

ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND REVIEW PANEL

Meeting held on Tuesday, 5th September, 2017 at the Council Offices, Farnborough at 7.00 pm.

Voting Members

Cllr D.S. Gladstone (Chairman)

Cllr J.B. Canty
Cllr K. Dibble
Cllr C.P. Grattan
Cllr Marina Munro
Cllr J.J. Preece

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Mrs. D.B. Bedford, Cllr Sophia Choudhary and Cllr A. Jackman.

9. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th June, 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

10. CHRISTMAS ACTIVITY IN THE BOROUGH

The Panel received a presentation from David Phillips, Town Centre and Cultural Manager, on the current planned activity for the Borough for Christmas 2017. Activities planned for Aldershot Town Centre included the Christmas Lights Switch-On, Community Christmas Festival, Christmas Craft Fayre and Carols in the Bandstand. In Farnborough, activities included a Farnborough Frost Fayre, Craft Fayre and Princes Mead Lights Switch-On. There had been some changes made to the Aldershot Community Christmas Festival and Farnborough Frost Fair since 2016 to make both events more cost effective.

An additional resource, Jenny Atherton, had been secured for two days a week up until Christmas to help organise and promote events, including any additional Christmas events. The budget for 2017/18 would allow £5,000 for additional events and £5,300 for the part-time post. The Panel was asked to let David Phillips know of any additional events they would like to be considered and provide any suggestions to enhance the town centres and shopping areas over the Christmas period.

The Panel discussed a number of proposals and agreed that a competition for shops to decorate their own shop fronts should be introduced as an initiative in both Aldershot and Farnborough. Cllr Keith Dibble, requested a meeting with Jenny Atherton, to discuss a potential community event in North Town.

John Trusler, Principal Engineer, informed the Panel on the current provision of Christmas lights and trees in the Borough. The Christmas lights were currently put up by the Maintenance Team at Wellington Street and Union Street in Aldershot, a tree with lights was placed at Princes Gardens and the tree adjacent to the NAAFI roundabouts was also lit. Christmas lights were also put up by the Maintenance Team in Queensmead in Farnborough. Christmas lights had been installed on an existing tree in North Camp in 2016 and North Town had been provided with a tree and lights. There were no plans for any additional trees or lights for 2017 as there was no funding available and the deadline for applications for licences had passed.

The Panel discussed options for additional funding to increase and improve the current lights provision including seeking sponsorship from large companies in the Borough. It was highlighted that a number of large companies already provided funding for other community events and it could be difficult to obtain further funding for Christmas lights. Other local authorities had benefited from becoming Business Improvement Districts where local retailers would put in a funding contribution of which some could be used for Christmas lights. Cllr Keith Dibble agreed to approach local retailers in North Town to contribute some funding for additional lights for the tree in North Town. Cllr David Gladstone had secured £250 towards Christmas lights and a tree in North Camp from North Camp Matters.

It was suggested that a joint approach should be considered in future in the town centres for the provision of Christmas lights to try to reduce the overall cost for each partner. Princes Mead would be looking to renew the contract for the provision of their Christmas lights in 2018, The Meads contract expired in 2019. Princes Mead and The Meads acknowledged the benefits of the whole town centre working together but there was no benefit for them to co-ordinate with Aldershot. It was suggested that the cost of a contract for the lease of Christmas lights should be investigated.

The Panel discussed options for securing funding for a tree in North Town with additional lights and a tree in North Camp with additional lights plus a one-off cost for a base to secure the tree in a suitable location. It was suggested that a request could be made to the Cabinet to increase the budget for provision of the trees in North Town and North Camp and that the £3,000 one-off funding for the base could be put forwards as a capital bid. There was also an option to approach the construction company based in North Camp to carry out some of the work required as a contribution. A potential cheaper alternative over the longer term would be to provide a permanent tree in North Camp with lights that would only be turned on during the Christmas period. John Trusler would provide a breakdown of the costs for a permanent tree and lights in North Camp.

A review of Christmas 2017 would take place at the January Panel meeting which would include consideration of costs for additional trees and lights for Christmas 2018.

The Panel requested that the Cabinet re-investigate the appetite of local retailers to become part of a Business Improvement District, although it was recognised that a consultation had already been held which had showed there was not strong support for the initiative.

The Panel **AGREED** the following actions:

Action to be taken	By whom	When
A review of Christmas 2017 be carried out at the January 2018 Panel meeting	Panel Members	23 January 2017
Details on the costs of a permanent tree and lights in North Camp to be brought to the January 2018 Panel meeting	John Trusler	23 January 2017
A meeting to be arranged with Cllr Keith Dibble to discuss a community event in North Town	Jenny Atherton	October 2017
Consider the introduction of a decorated shop front competition in the Borough	Jenny Atherton	October 2017
A meeting to be arranged with Tony Parrot and Liz Marsden to discuss potential joint procurement of Christmas lights and provide details of the costs involved	John Trusler	January 2017
The Cabinet be requested to re-investigate the appetite of local retailers to sign up to be part of a Business Improvement District and report back to the Panel meeting in March 2018	Ian Harrison	January 2017

11. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Panel discussed the current work programme and **AGREED** to add the Christmas 2017 review and proposals for 2018 to the 23rd January 2018 Panel meeting. Christmas activity Cabinet outcome, Business Improvement Districts and Neighbourhood Shopping Facilities Policy would be added to the work programme for the 20th March 2018 Panel meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

CLLR D.S. GLADSTONE (CHAIRMAN)
