

**NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE GREAT BRITISH HIGH STREET COMPETITION
SUB-COMMITTEE HELD AT TENTERDEN TOWN HALL ON 12TH DECEMBER 2016.**

Present: Cllrs. Carter, Mrs. Ferguson and Mulholland, and the Deputy Town Clerk.

Apologies: Cllr. Mrs. C. Bell (Ashford Borough Council).

Introduction: Cllr. Mrs. Ferguson introduced the Great British High Street Competition, outlining its history, its popularity and the categories under which towns could be entered – it was felt that Tenterden fit best in the “Small Market Town” category. The competition celebrated innovation, collaboration and transition. The timescale for the 2016 competition had been as follows; the competition opened in July, the deadline for entry was in September, the shortlist was released in October, and the results announced in December. Prizes for winning the 2016 competition included digital training for retailers from Google and Twitter. Cllr. Mrs. Ferguson agreed to research the winning towns to see what kind of work they had done.

Planning for the 2017 Competition: Cllr. Carter suggested that the results of the consultation carried out by the Lipton Group may help to show that the town was collaborating effectively, although the actual outcomes would perhaps not be evident in time for the competition. He added that he hoped the High Street would be cosmetically enhanced somewhat in the future, which would strengthen the bid.

Cllr. Mrs. Ferguson suggested that decals could be put in the windows of High Street retailers advertising the competition and the town’s participation.

Cllr. Mulholland suggested a return to the idea of putting photographs of local attractions in the coach park on Station Road, just off the High Street.

Cllr. Mrs. Ferguson suggested an approach to Ashford Borough Council to investigate the possibility of more free parking in the town to appeal to shoppers.

Cllr. Mrs. Ferguson reported that Rt. Hon. Damian Green MP was keen to take part in videos at High Street retailers, promoting Tenterden’s participation in the scheme.

Cllr. Mrs. Ferguson hoped that the possibility of a permanent market at the Market Square would allow a more diverse range of crafts and trades to the town. Cllr. Carter added that the craft market held at the former Greyhound Gallery premises contributed to this.

Cllr. Mulholland pointed to the Lewes Pound as an example of a town showing innovation, suggesting that something so radical might be useful for putting Tenterden “on the map”.

Cllr. Mrs. Ferguson reported that the Christmas market had been very successful, but that some retailers had felt it was more for the benefit of stallholders than existing retailers. In response to this she suggested a quarterly special shopping day, along the lines of the Christmas late-night shopping that was once held, where the event focused more on High Street businesses. This kind of event would rely on the participation of retailers, rather than visiting traders, to encourage shoppers and make it a community event. It was **recommended** that this project be actively pursued, with a view to holding the first event after Easter 2017. Some street food etc. could be considered.

It was suggested that buskers could be encouraged to play on the High Street to give a livelier atmosphere, both during the quarterly events and at other times. The Deputy Town Clerk would make enquiries with the Licensing department at Ashford Borough Council.

Budget: It was **recommended** that a budget of £1,000.00 per year be assigned within the Tourism & Business precept request to facilitate the quarterly event (to pay for advertising etc.).

The meeting opened at 4.03pm and closed at 4.58pm.

TENTERDEN TOWN COUNCIL

Tourism & Business Committee - background for agenda item 8 on 19 December 2016

REVITALISING THE HIGH STREET

Background

Committee members will by now have had an opportunity to read and consider my report on this subject following the seminar I had attended.

Most committee members will also be aware of the struggle the GPs' surgery at Ivy Court is having in pursuing its expansion plans and how such plans could be helped by taking a broader view of developing the west side of Recreation Ground Road as a whole, giving scope not only for improved healthcare facilities but also for improved car parking provision and traffic management, and for business regeneration there.

Proposal

I propose that the committee establishes a sub-committee (which Ashford Borough Councillor Graham Galpin, member for economic development, should be invited to join) to consider methods of revitalising and supporting the High Street generally, and taking a broader view off what could be done to improve facilities along Recreation Ground Road; in particular to -

1. consider how to use the street market to encourage visitors to the town
2. consider establishing a teenage market
3. encourage local businesses to get online
4. improve broadband and WiFi in the High Street
5. consider arranging or encouraging hubs and pop-ups
6. consider a strategy for business rates
7. develop a strategy for liaising with landlords and developing a landlords'/properties' database
8. prepare an entry for the Great British High Street competition
9. consider ways of improving facilities along Recreation Ground Road, including considering and suggesting options for expanding the GPs' surgery
10. seek the council's authority for the Town Clerk to liaise with relevant stakeholders
11. The council installs cycle stands (where appropriate) in St Michaels close to the shops and catering establishments and on the recreation ground
12. The council replaces existing non-Sheffield hoop stands with Sheffield hoops
13. The council should budget (say) £1,000 per year for installing and replacing cycle stands

Crime and disorder reduction impact: None

Biodiversity conservation impact: None

Impact on budget (and source(s) of funding, if needed): None

CLlr Justin Nelson - 13 December 2016

Tourism and Business Committee – Monday December 19th 2016

Committee Precept

Agenda Item 9

The committee precept for 2016-17 was set at £5,000. Although none of this amount has been spent during the year, the precept was intended to cover ad-hoc expenses.

Proposals: That the precept be maintained at £5,000 for the 2017-18 year



Phil Burgess
Town Clerk

Impact on Crime and Disorder: None

Impact on Bio-diversity: None

Budgetary Impact: None

Dear Colleagues

Ashford's visitor economy continues to grow

You may recall that Ashford proudly hosted the National Tourism Symposium in 2015 at Eastwell Manor. That event, as well as the tourism review and subsequently implemented tourism action plan, have been the catalysts for some strong results for the borough's visitor economy.

Independent research, commissioned by Visit Kent (the destination management organisation for the county) and released within the last week, show that Ashford saw a 6% increase in spend at Ashford attractions in 2015. There were 3.9 million day trips to the borough and almost half a million overnight trips.

The total number of jobs supported by tourism rose by 3.54% to 5,482 – this equates to 1 in 10 of all jobs in Ashford. The total value of tourism across the borough was £278 million.

The figures were derived using the Cambridge Economic Impact Model, an industry respected tool for measuring the economic impact of tourism in a given area. They clearly illustrate that the value of tourism and its importance not just to those in the borough but visiting it cannot be underestimated.

To provide some context to the Ashford-specific figures, despite the challenges presented by Operation Stack and poor weather during the summer of 2015, Kent welcomed more than 60 million visitors, an increase of 5% since 2013, with the visitor economy rising to £3.6billion. Indeed, since 2002, when Visit Kent was launched, the value of Kent's tourism industry has risen by 49% with more than 71,000 tourism-related jobs across the county.

We can be proud of the significant contribution the whole borough, including our beautiful rural areas with attractions such as the Kent and East Sussex Railway and the recently launched Tenterden wine trail, makes to Kent's tourism economy.

The borough's profile as a tourist destination is growing and these latest figures show we are moving in the right direction. With further promotion of the major regeneration projects in the borough, as well as the quality of life enjoyed by residents, we can build on this success and make the borough an even more inviting place to visit.

In the coming years the town will have a new Chapel Down brewery, an expanded Designer Outlet Centre as well as boutique cinema and hopefully the Model Railway Education Centre, which will all help to further put the Ashford borough on the map as an exciting and vibrant place to experience.

(Circulation restricted to addressees only)

Gerry Clarkson CBE, BA (Hons)
Leader - Ashford Borough Council

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