



WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Notes of a meeting of the Wellington Town Centre Working Group held on Wednesday 6 June 2018 at 5.30p.m. in the Council Chamber, 28 Fore Street, Wellington

Present: Councillor Shepherd (Chairman)
Councillors Barr and Lithgow
Richard Coupe (The Edge), Sharon Davis (Interiors and Flowers), Keith Wheatley (Around Wellington), Adrian Hooper, Peter Watts (WBA)
Dr. Joanne O'Hara – Wellington Heritage at Risk Officer.

Apologies: The Mayor (Councillor James)

Greg Dyke – Town Clerk, Gill Croucher – Assistant Clerk

1. Film Festival

Following publicity given to this possible event a number of volunteers had offered to help. Discussions had also centred around a possible theme. It was felt that the detailed planning should now be taken forward by those members of this Group who wished to get involved (Keith Wheatley, Mark Lithgow, Adrian Hooper and Pete Watts) together with the volunteers and Dave Harris of the Wellesley. It was anticipated that the event would not be self-funding initially and that the Town Council might be called upon to offer financial assistance.

2. Potential Funding Options for Town Centre regeneration

Dr. Joanne O'Hara drew attention to potential funding options for town centre renewal. It was suggested that "shopping list" of town centre requirements be drawn up.

A bid for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a Townscape Heritage Scheme in relation to the town centre Conservation Area had been unsuccessful in 2016.

3. Further options for town centre renewal

Cllr Lithgow to introduce discussion on what further steps Wellington Town Council could be taking to support the town centre by reference to reports published by the Institute of Place Management. The document listed 25 priorities that should be examined with a view to improving town centres

4. Rental of property in town for community/small business use

Cllrs Shepherd and Lithgow would shortly be undertaking an audit of empty town centre premises. It was proposed that landlords be approached with a view to the Town Council taking a lease of an empty shop and then making it available for short periods of time as a “pop up” shop. The aim would be to support a small business/community organisations.

5. Retail Survey data

Dr. Joanne O'Hara had identified extensive footfall data held by TDBC about Wellington. She undertook to pass it on for detailed analysis.

6. Christmas Lights Switch On

A request was submitted from local traders for consideration to be given to switching the town centre Christmas Lights on a week earlier than last year.

Last year the Lights were switched on on 2 December as this was the start of Advent and made it more relevant to the Christmas period. It also was the start of the four free Saturday parking dates.

However, if the switch on was week earlier (24 November) this would give the traders a longer lead in time to the Christmas shopping period and would coincide with most other similar events in surrounding towns. The point was made that the Lights had been enhanced last year and the Council had invested a great deal of its funds in them. It seemed a good idea therefore, that they should be on display for as long a period as possible.

This group had been formed to enhance the town centre and to do what it could to support local traders. It felt very strongly that in order to put matters on a par with other competitors in the area the opportunity should be taken to switch the lights on on 24 November this year.

It was unanimously **RECOMMENDED** that the Christmas Lights be switch on this year on 24 November.

7. Wellington Street Map

The Wellington free street map that had been produced by the Wellington Business Association in 2016 was now out of date and needed reproducing. The aim this time was to have the street map on one side of the guide and footpath walks on the other. The last version of the map cost just over £1,000 and was funded by a combination of sponsorship and a grant of £500 from the Town Council. It was hoped that a similar arrangement would be agreed for the replacement. There were sufficient funds available in the Promotion of Wellington budget if the Town Council were minded to support the new version.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Town Council make available up to £500 from its Promotion of wellington budget towards the cost of the new free guide.

8. Town Centre Street Furniture

It was anticipated that the repainting and refurbishing of the town centre street furniture would start soon.

9. Date of next meeting

5.30p.m. Tuesday 3 July 2018

The meeting ended at p.m.

Members: Councillors Shepherd (Chair), Lithgow, Russell-Cairns, Barr and the Mayor (Councillor James) Richard Coupe, Sharon Davis, Emma Ranson-Bellamy, Peter Watts, Keith Wheatley, Adrian Hooper, Dr. Joanne O'Hara