

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **Tourism and Economy Committee** held on Tuesday 14th June at 7.00pm in the Corn Exchange Complex, Hungerford

Present: Cllrs M Crane, Knight & Small (arrived 7:15 pm)

Also present Geoff Adams, Adviser, John Thompson West Berkshire Training consortium

- 1. Apologies for absence.** Cllr Wilson, Farrell and Chicken.
- 2. Elect Chairman for Tourism & Economy Committee.** This was deferred until the next meeting, as the meeting was not at quorate. **Action:** Place election of new chair on next meeting.
- 3. Declarations of interests.** None.
- 4. Presentation by West Berkshire Training Consortium** – John Thompson gave background information on the organisation, and that its principle aim is support young people to enter the labour market or those which are distant from the labour market. Young people up to the age of 18 must remain in education or training and this is fully funded. Generally, apprenticeships last for 12 months and work within a framework (standard of the sector) and work towards a qualification for that role. WBTC currently have 200 apprentices and offers bespoke apprenticeships. There is a skills partnership committee which is chaired by head of Newbury college. In Hungerford area there are several users of WBTC. If an expo went ahead then WBTC and Newbury College should be invited. Changes are ahead through qualifications from NVQ to BTEC and funding.
- 5. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 11th April 2016.** Cllr Knight, proposed the minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Small.
- 6. Signage – Welcome & Pedestrian.** Cllr Crane had developed new signage to use as part of the welcome signage. Those present agreed was simple and effective. **Action:** Cllr Crane to pursue signage on the A4.
- 7. Major Employers Forum.** Cllr Crane is concerned there is no current link with major employers in the town. Cllr Crane has met with David Wilson Homes, who have their own apprentice scheme but would be willing to support an expo in Hungerford. Cllr Crane has met with TriTech, who have had some contact with JOG. **Action:** Cllr Crane to contact Head of JOG and JOG's career office. Cllr Crane would like the event not to be a career fair, but an opportunity to see the number of larger companies that are based in Hungerford. Cllr Crane indicated that REME should be included as well. Cllr Small indicated that there was overlap with Nigel Perrin who was organising a career's fair. **Action:** Cllr Crane to work with the Chamber of Commerce to reduce

complications, with a view to holding the event in November. Next chamber of Commerce meeting Thursday 7th July. **Action:** Cllr Knight to attend.

8. **Picnic Area.** Creation of a picnic area in the layby at Charnham St, which would include tourist information signs & planting. Toilets would be available at the BMW garage. A query was raised over who owned the land, and it was thought to be the Highways agency. **Action: Cllr Crane to explore the possibility of placing a tourist information point at the location. Action: Need to establish who owns the land.**
9. **Issues raised from Hungerford Chamber of Commerce.** The last meeting saw a number of new members attend. The main issues raised were: rents, business rates and parking charges. Rents are set by landlords and any inaccuracies in the rates should be appealed against. Discussion was held over the car park charges in Hungerford compared to other locations, with Wantage offering 2 h free parking and Farrington 1 h free parking. Nick Carter indicated support the proposal made by for a surcharge on the parking at Church Street or 30 min free parking, which HTC would pay for. The cost of this would need to be determined. An idea was suggested were a button can be pressed on the ticket machine, or a card inserted, which allows residents to park for a cheaper rate or for the first 30 min to be free. **Action:** determine the cost implication.

Discussion was held about the pigeons in Hungerford High Street, with particular reference to the lower end of the street. This topic has been raised in a number of meetings with a number of difference groups. The Deputy Town Clerk was asked to look up conservation laws that may be considered. **Action:** look up conservation law. The idea of placing a picture in front of the building was suggested. **Action:** determine the cost of this.

Two businesses were closing down, Framemakers (2nd July) and Bridge Street Antiques.

Meeting ended at 8:15 pm.