was slow, however suitable progress is currently being made, to ensure joint responsibilities at Parklife Weekend are dovetailed in an appropriate manner.

Battle of the Bands will be taking place on Sunday 25 August from 12:30-4:30pm in the large marquee, with thanks to the support of Radley Windows and Doors and XYZ Music Academy, who will also be providing Band-e-oke on the Saturday evening.

Catering and bar applications have been issued with mandatory six stream rubbish sorting requirements. This hasn't had a negative affect on applications, with 21 catering and five bar applications received to date.

Councillors were provided with an email sent by a regular coffee supplier, expressing their concerns at the lack of 'barista style coffee' at Parklife Weekend. Councillors agreed that the detail will be addressed during the selection process at the next meeting.

The upcoming rolling event - Random Acts of Kindness - was discussed, with officers highlighting that four councillors have provided details of how they will be engaging in their community during this councillor lead event. Committee members to encourage further engagement from fellow councillors. Postcards were distributed at the meeting, with more supplies available at the office.

Details of the full Live in the Park line up was provided.

Community Event Funding application process will be launched at the end of February.

Youth Initiative Officer role has now been finalised, with application deadline of 23 February. Job Description made available for reference.

No further questions or concerns were raised.

The Chairman suspended the Standing Orders at 7:27pm to allow questions from the public and any reports from the councillors.

The Chairman resumed the Standing Orders at 7:27pm.

5. Event Evaluations

5i. Christmas on The Cobbles

Councillors reviewed the event evaluation for Christmas on the Cobbles, with praise given to officers for the comprehensive and detailed report. Cllrs Dixon, Bateman and Sherwell thanked staff, volunteers, performers and all involved with the event

for their hard work and dedication in making the event successful. It was noted that we have created a successful event format which will continue to grow and evolve. The success of the event and volume of attendees is leading to natural crowd viewing issues which need to be addressed at to see if improvements are viable.

Resolved, from feedback and analysis a number of specific items were discussed, with the following agreed.

- Officers to investigate and implement how to legally prevent or deter pedlars from attending.
- To review and revise the timings of the event elements along with the content of the Market Square daytime activities, to create a single site layout in Market Square, giving sufficient time and resources to implement the required crowd alterations.
- To move the parade start time forward by half an hour to 5pm, along with adjusting the timings of the other activities to improve times for visitors, providers, partners and staffing requirements.
- To reduce the number of participants in the parade, and improve the content provided by community groups. Less people with more impressive content.
- To extend the parade route to include the High Street. This would require support of Hale Leys shopping centre for mustering and revising the location for trailer. Awareness of heavy crowds then building close to the John Hampden statue once parade enters Market Square needs to be considered. Consultation with security advisors prior to final decision being made.
- Consider installing staggered viewing platforms / bleachers in Market Square. Officers to source designs and costings.
- Possibility of moving the 'stage' to lower Market Square to an in-the-round style 4.5x5m platform with barriers around it.
- Possibility of using barriers in Market Square for the spectators, following consultation with security advisors.
- More materials and time required in the lantern making workshop.
- Investigate the possibility of relocating the snowball arena inside, as it is a very popular activity with all ages and would be a shame to lose.
- Possibility of a static camera live feed to a designated web page.

No further questions or concerns were raised.

5ii Carolfest

Councillors reviewed the event evaluation for Carolfest, passing praise and thanks to officers involved with the event. It was very busy with lots of charity donations.

Cllr Dixon acknowledged that more councillor support is needed at this and all other community events.

No questions or concerns were raised.

6. Review budget and planned activities

Councillors reviewed the budget and planned activities for the St George's Day event. Praise was given for the additional planned content, aimed at adults, set to take place in the Kings Head.

No questions or concerns were raised.

7. Purchase of event equipment

Councillors reviewed and considered the items requested to support the events from the 23/24 budget.

Cllr Willis proposed, and Cllr Bateman seconded, to proceed purchased all items as detailed in briefing paper.

Resolved: The committee unanimously agreed to the above proposal.

8. Summer hanging baskets

Councillors discussed the proposed increase in the rate charged to local businesses for the summer hanging baskets to cover the increasing costs.

Cllr Summers proposed and Cllr Metha seconded, to the proposed increase, as detailed in the briefing paper.

Resolved

The committee unanimously agreed to the above proposal.

9. Budget

The committee reviewed the current budgetary position to December 2023 (month 9).

Councillors did not raise any concerns.

10. Commissioning of new 'attraction' for Christmas on the Cobbles

Councillors discussed commissioning the design, construction and purchase of a new wow factor element to lead the Christmas on the Cobbles illuminated parade, from this years budget (23/24), working with local performers, artists and school children when possible.

Cllr Dixon proposed and Cllr Willis seconded, for officers to research options and to create a wow element for Christmas on the Cobbles, which will be an ATC asset.

Resolved

The committee unanimously agreed to the above proposal.

11. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 2 April 2024 at 7pm.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:20pm

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairman