

BEVERLEY TOWN COUNCIL

BEVERLEY CHRISTMAS LIGHTS (Working Group Meeting)

1st March 2016

Present: Cllrs Willis (Chair), Astell and Dodsworth, Prue Blake (Appeal Group), Joy Jack (Appeal Group) and Harry Burton (Beverley Lions), Phil Scaife (Chamber of Trade), Julian Minshall (Chamber of Trade), Peter Jacobson (East Riding of Yorkshire Council), Judy Sager (Beverley Westwood Lions) and Les Ford (Beverley Westwood Lions),

In attendance: Graham Tait (Wykeland) and Carol Oliver, Deputy Town Clerk

38 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies of absence were received from Natalie Acton (UK Event Associates)

39 To note the minutes of the meeting of the 9th February 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on the 9th February 2016 were accepted at Full Council on the 22nd February 2016.

Mr Minshall reported, in his opinion, the minutes did not reflect the positive meeting which had taken place and also some facts are incorrect.

He pointed out that the Chamber of Trade provided the fireworks in the second year of being involved with the event and not the first. He said he had checked the minutes from the previous meetings and there has been a Santa's Grotto since the Chamber of Trade became involved. The only difference was that George's Fair Ground brings everything and after costs donates the profit to the Christmas Lights' account within the Chamber of Trade's accounts.

Mr Minshall reported that Chamber of Trade gave small donations to a number of charities in August 2015 including Beverley Lions and Beverley Westwood Lions.

Mr Minshall said there had been a lot of discussion not reflected in the minutes.

Mr Minshall said that everyone who attends the Christmas Lights meetings and who assists at the event are volunteers and do it for the benefit of Beverley.

It was agreed there had been a miscommunication between Councillor Dodsworth and Mr Minshall (Chamber of Trade) regarding Father Christmas and the Grotto and apologies were given and received for this.

Cllr Willis said she thought the minutes represented the meeting as they reflected both the positive and negatives. Members agreed the factual error and in order to move forward, agreed the minutes reflected the meeting but the positives from the meeting were to be focused on.

40 Matters arising not on the Agenda

No matters arising.

41 To discuss the 2016 event

Cllr Willis said the Town Council is restricted what it can do and a smaller event needed to be held on Saturday Market working with the Christmas Lights Appeal Group and the Beverley District Lions. The Town Council wished to take the event back to how it was.

Cllr T Astell said that the Full Council meeting on the 22nd February 2016 it has been resolved by majority vote that the Switch on would be the lights event focused in Saturday Market with a "one button" push and the lights would be switched on across Beverley. This would give the "wow" factor. The event should last no more than 2 hours. There was no discussion about finance. The switch on needed to be a compact event and more impact needs to be made with the lights. The event is for the town to celebrate Christmas and for the residents of Beverley to enjoy it.

Mr Burton said that a procession from Wednesday Market to Saturday Market had been done for the last 15 years but the adverse weather in 2015 stopped people attending the events surrounding the switch on.

Cllr Dodsworth said that the Town Council were not excluding Wednesday Market but it was felt more appropriate to use Market Cross for the children's competition presentations as this would remove the need of the collection and return of the stage. The premises that were previously used for the stage are not available.

The Market Cross is to be used for the Children's Competition presentation of Certificates and Mrs Blake indicated the Christmas Lights Appeal Group would be prepared to contribute to the cost of the sound system provided by the Beverley Lions. The Beverley Lions Service would conclude the event. The timings were 3-5pm. Mr Jacobson said the timings advertised should be adhered to as people turn up expecting to see trees lit at a time advertised and if it timings are not as advertised, people are upset. The Market Cross service will have the school choir and minister to conduct the service. However Mr Burton said that prior to the switch on the Beverley Lions would be erecting loudspeakers on the Market Cross and it would be too dangerous to have young children at the Market Cross.

Questions were asked if it would work by having one light switch on and Mr Jacobson said he would look into it and advise the meeting.

In response to Cllr Tom Astell's comment in connection with the lack of footfall at the Market Cross at the 2015 event which proves the event is too long and needs changing in Cllr Astell's opinion, Mr Scaife said he thought it was very blinkered of the Town Council to look at just the event from 2015 when the weather was a major factor.

Members asked for sight of the Full Council minutes but these were not available.

The Deputy Town Clerk read the information she had been provided with by the Town Clerk that "Christmas Lights are doing a switch on and if the Chamber of Trade want to do something different, they have to get their own licence and insurance and not use the Town Council's"

Cllr T Astell said the Christmas Lights working party comes under the management of the Planning Property & Services committee and the event was being brought back in house.

Mr Tait asked Cllr T Astell did he believe that there would be a light switch on and an event wrapped around it centred in Saturday Market. Cllr T Astell said that it was tabled at Full Council and Cllr Willis said the Town Clerk would be needed to clarify this.

Mr Minshall said from the information received from the Deputy Town Clerk the Chamber of Trade is not required. He said it is ridiculous to take out a separate licence and insurance as the Chamber of Trade cannot afford to do this and would blur which insurance company would be responsible should a claim need to be made. He did point out that the Chamber of Trade did pay for the additional event insurance of £150 and any additional costs as they arose, electricians, market stalls and others.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that under the terms of the Town Council's insurance a paid officer has to be present to make any decision should they be required and a Councillor, as a volunteer, cannot do this.

Mr Minshall said the directive needs clarifying and the Deputy Town Clerk read the information again. Under the Local Government Act decisions made by Full Council cannot be changed for 6 months. The directive was there from Full Council.

Mr Tait said it makes no sense to run the switch on, the Chamber of Trade event and an event at Flemingate. Cllr Astell said that it was to be focussed in Saturday Market. Mr Tait tried to clarify what the switch on event was.

Cllr Astell left the meeting at 2.30pm.

The Deputy Town Clerk read the information and the directive is there from Full Council. Mr Burton said over the last 15 years the event has evolved to what it is now.

Mr Burton said that more emphasis needs to be placed on Saturday Market lights but Mrs Blake said that it is quite difficult as the lights cannot be switched off and no strings of lights can be attached to the lamp columns.

Mrs Sagar thought this decision would have a negative impact on the town.

Mr Minshall said that thanks to Natalie Acton the event went ahead despite the adverse weather but the Chamber of Trade now has to rethink what they can do. The event last year is a victim of its success.

Mr Tait said that there were three Councillors from the working party of the lights group at Full Council so they would be aware of the decision too. Mr Minshall reported he was in attendance at Full Council as an observer.

Mr Burton said he felt the Council were frightened of the additional financial commitment and additional expenditure but the Councillors present assured him this was not the case.

Mr Tait said the decision to him was crystal clear.

Other items

Mrs Blake reported that a donation is to be made from the gentleman who climbed the cone tree of £100. Mr Jacobson would contact the lighting company to make arrangements to have these repaired as soon as possible in the new financial year.

Mrs Blake said that the lights for County Hall would be put onto the trees as soon as possible and he will liaise with ERYC in the new financial year.

Mr Jacobson said the three bases are stored outside their premises, the snowflakes were returned on the 1st March and he will be able to arrange for storage of the trees by moving the other lights around the container.

Date of next meeting: 5th April 2016 at 1.30pm – invite lighting companies to put a tender for the large cross pieces.

Apologies were given by Mr Minshall and Mr Scaife as they are unable to attend the meeting on the 5th April.

Meeting closed at 2.55pm.

SignedDate.....