

FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the MARKET AND BUSINESS LIAISON SUB COMMITTEE held at Mountfield, Bridport on Tuesday, 18 March 2014 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Cllr: G.J. Ackerman (Chairman)

Cllrs: Miss S.A. Brown D.G. Rickard
Mrs M.J. Ray

Also in attendance: Ray McLaren (Market Superintendent), Roy Gregory (Market Traders' Federation), Terri Foxwell (Bridport TIC Manager), Amanda Streatfeild (BLAP).

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no speakers in the Public Forum.

13. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Ms S.J. Williams and Scott Condliffe (Bridport and District Tourism Association).

14. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2013, which had been previously circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

16. EVENTS 2014, TOURISM AND BRIDPORT PROMOTION

The Town Clerk reported on the following issues:

Town Events - the latest list of events was circulated for information.

Town Guide - discussions were taking place with two local people regarding the production of a new Town Guide, which would be intended both for residents and visitors to the area.

Community Web Site - this was being maintained by the Town Council and it was hoped to attract more businesses to advertise on the site.

It was suggested that it would be helpful if the regular monthly meeting of representatives, drawn from this Sub Committee, could oversee these issues, particularly the production of the Town Guide.

During discussion, the following additional issues were raised:

- on occasion, the music from buskers was very loud and this needed to be monitored.
- car park signage was being looked at.
- flags and bunting in the town would be erected on Sunday 8 June.

RECOMMEND: that the monthly meeting of representatives of this group oversee and advise on the production of the Town Guide and the continued development of the community web site.

17. DISTRICT COUNCIL INITIATIVES

Simon King, Senior Economic Regeneration Officer, West Dorset District Council, was welcomed to the meeting.

Simon reported on the District Council's "Priorities for Growth" document, which referred to support for vibrant town centres. He referred to the establishment of Business Improvement Districts, as one way of raising funding for a town.

There would also be funding available through the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership which, via its strategic economic plan, was looking to support local business. £30 - £40,000 of Government funding could be available for each Dorset town to improve infrastructure. The allocation of this funding would be in response to the wishes of the local area and towns needed to consider the best way to bring the local stakeholders together – traders, Town Council, tourism etc – to attract this funding. The District Council would be happy to work with towns to formulate ideas. The funding would be available from April 2015.

The Sub Committee discussed the possibilities for funding and agreed that this should be discussed further, once the detail had been received.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted and the Sub Committee receive a report back at its next meeting, with further information on funding opportunities.

18. MARKET OPERATION

The latest reports on the performance of the market, ENCLS: 2784 and 2785 were noted.

The Town Surveyor reported on the need to continue to support the market, a new market leaflet and newsletter, the West Bay evening market and providing more information for visitors.

Roy Gregory commented on the need to target promotional information to visitors from north of Bridport and to make more use of the links with West Bay. The use of the newsletter was also important for traders.

Members discussed the operation of the market and it was agreed that it was important to continue to promote and "build" the market. Coach tourism was

very important and more information for coach companies should be considered.

RESOLVED: that the update be noted.

19. MARKET CHARGES

Consideration was given to a report of the Town Clerk, ENCL: 2798.

The Town Clerk reported that discussions had taken place with the National Market Traders' Federation and he reported the proposed fees for next year.

RECOMMEND: that the proposed charges for 2014/15 be supported:

- (i) Registered Trader £1.60p per 30 cm. run per day
Non registered Trader £2.60p per 30 cm. run per day

- (ii) the following reduced market tolls be levied for the winter months of January, February and March:

Registered Trader £0.75p per 30 cm. run per day
Non registered Trader £1.60p per 30 cm. run per day

- (iii) for the Wednesday market only, the winter fees as in (ii) above to again also apply for the months of November and December and the fees for Wednesdays be capped at no more than £5 for registered traders during January and February.

20. MARKET TRADERS

Roy Gregory, Chairman of the local branch of the National Market Traders' Federation, raised the following issues, some of which had been discussed under earlier items on the agenda:

- the Market Newsletter was important, should be issued at set times each year and he was happy to provide some content.

- rings or fixings in the pavement to anchor stalls in windy weather had been raised by traders.

- the West Bay Wednesday evening market should be discussed again.

- traders were asking about whether to become members of the National Market Traders' Federation, or whether it might be better to form a new local traders' forum. This was being looked at.

These matters would be discussed further with the Town Surveyor.

RESOLVED: that the issues raised by the National Market Traders' Federation be noted, with the comments above.

21. CHAMBER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE

Roy Gregory was also representing the Chamber and said that many of the issues had been discussed elsewhere on this agenda. The Chamber was continuing to work through the issues raised at the well attended meeting in the Town Hall last year.

In discussion of a related issue, it was asked what could be done to support and encourage independent shops, rather than chain shops. It was felt that it was difficult to enforce a policy that gave preference to particular types of shop. However, it was commented that this was potentially something that could be looked at through a neighbourhood plan. If it had the support of the community through a referendum, that would have some weight and influence on planning decision making.

The update was noted.

22. BRIDPORT & DISTRICT TOURISM ASSOCIATION

There were no issues reported.

23. FUTURE MEETINGS AND WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

The Town Clerk reported that it was proposed to facilitate monthly meetings of representatives from the Sub Committee and the Sub Committee itself would meet four times a year.

The update was noted.

The meeting closed at 11:55 am.

The next meeting of the Market and Business Liaison Sub Committee will be held on 1 July 2014, subject to the agreement by the Town Council of the new Calendar of Meetings at the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee