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Minutes

Meeting of : Events, Markets and Grants Sub-Committee
Date : 29 January 2024
Meeting held in : The Guildhall, Salisbury
Commencing at : 6.30pm

Present:

Chair: S Charleston Vice Chair: J Bolwell

Cllrs: C Stanway, C Hibbert, E Rimmer, S Hocking and P Sample.

Also present: Cllr T Corbin, Cllr J Wells

Officers: Sarah Gregson, Joanna Wood and Andrew Hunt

85. Apologies:

- 85.1. Cllr B Dalton gave apologies and was substituted by Cllr C Stanway
- 85.2. Cllr J Broom gave apologies and was substituted by Cllr S Hocking
- 85.3. Cllr J Nettle gave apologies and was substituted by Cllr C Hibbert

86. Public Questions/Statement Time:

There were no questions or statements submitted by the public.

87. Councillor Questions/Statement Time:

A councillor statement was read by Cllr P Sample. The full statement can be found at the end of these minutes.

88. Minutes of the previous meeting:

The minutes of the last meeting of the Events, Markets & Grants Sub-Committee held on 2 October 2023 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

89. Declarations of Interest:

89.1 Cllr C Stanway declared an interest in the Read Easy Project.

89.2 Cllr P Sample declared an interest as a previous Vice-Chairman of the Salisbury Rugby Club.

90. Dispensations:

No dispensations were requested.

91. Chairman's Announcements:

The Chairman thanked officers for their hard work this Christmas; advising he enjoyed visiting Salisbury's Christmas displays, lights and grotto. He expressed his disappointment at the media coverage.

92. Stratford Road Social Club Improvement Period Report:

The Communities Manager, Sarah Gregson, gave a verbal update regarding progress of the Stratford Road Social Club improvement period over the last 6 months, The sub-committee discussed and asked questions, and it was;

Resolved to:

92.1 Recommend that the sub-committee grants the Stratford Social Club a further 6 months' rent reduction from April 2024 with ongoing support from SCC. However to be reviewed in full again at the Events, Markets and Grants Sub-committee on the 8 October 2024.

92.2 Approve the proposals outlined in the report and to continue using the improvement period plan that is in place currently.

Proposed by: Cllr S Charleston

Seconded by: Cllr J Bolwell

A vote was taken and accordingly was **carried**.

93. Summary of Community Development Grants 2023/24:

The Communities Manager, Sarah Gregson, provided a verbal update on community development grants for The Family Counselling Trust, Care Home Volunteers, Well City, Underground Studios CIC, Silver Salisbury, Riverbourne Community Farm, Community Transport, Age UK, Alzheimer's Support, AGAS, Sounds Better CIC, Families out Loud and DIGS. The sub-committee discussed the report, and it was:

Resolved to:

93.1 Note the report.

94. Community Development Grants Monitoring Report:

The Communities Manager, Sarah Gregson, provided a verbal update on grants monitoring for Victoria Park Bowls Club (Morning Star), Harnham Sports and Social Club, Salisbury Sea Cadets, Bemerton Heath Harlequins, Salisbury Rugby Club (Association), Stratford Road Scout Hut and Stratford Road Social Club. The sub-committee discussed the report and asked questions, and it was;

Resolved to:

94.1 To note the monitoring outcomes of the Read Easy project.

94.2 To approve Year 2 of the three-year Medium Grant to Silver Salisbury for distribution in March 2024 to reflect the delay in project delivery due to recruiting delays and personnel changes.

94.3 To approve Year 2 of the three-year Medium Grant to Silver Salisbury for distribution in March 2024 to reflect the delay in project delivery due to recruiting delays and personnel changes.

Proposed by: Cllr S Charleston

Seconded by: Cllr J Bolwell

A vote was taken and accordingly was **carried**.

95. Rent Reductions Monitoring Report:

The Communities Manager, Sarah Gregson, gave a verbal report on the monitoring of rent reduction for Victoria Park Bowls Club (Morning Star), Harnham Sports and Social Club, Salisbury Sea Cadets, Bemerton Heath Harlequins, Salisbury Rugby Club (Association), Stratford Road Scout Hut and Stratford Road Social Club. The sub-committee discussed and asked questions, and it was;

Resolved to:

95.1 Note the inclusion of Morning Star in next year's rent reduction reporting processes.

95.2 Note the stated aims and goals for Stratford Road Social Club as outlined in this report, with reference to decisions made via item 2 of this meeting.

95.3 Approve in full the Rent Reduction for Harnham Sport and Social for 2024/25.

95.4 Approve in full the Rent Reduction for Salisbury Sea Cadets for 2024/25.

95.5 Approve in full the Rent Reduction for Bemerton Heath Harlequins for 2024/25.

95.6 Approve in full the Rent Reduction for 23rd Salisbury Scouts for 2024/25.

95.7. Approve in principle the Rent Reduction for Salisbury Rugby Club for 2024/25 to be confirmed at the next Events, Markets and Grants Subcommittee Meeting in May 2024.

Proposed by: Cllr S Charleston

Seconded by: Cllr P Sample

A vote was taken and accordingly was **carried**.

