

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Services Committee Meeting held at  
Corsham Town Hall on Wednesday 16 November 2016**

**Present** Councillor S Abbott (Chairman)  
Councillors Ms L Bray, D Jarman, D Jones, N Pocock, R Taylor and  
Mrs I Thompson

**In Attendance** Mrs R Avent (Tourism and Events Officer)  
Mr D Martin (Chief Executive)  
Mrs S Thomas (Head of Community Services)

**CS 31/16 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors N Farmer, C Fuller and Mrs R Hopkinson.

**CS 32/16 Public Question Time and Petitions**

There were none.

**CS 33/16 Declarations of Interest**

To receive any Declaration(s) of Interest under Corsham Town Council's Code of Conduct issued in accordance with the Localism Act 2011.

There were none.

**CS 34/16 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Community Services Committee Meeting held on 14 September 2016**

*Minute 30/16 Corsham Youth Zone* – Cllrs N Pocock and D Jarman had met to discuss the help required to ensure the continued running of the Corsham Youth Zone. Since the last meeting Richard Williams, Wiltshire Council's new Youth Officer for Corsham, had become further involved in the running of CYZ and the future of the youth club was now looking far more assured.

**CS 35/16 Reports from Council representatives appointed to outside bodies**

There were none.

**CS 36/16 Strategic Plan Monitoring and Evaluation (Minute CS 24/16, CS 27/15, SP 4/15 and others)**

The Head of Community Services reported on progress made on those Strategic Plan themes covered by the Community Services Committee: Destination Corsham; Alive with Centres of Excellence; Open to Business and Safe and Healthy Community.

It was noted that more could be done around the Charles Dickens/Pickwick connection, particularly in connection with the Great West Way (A4 Tourism Route) work being undertaken with Visit Wiltshire (*Note 2 – DMP Update – Attracting People*).

Cllr Jarman also suggested that the potential for digital displays could be discussed in more detail with Bath Spa University (*Note 7 – Create New Physical and Electronic Material*).

**CS 37/16 Destination Marketing Plan (Minute CS 20/15 and others)**

The Tourism and Events Officer gave a presentation and update on the advertising activity undertaken in 2016, and the proposals for 2017. While it was difficult to evaluate the impact of the advertising activity, there would appear to have been an increase in: visitors on the High Street; visitors coming into the Town Hall for tourism information; reviews on Trip Advisor, and group visits contacting the Town Council for advice. Following a year of advertising more widely than before, 2017 would be more targeted, which should allow for better evaluation procedures to be put in place.

The update was noted.

**CS 38/16 Community Services Budget 2017/18**

The Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive on draft budget proposals for 2017/18. The figures had been adjusted from current budgets and were based on Strategic Plan priorities, historical costs, projected costs and inflation.

Service developments in the draft budget were:

Retail/Town Centre Support (increase)	£2,000
Destination Marketing (increase)	£2,000
Strategic Plan Delivery	up to £24,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>up to £28,000</b>

The proposed overall increase for the Community Services Committee (revenue budget) would be £8,356 which was just under 10.5%. This increase included items previously funded from the Strategic Plan budgets and Earmarked Reserves.

**Resolved**

That the draft budget proposals be approved for consideration by the Finance and Administration Committee in December, in order that the precept can be set by Full Council in January 2017.

**CS 39/16 Corsham Cultural Strategy and Action Plan (Minute CS 25/16)**

The Committee thanked Cllrs Neville Farmer and Dave Jarman for their help in completing the Creative Corsham Strategy.

There were a number of comments and suggestions based on the Strategy and the associated Action Plan written by the Chief Executive, Head of Community Services and Tourism and Events Officer. It was felt to be vital that the contacts established with Arts practitioners during the research for the Strategy should be maintained, and their views on the Strategy and Action Plan be sought as soon as practicable. The Strategy's timescale of 2017-2022 meant that, with the current Strategic Plan, ending in 2018, the Creative Corsham Strategy would need to be included in the next Strategic Plan. The setting up of a Working or Steering Group may have some value in helping to deliver the actions identified, particularly with a lot of local artists and Town Councillors well-placed to be engaged.

#### **Resolved**

- i) That the Creative Corsham Strategy and Action Plan be approved.
- ii) That the Creative Corsham Strategy be included as a central part of Corsham Town Council's next Strategic Plan.
- iii) That those members of the Arts community who had attended workshops, etc, in the research for the Strategy, be invited to comment on the final version, either via email or, if possible, at a specific event.
- iv) That, following this, the potential for setting up a Working or Steering Group – with targeted aims and objectives – be investigated.

#### **CS 40/16 Review of the Street Fair (Minute CS 17/16)**

The Committee discussed the Street Fair held on 17 September 2016. It was felt that the event was excellent and should continue annually.

