



## WISBECH TOWN COUNCIL

### WISBECH MARKET PLACE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

16 JULY 2018 – 7.30 pm

#### MINUTES OF MEETING

**Present:** Councillor Tibbs, Chairman; Councillors Balsevics, Miss Hoy, Oliver and Wing.

**Apologies:** Councillors Hill, Lynn, Maul and Tierney.

**Public participation:** None requested.

The minutes of the meeting of the Wisbech Market Place Management Committee held on 11 June 2018 were confirmed and signed.

#### **M6/18 Wisbech Market Place enhancement scheme**

Further to minute M5/18, members considered further the design and delivery of an enhancement scheme for Wisbech Market Place.

The Chairman informed members that Councillors Maul and Wing and he had met within the last few days to progress obtaining quotations for certain elements of the proposed enhancement scheme and that, as a result, a meeting had been arranged (for tomorrow afternoon), to be attended by Councillor Maul and he, with a contractor which would be able to provide quotations for gates and planters/seating and possibly for a structure which would provide cover to part of the Market Place; this would be the “starting point” for seeking comparator quotations.

In addition, the Chairman mentioned that he made enquiries of contractors regarding the provision of a Tidal Clock; his conclusion, as a result of those enquiries, is that there would appear to be no company which is able to supply an “off the shelf” item; a Tidal Clock for Wisbech Market Place would need to be bespoke; it is, therefore, not possible at this time to identify how much such an item would cost. He suggested that the committee should consider agreeing a budget for such an item, which would then determine what could be provided.

With regard to the provision of a Tidal Clock, Councillor Wing commented that he has a contact who may be able to assist with this element of the enhancement project and suggested that he pursues such an approach. Other members supported this suggestion. In terms of a design for a Tidal Clock, members supported the idea of possibly running a public competition but felt that a decision on that matter should await the outcome of Councillor Wing’s discussions with his contact.

Councillor Miss Hoy mentioned that she had met with a representative of a local company which supplies and installs play equipment; the company would be producing a small number of options for the provision of a play area at Wisbech Market Place; these could then be used as the basis for the selection of a scheme by this committee; once a scheme had been selected, a formal tendering process could be undertaken. She commented that the representative with whom she had met had indicated that the cost of providing play equipment for the area identified is likely to be of the order of £15,000 to £20,000. She made the point that it would be necessary to obtain quotations for the other aspects of the play area, such as fencing and landscaping.

With regard to the proposed water features, the Chairman informed members that he had discussed the proposal with two potential contractors, one of which wishes to visit the Market Place and the



other had expressed the concern that the company would not be able to guarantee that its products would be suitable for such a public space.

Councillor Oliver presented to members a report, which had been prepared by the Clerk, of a meeting which they had both attended, on 5 July 2018, with three representatives of the Local Highway Authority (LHA) to discuss the highway-related issues associated with the proposed enhancement scheme. The Clerk provided each member of the committee with a copy of his report.

Members noted that the view of the LHA representatives is that closing the entrance to Church Terrace during the day would result in additional traffic using Hill Street; this is very narrow and the slabs on the footpath are constantly being damaged; in addition, the LHA had recently an insurance claim for damage to the front of a shop on the bend coming onto Market Place. Consequently, the LHA suggests that Hill Street be included within the “pedestrianised” element of the scheme; this would require the installation of gates at the Nene Quay end of Hill Street. There would be a need to introduce an arrangement whereby those residents of Hill Street who currently have access to their properties would continue to do so.

A consequence of closing Hill Street to traffic would preventing access to the four existing Disabled parking spaces which are adjacent to the Market Place; however, the LHA officers are of the opinion that four “replacement” spaces (not all at one location) could be provided elsewhere within the town centre.

With regard to the installation of additional street furniture in the Market Place area (metal bollards to stop vehicles parking on the High Street etc and the new gates at certain locations) the LHA would expect the Town Council to be responsible for all initial costs and the future costs of maintenance and replacement (for example, when damaged by vehicles).

