Present: Councillors: A. Blackbourn (Chair)

 M. Brindle

 M. MacDonald

 V. Ross-Smith

 V. Peters

 Officers: S. Wright (Town Clerk)

 D. Brooks (Committee Officer)

 Members of Public: There were none.

**238/24** **DECLARATIONS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

There were none.

**239/24** **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors T. Jermy, M. Stirrup, C. Barreto, D. Jefferson

**240/24 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Heritage and Events Committee meeting held on the 17th July 2024 are a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**241/21 MAYORAL AND CIVIC EVENTS**

The Committee Officer provided the committee with a verbal report of the upcoming and recent events within the town, highlighting key moments and achievements. He outlined the event's objectives, discussed the community's participation, and shared feedback received from attendees.

**242/24 TOWN EVENTS**

The Committee Officer provided an update to the council, and the Councillors acknowledged the recent events. They expressed their appreciation for the positive atmosphere and vibrant energy in the town. The Councillors extended their thanks to the staff and events team for their dedicated efforts in contributing to the town's lively ambience.

**Upcoming Town Event**

The Committee discussed the upcoming Christmas Light switch-on event, with Committee Officer providing an update on the preparations. The associated costs were reviewed, and it was noted that there would be a change in the position of the Christmas tree. Specifically, it was agreed that St. Peter's Church would retain its Christmas tree. Additionally, the possibility of placing a second tree in the marketplace was considered. The cost for this additional tree is £500, which falls within the budget allocated for the event and lighting. It was agreed to purchase and locate additional Christmas tree in the Market Place.

**RESOLVED:**

To purchase a new Christmas tree for the Marketplace.

To create a letter for shops and businesses to get involved in the Christmas lights event including a new trail.

Action:

To purchase new Christmas tree by Christmas Lights installation date in November.

**243/24 PARTNERSHIP EVENTS**

Several events have taken place in the Marketplace, with the events team collaborating with Breckland Family Services for an event delivered with other organisations to create a family-friendly event on the 1 August 2024, that was well received by the public. Councillors noted that while the partnership event, led by Breckland District Council, was successful, the location chosen posed logistical challenges, including the lack of electrical points. They also expressed concerns about communication with marketing materials being a little confusing, resulting in attendance being lower than expected and at previous events.

Action:

Feedback to be given to Breckland by the Committee Officer by 01.10.24

The Councillors discussed the possibility of hosting a Pride event in Thetford. A member of the public has expressed interest in collaborating with the council to organise the event, which would include stalls, food, entertainment for children, and an evening ticketed event at the Carnegie for adults. The councillors emphasised the importance of ensuring the event is organised in partnership with the council. To move the event forward, they agreed to establish an action group.

Action:

Committee Officer to set up a working group consisting of three councillors and two officers; immediately.

**244/24 HIRED 3RD PARTY EVENTS**

The committee officer gave a verbal update to Councillors regarding hirers who have been utilising our buildings.

**245/24 FLAG POLICY**

Councillors reviewed a proposed new Flag Policy aimed at ensuring the council adheres to proper flag protocol. The policy will formalise the guidelines for flying flags. Currently, there are five flagpoles at Kings House and one at the Guildhall, all of which have been refurbished and are in good condition. Councillors discussed the need for flags to be flown at Kings House.

Actions:

1. To liaise with G. W. Staniforth Clerk to understand whether they would wish for flags to be flown on their flagpoles.
2. To bring back the Policy to the September Heritage & Events Committee for consideration once the above information has been ascertained.
3. Committee Officer to speak to G. W. Staniforth Clerk; immediately.

**246/24 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS TENDER**

Councillors reviewed the tenders presented to the committee, noting that each had been thoroughly scored. Based on these evaluations, the Committee Officer recommended that the council proceed with Company A. Councillors agreed that the scoring system was not clear enough for tenders and would like an alternative process for future tenders. It was

**RESOLVED:**

1. To accept Tender A for the Christmas Lights for 2024.
2. To review the tender process for future contracts.

**Proposed by Councillor V. Peters. Seconded by Councillor M. MacDonald.**

Action:

To revise the tender process for future tenders; Deputy Town Clerk; immediately

**247/24 MARKET PLACE SAND PIT**

Committee Officer provided a verbal update on the sandpit; committee discussed the sandpit's future use. They explored options for how the sandpit could be utilised moving forward, including the possibility of pop-up sandpits and staging for events. Councillors agreed that the sandpit was a successful initiative and expressed confidence in creating something equally impactful next year. It was

**RESOLVED:**

To remove the sandpit.

**Proposed by Councillor M. MacDonald. Seconded by Councillor M. Brindle.**

Actions:

1. To remove the sandpit; Town Team; immediately
2. Comms officer to complete a press release; Immediately.

**248/24 HERITAGE MASTER PLAN**

Councillors were updated on the Heritage master plan which seemed to have stalled over the past few months, it was agreed that this project needed to be brought forward to realise the potential of the plan for Thetford.

Action:

Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Committee Officer to consider ways to move forward with the plan; immediately)

**249/24 FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Committee noted the details in the report.

**250/24 ACTION POINTS ON PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Councillors updated committee members on action points from previous meetings.

**251/24 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Councillors discussed Community Engagement and Civic Events and noted that there was a need for more volunteers to help with these events to ensure their future. It was noted that Thetford has the third oldest mayoralty in England.

Action:

Communication Officer to put out a press release acknowledging the mayoralty history of Thetford and ask for volunteers for our Civic Events; immediately.

**The meeting closed at 19:42**

Chairman: A. Blackbourn