96. Grant Policy Amendment - City Grants:

The Communities Manager, Sarah Gregson, gave a verbal report on city grants. The sub-committee discussed and asked questions, and it was;

Resolved that:

96.1. City Grants be removed as a grant option from the SCC Grants Policy as per the amendments outlined in Appendix 1.

Proposed by: Cllr S Charleston

Seconded by: Cllr S Hocking

A vote was taken and accordingly was **carried**.

97. Youth Bursary Grant 1-Year Monitoring Report:

The Communities Manager, Sarah Gregson, provided a monitoring report regarding youth bursary grants awarded to Wiltshire Creative, Salisbury Rugby Club, Salisbury Area Youth Musicians and Salisbury Football Club. The report was discussed by the committee, and it was:

Resolved to:

97.1 Approve the re-launch of the youth Bursary Grants scheme as delivered this year with a total budget of £6000 to be issued in Q4 of the 2023/24 financial year and to report to this committee in January 2025.

Proposed by: Cllr S Charleston

Seconded by: Cllr J Bolwell

A vote was taken and accordingly was **carried**.

98. Events and Markets Update:

The Interim Clerk/ Business and Communications Manager, Joanna Wood, provided a verbal update on recent events and markets, including 2023 total expenditure and income as well as highlighting some of the challenges for 2024.

The committee asked that officers be thanked for all their work on for last years events and markets, and it was:

Resolved to:

98.1. Note the update.

99. Matters, if any, which by reason of special circumstances the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency:

Nil

There were 6 members of the public and no press present.

The meeting closed at 8:44 pm

Statement from Cllr P Sample

Colleagues,

I have received a letter, which other may have received from Peter Wragg, the Chairman of VisitWiltshire. Other members may have received it. It reads:

Dear Councillor,

I am writing to update you on the impact of the proposed Wiltshire Council funding cuts to VisitWiltshire and the effect that this will have on our ability to access national funding and support for local businesses and the tourism economy across Wiltshire.

As you may be aware VisitWiltshire is the official Destination Management Organisation for Wiltshire and is responsible for promoting Wiltshire and supporting Tourism in the County. VisitWiltshire was created by and has been supported by Wiltshire Council over the last 13 years in a public/private partnership, and it has successfully worked to support and grow our tourism industry, promote local businesses, and create local jobs.

Last year the Council decided it would no longer provide critical core funding of £150k per annum for VisitWiltshire. Funding is due to end next month and as a result our future as an organisation is uncertain.

What neither officers nor councillors realised at the time of making that decision was that this cut would also make us ineligible to receive funding and support from VisitEngland or VisitBritain. The reason being that we would no longer meet the criteria for being part of the Government's new national public/private sector funded structure of Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs). This means that the impact of losing the £150k funding from Wiltshire Council will exact a much greater impact on our local businesses and communities and therefore needs to be urgently reconsidered.

For Wiltshire and destinations within Wiltshire to continue to be included in VisitEngland and VisitBritain marketing and support activity, it must have an LVEP. If it does not Wiltshire will be excluded from VisitEngland/ VisitBritain national and international marketing activity and according to their calculations, lose £5.6million in direct and indirect international visitor spend per annum from April 2024. That figure rises to a loss of £50million per year in short-term economic impact if domestic visitors are also taken into consideration.

These losses are significant, and our county, its towns and all the businesses that are involved in the visitor economy both directly and indirectly will suffer. Pre Covid the income derived from visitors to our county was £1.5 billion per annum supporting 29,000 jobs. The marginal revenue required to create a job in the UK tourism industry is estimated to be around £54,000, therefore £50m of revenue equates a potential loss of 930 jobs in the sector.

We are therefore urgently requesting that the council reconsider their decision to cut £150k funding from VisitWiltshire and work with us to establish a Wiltshire County LVEP (as set out in the [Government Response to the DMO Review](#)) that can secure additional investment and support from VisitEngland. Therefore, effectively support Wiltshire places and

businesses and promote the County and local businesses to domestic and international tourists.

VisitWiltshire is a multi-award winning DMO, highly regarded by VisitEngland/Britain and with the exception now of public sector funding it meets all the requirements for becoming an accredited LVEP. We operate a Wiltshire website that attracts over 1.3 million unique visitors a year providing them with comprehensive information about events and attractions across the county.

In terms of the performance of VisitWiltshire, at a recent performance review meeting with Wiltshire Council Officers and Councillor Najjar they confirmed that we had delivered in line with the Deed of Entrustment contract with Wiltshire Council, successfully achieving the objectives stated in that contract. Wiltshire therefore already has a highly regarded and performing organisation in place that is set up to be a successful LVEP.

We already have expressions of support from Wiltshire Towns, several of our Councillors, MP's, the National Trust, English Heritage, and the Chief Executive of VisitEngland and we are extremely grateful for that expressed support. Given that we now know the full extent of the financial loss to our county of cutting the £150k p/a VisitWiltshire funding, we believe that Full Council should be asked to reconsider their decision. Your active support to get this request properly considered at Council would be very much appreciated.

Perhaps you would consider lobbying your County Councillor or indeed the County Council direct, we are more than happy to meet your Council and answer any questions you may have.

Regards

Peter Wragg

Chairman, VisitWiltshire