



**AYLESBURY**  
TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of a meeting of the Communities Committee held on  
Tuesday 25 July 2023, in the Council Chamber, Aylesbury Town Hall,  
5 Church Street, Aylesbury HP20 2QP at 7pm**

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7.05pm.

In the Chair: Cllr Tim Dixon

**Present:** Cllr S Bateman  
Cllr A Christensen  
Cllr R King (substitute)  
Cllr A Sherwell  
Cllr D Summers

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

**1. Apologies for absence**

To receive and accept apologies of absence from Town Councillors.

**Resolved:** To accept apologies from Cllr N Mehta (prior commitment), and Cllr D Thompson (prior commitment, sent a substitute), Cllr M Willis (work 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 6 June 2023 as a true record.

**4. Matters arising**

The Senior Communities and Events Officer informed councillors of the discussion with the Town Clerk and Chairman regarding how to formalise the process for allocating funds to external community events. It is recommended to retain allocation of funds through the communities committee and that a short formal application process be implemented. Officers to prepare draft application process by the next meeting. Councillors agreed to this proposal and will review the process in full at the next meeting.

Other items will be addressed within this agenda.

No questions or concerns were raised.

*The Chairman suspended the Standing Orders at 7:09pm to allow questions from the public and any reports from the councillors.*

*There being no members of the public present or reports from councillors, the Chairman resumed the Standing Orders at 7:09pm.*

## **5. Event evaluations**

Councillors reviewed and discussed the event evaluations supplied:

### **i) Soapbox Derby**

Officers highlighted two key areas of concern from the evaluation - insurance costs and a downturn in participants racing in the event.

Councillors praised the event, noting that even with a reduction in participants, visitor attendance was still high with many happy families enjoying the event. This event is unique within the current program as it is not only entertaining but also encourages a wealth of skill developments and learning opportunities for those who participate.

Lengthy discussions took place, resulting in several avenues to explore to encourage further participation next year, including event sponsorship, collaborations within education, corporate and individuals. Insurance prices to be explored prior to budget setting in the autumn. Officers to continue with plans for this event to present to councillors later in the year.

Viable solutions need to be found to ensure this event remains successful.

### **ii) Sharing Joy**

The positive emotional benefits of this event were discussed and praised.

### **iii) Aylesbury on Sea ft WhizzFizzFest**

Cllr Bateman and Cllr Dixon praised the event and the work of the Events Officers, Siobhan and Dan, for putting this fun and well run event together. It was a very successful event, and the partnership with Buckinghamshire Council went smoothly.

Officers will be taking feedback received from the public, councillors and through officer experience to Buckinghamshire Council, with ideas to improve further next year, as detailed in the event evaluation.

No further questions or concerns were raised.

## **6. Event updates - verbal**

Officers provided verbal updates on a number of event developments.

### **i) Parklife Weekend**

Battle of the Bands requires two ATC judges, Cllrs Summers and Christensen volunteered to take on this role. Officers to provide additional information in the coming weeks.

Five bands will be taking part, this is all that applied and were able to attend.

## Volunteers

Officers once again expressed the importance of councillor support at this event. Each job which is requested is required for the event, including the simple task of clicker counting visitors as they arrive, as this provides accurate data which will assist officers in ensuring the ongoing safety at the event and identify how the site could be developed, as the event continues to grow.

Officers will issue a new specific time sheet form for all councillors and volunteers to complete to receive accurate time availability from all. It is hoped that with sufficient cover a rotation of roles will be possible.

Request for a political stand covering green issues has been received. Councillors discussed the impact of having any political stalls at the event and confirmed that this request be denied, as it falls outside the requirements of being part of the Community Involvement Area. All ATC events are a-political.

### ii) Walking Play

Update provided on dates, location, timings, lead actors and the working title of Time and Time Again. One member of staff and a volunteer is required for each of the shows. Councillors would be welcome to attend as a volunteer to walk with the performance and assist in visitor safety.

### iii) Rolling Event - A Christmas Carol

Officers informed Councillors that the show provider has requested a change in the performance date. A meeting is set for later this week where the date and other event perimeters will be confirmed.

Concerns have been raised that the project may lead in a different direction to that proposed and agreed by the committee. Officers are devolved responsibilities to make appropriate decision to ensure the event is delivered in line with councils' requirements. Should further clarification be required, officers to contact the Deputy Chairman of the Communities Committee, Cllr Summers

No further questions or concerns were raised.

## 7. Sunday Lunch Open Mic

Cllr Bateman provided an update on the winter location for the monthly events, as Friars Square shopping centre. Space, seating, and a temporary raised platform will be supplied directly by the shopping centre. To be positioned in the space outside BB's café. Event still to be run and hosted by Simon Aldridge, with two councillors in attendance.

Revised risk assessment will be supplied by Officers in due course. Promotional feather flag will need to be collected from ATC offices prior to each session. Gazebo will not be used.

Should further sessions, beyond the first Sunday of the month, be desired by the location and / or event provider, this must be discussed and agreed directly, without the financial, physical or insurance support of ATC.

**8. Heritage Open Days**

The Events Officer provided a verbal update of this years Heritage Open Days, including details of the information session hosted by ATC and HODs earlier this month. Existing and potential new locations attended the session, including representatives from Buckinghamshire Council cultural and heritage teams.

Discussions took place with additional locations and suggested contacts made by councillors. Information to be supplied to officers to progress enquiries further.

**9. Planetarium day with UK Astronomy**

Councillors considered the proposal to work in partnership with UK Astronomy to provide a free planetarium experience, in Friars Square during February half term 2024, in line with the briefing paper supplied.

Cllr Christensen proposed, and Cllr Summers seconded, that ATC work in partnership with UK Astronomy to provide this additional free event in 2024. With ATC providing physical support on event day and exposure through our social media channels. UK Astronomy will be responsible for all other planning and logistical elements of pulling the event together.

**Resolved:** The committee unanimously agreed to the above proposal.

**10. Budget**

The committee reviewed the current budgetary position to June 2023 (month 3). Councillors did not raise any concerns.

**11. Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 26 September 2023 at 7pm.

*There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:23pm*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman