



FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEETING HELD ON 28th May 2024 AT 7:45 PM AT THE RUFUS CENTRE

Present:

Cllr I Blazeby
Cllr A Snape
Cllr J Roberts
Cllr T Harald

Also present:

Stacie Lockey – Town Clerk & Chief Executive
Mat Earles – Business & Facilities Manager (BFM)
Beverley Jones – Communications & Marketing Manager (CMM)
Stephanie Stanley – Deputy Town Clerk (Virtual)

1530 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were **received and accepted** from Cllr Hodges – holiday and Cllr Parsons – holiday.

1531 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary interests in any agenda item –. none.
- (b) Non-Pecuniary interests in any agenda item –.none.

1532 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

No items.

1533 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

No items.

1534 INVITED SPEAKER

No items.

1535 MEMBERS QUESTIONS

No items.

1536 **MINUTES**

It was **resolved** to adopt the minutes of the Business Improvement & Development Board meeting held on Tuesday 12th March 2024 as an accurate record.

1537 **MATTERS ARISING**

A member commented that the procurement regulations were due to change, and Officers should be mindful of this when appointing contractors. A suggestion was made to appoint a single supply contractor with a maximum amount of cost.

Action: BFM

Members asked for an update on the replacement windows for the Rufus Centre flat. The Town Clerk advised that the order had been placed but the works were yet to take place.

The Town Clerk advised that the new lease for the Rufus Centre flat had been signed and passed on thanks from the tenant for spreading the increase over a phased period.

1538 **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. Vice Chair

It was **resolved** to elect Cllr T Harald as vice chairman.

b. Rendezvous Café Expansion

Members discussed the different options presented to install an additional seating area within the café or first floor Denel wing. Members raised concerns about the lighting in the café area and felt this would need to be improved if the project was progressed.

Members asked if it was possible to install additional furniture within the café, however, the BFM advised that this was not possible due to space.

It was **recommended** to proceed with the installation of a workstation bench within the Rendezvous Café.

The BFM would seek quotations to include lighting and seating, with a final proposal being considered by the full Council in June.

Action: BFM

c. Community Fridge Expansion

The Town Clerk advised Members that all quotations had been sought to carry out the works for the conversion of the Stocksfield Annex, and the Committee was required to formally agree to this project.

Members asked for clarity on where the fridge would be situated so that this could be communicated with SHARE who currently use the space on a Saturday morning.

It was **resolved** to go ahead with the Stocksfield annex conversion.

The BFM agreed to produce a scaled map and timeline for the project and publish this to Members.

Action: BFM

d. Security Provision

Members commented on the Events & Bar policy and felt that the Town Clerk should have delegated authority to appoint the designated premises supervisor.

Members also felt that all the policies needed to be reviewed to include that the Rufus Centre was a safe space and Ask for Clive venue. The Town Clerk advised the policies would be reviewed at a future meeting.

Action: SMT

A Member commented that the security was not just there to control people who were drunk but also to ensure people were quiet when leaving the building to minimise disruption to the neighbours.

Members were in agreement that the policies remained but felt that Officers should have discretion when appointing security based on the event as they didn't feel some events required security.

The BFM explained that members of the SMT had discussed upskilling the Hospitality Porters. However, this could put them in a difficult position and was not currently included in their job descriptions. The BFM also explained that if Officers had discretion they would likely choose to have security to be covered in the event something may happen.

The Town Clerk felt that one rule should be followed so it doesn't get complicated and everybody is clear on what is required.

Members agreed to leave it as is currently and tasked Officers to come back with some proposed rules and an indication of how that might change the costings of some events.

Action: BFM/TC

1539 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Communication & Marketing Report

Members noted the report.

The CMM gave an overview of the social media management software that was due to be implemented, including officers' increased involvement in the process. Members suggested that a training session be held for those staff to cover the basics of what needs to be included within posts, e.g., the process, timelines, photos, etc.

Action: CMM

Members were advised that a marketing and communications plan for all events and activities throughout the year would also be implemented using Microsoft Planner. This would be able to be filtered by the Community and Business Committees if required.

Members were advised that the branding review meeting had taken place, and Treacle Factory would now be instructed to proceed with the project. Once this had taken place, Officers would consider possibly outsourcing the production of one-off posters for different events and activities.

Members discussed the social media statistics and were pleased to see the engagement and post reach was relatively high.

A Member asked if hashtags were used on posts and whether the Council shared posts, which helps to increase the algorithms. The CMM advised that hashtags were used on posts.

A discussion was had around boosting posts. The CMM advised that this was not possible on the FTC page; however, it could be done on the Rufus Centre page. The BFM advised that the post for the silent discos had recently been boosted, and although it did not attract new sales, it did create additional followers. Members suggested boosting posts for niche events.

A suggestion to include a 'How to stay in contact with news, activities and events FTC/Rufus put on' is featured on a page in the Autumn Flitwick papers was made including possible QR codes, and it was recommended that this page be tied into the residents' survey results.

Action: CMM

Members were keen to keep the printed flyers to a minimum and ensure that they were controlled within the foyer area.

Members were advised that the digital signage in the café area was predominantly used for displaying menus only however, poster content had been added recently to promote events taking place.

The CMM gave an update on the issues with the distribution of the Flitwick Papers and it was agreed to trial alternative distributors in the Autumn, having proactively promoted and monitored the Summer edition delivery.

Members were also advised that the design had been outsourced for one month as a trial, and this would be reviewed following the completion of the summer edition.

b. Funeral / Wake Packages

Members noted the revised packages.

Members asked what the approximate lead times were for bookings. The Town Clerk advised that it was usually around 3-4 weeks. A suggestion was made to carry out paid for targeted social media posts to wider areas promoting the Rufus Centre as a venue.

Members discussed the room prices and agreed that they should be removed to allow flexibility. The document could include something more vague to give an indication of capacity and prices starting from.

It was agreed that the Rufus Centre website needed updating with up-to-date pictures of the offer.

Action: BFM/CMM

1540 **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

No items.

1541 **EXEMPT ITEMS**

The following resolution was **moved** it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

a) Confidential Report

Members noted the report.

b) Officer Update

Members noted the report.

c) Potential Projects Discussion

Members discussed future potential projects.

d) Finance Reports

Members noted the finance reports.

e) Occupancy Stats

Members noted the occupancy stats.

f) Internship

The Town Clerk gave an update on the internship.

Meeting closed at 21.53.

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council **resolved** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.