



BOGNOR REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

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CHRISTMAS ILLUMINATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 21st JANUARY 2009

PRESENT: Cllr. G. Burt (Chairman), Cllrs: Mrs. S. Daniells and Mrs. J. Warr (to Min. 53)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs. G. Frost (Deputy Town Clerk)
Mrs. S. Holmes (Events Officer)
Mr. A. Holmes (Electrical Contractor) and Mr. I. Harding (Chamber of Commerce representative) - co-opted members

The Meeting opened at 6.35pm

45. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman welcomed those present. Apologies were noted received from Cllrs. Mrs. E. Anderson and D. Eldridge.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this Agenda.

Members and Officers should declare an interest by stating:-

- a) The item they have an interest in
- b) Whether it is a personal interest and the nature of the interest
- c) Whether it is also a prejudicial interest
- d) If it is a prejudicial interest, whether they will be exercising their right to speak under Question Time.

They then need to re-declare their interest and the nature of the interest at the commencement of the item or when the interest becomes apparent.

In accordance with good practice, individual forms were available to those Councillors present in order that they could personally record their interests - both Prejudicial and Personal. These forms to be returned to the Committee Clerk at the end of the meeting to enable all declarations of interest to be accurately recorded in the Minutes.

Mrs. Holmes declared a Prejudicial Interest as her son is a Director of Leaderboard Sports (UK) Ltd., the Town Council's Electrical Contractors and Mrs. Holmes is Company Secretary

Mrs. Warr declared a Prejudicial Interest in any matters relating to Bognor Regis Seafront Lights

Those present noted that there were two Declarations of Interest made at this point in the Meeting.

47. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21st OCTOBER 2008

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** to agree and approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st October 2008 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and the presiding Chairman signed them.

48. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES WHICH ARE NOT SEPARATE AGENDA ITEMS

48.1 21st October - Min. 36.4 Festive Lighting

The Sub-Committee noted that the lights were not delivered until 29th October, a bit later than requested. These had been insured on an All Risks basis whilst in the Council's possession and had now been returned to the supplier and the insurers advised accordingly. The invoice from the insurance company for the additional premium that will be payable is still awaited.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that Festive Lighting had promised the Council a 5% discount on the 2nd hire agreement backdated to year one (2007) as a goodwill gesture in view of the problems that had been experienced with the lights. Unfortunately, when the invoice was received only a 5% discount had been applied for this current year. This has now been rectified and a credit for the further 5% has been received.

48.2 21st October - Min. 36.5 Works to electrical boxes

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that contact had been made with the Electrician carrying out these works for an update. Testing and certification of the Aldwick Road supplies was still to be finalised. A timer also needed to be fitted to the new supply at the Station Public House. Once this work was completed a final invoice would be prepared and forwarded to the Town Council with all the necessary certificates. It is hoped works will be completed by the end of next week.

48.3 21st October - Min. 38 Income and Expenditure

In answer to a query the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that a refund had been received for the electrical supply that was originally to be installed by SSEPD in 2006/07 to feed the display at the Station Public House. This work had now been completed by SEC towards the end of last year.

49. REPORT FROM ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR ON CHRISTMAS ILLUMINATIONS 2008

49.1 The Report from the Electrical Contractor was noted as being received and circulated to those present. The Electrical Contractor confirmed that the catenary wires at Travelcare/Co-op and The Bodyshop were still galvanized. This was due to a delay in delivery of new stainless steel strainers and scaffolding at one of the sites, which restricted access to the fixings. Parts have now been received and as soon as the scaffolding is removed the Contractor will complete the outstanding works.

- 49.2** Members noted that the welding on the display in York Road had failed during stormy weather which meant that part of the structure was being held up by the lights rather than the frame. This had been secured by a member of Town Force and was checked by the Contractors at the earliest opportunity to ensure that the repair was safe and that the display could remain in situ until the end of the festive period. The possibility that one of the smaller snowflake displays from the High Street could be hung in this location next Christmas as they would be more likely to withstand gusty weather conditions was suggested.

Cllr. Burt declared a Personal Interest as a resident of the High Street

Concern was expressed that moving the larger display from York Road into the High Street could upset the balance and give a more cluttered appearance as it was felt the vista down the High Street with the current displays looked very good.

- 49.3** The Electrical Contractor reported on the problem with the Christmas tree lights. These had been tested prior to installation and many of the strings were not working. This had resulted in considerable extra work with working sections of the lights having to be remade in to strings. There appeared to be no obvious cause for the failure of these lights but the purchase of additional lights would need to be considered prior to next Christmas as the trees had looked sparse in areas this year. Comment was made that the wires were generally very thin and delicate and the need to look at more robust lighting for future years was suggested. Members felt that the trees at the William Hardwicke and the Railway Station had looked good this year although comment was made that the tree at the Station looked better at night. Concern at the size of one of the sponsorship banners for this tree was raised and it was suggested this be looked at for future years. The Chairman commented that the tree on the Town Hall balcony was bigger than usual and suggested that a smaller one be considered in future. The Electrical Contractor reported that he recalled the tree on the balcony used to be placed in a stand which elevated the tree so that the base of the tree could be seen. The whereabouts of the stand would be investigated.

- 49.4** The Electrical Contractor had kindly supplied a breakdown of the electricity used during the festive period. This would now be forwarded to Scottish and Southern Energy plc

- 49.5** It was noted that a section of one of the snowflake arches in London Road had failed again this year, which had already been reported to the suppliers.

- 49.6** The Chairman thanked Mr. Holmes and Mr. Brooks on behalf of the Town Council for the excellent job they had done again this year. Hardly any of the lights had failed during the festive period, which it was felt was a great improvement.

50. REVIEW OF SWITCH-ON ENTERTAINMENT 2008 - INCLUDING REPORT FROM EVENTS OFFICER AND TO RATIFY DATE FOR SWITCH-ON IN 2009

- 50.1** The Events Officer reported that there had been no major problems with the event this year. However, it had been more stressful due to the implementation of the road closures. It was noted that it had been necessary to erect the Council's marquee on the day for use by the performers owing to the bad weather. Everything had gone well with Santa's Grotto and thanks were extended to Cllr. Mrs. Daniells and her son for their assistance on the day. Concern had been expressed by some of the people with craft stalls as in their opinion the Craft Fair had not been publicized enough. The

Events Officer confirmed that the event had been well advertised and a large banner located outside the theatre with details of the event. She suggested that the Sub-Committee may wish to consider not holding the Craft Fair next year due to the problems it creates. The Events Officer was pleased to report that a couple of students from the University had volunteered to assist at the event, which had been very helpful. The Lantern procession had been good and there had been a police presence. Unfortunately the students from Art of Dance were unable to sing whilst participating in the procession as they had no musical accompaniment. The Events Officer also referred to the difficulty that was experienced with managing the crowds at the entrance to the Arcade so as access for other shoppers could still be maintained.

50.2 The Chairman expressed a big thank you on behalf of the Sub-Committee to the Events Officer and other staff who had been involved and to all Councillors who had given their time on the day to assist with making this a successful event. In answer to a query the Events Officer confirmed that thank you letters had already been sent out.

50.3 Some discussion took place regarding the entertainment held during the day and whether this should be condensed to an hour or two prior to the Switch-on as there had been occasions when there had been no audience for the entertainers. It was suggested that the patio outside the William Hardwicke could be considered as an alternative location for the stage, subject to the owner's approval. Members agreed that this was a natural stage and with the tree in this location this would only enhance the event further. Cllr. Mrs. Daniells reported that she had attended the Selsey event with the pantomime characters from the theatre, which had been short and intense with a parade and then their Switch-on event. This had been well supported by the local residents. The Events Officer expressed some concern as to whether by locating the stage further up the High Street this would push the crowds too close to the road closure barrier at the entrance to Sussex Street and advised that she would need to investigate the practicalities of this. Following further discussion, it was AGREED that subject to the William Hardwicke giving their approval for use of their patio, the Events Officer would put this proposal to WSCC and the Police to see if they would both be in agreement to this change. The possibility of having spotlights located on the balcony above Barclays Bank to illuminate the patio area was suggested. Comment was made that the Regis Centre may be able to assist with the loan of such equipment.

50.4 A Councillor commented that following the Switch-on there was no Christmas atmosphere in the town and requested that the Sub-Committee consider the provision of piped Christmas carols during the festive period. The Events Officer advised that she had investigated this at the beginning of last year and had established there would be a requirement to purchase a Performing Rights Society Licence and Public Performance Licence if the Sub-Committee wished to progress this. These would be expensive, the exact costs being dependent on various criteria. It was AGREED that the Events Officer be asked to investigate the costs again and report back to the next meeting to allow the Sub-Committee to consider this for 2009.

50.5 Members AGREED that the children's rides should continue and the Chairman advised that he had details of a company that have a barrel organ, which he would forward to the Events Officer so that costs could be investigated. It was further AGREED that in view of the difficulties that arise every year with the Craft Fair, local charities would be approached and offered a table at a cost of £5.00. It was noted that the Window Competition had proved very popular and had been well supported particularly by the Aldwick Road traders. As a result many of the participating retailers had also donated raffle prizes. Members were pleased at the

response this had created and AGREED that the competition be run again in 2009. The Events Officer gave a detailed breakdown of the income received and expenditure incurred for the Switch-on event which had resulted in the event being slightly under budget.

50.6 The Chairman queried whether the Events Officer felt that the Lantern workshops and procession had been value for money. The Events Officer confirmed that she had been disappointed that only eleven children had participated despite publicizing the event through local schools etc. In answer to a query as to whether the event could grow and be better supported this year, the Events Officer advised that she would like to run this for a further year to try to increase participation. If however numbers could not be increased then the event would be dropped for the following year. This was AGREED.

50.7 In answer to a query about Spirit FM and whether the service received was value for money, the Events Officer confirmed that the Town Council had been first to book their services for this Christmas despite them attending the Chichester and Selsey events on the same day. The original quote for them to MC the event had been between £400 and £450 but the Council had only actually been charged £350. This figure would have been spent on radio advertising for the event anyway with Spirit FM if they had not been in attendance but the cost of advertising, their services to MC the event and use of their PA system was all included in the £350 cost.

50.8 The need to encourage traders to sponsor Town Council events and publicize their support was stressed. Comment was made that the Promotions and Publicity Committee would be considering at their next meeting the proposal to host a reception as a means of thanking sponsors. It was suggested that consideration could also be given to use of a page on the Town Council's website to identify supporting businesses. The Events Officer reported on the difficulty she had experienced getting support from the multi national companies in comparison to the independent traders in the town. The possibility of producing a window sticker for traders who offer support to display in their shop windows was proposed, which it was felt could be a way forward for the future. In the meantime it was AGREED that an A5 poster could be produced by the Events department, which could be given to all sponsors of Town Council events to be displayed at their premises identifying their support. It was further AGREED that a thank you to sponsors would also be included in the Town Council's newsletter.

50.9 The Events Officer proposed that the date for the 2009 Switch-on event be set as Saturday 28th November 2009. This was ratified.

51. CONSIDERATION OF CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS WEATHERPROOF PLUGS AND SOCKETS ON LED DISPLAYS

51.1 The Deputy Town Clerk advised that weatherproof plugs and sockets had been fitted by the Electrical Contractor to enable easier connection between the two halves of each LED display. As a result future installations would be faster and safer. It had been suggested that the Council's contribution towards the overall cost be £200 excluding VAT. The Chairman commented that the Sub-Committee had put a £200 contingency within the budget for parts, which would allow for this expenditure. Members were in agreement that this payment should be made.

51.2 Contact had been made with The Festive Lighting Company who had confirmed that if the Sub-Committee decided not to extend the first hire agreement for a further year,

these fittings would be removed from the illuminations that had been displayed in London Road and returned to the Town Council. Otherwise they would remain on the displays for easier installation next Christmas. The fittings would then be removed prior to the displays being returned to the supplier following the 2009 festive period, as both hire agreements would have expired and the fittings will be used with any new displays that the Council may hire.

52. REVIEW OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE TO DATE

52.1 The Sub-Committee noted the draft Income and Expenditure account that had been circulated to those present. Invoices that were still awaited for expenditure were highlighted in bold and a further invoice was expected from the electrician for the works still outstanding as reported earlier. This had not been included in the draft calculations.

