



AYLESBURY
TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of a meeting of the Communities Committee held on
Tuesday 26 July 2022, in the Council Chamber, Aylesbury Town Hall,
5 Church Street, Aylesbury HP20 2QP at 7pm**

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7pm.

In the Chair: Cllr Tim Dixon

Present: Cllr R Lloyd to substitute Cllr S Bateman
Cllr A Christensen Cllr D Summers
Cllr D Thompson Cllr M Willis
Cllr P Koya Cllr N Mehta

Officers: Ruth Mayhew (Senior Communities and Events Officer, Committee Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

To receive and accept apologies of absence from Town Councillors.

Resolved: To accept apologies from G Wadhwa (prior commitment)

2. Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were raised.

3. Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr Lloyd proposed and Cllr Thompson seconded for Cllr D Summers be appointed Vice Chairman of the Communities Committee.

Resolved - the committee unanimously agreed

4. Minutes

Resolved - the committee unanimously agreed to accept and sign the minutes of 7 June, 2022 as a true record.

5. Matters arising

The Senior Communities and Events Officer updated councillors on the following:

Cllr Summers has not received any further offers of assistance, from Cllrs following her email request, to assist at the upcoming Sunday Lunch Open Mic sessions on 7 August and 4 September.

Cllr Koya offered his assistance in August and Cllr Lloyd in September.

Confirmation that Holy Cow Homes, Mela in the Park will no longer be going ahead in any format. This now gives the opportunity for other Mela style stalls to apply. Officers to contact Cllr Mehta with details and information to be shared with community.

The organisers of Pride in Aylesbury took the news well that the councils support of the event wasn't going to be viable for 2022. It was reported that they are interested in requesting support for an event in 2023, officers have advised Pride in Aylesbury to ensure that any approaches are made in a timely manner.

The budget requests for initiatives which support town centre businesses has now been passed to the policy committee, therefore no further information was supplied at this meeting.

Community litter pick items and vinyl banners have been purchased.

Councillors did not raise any questions or concerns on the updates above.

The Chairman suspended the Standing Orders at 7:11pm 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 7:11pm

6. Event updates - verbal

Senior Communities and Events Officer provided a verbal update on the following:

i) Parklife Weekend

Battle of the Bands - nine bands applied, this has been shortlisted to six participants by officers and event partner, XYZ Music Academy. Officers requested volunteers for two representatives to be judges at the event. Cllrs Christensen and Willis put themselves forward, this was agreed. Officers will provide relevant information.

Artists - The 5:45pm second stage slot performer has had to cancel. Officer suggested an alternative band to perform, who is local, available and suitable for this time slot. Committee agree with the suggestion made.

Volunteers - a number of regular volunteers will be supporting the event. It was noted that this will be discussed at length during agenda item 8

BuDS - will not be attending the Parklife Weekend, as they will be supporting another festival which takes place across the same weekend. ATC will organise, manage and run all elements of disability support at Parklife Weekend. BuDS will still support the event across their social media channels, to inform it's members of the support which will be available. Officers to remain in contact with BuDS to inform them of the facilities that will be available.

ii) Christmas Light Switch on event

Confirmation has been received from full council of a total budget of £26,400 for the event. Plans are starting to take shape, with further information to be provided at the next meeting. Confirmation that Hale Leys Shopping centre are no longer able to financially support the event.

iii) Heritage Open Days

Report given on the current six venues signed up to take part. This is currently lower than previous years, officers are encouraging and supporting all potential venues as much as possible.

ATC are pleased to be in a position to offer tours of the cemetery again this year, which will include access to the chapels.

Cllr Thompson, passed on the praise and positive comments he received whilst attending a service in the chapel recently, stating that they are presented very well and that the chapels look very good. Thanks is to be passed onto the team involved.

Councillors are in approval of how each of these elements are progressing.

No additional questions or concerns were raised.

7. Event evaluations

The committee reviewed and discussed the event evaluations for Jubilee Roadshows, Soapbox Derby and Aylesbury on Sea

i) Jubilee Roadshow

Cllr Christensen praised the format of the event, stating the roadshow format is an effective way of supporting a wide number of local people and communities during a period of national celebration. It is suggested that this model is followed in the future for other times of national celebration.

Cllr Dixon praised the talents of all the local performers who were used, alongside the efforts of all those who organized their own street parties.

