

Minutes of the meeting of Caistor Town Council's Economic Development Committee held in the Multi Use Centre, Caistor, on Thursday 21st June 2018

Present: Cllrs D Barker, S Critten, J Hughes, J Bowman & M Sizer.

In attendance: J Hanrahan (Town Clerk)

Apologies: Cllrs Wright & Galligan

1. Election of Chairman

It was agreed that the Chairman be elected for this meeting only. Cllr Critten was proposed by Cllrs Sizer and seconded by Cllr Hughes and elected unopposed to chair this meeting.

2. Former COOP 1-4 Market Place, Caistor. Update

The Town Clerk explained that this is a grade 11 listed building, parts of which date back to 1750. It has been vacant since 2010. Members will recall that Heritage Lincolnshire are working with Hodson Architects with financial support from Caistor Town Council and Lincolnshire Cooperative (£10,000 & £15,000 respectively). The steering group had come up with a preferred solution following several public consultations.

Cllr Steve Critten then updated the meeting on progress thus far. He advised that the steering group had set up a small board to progress the formation of a community benefit society. Three board members have recently been appointed to oversee the establishment of the Community Benefit Society (Steve Critten, Alan Dennis & Neil Castle).

The steering group also considered that the initial feasibility study, on future uses needs to be updated and that an architectural heritage study should be undertaken on the buildings themselves. There are still some funds available to contribute to these works.

3. Former ACIS Depot, Mill Lane, Caistor.

Members will understand there is too little car parking in Caistor, to support long-stay visitors and residents when using the Town Centre facilities or attending events. There is a two-hour restriction in the Market Place, designed to encourage turn over and shop patronage, with longer stayers directed to the Town Hall and Mill Lane car parks or using on street parking.

Following a meeting with Eve Fawcett-Moralee at West Lindsey District Council the Town Clerk initially contacted Andrea Lowman at ACIS to discuss the future of the above site. The Town Council at that time used the frontage of the site, under licence, to provide free public car parking. The temporary planning consent and license however, have now expired.

The Town Council had resolved that they should like to continue this arrangement and possibly use the whole of the site, for a longer period, for free parking if cleared of buildings. The Town Clerk reported that he was now in dialogue with Suzi Hinman (Legal & Governance Officer) on the matter who was to report back on 25th June 2018. Members reiterated the Town Council's interest in using the whole site for car parking but wondered if ACIS were progressing affordable housing schemes for this and the Southdale sites.

4. Markets

The Town Clerk outlined his experience of various markets around Lincolnshire and suggested that the Town Council might consider enhancing its' Saturday markets, with specialist traders maybe once a month or so. Members were broadly supportive of the initiative but advised that the idea had been tried before with limited success. It was noted that the Town Council had some stalls in storage.

It was considered sensible for such markets to link in with other events in the Town, where members of the public would already be in the centre. The Arts and Crafts Festival on 1st & 2nd September might be such an occasion. It was agreed that the Town Clerk should contact potential traders and liaise with the Festival organisers and report back.

5. New Projects

Members will be aware that the Town Council has a healthy reserve account with reserve funds more than those recommended by Government. It may be sensible therefore to prepare an indicative list of projects, known or aspired to, by the Town Council. We are aware that the Town Hall roof needs, yet unspecified, resources and there are always urgent items of expenditure.

6. Dates and frequency of Future Meetings

It was agreed that meetings should be pencilled in on a quarterly basis commencing July 2018.