

be a more environmentally friendly, free, family focused activity which could in time perhaps become a lasting tradition for the town. It was envisaged that once a decision had been made, the detailed content of the event could be finalised to include stalls and live music in the High Street.

The Rotary Club was asking for support from the Town Council in delivering the event and assistance with the cost for the show in its first year, of up to £5,000. In the long term it was hoped that it could become self-funding and eventually generate a surplus for distribution to Rotary charities.

Committee members expressed support for the principle and it was suggested the town council be a named partner in the event, or be an official sponsor of part of the light show. It was acknowledged there was no provision within the 2023-24 budget.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed to support the request (6 in favour, 1 abstention).

RECOMMENDED to Council to provide funding of up to £5,000 to the Rotary Club of Leighton-Linslade towards costs for a free community laser light show to take place in autumn/winter 2023, to be funded from general reserves.

162/CE BLACK HISTORY MONTH

A member of the public spoke in support of the Black History Month report submitted to the committee. It was hoped to expand this event this year by showing a film at the Library Theatre, hold workshops and involve businesses from the town. A working group had been set up to discuss how this could be delivered. The longer-term intention was for the group to become formalised to enable them to bid for grant funding in the usual way, but to enable planning of the 2023 event it was proposed that the council commit some funding this year. A question was asked about whether proposed funding was sufficient, but it was noted the allocated budget had not been fully utilised in 2022.

RESOLVED to endorse the proposal to fund Black History Month events up to the value of £1000 in 2023 (from a carry-over of £697.62 underspend from the event budget for 2022 with an additional £302.38 being allocated from the new events development earmarked reserve, subject to Council approval of establishing the earmarked reserve at financial year end).

163/CE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

(a) The Committee received the draft minutes of the previous Cultural and Economic Services Committee meeting held on 12 December 2022.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Cultural & Economic Services Committee held on 12 December 2022 be approved as a correct record

and were signed accordingly.

(b) There were no updates or matters arising from the previous meeting.

164/CE SUB COMMITTEE AND TASK & FINISH GROUPS

The Committee received the draft minutes of Sub-Committee meetings held since the last meeting of the committee for consideration.

(a) Market Sub-Committee held 23 February 2023:

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Market Sub-Committee held on 23 January 2023.

Committee considered the recommendations made by the Market Sub-Committee (minute reference 99/MK and 101/MK).

RESOLVED to approve that reasonable travel expenses incurred by participants in the Young Traders National competition be reimbursed, in recognition of the positive publicity generated for the markets as a whole.

RESOLVED to amend the adverse weather policy to include reference to market operations during periods of extreme heat.

(b) Older Persons Sub Committee held 2 March 2023:

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the Older Persons Sub Committee meeting held on 2 March 2023.

165/CE TACTIC WORK UPDATE

The Committee received a written report and a verbal update on the work of the Teenage Advice and Information Centre including young persons drop in, mentoring, schools lunchtime drop-ins, building hire, Easter and summer playschemes, Chatty Café and staffing.

Demand was still high for school workshops and Mentoring covering mental health and anxiety issues and it had become apparent that the younger years from year 6 upwards need support before transitioning to upper school. The Box Release project commenced in Jan 2023 and currently 12 young people took part, 8 of which were female with an age range of 12 – 16 years. The Chatty Café continued to be well attended with up to 40 people per session. The NHS Wellbeing Team and the Digital Champions also attend to offer advice when needed.

The New Projects introduced include an Environmental Project, Community Safety Project and First Aid course. The Easter Programme would be starting soon and the young people were manning a market stall to provide information and advice and highlight environmental issues.

Members agreed that the work of TACTIC was exemplary and officers were asked to research if any Community Awards were available for the TACTIC team to show appreciation of all work undertaken.

With regards to staffing, the Committee was advised that in order to maintain the current service delivery and provide outreach for Summer 2023, additional funding would be required to extend the current agency staff member (maternity leave cover). Currently funding for this staff member would run out in June. It was suggested that if additional funding could be provided through the Community Safety budget, this would enable continued outreach work over the summer period.

The Committee expressed support for the summer project and outreach work, particularly if this was undertaken in conjunction/liaison with the police.