Cllr Dixon observed that ward councilors would benefit from attending similar events in the future, as a way of connecting with residents. Officers are to ensure that information is sent with as much time notice as possible, so that councilors can make plans to attend celebrations within their own wards.

ii) Soapbox Derby

Cllr Koya passed on the praise he has received from several people within the Indian community, stating that this type of event isn't "usually enjoyed within our culture", however many people reported to him about their enjoyment of the day.

Officers reported that since the event approx. 30 teams have registered their interest in taking part next year. It is anticipated that this will mean larger visitor attendance, which will require additional staffing and support.

It is suggested that water is sold at the event, and others, with profits going to the mayors charity.

iii) Aylesbury on Sea

Councillors discussed at length the quantity and content of the negative feedback received via the feedback survey. It was agreed that these comments were too

extensive not to act upon, because if left unaddressed situations like those at Aylesbury on Sea, if repeated at future events, could have a negative impact of the council's good reputation. It was also acknowledged that during the event many members of the public expressed their praise of the event and gratitude to ATC for providing a wonderful, inclusive and enjoyable family day.

Several scenarios were discussed, including - limiting visitor numbers and charging those who live out of parish, both were dismissed at this time due to the committee wishing to ensure events remain accessible for all, inclusive and encouraging people to visit the town from further afield.

Cllrs discussed the merits of having the Sunday Lunch Open Mic sessions on site within Aylesbury on Sea. It was agreed that should these events be taking place next year that suitable location and support be given.

No additional questions or concerns were raised.

19:50 Cllr Lloyd temporarily left the meeting

8. Resilience team

Cllrs considered the merits of creating a Councillor resilience team for all events and discussed the options to ensure sufficient, adequate and appropriate cover at all Aylesbury Town Council events in the future. The 2022 events have been very popular with the most recent seeing around a 50% increase in attendance, which lead to officers being stretched beyond capacity and young volunteers receiving abusive comments from disgruntled visitors.

19:57 Cllr Lloyd returned to the meeting

A number of options and scenarios were discussed at length, which included - councillors to attend all events to support the officers, hiring freelance external staff, recruiting more volunteers from the community.

It was established that two types of support are required at the events, to ensure they are safe and enjoyable for the public, and to maintain the high standards of customer service given by the council.

- 1) Resilience team. Two or three councillors who would be willing, available and able to step into officer positions during the event if an officer is unable to fulfil their role at short notice. This is essential to ensure on site emergency procedures could be implemented if required, in line with the Event Management Plan.
- 2) Event support. Each event is different and requires different roles to be fulfilled, which could include manning the ATC information point, assisting with a game, craft, activity or manning a disabled viewing platform. In addition to event specific roles, it would be beneficial to have additional personnel on hand who would be able to be deployed to specific tasks which arise during an event - eg control of a lengthy queue, handling of visitor complaints / praises, ensuring volunteers get adequate breaks, covering staff roles when they are required to perform other specific duties like first aid or missing persons.

Resolved:

Cllrs requested that officers provide further information to be discussed at full council at the October meeting, to include visitor numbers, details of how the success of all events is impacting the resources currently available and how this is impacting the

reputation of the council. Along with suggestions of how to improve the staffing at events, including the costs involved and the viability.

Cllrs agreed that support would be needed at the council's flagship event, Parklife Weekend, prior to the full council meeting. Officers will issue all councillors via email a form to complete, indicating if individuals are able to support the event and in what capacity.

9. Festival of Light - funding request

Cllrs considered at length the request from Holy Cow Community Events for funding to support this years Festival of Light in October, with information provided in a briefing paper.

Cllr Dixon noted that of the £2000 allocated to supporting external community events, in recent years, this is the only event that has applied for funding. Officers to ensure this opportunity is promoted across ATC social channels and to encourage support of other external community events.

Cllr Thompson proposed and Cllr Koya seconded, to support the Festival of Light event
Resolved: The committee unanimously agreed to the above proposal.

Cllr Thompson proposed and Cllr Willis seconded, to fund the event with £1000
Resolved: The committee unanimously agreed to the above proposal.

10. Budget

The committee reviewed the current budgetary position to June 2022 (month 3).
Councillors did not raise any concerns.

11. Next meeting

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 27 September 2022 at 7pm

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting closed at 8:37pm

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairman