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Date: 10 June 2009

MEETING OF THE ST ALBANS CITY FORUM ON TUESDAY, 23 JUNE 2009 AT 7.00 PM IN THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, ST PETER'S STREET, ST ALBANS, HERTS AL1 3JE

Councillors White (Chairman), Teare (Vice-Chairman), Leach, K Morris, Poor, Prowse, Wartenberg, Willcocks, Witherick and Zia

The room in which this meeting is to be held is equipped with an infra red hearing system for people with hearing difficulties. Advice on the use of the system will be provided at the meeting by the Corporate Administrator.

AGENDA

Speaking at the Meeting – one person can speak for, and one against or about a relevant issue. Booking to speak should be made between **10.00 and 14.30** on the day of the meeting by telephoning St Albans Tourist Information Centre **on 01727 864511**. Each speaker will have up to three minutes to address the Forum Members. Brief written material and/or photographs can be circulated at the meeting.

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Replacement Members

To note any replacements to the membership of the Forum for this meeting made in accordance with the notification procedure.

3. Apologies for Absence

4. Disclosures of Interest

5. Notification of Other Business

6. Minutes

(Pages 3 - 6)

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2009

7. Public Questions Covering Matters of Local Concern

8. City Vision Update and Way Forward

9. Streetscene Project Update

(Pages 7 - 9)

MINUTES OF MEETING NO 4 OF THE ST ALBANS CITY FORUM

held in the District Council Offices, St Peter's Street, St Albans, Herts AL1 3JE on Tuesday, 17 February 2009 at 7.00 pm

Present:

Councillors K Morris (Chairman), Teare (Vice-Chairman), Poor, Prowse, Wartenberg, White, Willcocks, Witherick and Zia.

Apologies

Kate Bell - PWC
John Brownfield – Faber Maunsell
Peter Trevelyan – Civic Society
Alastair Woodgate – St Albans Chamber of Commerce

Council Members In Attendance:

Councillors Donald, Frearson and Lusby.

Officers in Attendance:

Jo Grimes
Maria Cutler
Chris Roach, Community Support Manager
Richard Shwe, Head of Culture and Community Development

Also In Attendance:

Sgt J Bartlett – Hertfordshire Police;
Laura Cronshaw – St Albans CVS;
Angela Harkness – Senior Commercial Director - Butterfly world;
Ricky House – Project Manager – Butterfly World;
Jane Journet – St Albans Civic Society;
Esther King - General Manager Phase I – Butterfly World;
Holly Stedman – Marketing Manager, Butterfly World;

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed Members, stakeholders and all those in attendance.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2008 were confirmed with the addition of John Brownfield of Faber Maunsell as being present.

3. **PUBLIC QUESTIONS COVERING MATTERS OF LOCAL CONCERN**

There had been no notification of questions from the public.

4. **PLANNING, BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY ISSUES IN ST ALBANS CITY FORUM AREA**

The Chair introduced this item as a generic heading for the issues set out below.

a) Street Scene Improvements - Bids for Partnership Projects

The Chair stated that she and the Vice-Chair had had met to discuss these bids as this was required before the meeting. Decisions were to be made by the end of the month, so there was no news as yet. The City Forum bid had been made in respect of all un-parished wards or improvements to litter bins, benches, verges, bus stop shelters.

ACTION

Update to next meeting

b) Connect St Albans Project - Corporate Social Responsibility

Laura Cronshaw introduced this item referring to the establishment of Connect St Albans described as a brokerage service using business skills, resources and expertise to support the local community. It had been launched in September 2008 to bring together local businesses and the voluntary sector to a forum where skills and facilities could be exchanged and volunteering opportunities shared via a monthly bulletin. The project had attracted European funding and was providing a co-ordinator post one day a week.

Laura Cronshaw also referred to the Executive Forum set up by Oaklands College for senior managers facing redundancy.