RESOLVED:

- (a) To note the report**
- (b) To endorse the refreshed TACTIC delivery plan for 2023/2024**

RECOMMENDED to the Community Safety Sub-Committee that up to £8,000 be allocated to TACTIC from the Community Safety earmarked reserve to support summer outreach projects for young people in the town.

166/CE EVENTS PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Committee received a report in respect of the annual community events programme as well as ongoing projects.

The next scheduled event was the Business Networking Event on 19 April and planning was well underway for the Big Lunch, Coronation celebrations and the Linslade Canal Festival. A recent approach regarding corporate sponsorship of events had been received and the committee was asked to endorse the proposed response.

The Committee was informed that following the revised events programme in 2021/2022 there had been an underspend totalling £19,307 and it was suggested that an Events Development Earmarked Reserve be created to fund one off events, whilst providing an opportunity for funds outside of the revenue budget to be used to implement new technologies and ways of working with the events programme e.g. providing battery powered generators at events, some of which are currently too expensive to obtain through the revenue budget.

RESOLVED:

- (a) To note the report.**
- (b) To endorse the sponsorship approach outlined, pending a response from the company who has enquired.**

RECOMMENDED to Council to create a new Events Development Earmarked Reserve as part of the financial year end process, through the merging of existing earmarked reserves with revenue budget underspend from the financial year 2022/23.

167/CE TOWN CENTRE SUPPORT AND PROMOTION

(a) The Committee received and considered a report on the Flags and Bunting Scheme for Summer 2023. Members agreed that the option of a flag only scheme would be preferable to bunting and flags, and that weighted flags would hang better. It was noted that the flagpoles also needed replacing. A concern was raised regarding the phrase 'lead trim' on the flag so this would be looked into. It was agreed to endorse option 6 which included flag installation, replacement flag pole and upgraded flag with lead trim.

RESOLVED to choose option 6 for the Town Centre flag scheme at a cost of £7,757 from budgets 101/4523, 101/4572 (remainder of 2022/3 and budget for 2023/24), with the remainder met from 101/4920 (2023/24).

(b) The Committee received a report on the monthly Business E-Update, which had started as part of the post-Covid "Welcome Back" fund initiative and had been continued for the remainder of 2022/23. It was proposed to continue this communication with the town centre businesses on an ongoing basis. Only 43 business had signed up for the email newsletter and it was therefore proposed to try hand delivering a paper copy to get better engagement. A suggestion was made to involve LB First and to monitor the results of the scheme for the following year.

RESOLVED:

(i) **to endorse the renewal of contract with the current provider to create the Business E-Update and to trial a paper copy to be distributed to businesses in the town centre.**

(ii) **To meet the annual production cost of £4200, that up to a maximum of £3450 to be drawn from earmarked reserve 970/9026 Cultural and Economic Services with the remaining cost being taken from cost centre 101/4575 Business Campaigns.**

(c) The Committee received and considered a report regarding Bus Advertising 2023-2024 to publicise town centre initiatives and support shopping locally. Members agreed that option 1 would be preferable with advertising on the rear and side of the bus for a 6 month period over the summer months.

RESOLVED to choose option one with the current provider.

(d) The Committee received an update report on Town Centre Trails. Members agreed the trails provided free activities for families and all trails had been well used and appreciated.

RESOLVED:

- (i) **To endorse the High Street Safari Trails for Easter and The Coronation.**
- (ii) **To note the report on the Children's Trail.**
- (iii) **To note the report on the Sands of Time Trail.**

168/CE COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

(a) The Committee received the Committee Workplan and Objectives for 2022- 2023.

RESOLVED to note the Committee Workplan and Objectives for 2022-2023.

(b) The Committee received the draft Committee Workplan and Objectives for 2023-2024.

RESOLVED to note the draft workplan and objectives for 2023-2024

169/CE C & E EMR 230313BUDGET

The Committee received a nine-month budget monitoring report for the period April-December 2022 as well as an update on earmarked reserves.

RESOLVED to note the report.

RECOMMENDED to Council to move £3,414 underspend from Town History revenue budget 101/4516 for the current year into earmarked reserve 9018/970 (Economic Development) for future town activity, as part of the financial year end process.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 13 MARCH 2023.

Chair

12 JUNE 2023