



**CITY OF ELY COUNCIL
TOURISM AND TOWN CENTRE COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD AT 6.30 PM ON
TUESDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY 2020 AT SESSIONS HOUSE, LYNN ROAD, ELY**

PRESENT:

Cllr Dian Warman C Cllr Lis Every
Cllr Christine Whelan Cllr Alison Whelan
Cllr Arnie Arnold Cllr Kevin Wilkins

Mrs Anna Bennett (Tourism, Town Centre Manager)
Ms Kerry Edmonson-Brown (City Centre Ranger)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Mike Rouse and Cllr Rebecca Denness.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Public Question Time

There were no members of the public present and therefore no questions were raised.

4. Minutes of last Tourism and Town Centre Committee Meeting held on the 21st November 2019 and Matters Arising

Minutes of the last meeting held on the 21st November 2019 were agreed and signed as a true record, subject to the addition of Cllr Wilkins as being present. Pages TTC 18, 19, 20 and 21 refer. There were no matters arising.

5. Budget Update

The budget update was noted. Cllr A Whelan raised her concerns again regarding the format of the budget update presented. She still felt that these needed to be profit and loss accounts. She suggested she meet with the Managers of OCH and the Maltings to investigate. Mrs Bennett suggested it may be beneficial to consider employing a person to undertake the invoicing to ensure these are kept up to date.

6. Report from City Centre Ranger and to consider the 'On-Street' Parking – Ely Report

Ms Edmondson-Brown presented her report and findings to the Committee in depth and raised all her concerns. The main issue felt by Ms Edmondson-Brown was that the issues raised always seemed to be closed down, no matter who they were raised with. The conclusion was that this is a long-term issue and that the approach to ECDC was previously too informal, hence the reactions. Cllr Every explained that there are certain protocols to follow when approaching various departments within ECDC. The fact the streets in Ely are still not de-criminalised and that there are no parking attendants needs to be resolved. However there seems that there is no way forward, aside from a more formal approach which is presenting as a 'minefield' of issues. Ms Edmondson-Brown mentioned that it made her role as the City Centre Ranger very difficult, as members of the public approach her with 'parking issues' and she cannot rectify them as no matter what avenue she approaches, there is always a 'dead-end'.

No decision was made as to how to move the 'parking issues' forward.

7. To Receive an Update from Tourism and Town Centre Manager regarding Eel Day and the Food and Drink Festival 2020

Mrs Bennet presented a full overview including a Gantt chart of where her new team were regarding the Festival. It was explained that given long delays, she felt that her team had been working extremely hard, pulling together what resources they had to plan for the occasion.

Various meetings have been held with the Royal British Legion, Cadets and Royal Airforce regarding the planning of VE Day 75. Mrs Bennett explained that the Festival had incorporated this theme and commemorative occasion, throughout the Festival weekend with themed acts and the civic ceremony that takes place on the 8th May. The Food and Drink Festival has over 75 artisan producers booked, many of whom will be new to the Festival this year. All traders have their pitches and confirmation packs are ready for despatch. The chefs are booked and sponsors are secured. All advertising, press launches and effective social media campaigns are in place.

8. To receive an Update from the Tourism and Town Centre Manager on new income sources

Mrs Bennett delivered ideas for the coming year which will result in additional income. Plans were in place to increase school tours, by offering them structured learning programmes and feedback forms. During February half-term plans were in place for extra activities and plans were being made for Easter. Mrs Bennett presented her ideas for additional sources of income throughout the year, which included increasing the walks programmes, using Sessions House as part of that tour together with the Cemetery and working closely with other partners such as The Cromwell Museum, Ely Museum and Babylon Gallery. Babylon Gallery is currently working towards the branding of 'Small City, big on Culture' where a synergy will be formed to increase tourism footfall to Ely.

9. Shopmobility

Ms Edmondson-Browne presented her Shopmobility usage report, which clearly showed the Committee that the service is only used by the same users every week. Providing this service takes up a lot of her time and quite often the end-user is not happy with the provision, due to reasons beyond Ms Edmondson-Brown's control. Again, this was reported as 'not working' under Visit Ely's management as there is no back up for Ms Edmondson-Brown when she is on leave, or sick. Therefore, it was felt that Visit Ely are not providing an effective, reliable service should this situation arise. Cllr Every and Cllr Wilkins suggested a team of volunteers might be the way forward. None of the other stake-holders seem to want to take responsibility of this service, even though the move to the City Council was only agreed until Ely Museum reopen in September. It has been noted that one of users is not finding the service as efficient as Ely Museum. This is an on-going issue and plans for the future of this service need to be agreed as soon as possible.

10. Health and Safety Issues

There were no health and safety issues to report.

11. Personnel Issue

Cllr Warman proposed that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted under this heading, that this be considered in private and that the power of exclusion of the public under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 be exercised. This was seconded by Cllr Arnold and it was agreed to go into Committee at the end of the meeting.

12. Any other business

Mrs Bennett informed members the repairs to the chimney at OCH would take place the week commencing the 9th March.

13. Date of next meeting

The next meeting was agreed for the 21st April at 6.30 pm.