

Westerham Town Partnership Meeting Minutes
Tuesday July 14 2015 6.30pm

Present: S Merrylees; T Williams; A Bates; A Wesley; E Boyle; Z Colbeck; D Esler; A Burt; N Tonge; R Wilson; M Gibson; V Sheffield; Lin Clarke; K Innes; B Curtis; J Hunter

Apologies: K Maskell; G Rodgers; M Brewer; H Ogden; T Gravett; N Proudfoot; L Moore; H Marsh

1. **Minutes** of last meeting were approved
2. **Matters Arising:** DE reported that no more had been heard re Business Advisory Service
3. **Parking:** AW reported that the Town Council had met and agreed a maximum contribution. AW had met with Ricard Wilson today, and confirmed that funding was now complete: no requirement for a contribution from WTP. The surface is to be grass protecta and work will commence in a timely fashion. The meeting agreed that no further input is required by the WTP, and that our reserve funds could be directed towards signage in the Darenth carpark. **Action SM; JH**
4. **Talk of the Town:** Bill Curtis described plans as well advanced. Tickets are now on sale for the Cabaret at Westerham Hall, which will be for tables of 8. Acts include Sir Richard Stilgoe and members from his Orpheus Choir, Fergus Anckorn as well as various musicians, and hopefully some poetry reading.

The raffle prizes are well in hand although some of the funds raised from this will have to go towards a donation to the Orpheus Choir. Other suggestions of fund raisers were a 'head and tails' game during the evening.

KI suggested a children's activity on The Green, and undertook to look into this.

Action BC; VS; KI; AB

So far the expected spend is £1500 although an SDArts Council grant has been applied for.

5. **Proud to do Business:** JH passed round a window sticker, and described the new Visit Westerham full page advert for subscribers, which includes a link to website, Google map pin, mention in suitable website promotions, and access to tweet on behalf of @westerhambiz. Despite the promise of salesman help from various people no-one had attempted to sell the service yet. JH had signed up 17 businesses on her first attempt.

Alison Burt has done much of the work in setting up the new advert service, for which the meeting thanked her.

Hannah Marsh will invite the retailers to a meeting on 30th July, jointly hosted by the WTC and WTP, to discuss ways of increasing footfall and supporting the economy. At this meeting both 'Proud to Do Business' and the collection boxes (per the survey) would be launched. **Action HM; JH**

6. **Xmas Lights:** EB reported that he and HM approached retailers about lights and took the opportunity to conduct a survey, the results of which were:

Of the 27 businesses surveyed:

* 81% (22) said the lights were either a good or excellent addition to the town

* 95% (23) stated we should invest in new lights and continue to have same scale of display

* 100% want the late night shopping event with the switch on of the lights to continue

* 92% (25) will consider making a donation towards the lights

* 66% (18) happy to have a collection box for customers to make a donation

EB confirmed plans are well in hand to extend and improve the Xmas lights, and funding was in a sound position, with the need to raise a further £1500. **Action EB; HM; JH**

7. **Late Night Shopping:** EB reported that last year there had been complaints that there was no business done during late night shopping, about the amount of alcohol flowing, and there was a feeling it was out of

control. JH explained that without help the WTP would not be in a position to organize it this year. Suggestions of people to ask for help included the KCC warden, the Gym, the Cycle Club and Darian Williams, (**EB to make introduction**) and it is hoped that retailer volunteers will come forward at 30th July meeting.

Suggestions to improve the spend in shops included:

Vouchers for returners

Every Thursday until Xmas

On-line vouchers

All of these suggestions can be put to retailers at the 30th July meeting

Action EB; HM; JH

8. **Website upgrade:** SM explained that the website needs to upgrade to be mobile friendly, and it is currently considering whether to upgrade with Joomla, or make the switch to Word Press, as recommended by our host Pretty Perfect. JH expressed the wish to move to Word Press, because it is much more widely known and others can help out with uploading information. **Action SM; AB; JH**

9. **Pavilion and King George Field:** AW explained that the drawings had come in from Bond Bryan and were not as expected.

JH suggested the possibility of approaching the Darent Valley Partnership with a request to develop a cycle/walking track between the KGPF and Charman's Farm site. ZC confirmed Henry Warde has already agreed this in principle. SM is already on the committee and confirmed there has been a large grant awarded and Westerham might participate.

Action SM/JH

JH mentioned that now Charman's Farm work was started it may be time to think again about the red vintage bus between Chartwell, the town centre and the new site. ZC said Squerryes was unwilling to lead this project but that the NT would make a contribution towards running costs.

ZC suggested that the walking route between the town and Chartwell should be permanently marked on trees. The Ramblers have already mapped a route, which is published on the website. **Action JH; BC**

10. **Talking Statues:** actors, scripts, trail map: Volunteers to work on this are **Action MG; VS; SM; ZC; KI; BC**

11. **Market:** SM explained that it had been going 5 years and we currently have a fine fruit and veg stand but have lost fish and some others are not always reliable. JH asked AW if we might consider holding the summer markets on The Green, following feedback, and there was some discussion about vehicles on the grass. AW undertook to refer to the appropriate committee. **Action SM; AW**

12. **Finance:** SM confirmed that the Town Partnership has a current balance of about £4500. NT confirmed the new bank account will shortly have on-line access.

13. **Any Other Business:** JH explained she'd had a call from Alan Whitely about the update to the Community Plan: AW and DE had received similar approaches. It was agreed to work on a joint response once the templates are published. **Action JH; AW**

SM explained there had been much work at the Round Pond.

14. **Next meeting Wednesday 28th October 2015 6.00pm Russell House**