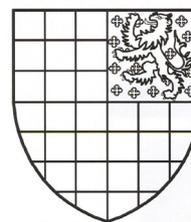


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**LEWES
TOWN
COUNCIL**

MINUTES

of the meeting of the **Commemorations & events Committee**, held on **Tuesday 27th August 2019** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall**, Lewes at **7:00pm**.

PRESENT Cllrs S Catlin; G Earl; Dr W Maples; Dr G Mayhew(*Chairman*); R O’Keeffe; J Vernon and K Wood

In attendance: S Brigden (*Town Clerk [TC]*).

Commems2019/01 ELECTION of CHAIRMAN

Cllr Dr Mayhew was elected Chairman of the Committee for the 2019/20 year.

Commems2019/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies had been received from Cllr Makepeace, who had a family commitment. No message had been received from Cllr Burrows.

Commems2019/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: There were none

Commems2019/04 QUESTIONS: There were none

Commems2019/05 MINUTES: It was resolved that:

Commems2019/05.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 21st February 2019 are received and agreed as an accurate record.

Commems2019/06 REMIT of the COMMITTEE

Members noted the remit of the committee, as:

- › Originally a Working Party set up in 2012 to address a number of imminent commemorations; this body had its mandate extended in response to the similar considerations arising through to 2019; when it was established as a standing committee to address the continuing volume of noteworthy commemorations foreseeable in the next few years.
- › The Commemorations & Events Committee is mandated to consider significant anniversaries/centenaries or similar occasions, and such notable events as may be presented, and to formulate recommendations for Council as to the appropriate recognition of them.

Commems2019/07 BUSINESS OF THE MEETING:

1 TC gave a brief update on matters in progress:

There would be a small exhibition in the Town Hall foyer between 11th and 16th September, to cover the Heritage Open Days weekend, on the life and work of the architect Rowland Hawke Halls; mounted by his grandson, Mr David Scott Cowan. This would be later transferred to the County archive at The Keep, where a talk was to be presented on 18th September. Members were interested to see two examples of the material to be displayed and wished the project every success.

It was noted that the European Film Academy Young Audience Award international project held at The Depot in May with support from the Council, had been hailed a success by the organizers.

2 The meeting welcomed Graham Festenstein, Director of the Lewes Light Festival, who presented a request for financial support for the event planned for February 2020. The Council had supported earlier Festivals with grants to pay for basic expenses (insurance; technical operators, general running costs *etc*) that would not easily attract mainstream grant funding. Mr Festenstein described

planned changes to the format for the next Festival, which would move from October to February and thereby help in the engagement of educational establishments when they were not occupied with the start of a new academic year. There were many other changes designed to make the Festival easier to manage and yet bring higher-quality installations to more people. Numbers attending had continued to grow and the last year had seen record attendances. Links with educational establishments continued to expand and the 2020 event would also involve partnerships with the Environment Agency; Lewes Railway Land Wildlife Trust and The Depot. The theme was to be “water and moonlight” and installations would include the Railway Land Nature Reserve; The Pells, and Grange Gardens. The Environment Agency hoped to include an element of education regarding flood awareness. Arts Council funding was applied-for, and other funds were being approached. The Town Council was asked to contribute up to £8,000. Members were most interested in the details of the planned Festival and broadly supportive of the project. An extensive question-and-answer session followed. Although sympathetic to the proposal, it was remarked by several Councillors that more detail was required to explain the financial structure of the Festival and to help identify the application of any Council funding. It was agreed that a further meeting be held at which such detail could be considered, in time for recommendation to Council at its meeting on 3rd October.

3 Members welcomed Tom Reeves, representing Lewes High Street Traders’ Association. Mr Reeves recounted the formation of the Association, in late 2018, as an initiative to ensure a vibrant late-night festive shopping event with appropriate road-closures *etc.* The Council had previously given an annual grant to the Chamber of Commerce towards the underlying costs of their Christmas event, but this had not been requested when the Chamber ceased to arrange road-closures and last year Council had agreed to grant £2,000 to the Traders association to achieve the same end. The Association had started with enormous energy and an encouraging number of members had entered membership; now grown to around ninety. It was hoped that a mid-summer late-night shopping evening could be introduced, and this was one of several initiatives being considered. The 2019 winter event planning was well-progressed and an application for a road-closure Order was pending. The Association asked that a similar grant be made, to offset the cost of the Order and associated barriers; signage; marshalling, insurance *etc.* and Members considered this as a ‘transfer’ of the previous funding to a new organizer. Following a number of questions, they agreed to recommend that Council establish a grant at £2,000 per year, subject each year to a post-event expenditure report; this being in place of the grant previously given to the Chamber of Commerce.

4 Mr Reeves also described the Association’s position regarding a recent proposal made by a major festive lighting company for a comprehensive ‘turnkey’ arrangement to provide festive street lighting for three years – running from St Anne’s Hill to Cliffe, and from the railway station to Fisher Street. The company suggested that it could arrange all necessary licenses or permissions for attachment to buildings and street lighting columns *etc.* and provide the equipment; out-of-season storage; annual installation and dismantling, and all associated services, for a three-year initial period and then a follow-on arrangement once capital costs were recovered. Details were still being established but encouraging responses had been received from the District Council and others. Costs in the first three years would be over £44,000 per year, but the Association was hopeful that its members could finance half of that amount and hoped for contributions from Councils and others. The association considered this an important project in protecting the High Street from the threats of austerity and, increasingly, conversion of shops to residential dwellings. There followed a lengthy discussion on various details and members agreed to suggest that Council consider a

provisional grant of up to £10,000 for each of the first three years, dependent upon further detail and evidence of the Association's ability to realize the project this year or in 2020. Mr Reeves was invited to bring any latest developments for consideration in this regard, to the meeting proposed earlier, in order to facilitate decisions by Council at its meeting on 3rd October.

5 In light of the decision to hold a further meeting before Council in October; it was also agreed to invite the organizer of the Lightbox project to present a request for extended funding that was understood to be imminent.

Commems2019/08

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS: Council would be asked to support the decisions of the Working Party, as described.

It was agreed to recommend that Council establish an annual grant to Lewes High Street Traders' Association at £2,000 per year in respect of the winter late-night shopping event, subject each year to a post-event expenditure report (this being in place of the grant previously given to the Chamber of Commerce for that purpose)

A further meeting would be held at which further detail of the requests by Lewes Light (for grant support of £8,000) and the High Street Traders Association (for a contribution of £10,000pa towards cost of a three-year festive lighting agreement) could be considered in depth, in time for final recommendations to Council at its meeting on 3rd October. This meeting could also consider a prospective request from the Lightbox project organizers, which was understood to be imminent.

Commems2019/09

There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed, and thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions.

The meeting closed at 8:45pm

Signed.....

Date