52.2 In answer to a query the Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that an additional £1,600 had been added to the budget so far funded from the Rolling Capital Programme as supplementary funding to cover works to the electric boxes. With the estimated income and expenditure to date, an additional £309 approximately would now be required from the RCP to balance the budget. The capital budget for 2009/10 had been reduced by £2,000 to cover this additional expenditure.

52.3 *Cllr. Mrs. Warr gave her apologies and left the Meeting at 7.23pm*

52.4 As the Meeting was no longer quorate, those present made recommendations to the Environment and Leisure Committee from this point in the Meeting.

53. REVIEW OF RISK ASSESSMENTS FOR CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND CHRISTMAS TREES

53.1 The Events Officer circulated copies of the Risk Assessments for the Christmas lights and Christmas trees to those present. It was noted that the next date for review would normally be October 2009. However, it may be necessary that this date is brought forward dependent upon the decision of the Sub-Committee as to the way forward with the installation of the lights. The Events Officer reported that the Risk Assessments currently refer to contractors and it may be that consideration will be given to Town Force undertaking some of the workload. Should this be the case then these documents would need to be amended accordingly. The Events Officer also referred to the issue of hard hats being worn during the installation of the Christmas trees and how this can be a hazard whilst working off a ladder. Members were in agreement that the document be amended to incorporate that hard hats should be worn as appropriate.

53.2 The Events Officer was thanked by the Chairman on behalf of the Sub-Committee for all her hard work on these documents.

53.3 Concern was again raised at the size of one of the sponsorship banners on the Railway Station tree and it was noted that a review of appropriate signage will be undertaken at a future meeting. It was suggested that more should be made of the Town Council's involvement with the Christmas illuminations and the possibility of the Railway Station tree incorporating a sign with season's greetings from the Town Council was raised.

54. CONSIDERATION OF CORRESPONDENCE FROM LOCAL RETAILER REGARDING ELECTRICAL BOXES - COPIED TO SUB-COMMITTEE

54.1 *Cllr. Burt declared a Personal Interest as a resident of the High Street*

54.2 The letter which had been circulated to the Sub-Committee was noted as being received. Members were advised that it had been suggested by the local retailer that contact be made with all the relevant property owners to seek their agreement to the electric boxes remaining on their property. The Chairman suggested that an approach could be made to WSCC to seek a copy of a model wayleave agreement to establish if this could be used in this process. A letter expressing the Council's appreciation for previous support could then be sent to all the relevant businesses incorporating the wayleave agreement if appropriate, to seek confirmation of their continued agreement for the boxes etc. to remain on their property.

55. PEA LIGHTS IN HIGH STREET TREES - TO CONSIDER REQUIREMENT FOR MAINTENANCE WORK/BULB REPLACEMENT - REFERRED FROM E & L MEETING 15th DECEMBER 2008

55.1 The Sub-Committee noted that the pea lights needed to be removed from the trees for repair and then be re-installed. The Deputy Town Clerk was requested to seek some quotations for this work and report back to the next meeting.

55.2 Comment was made that the up-lighters at the base of the trees had also not worked for some time and this needed investigating.

56. CONSIDERATION OF WAY FORWARD FOR 2009 INCLUDING

56.1 **Correspondence from Leaderboard Sports (UK) Ltd. - consideration of how to proceed**

The Deputy Town Clerk reported on the letter received from Leaderboard Sports (UK) Ltd confirming that it was not their intention to apply for the Christmas Illuminations contract again in 2009/10. Members noted that the Electrical Contractor had kindly supplied a detailed breakdown of the approximate time required for installation, testing and removal of the Christmas illuminations. Unfortunately, the installation and removal of the Starburst displays at Aldwick Road had been omitted from the breakdown. The Electrical Contractor apologised for this error and confirmed that he would advise the Deputy Town Clerk of this information as soon as possible. The possibility of the Town Force team undertaking the installation and removal of the lights was discussed. Detailed costs would be prepared for the Sub-Committees consideration. Quotations would also be sought from alternative contractors. The Chairman stressed the importance of the inclusion of a contingency budget to allow for any unforeseen circumstances.