It was noted that the busking tent worked very well in keeping people at the event and that the numbers of visitors was very high. The feedback from businesses had also been very positive. It was suggested that there could have been activities for older children, maybe in conjunction with Corsham Youth Zone and/or The Corsham School's Student Leaders.

#### **Resolved**

- i) That a Street Fair be held again in September 2017.
- ii) That contact be made with Corsham Youth Zone and/or The Corsham School to look at running activities for teenagers as part of the event.

#### **CS 41/16 World War One Commemorative Events (Minutes CS 26/16, CS 28/16)**

The Head of Community Services reported on the success of Above and Beyond – the World War One Red Cross Hospital Exhibition that took place at the Town Hall from 17 October-30 October. The first four days had been for school visits only, and classes from Corsham Regis, St Patrick's, Corsham Primary, Lypiatt and The Corsham School all attended. Over the course of 20 and 21 October, yarn-bombing artist Emma Leith had installed the poppy display, made up of over 2,000 knitted and crocheted poppies created by local people, including the members of Corsham's Knitting and Crochet Club. On 21 October, BBC Points West and BBC Wiltshire covered the installation and the exhibition in great detail, with reports on TV and radio throughout the day. The

exhibition then opened to the public from 22-30 October, alongside a series of events including 'Knitting for the Troops', concert parties, a drama production by Act Now Youth Theatre, the involvement of The Natural Theatre Company and family history workshops. Around 2,500-3,000 people came to the exhibition and over £1,300 was raised in donations for the Royal British Legion, SSAFA and the Red Cross.

The feedback received had been excellent, with a number of very positive and moving comments left in the Visitors Book.

It was hoped that, in the New Year, Above and Beyond would be displayed, on a smaller scale, at Selwyn Hall in Box and then at the Tourist Information Centre in Corsham. There were also plans for it to be included in part of a larger exhibition in Bath in February 2017.

The Head of Community Services then reported on the unveiling of the Centenary Fields plaque at The Batters on Friday 11 November. This small and informal event had created coverage on BBC Wiltshire and Corsham TV, as well as press coverage in the Gazette & Herald. It was particularly gratifying that The Batters was the first WW1 site in Wiltshire to become a Centenary Field. Cllr Steve Abbott made a speech and unveiled the plaque - which had been mounted on a piece of Portland Stone - in front of invited guests including members of the Royal British Legion; David Lynam and the GSM, Christopher Bradshaw, from MOD Corsham; a representative from Fields in Trust, organisers of the Centenary Fields project; Town Councillors and members of the Corsham Commemorates Group.

The reports on both World War One Commemorative events were noted and the staff were thanked for all their efforts.

#### **CS 42/16 Christmas Lights Switch-On 2016 (Minute CS 27/16)**

The Tourism and Events Officer updated the Committee on preparations for the Christmas Lights Switch On which would take place on 2 December 2016. Musical entertainment on the night would include the Colerne Military Wives Choir; Corsham Panto, an Adele tribute act and the Disney Princesses, and the entertainment would take place on both the stage outside the Town Hall and in an 'acoustic tent' – following the success of the busking tent at the Street Fair - outside the TIC. Sponsorship had been given by Wadswick Green, Hunter French Estate Agents and Hunter French Lettings, and the owners of Green Ginger had donated the Christmas tree for the Martingate Centre. Thirty stalls were booked to take part in the Christmas Market. St John Ambulance and the Air Cadets were both booked to help and an Event Policing and Safety Plan would be in place.

The update was noted.

#### **CS 43/16 Taste of Corsham**

The Tourism and Events Officer updated the Committee on the plans for a 2017 Taste of Corsham food festival, to take place on Saturday 17 June, and be part of what was now becoming 'Festival Fortnight' alongside the Walking Festival and The Pound's Blue Sky event. Taste of Corsham would showcase local food suppliers and also include local retailers and restaurants. The event would feature live music, plus tastings, master-classes, special offers, etc.

The update was noted.

**CS 44/16 Corsham in Bloom (Minute CS 49/15)**

Following the successful entry in Britain in Bloom South West, with Corsham winning Gold in the Pennant competition in 2016, the Committee was asked for its comments on the proposal that Corsham should enter the competition again. The Head of Community Services explained that entering at the Pennant level was less work for the groundstaff and, with a very small Corsham in Bloom Committee, outside help with gardening tasks was very much in short supply. There was little distinction among the wider public between the Pennant and the main competition so winning Gold in the Pennant was still deemed to be a great success and help attract visitors to the town centre.

**Resolved**

That Corsham enters Britain in Bloom South West's Pennant competition in 2017.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and closed at 8.40pm. There were no members of the public present.

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CHAIRMAN

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE