

**HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**HELD ONLINE ON 4 NOVEMBER 2021 (6.00pm-8.10pm)**

727.	PRESENT: Councillors L Williscroft-Ferris, M Domingue, S Fairless-Aitken, D Kennedy, P Grennan, A Smith and C Ponsford. Also present was Jez Light from Hexham Community Partnership and one local resident.
728.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillor S Ball.
729.	MINUTES of the meeting held on 23 September 2021, having been circulated, were AGREED.
730.	<p>MATTERS ARISING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY (minute 715b and action log refers). It was noted that this is still being worked on. It was AGREED that Councillor Williscroft-Ferris will prepare a working outline document to share, to be then worked on by Councillors Grennan and Fairless-Aitken. It was further noted that in October shares of Town Council Facebook posts reached 9,900 people, up 200% from the month before.</li> <li>b. POVERTY PROOFING (minute 715c and action log refers). It was noted that this is pending.</li> <li>c. BELLMAN AUDITIONS (minute 715d and action log refers). It was noted that Councillor Ball had given his apologies so this was deferred.</li> <li>d. TOURISM STRATEGY (minute 717 and action log refers). It was noted a shared Google document had been set up and that related ideas will be ongoing.</li> <li>e. COUNCILLOR BLOGS (minute 718 and action log refers). It was noted that Councillor Fairless-Aitken is preparing the first one of these, on her interest in dark skies.</li> <li>f. TOWN TWINNING CHRISTMAS MESSAGES (minute 720 and action log refers). It was noted this is being progressed.</li> <li>g. CHRISTMAS TREE SITE VISIT (minute 720 and action log refers). It was noted this had taken place and the tree will be delivered on 18 November and be sited in the same place as last year.</li> <li>h. BUSINESS CARDS (minute 721 and action log refers). It was noted these had been printed.</li> <li>i. FRESHERS FAIR (minute 722 and action log refers). It was noted this was held on 8 October but not attended.</li> <li>j. HEXHAM IN BLOOM (minute 724 and action log refers). It was noted an update will be given at the next meeting.</li> <li>k. MOSAIC ARTIST (minute 724 and action log refers). It was AGREED to keep this on the action log.</li> <li>l. FRIENDS OF THE SELE (minute 725 and action log refers). It was AGREED to ask Councillors Ord and Baty for any update.</li> </ul>

731.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: No declarations of interest were made.					
732.	HEXPRESS: It was AGREED to monitor the response to the blogs. It was further AGREED to ask Rachel at HCP to send some guidelines on the number of words, etc.					
733.	UPDATE FROM HEXHAM COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP: Jez Light advised that there had been a great atmosphere at Spook Night and it was well attended, boding well for the future of the event. Collaborating with the Queen's Hall, the lantern parade on 19 November will start from outside Molly Moo's, go down St Mary's Chare, cut across the Meal Market, then the end of Fore Street to the Shambles. After the Christmas lights switch-on event on 26 November there will be late night shopping and carol singers at the Shambles. There will be no indoor Festival of Flame due to Covid but there will still be a fire garden outside and a team from the Abbey supplying free hot chocolate outside. On 11 December there will be the Christmas Market and Abbey Christmas Fayre. He also advised that on 1 November the Hexham Cultural Network had met to discuss events in 2022 and that the Team Hexham Volunteer Hub had been launched today.					
734.	COMMITTEE BUDGET 2022/23: The following draft Committee budget was AGREED, changing the budget heading for Armed Forces Day to Events (7805) and adding budgets for Bandstand Sessions and Hexham Specific Cultural and Inclusion/Sustainability.					
	<b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b>	<b>2021/22 Agreed Budget</b>	<b>2021/22 Spent at 30/9/2021</b>	<b>2021/22 Estimated at 31/3/2022</b>	<b>2022/23 Draft Budget</b>	<b>Ref.</b>
	Remembrance Day	2500	0	2000	2500	7800
	Events	3400	0	0	10000	7805
	War Memorial Reserve	500	0	0	500	5096
	Website & IT	2000	809	1700	1800	7830
	Newsletter	1200	169	350	350	7840
	Town Twinning (Council expenses)	1000	0	0	1000	7870
	Christmas lights	24000	29285	29285	26000	7040
	Christmas lights switch-on	500	0	400	500	7065
	Mayor's Annual Reception	400	0	600	700	7070
	Hexham/Northumbria in Bloom (Council expenses)	300	0	400	400	7850
	Flower Beds and Tubs – Renew/Replace	750	0	700	750	7110
	Flower Beds and Tubs – Planting	5600	2858	5600	6000	7120

	Support for Town Events	1000	0	0	1000	5130	
	Ceremonial Events	1000	0	1000	1000	5135	
	Young Employee of the Year	0	0	0	250	TBC	
	Bandstand Sessions	0	0	0	5000	TBC	
	Hexham Specific Cultural and Inclusion/ Sustainability	0	0	0	3400	TBC	
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>44150</b>	<b>33121</b>	<b>42035</b>	<b>61150</b>		
735.	ARTS HUB IN HEXHAM: It was AGREED that Councillor Grennan, with Councillor Baty, will discuss this further with Jez Light.						
736.	BANDSTAND SESSIONS: A report from Core Music was noted, together with 112 responses to questionnaires. There was very positive feedback and it was AGREED to put the results on the website and social media. The possibility of a hot drinks van next time, providing more deckchairs and setting up a bandstand working group were also discussed.						
737.	COMMUNITY ACCESS TO THE NEW QEHS TENNIS COURTS/PLAY AREAS: It was AGREED to check with Sports England about this being a closed facility, as it was open when at HMS. It was further AGREED that, after this response, to write to QEHS.						
738.	HEXHAM IN BLOOM AND TOWN TWINNING UPDATES: It was noted that the Town Twinning Association had met the previous day, noting the outstanding issues of having streets in Hexham named Noyon and Metzinger and having two memorial trees planted in honour of J B Jonas and David Hindley, both of whom did a great deal for town twinning in Hexham.						
739.	GROW HEXHAM: It was noted that the soft launch of this will be on 8 November.						
740.	CLIMATE CHAMPION: It was noted that Councillor Ord has become a climate champion and that Councillor Domingue is hoping the Abbey Great Hall will be used for a pending climate change event.						
741.	NEXT MEETING: It was AGREED that the next Committee meeting will be held online on Thursday 16 December 2021 at 6.00pm.						

### Action Log

Continue work on a social media strategy (minute 730a)	Councillors Williscroft-Ferris, Grennan and Fairless-Aitken
Distribute poverty proofing document (minute 730b)	Councillor Ponsford
Progress the Bellman auditions (minute 730c)	Councillor Ball
Consider adding ideas to the Shared Google document relating to the Tourism Strategy (minute 730d)	All
Consider a rota for Hexpress, etc blog (minute 730e)	All Councillors
Progress Town Twinning Christmas messages (minute 730f)	Councillor Williscroft-Ferris
Liaise re possibility of mosaic artist, etc (minute 730k)	Councillors O'Farrell and Williscroft-Ferris
To consider working in partnership and a Friends of The Sele group, and get update from Councillors Ord and Baty (minute 730l)	All Committee members
Ask for blog guidance (minute 732)	Jez Light
Discuss Arts Hub (minute 735)	Councillor Grennan/ Jez Light
Add bandstand session responses to website and social media (minute 736)	Admin Officer, Councillor Fairless-Aitken
Write to Sports England and QEHS (minute 737)	Councillor Fairless-Aitken and Clerk

Chairman .....