The Chair thanked Laura Cronshaw for her presentation and the Forum agreed that a recommendation the Council's Cabinet and LSP be formulated.

c) Butterfly World

Angela Harkness introduced her colleagues and made a presentation on the of Butterfly World project which was under construction. The ambition was for the project, in Chiswell Green, to be the biggest butterfly experience in the world and to bring back indigenous butterflies to the region. Butterflies were described as an environmental barometer, necessary to human survival and the project was supported by several prestigious personalities. Phases I and II would consist of a garden festival open to the public in June-October featuring twelve competition gardens. The project would open fully in 2011. It had been estimated by the London School of Economics that Butterfly World would generate £123 million into the local community within five years. Humberts Leisure had made the following visitor predictions:

Phase I 2009 - 200,000 visitors

Phase II 2010 – 250,000 visitors

2011 – 750,000 – 800,000 visitors

Members asked questions, commented and received answers as set out below:

- Integrated transport links – partnership solutions were sought including a shuttle bus/green travel plan and The Council's Tourism and Regeneration Manager was acting as the Council's ambassador
- Ticket concessions – relationships with local people would be built and family/residents' discounted tickets considered
- Encouragement to visit other St Albans attractions – it was hoped to link Butterfly world with the Cathedral, Museum and City Centre
- Community safety issues – there would be full security, Chris Roach offered to discuss CCTV with Butterfly World and Sgt Bartlett offered advice on wildlife crime
- Employment opportunities – 100 staff would be employed on site at Phase II and many posts would be seasonal suitable for local students
- Traffic congestion – there were no plans for a shuttle service this year and Richard Shwe referred to the Festival which had not generated
- 2012 Games – Humberts had predicted the project would benefit from The Games which were being seen as a marketing opportunity
- Garden of the Rose – Butterfly World had offered to liaise with Garden of the Rose but no response has been received to date
- Impact on residents - attempts were made to minimise potential light pollution and it was hoped the environmental impact would be beneficial with the reintroduction of species and wildlife meadows - Groundwork Hertfordshire was working in partnership with Butterfly World

The Chairman thanked Angela Harkness for her presentation and asked that her contact details be included in these Minutes to enable Forum Members to discuss issues and arrange visits to the site.

Angela Harkness
Senior Commercial Director
Butterfly World Project
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d) Walking Strategy

The Chair drew Members' attention to the strategy requesting that comments be made by 20 February by email. The report had been written by the Council's Principal Engineer and Maria Cutler referred to the need for improved signing for pedestrians. Councillor Witherick inquired about sponsored pedometers and the Chair stated that the quickest routes via alleyways should be signed more effectively.

5. **FORWARD PLAN**

Forum Members considered the Forward Plan and approved the items shown on the appendix.

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET, OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES AND RELEVANT PARTNER AGENCIES**

That the Cabinet and Local Strategic Partnership be recommended to invest LAA reward funding in volunteering projects which promote corporate social responsibility such as the multi agency partnership initiative Connect St Albans. This project provides a cost effective model that contributes to a stronger local economy, builds better relationships between the business sector and more disadvantaged communities, develops and maximises skills through increased levels of volunteering and encourages an ethos and environment that will support a thriving third sector.

The Meeting ended at 9.45 pm

(SIGNED)