56.2 **Cessation of first three year Hire Agreement - consideration of options**

Following a suggestion at the last meeting that an approach should be made to The Festive Lighting Company to establish the cost to extend the hire agreement for London Road for a further year, the Deputy Town Clerk reported that the cost would be the same as in 2008 less 10% totaling £3,150. The other option available would be to purchase the lights outright at 75% discount on the trade price at the time of hiring. Members felt that the problems of storage and ongoing maintenance made this option less attractive than extending the current agreement. However, it was felt that The Festive Lighting Company should be pressed for an improvement on the 10% discount offered. Members felt that a 30% discount would be preferable and the

Deputy Town Clerk was asked to liaise with the company to secure the best terms available. Following further debate, those present **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** to the Environment and Leisure Committee that the hire agreement for London Road is extended for a further year. It was further **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that the Deputy Town Clerk should negotiate with the supplier regarding the discount available and obtain the best price.

56.3 Switch-on Celebrity

Mr. Harding advised that he had made enquiries about the possibility of Jonathan Ansell being available to undertake the Switch-on this year. The Chairman commented on the pantomime characters that compliment the Switch-on event and stressed that the Sub-Committee would not want to detract from that.

56.4 Christmas tree sponsorship and sponsorship of Children's Competition

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that she had been advised by Mr. Hay that Frank R Hay and Sons would no longer be able to sponsor the Railway Station Christmas tree or making of the frames for the children's competition. Members were keen that the competition continues and it was suggested that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr. Hay for his sponsorship over the years and to enquire what the cost would be for his company to continue to make the frames. This would then be referred to the next meeting for further consideration. The Sub-Committee would also need to consider the cost of having the frames wired, which had been part of the Leaderboard's sponsorship in previous years. Mr. Holmes confirmed that he felt sure that they would be happy to continue to wire the displays for the Sub-Committee on a sponsorship basis. Members expressed their appreciation to Mr. Holmes for his kind offer.

Members spoke about the Railway Station Christmas tree and the level of sponsorship required. It was suggested that sponsorship in the region of £500 should be sought for the tree, which is located in a prime location at the gateway to town. A press release would be issued later in the year to publicise the availability of this sponsorship opportunity.

57. CORRESPONDENCE

Cllr. Burt declared a Personal Interest in the first item as a resident of the High Street

- Various emails from the resident of 4b High Street in connection with the removal of old catenary wires and replacement with new. The Chairman commented that the old ironmongery had been removed from this site by Town Force who had done an excellent job. Mr. Holmes advised that there were areas of historic ironmongery within the town that needed to be de-cluttered and the area made good. It was suggested that the Town Force team could be asked to assess the level of work that would be required to undertake this task.
- Copy of email from Cllr. Brooks to the WSCC contractor for street lighting in connection with failure of lights at Aldwick Road
- Lamps and Tubes Illuminations - emails with details of January 09 sale and request for a meeting to discuss lighting requirements for 2009
- Bognor Regis Chamber of Commerce - details of free parking at Fitzleet multi-storey car park on Saturdays from 29th November through to 20th December 2008
- Gala Lights - details of 15% discount offer on orders placed up to 31st March 2009 and Evaluation and Refurbishment Check details
- Blachere Illumination - 2009 Wall Planner
- R&W Electrical Ltd. - copy of company portfolio

58. It was noted that one of the proprietors of Art of Dance had expressed an interest in being co-opted onto the Christmas Illuminations Sub-Committee. Members were of the opinion that the Sub-Committee had sufficient members at present, so requests for co-option would not be considered at this time.
59. Mr. Holmes queried whether he would be required to attend future meetings of the Sub-Committee as Leaderboard would be standing down as the Council's contractor from May 2009. Those present felt that Mr. Holmes was able to offer a valuable contribution to the meetings and welcomed his guidance and expertise on all aspects of the lights. It was therefore **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that Mr. Holmes remain on the Sub-Committee if he was in agreement.

60. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The Sub-Committee would meet again on Wednesday 18th March 2009 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber (subject to availability).

Note: The Council Chamber has now been booked for this date.

The Meeting closed at 8.05pm