

Minutes of a meeting of the **SPALDING TOWN FORUM** held in the Meeting Room 1, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Wednesday, 4 March 2020 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

J D McLean (Chairman)

A C Cronin

H Drury

R A Gibson (Vice-Chairman)

M Hasan

C J Lawton

A M Newton

G J Taylor

In Attendance: G Scott (Spalding Transport Forum), Pastor K Taylor (Churches Together in Spalding and District), R Perkins (Castle Sports Complex Bowls Club), The Press and Bland (Civic Society),

30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Gambba-Jones, Scalese and Porter.

31. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2020.

AGREED:

That the minutes be signed as a correct record.

32. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were none.

33. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

There were none.

34. TRANSPORT FORUM AND WATER FESTIVAL

George Scott (Spalding Transport Forum) commented that since the loss of the Tulip Festival a Water Festival may be a way of attracting tourism to

Action By

SPALDING TOWN FORUM - 4 March 2020

the district. He advised that Spalding Water Taxis were supportive and there was potential for special trains to be made available to support the event. John Bland (Civic Society) and Members agreed that this was a good idea. Councillor Gibson commented that there was potential to combine elements of the Tulip Festival by having a flower parade float and links to Ayscoughfee Hall.

Councillor Drury has been in discussion with Mark Le Sage regarding a potential raft race from the High Bridge area, involving the water taxi docking and The Moorings pub. He commented that a professional organisation who could co-ordinate the event on behalf of the Council would be a more cost effective and safer option for the community due to potential risks and issues. Councillor Drury also advised that agreement would need to be gained from the Environment Agency (waterways).

ACTIONS

- The Chairman suggested arranging a meeting for potential sponsors and private contacts.
- The Chairman has a contact at the Environment Agency.
- The Press can use The Chairman's email address as a contact for volunteers to assist with organisation of the event and for potential sponsors.
- The Forum will gauge interest from residents and businesses before the next Spalding Town Forum meeting.

35. FLOWERS IN SPALDING

Councillor Newton updated the Forum following a meeting with Emily Spicer regarding floral displays in Spalding. The Council will commit to the hanging and watering of baskets for local businesses for the cost of £40 per basket/trough or £25 for just the basket/trough (no watering). An information leaflet/order form entitled Spalding in Bloom 2020 will be posted to businesses in Spalding but assistance would be required for this. A copy of the leaflet has gone to the local press and an electronic copy was requested by the Civic Society. Councillor Newton requested a specific meeting to be held within the next 2 weeks.

Councillor Newton advised that Councillor Bingham has agreed to contact local flower growers with regards to sponsorship and sponsorship requests will be forwarded to local groups (Rotary Club, Spalding Lions etc). Councillor Newton commented to the Forum that the criteria for entering the 'In Bloom' competition is high and it may not be possible to enter this year.

The Chairman asked the Forum to consider existing ongoing projects in their own wards/areas which may provide support to an 'In Bloom' entry.

Councillor Lawton suggested that the Forum look at the use of floral displays to brighten the town this year and then consider an entry next year which the Forum agreed was a good idea. John Bland advised that

SPALDING TOWN FORUM - 4 March 2020

the Civic Society are looking at town centre regeneration through the use of public art and commented that if funding could be found for temporary structures then floral displays are an inexpensive way to brighten the town. Councillor Drury commented that one of the local farmers still has the flower parade static displays and is keen to utilise these props. The Chairman recommended speaking to Council regarding costs of improving planters and existing flower beds with a view to bringing a specific figure back to the Forum.

ACTIONS

- A date is to be agreed for a further meeting regarding Flowers in Spalding to consider:
 - a) sponsors
 - b) leaflet distribution ideas
 - c) approaching local nurseries for donations
 - d) consider approaching a garden designer for advice on displays
- An electronic copy of the leaflet is to be forwarded to John Bland (Civic Society) **johnrgbland@gmail.com**
- All Forum members are to consider existing projects which may be able to support Flowers in Spalding or entry to 'In Bloom'
- Council to be asked for costings to improve planters and existing flower beds
- Councillor Sneath to provide a contact for the local farmer currently in possession of the static flower parade displays

36. STAKEHOLDERS STEERING GROUP UPDATE

Councillor Taylor provided a verbal update regarding the first Stakeholders Steering Group and the following points were noted:

- The meeting was very positive with 7 topics for discussion
- A co-ordinator role for the Spalding/Holbeach project has been recruited
- Councillor Taylor placed emphasis on partnership and co-operation in order to achieve project outcomes
- Projects include working with 'In Bloom' in order to make Spalding an attractive environment and looking at ways of promoting traders, the market and shops (including how to attract different traders in order to provide variety)
- Councillor Taylor is the Chairman for the Steering Group and some Members have been invited (though all are welcome who wish to contribute). Specialists (eg transport) need to be invited too. Once the group is co-ordinated, funding can be applied for.

George Scott (Spalding Transport Forum) commented that the town is divided by the station and now that the lifts are in and the back way is temporarily open due to this refurbishment, Network Rail should be contacted regarding making this permanent. Councillor Taylor advised that an official letter has been sent as there is no cost involved and the change encourages pedestrians. George Scott also commented that

SPALDING TOWN FORUM - 4 March 2020

there may be Central Government funding for Littleworth Station in Deeping St Nicholas to reopen.

Councillor Drury commented that the Stakeholders Steering Group was a positive event with a mix of stakeholders interested in rejuvenating the town and an opportunity for joined-up working.

Councillor Lawton noted that other market towns have a unique selling point such as food or books and that Spalding should have a selling point to fit the profile. Councillor Sneath suggested horticulture could be the selling point.

Councillor Newton advised that the Chief Executive is keen to rejoin NABMA (National Association of British Markets) and that a representative recently visited to see the market and offer advice. (The organisation offer appraisals of markets and provide expert opinion in order to maximise potential).

Councillor Newton also advised that 2 extra buses will be provided to the town centre offering different access routes including a direct route to the hospital and that funding for better public transport links should be considered in new development planning applications. Councillor Sneath advised that County Council are also looking at more local bus routes to be added.

ACTIONS

- Any Forum members wishing to participate in the Stakeholder's Steering Group are to contact Councillor Taylor
- Councillor Newton to invite her contact regarding the extra bus routes to the next Forum meeting.

37. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

Potholes, road repairs and building work

Councillor Newton commented on the issue of potholes being reported to 'Fix My Street'. The reports are being deleted and the potholes are not being fixed however the County Council have advised that they are now committed to those jobs. Councillor Lawton advised that a County Council meeting on 5 March 2020 would be addressing the issue.

George Scott (Spalding Transport Forum) commented on road sinkage on Enterprise Way and Councillor Sneath advised that she would look in to the matter. George also commented on the 2.5 day road closure outside the school on Halmer Gate for repairs but reported that there is still a problem with a sinkhole.

Councillor Sneath commented on the excellent brickwork which is part of the new lift at the train station.

SPALDING TOWN FORUM - 4 March 2020

Great British Spring Clean

Councillor Newton advised that the Great British Spring Clean dates are 20 March to 13 April 2020 and Councillor Cronin has registered Council participation. Litter picking has been arranged in Councillor Hasan's ward and Councillor Newton would like Members and the Forum to consider other projects as well as getting local residents involved.

Refurbished public toilets

Councillor Newton asked whether there was an update on the refurbishment and the Chairman advised he will follow up and report to the next meeting.

ACTIONS

- Councillor Sneath to look into road sinkage on Enterprise Way
- Councillor Newton to advise the press regarding Great British Spring Clean
- Forum to consider other Great British Spring Clean projects
- Chairman to follow up refurbishment of public toilets and provide an update to the next meeting

38. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Forum will take place on Wednesday 17 June 2020 at 6.30pm.

(The meeting ended at 7.43 pm)

(End of minutes)