With regard to preventing vehicular access to the Market Place area, the LHA officers suggest that the commencement time each day be 7.00 am, rather than the time of 10.00 am which had been indicated as a possibility for the purpose of the public consultation exercise. The LHA suggests that gates at Hill Street and Church Terrace be “manned” between 7.00 am and 10.00 am, for the purpose of providing access to the Market Place by traders and to allow deliveries to shops. Officers of the LHA suggest that Wisbech Town Council installs four sets of gates (rather than the two proposed at the time of consultation; at Church Terrace, Market Street (instead of bollards), Hill Street and High Street). They also suggest the installation of a barrier, rather than a bollard, at the “Britannia Café” end of Little Church Street (to prevent vehicles being driven the wrong way along the One-Way Street).

The officers of the LHA stated that they would also be supportive of “stopping up” of the length of highway which runs, alongside the Market Place, between the Norwich and Peterborough Building Society and The Globe public house.

Implementing or changing parking restrictions would require the making of a legal order (a Traffic regulation Order (TRO)), which involves a statutory consultation process that requires the Local Highway Authority to advertise, in the local press and on-street, a public notice stating the proposal and the reasons for it. The advert invites the public to formally support or object to the proposals in writing within a 21 days’ notice period. With regards to changes to any Traffic Regulation Orders, as with any restriction that would require enforcement, the Town Council would need to consult with Cambridgeshire Constabulary’s Traffic Management Officer.

To progress any proposals for changes to traffic management in the Market Place area, the Town Council would need to complete the LHA’s Third Party Funded Highway Improvements Application Form. The LHA would expect to bear none of the costs involved in the TRO process. The LHA representatives comment that it is difficult to predict accurately the timescale for making a TRO because each Order will be different and the timescales are inevitably connected to the number and



nature of objections received to each proposed TRO. The ability to progress a TRO application swiftly would also be governed by levels of workload at the LHA. In general terms, and where a TRO is relatively simple and attracts few (if any) objections, the process should normally take approximately three months. Any objections to the proposed TRO would need to be referred to the relevant committee at the County Council for consideration. If the TRO proposals are more complicated, and particularly where the proposed TRO attracts significant objections, the process may take significantly longer, and would also be governed by the decision-making timescales in operation at the time; i.e. the dates of meetings of the relevant committee.

Councillor Oliver made the point that the electrical installations on the Market Place are in poor condition and, consequently, this committee ought to consider the replacement of the current equipment as part of the enhancement scheme; he explained what he thinks would be a better arrangement and offered to obtain quotations for such a system. Members concurred with the opinion of Councillor Oliver and accepted his offer to obtain quotations.

The Clerk mentioned that the appropriate fee had been made to Fenland District Council, as Local Planning Authority (LPA), for a Pre-planning Enquiry meeting to discuss the planning and conservation aspects of the proposed enhancement scheme; he is waiting to receive from the LPA a date and time for such a meeting.

The Chairman suggested that the committee should consider whether, as part of the enhancement scheme, the existing seating and other items of street furniture located at the Market Place should (for “completeness”) be replaced.

With regard to the funding for the scheme, the Clerk informed members that enquiries could be made of the Public Works Loans Board once the committee had formulated a costed scheme.

Members decided that

- (1) the current situation be noted and that work would continue in terms of obtaining quotations for the various elements of the scheme;
- (2) the committee would consider, following the making of a decision in respect of a structure which would provide cover to part of the Market Place, whether the existing seating and other items of street furniture located at the Market Place should be replaced;
- (3) public consultation, via the Town Council’s website, be undertaken on the possibility of bringing forward (from 10.00 am) to 7.00 am the proposed commencement time of “pedestrianisation” of the Market Place area and the inclusion now of Hill Street and High Street to the area from which vehicles would be prohibited between the hours of 7.00 am and 4.00 pm; the consultation exercise to conclude at 5.00 pm on 10 August;
- (4) a further meeting of this committee be arranged for 13 August 2018 (to commence at 7.30 pm), for the purpose of evaluating the further progress achieved, (hopefully) accepting some quotations, and determining any other actions necessary to facilitate delivery of the scheme.

**Meeting finished at 8.10 pm.**

Signed.....

Dated.....