CHAIRMAN

Street Scene Project Plan

Status	Project	Lead	Resources	Outcome
1	Tackling Congestion - St Peters Street			
	This Project is to provide partial traffic management to St Peters Street and possibly Chequer Street and Market place. Principal reasons are to reduce congestion allowing better public transport as part of QNTP initiative, reducing air pollution and reducing the area's carbon footprint. Time line for key activities currently being prepared by Herts highways.	BP	£100 K capital for 2009/10 and 2010/11 has been made available. Herts Highways will pay for the traffic modelling as part of the Local Transport Plan. No capital cost implications for 2009/10.	Partial traffic management i.e. buses and taxi only during day - reduction in congestion, air pollution and CO footprint.
2	Visible Street Scene Improvements			
	Match funding was provided to all parishes, Harp TC and the SA City Forum to carry out visible street scene enhancement projects. All bids were evaluated and awards made by April 2009. All parties advised that scheme will be rerun towards the end of the year.	AR	Budgetary Provision of £20,000 made available for 2009/10. Some initiatives also funded from existing budgets.	
3	City in Bloom 2010			
	Currently this initiative still being considered by Project Board. Briefing note to be brought to next meeting of Board re feasibility of introducing a City in Bloom, perhaps linking with villages currently not entering Anglia in Bloom.	RS	Possible GAF money may be made available. Main concern however is staffing resources.	
4	Provision of Community Skips			
	Provision of Community Skips to public sector housing estates planned. Will involve partnership working between housing department and waste management section. Will use 40cu yd skips with supervision	MW	Joint funding between housing and E&RS budgets. Finding will be required for provision of skips, supervision, separate collection for electrical goods and costs of publicity and promotion.	To improve street scene by the removal of miscellaneous rubbish from gardens etc.
5	Development of Themes emerging from:			
5.1	City Vision			
	Report to May Cabinet on draft City Vision. Next stage of project to include development and refinement of options for City Centre congestion reduction. Workshop with Council officers and consultants Urban practitioners has taken place to link Transport into City Vision. This looked at options for	CM	Currently officer time only	Report to Highways Panel 22nd July
5.2	Public Realm			
	Report to May Cabinet on developing a public realm strategy. Any emerging themes from development of strategy that link to the visible street scene are to be considered by the board.	JB	Currently officer time only	Report to Highways Panel 22nd July
5.3	Streetscene Design Manual			
	Subject of report to May Cabinet. Design manual is now out for consultation. Any emerging themes relating to street scene to be dealt with by Project Board.	GK	Currently office time only	Report to Highways Panel 22nd July
6	Pavement Licensing			
	This scheme sees the introduction of licensing for providing tables / chairs etc on the pavements outside business premises. Licensing procedures now in place after consultation. Two premises currently licenced and one in progress. Leaflets now being distributed to all relevant premises in St Albans and Harpenden to remind them of their	LC	Finance fee payable. Should be self funding.	The use of pavements for the provision of street furniture to be properly controlled by Licensing.
7	Refurbishment of Static Recycling Banks			

	The repainting, relabelling (and maintenance) of the static recycling banks commenced in January 2009. This work will continue until all the banks have been improved.	MW	Budget provided for 2008/9 and 2009/10 for this work.	That all static recycling banks are painted the same colour, labelled correctly and present a professional approach.
8	Verge Improvements			
8.1	Enforcement of no parking			
	TMO's now in place for part of Harp Road, Watson's Walk and Colney Heath. Signage and verge reinstatement now needs to be co-ordinated. Letters have now gone out to residents on next tranche of roads e.g. Hatfield Road. Liaison with Herts Highways now required re verge reinstatements.	BP	JOC to carry out reinstatements of verges on Harp Road and Colney Heath. Herts Highways will need to contribute re 2nd tranche of verges as no SADC budget for this work.	
8.2	Verge Hardening			
	This is a function of Herts Highways. Liaison now taking place to increase amount of works undertaken.	BP	Discussions too take place on whether discretionary highway funding could be used in 2010/11.	
8.3	Verge Reinstatements			
	Verges being reinstated where damage not to severe. Part of GM contract	RS	Within Grounds Maintenance budget	
9	Street Litter Recycling Bins			
	These are provided on street for recycling newspapers/ cans and plastic bottles. A further 16 units have now been delivered and a provisional list for siting them drawn up including some park sites. Will be put out on site once list approved.	MW	Purchase 100% funded from government Capital Reward Grant	
10	A' Board Licensing			
	Negotiations still taking place with HCC to transfer responsibility for these functions to SADC	LC	Officers time at present.	
11	Use of Devolved Powers re Unlicensed Vehicles			
	The use of these powers was considered by the Board. However a further briefing note was required for the next meeting before a decision was to be made	BP	Officer time at present	Reduction of the 2500 untaxed vehicles in the St Albans Area.
12	Premier Foods Initiative			
	A offer of assistance has been received from Premier Foods	RS		
13	Voluntary Closure of Heavily Parked Roads			
	This is a partnership initiative between SADC and Herts Highways. This is part of a rolling programme where heavily parked roads are voluntarily closed to allow essential maintenance and cleaning. Next batch of roads (38 in total) to be dealt with in July 2009	MW	No additional costs to SADC	Roads which are inherently difficult to clean are swept.



Agenda Item 10

ST ALBANS CITY FORUM FORWARD PLAN 2009-06-01

22 September 2009	10 December 2009	Possible/future items
Public Realm review	Tourism problems	Licensing issues Community Assets Community safety/ public realm LDF Local Shopping parades Green Travel