

# TENTERDEN TOWN COUNCIL – EXTERNAL COMMITTEE

## CINEMA FOCUS GROUP

### MINUTES OF A MEETING ON 20<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2019

**Present:** Cllr. Mike Carter, Cllr. Sue Ferguson, Claire Gilbert (Deputy Town Clerk), Tom Evans (Chair), Alan Bates, Paul Hale, Barbara Lawrence, Elaine Mahoney, Nic Phillips, Gill Topley and Wilfred Watters.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** Colin Campbell, Chris Head, Carol Parkin, Fran Sharp, Bob Somerscales and Seren Welch.
2. **Minutes** of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2019 were agreed.
3. **Matters Arising.** None.
4. **Pre-application Progress Update.**
  - 4.1 Tenterden Green Spaces Group Responses (4<sup>th</sup> June meeting) to Burrell, Foley & Fischer (BFF) alternative proposals. Tom Evans reported that a meeting had been held on 4<sup>th</sup> June whereby the BFF alternative proposals for the Pebbles were presented by the Town Clerk to the Green Spaces Group (GSG). There were six members of the GSG present in addition to Sue Ferguson and Tom Evans. The meeting went well and the group particularly liked option 2. The Chair of the GSG requested visualisation images and measured surveys of the proposal, however, the Town Council had resolved not to purchase this information at this stage. Following the meeting, the Cinema Focus Group decided to conduct a survey of the usage of the Millennium Garden.
  - 4.2 Feedback from Ashford Borough Council. Following feedback from pre-planning at Ashford Borough Council (ABC), a request for further investigations on the archaeology and highways impact was put forward to the Town Council. The surveys were approved, but would be ratified at the 9<sup>th</sup> September Council meeting.

Alan Bates queried why Highways would need to be consulted. Sue commented that this could be to do with disabled parking nearby and Claire commented that they would look at car parking availability. Barbara Lawrence also commented that they may well look at bus timetables for non-drivers.
  - 4.3 Further studies: Highways and Archaeology. Alan asked whether the two further studies could be carried out in tandem with the full building feasibility study. Claire agreed to check with Stefanie Fischer.
5. **Working Groups' Progress/Updates.**
  - 5.1 Millennium Garden Use Survey. A survey had been carried out by one of the working groups (attached) because of the sensitivity of green spaces in Tenterden. It was felt that the usage of the garden needed to be assessed. The survey took place over a week in July and a sampling pattern was carried out. Results showed that lunchtimes during the working week were

the most popular. It was noted that there was a significant impact on the garden by the White Lion's kitchen extractors, from both noise and smell. It was agreed that alternative option 2 would be more attractive for café users.

The maximum number peaked at lunchtimes where numbers ranged from 4 to 16 people in total. There were no more than 11 at any one time. Tom reported that under the pergola was unusable as this currently housed one of the Town Council's trailers.

Thanks were expressed to the working group for carrying out the study.

- 5.2 Legal and Financial Working Group. The working group had a meeting where Angela Chivers (Solicitor) agreed to provide her views on corporate and lease structures; she is a specialist in property law. Paul Hale reported that they had looked at a corporate entity to manage the process after planning is approved. A standard UK Ltd company would be the best option. They had also looked at various lease options and discussed the implications of VAT on the build.

Cllr. Mike Carter suggested that the group approach the Town Clerk regarding VAT as he believed there was an 'option to tax' on the Pebbles. With regard to a lease, it was indicated that operators may expect a 25 year lease or another option could be a 99 year full repairing lease. Mike reported that work on the Pebbles should be VAT reclaimable and the new build should be VAT exempt; this requires checking.

*Fundraising* – Barbara Lawrence enquired whether anyone would be interested in the cinema being named after them/someone for a fee. Tom reported that the only problem would be that an operator would want their own branding on the property. Sue suggested that there could be a wall of 'sponsored by' and Nic Phillips suggested sponsored seats.

- 5.3 Operator Relations. Paul reported that the interested operators are aware of the progress and have been updated since Stefanie's presentation. Kino and The Picture House Uckfield are the two interested operators.
- 5.4 Route Map Working Group. The route map had been amended and pushed back a couple of months due to the pre-application advice and further studies required.

## **5. Full Building Feasibility Study Preparations.**

- 7.1 Alan reported that we need to invite bids for the size of the contract. A letter had been prepared which would be sent out to interested contractors; this would help the Town Council in the tender process. The letter includes information provided by Stefanie Fischer.

It was agreed that, if Stefanie confirms that the full building feasibility study could run in tandem with the highways and archaeological surveys, then a proposal should be made to the Town Council to move to a full study. Claire reported that a proposal could go to the 9<sup>th</sup> September External Committee meeting. The cost would be around £26,000, but this would come out of the £500,000 that the Council would be spending on the Pebbles. It was

agreed that a draft proposal would be drawn up for comments and then the final version sent to Claire on 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

**6. Press and Community Relations.**

6.1 Public presentation of regeneration projects. Tom asked when this was going to happen. Claire reported that it would probably be around November time; there had been a hold up with the Town Hall project. It was agreed that detailed images would need to be obtained for the display.

6.2 Engagement with the community groups and interested parties. Sue reported that we have held back and not engaged with these groups yet. Mike suggested this is revisited after the full building feasibility study has taken place.

The question was raised as to when potential investors would be approached. It was reported that this was discretely taking place already. Sue commented that we need to look at what investors will get in return.

**7. Any Other Business.** The comment was made that there had been no interaction with Homewood School students yet; Mike agreed to try and sort this out.

**8. Date of Next Meeting.** Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at 7.00 pm (to be confirmed).