

## Hythe and Dibden Parish Council

### Christmas Lights and Mistletoe Fayre Working Group

Held at The Council Chamber, The Grove, 25 St John's Street, Hythe, SO45 6BZ  
on Thursday, 27th February, 2020 at 6.00 pm

Cllr M Kitcher (Chairman)

#### Councillors

Cllr S Cullen  
Cllr A Fairhead  
Cllr S Lodge

#### Councillors

Cllr A Wade  
Cllr M Wade

#### In Attendance

A. Broomfield, Hythe Alive  
J Binns, Hythe Alive  
G Marston, Hythe Alive

#### Officers in Attendance

Sean Spencer, Deputy Clerk  
Helen Bradley, Parish Development Officer  
Marcus Kendall, Maintenance and Facilities Supervisor

#### 21 APOLOGIES

No apologies were presented.

#### 22 NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes of the meeting held on 15 October 2019 were agreed.

#### 23 TO REVIEW THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND MISTLETOE FAYRE 2019

Sean Cullen thanked and congratulated Hythe Alive on behalf of the Council for their efforts in relation to the Christmas lights.

#### Hythe Alive

The Christmas lights and wreaths in the Village Centre had been installed with 8 – 10 hardworking volunteers. Alan offered the use of a strong aluminium ladder that volunteers could use next year if required.

Amanda confirmed that problems had been experienced with a number of the battery lights and that Hythe Alive had difficulties sourcing replacement units. As a result the group was investigating the possibility of installing electric lights and

timers. Marcus confirmed that when the Council provided electric lights, a number of issues were experienced due to the infrastructure that is available in the Village Centre. Marcus confirmed that he was available to provide further information if needed.

The snow days run by Hythe Alive had been successful and it was intended to run them again next year.

James announced that fundraising had gone well and that they were also investigating a contract option similar to ones that the Council has entered into in previous years. Fundraising was continuing in preparation for this year's lights and decorations.

Matthew was also aware that a number of strings of lights that were around trees in the High Street and the Promenade had been vandalised. He asked whether or not it would be worth informing the CCTV control room when the lights have been installed this year so that they can be monitored.

#### Hythe and Dibden Parish Council.

Marcus confirmed that the solar lights mounted on various lamp columns had worked well in most places however there were one or two initial issues which were rectified quickly. Notification had been received from HCC that decorative features would no longer be allowed to be hung from lamp columns made of cast Steel. As a result that would mean a reduction of three columns being available in the High Street in the summer for hanging baskets and in the winter for the Christmas solar light units. It is intended that the solar light units will be repositioned to three lamp columns adjacent to the Fairview shops.

Helen reported that the Mistletoe Fayre went well however there is a need to provide an attraction in Pylewell Precinct. Over the years a number of organisations have been working in partnership with the Council to manage various elements of the day and this has now taken some of the pressure off of the workload for the Council. It was suggested that a press release seeking a partner to provide an attraction in Pylewell Precinct is included in the next parish magazine. It was agreed to discuss the matter at a future Communications Group meeting.

#### 24 **TO CONFIRM THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET FOR 2020/21**

A Christmas lights budget of £9887 had been agreed by the Council for 2020/21. This had been increased from last year by the rate of inflation. The budget included the £1000 match funding that is usually paid to Hythe Alive.

Members suggested that as the working groups budget has been increased then should the match funding paid to Hythe Alive be increased as it had remained static for a number of years. It was agreed to make a recommendation to Council.

**Recommended**

That the Council increase the match funding paid to Hythe Alive for Christmas lights from £1000 to £1100.

25 **TO DISCUSS THE PROVISION OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS AND THE  
MISTLETOE FAYRE 2020**

Hythe Alive are continuing to fund raise and are investigating various options for next year, the group would be updated at the next meeting.

The Parish Council are intending to continue with the same provision as last year. Malcolm questioned whether it was time to review the current provision and could the Council be doing other things. It was suggested that Christmas lighting is an expensive project and that unless a larger amount of money is available it is difficult to do things much differently. Members accepted the response however it was felt that Officers are hamstrung and therefore delegated powers should be provided to Officers to make improvements to the Christmas lights and Mistletoe Fayre where possible.

**Recommended**

That Officers be provided with delegated powers to make improvements to the Christmas lighting and Mistletoe Fayre provision where possible with the existing budget.

Marcus highlighted an issue he raised a couple of years ago with the Christmas tree installed in the Marsh. Currently the Council purchases a tree and associated lighting every year. He suggested that as the roots from Plane Tree by HSBC Bank had started to damage the block paving, was it now time that the tree is removed and then a replacement tree which doesn't damage the surface be planted in its place. The replacements trees roots could be enclosed to reduce the risk of damage. The replacement tree could be a Fir tree which could be used as the village centres annual Christmas tree therefore avoiding the need to purchase a tree every year. There would still need to be provision made for the lighting and decorating.

This proposal has been raised with the County Council previously however it was denied. Malcolm suggested that if a proposal could be drafted he would then present it to the County Council. It was agreed that this option be progressed.

This year's Mistletoe Fayre will take place on Saturday 5 December, as it is Small Business Saturday, NFDC will be providing free car parking in the car parks operated by NFDC.

26 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting is 6pm on Tuesday 23 July 2020.

27 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no other items of business raised.