



A Better Crewkerne and District Executive Committee Meeting

Thursday January 22nd 2015

7pm at the Heritage Centre, Crewkerne.

1, Welcome – Diane Butler opened the meeting at 7pm.

2, Present – Diane Butler (Chair), Brian Forster, Colin Coggan, Vikki Le-Fort, Rev Jane Sperring, Inspector Tim Coombe, Angie Singleton, Martin Pakes, Zoe Harris, Graham Butcher, Rick Canning, Tony Samuel, Katy Pritchard, Dennis Holland.

3, Apologies – Mike Best, Simon Colledge, Dendy Harris, Ros Badger, Hilary Leamon, David Derbyshire, David Welch.

4, The minutes of the last meeting, dated November 20th 2014, were read and agreed.

4(a), Matters arising not as agenda

- Angie reports that the insurance has been checked and verified.

5, Treasurers Report –

6, Community Plan Refresh –

Zoe reports that the draft copies of the survey was sent out to ABCD members via email, asking for suggestions, and the resulting comments have been noted and implemented. Rick also pointed out that Wadham School as a venue is not mentioned, Zoe is going to update the survey adding the local school buildings under venue headings. Zoe has also added a question in the Transport and Travel section, asking for local community views on the town's bus network and asking what would encourage people to utilise the service. Also under the Work section, questions have been added about starting up local businesses and the requirements for local advice and mentoring. In the Environmental section, which covers all outdoor areas and open spaces, Zoe has added the cemetery as a site, due to it being recognised as an Official War Graves site. Also there is an added encouragement for people to attach extra sheets detailing views and ideas if they so wish.

Zoe explained that in order to get relevant specific and meaningful information, the survey itself has to be quite lengthy with very specific questions. Lots of communication and local publicity will be required to ensure that residents are made fully aware of how important this survey is. Local newspapers, radio, social media and the town's noticeboards will be vital in this. There is also an added incentive of a £50 Waitrose voucher in a draw of the returned survey sheets. Local youth clubs have also shown interest, more young people are being made aware of their voices needing to be heard. The L.I.C has been put down as a visiting point for all enquiries, and with regard to the distribution of the survey, Annette Roffey at the Town Council has been approached by Zoe, and Zoe is awaiting a response. It has also been decided that the best way for people to return their surveys, is with a pre-paid envelope attached to them, rather than ask the residents to drop their completed surveys off at a specific point. Zoe is hopeful that the survey will be ready for distribution in late February or early March, and asks for volunteers to be able to help with that. ABCD members have



all expressed a desire to help. A press release will be done at the end of January. ABCD would like to thank Zoe for all her hard work in producing and promoting the survey, and for all that she does for ABCD.

7, Bus Shelters –

Colin reports that in December, the working party advised the Planning and Highways Committee meeting that the proposals for the amalgamated bus stop in Market Street were not looking hopeful and therefore the committee has asked for the decision to be put back until September 2015, until more research to be done. In January 2015, Colin received a call offering help and support from the members of the sadly now disbanded Civic Society with this matter. There have been thoughts about having a petition to be made available at the L.I.C and also at the Farmers Market, with people able to air their views both for and against the proposals. Brian is going to contact the Chamber of Commerce for their views. Inspector Tim Coombe also sent an email with regard to this matter. He stated that the plan shows that the lost car parking spaces from the moving of the bus stop would be countered by new parking spaces where the current bus stops are, which he believe would mean reduced traffic flow at all times and not just when a bus was stopping. Also that buses emerging from the new stop to travel west along the A30 would have to make a fairly sharp deviation to get around the island at the end of South Street. That if cars are parked in the bus stop, that the bus will then stop in the main carriageway causing more congestion which will cause further problems to lorries delivering outside OneStop for example, and that this congestion would be most likely to occur at peak times, this only being negated by rigorous enforcement from the CPE (Civilian Parking Enforcement) provider who would need to be consulted re the ability to support the new proposals. The next point is that large vehicles using the bus stop to unload, and therefore parked immediately adjacent to the crossing would obscure the visibility of the pedestrians using said crossing, citing the fact that some people will always make a mad last dash as the lights are changing and that motorists will see a red-amber signal and start to move off if they don't have the wider field of view in order to anticipate what pedestrians are doing. Inspector Coombes was also concerned that from an aesthetic point of view, that removing the trees in Market Street would leave it looking barren, as trying to improve the street scene in Crewkerne is fundamental to encouraging quality independent retailers, and that we should be looking to emphasise the country/market town feel. He also feels that the plan should be delayed until the town is made one way, and offers as an alternative idea, the possibility of creating a transport hub and larger pedestrian area outside the Town Hall in the cut through, as there is an alternative route for traffic to the east of the town hall when the buses are stopped and the Town Hall could be treated as a large bus roundabout, where a taxi bay could also be considered, even though this would impact on the Wednesday market.

Colin responded with this explanation. That since the parking of cars at existing bus stops will merely extend the existing parking areas, the statement that this will reduce the traffic flow at all times is obviously untenable. That buses emerging from the proposed new merged bus stop, will be able to do so when the lights are at red, and that the Chard bus (the 99a every two hours from 7.05am until 17.40pm i.e. 7 buses in total) does not need to negotiate the island at the end of South Street, as it will cross directly to West Street, therefore Inspector Coombes comment is not sustainable. Cars parking at the proposed bus stop has already been considered and it has been agreed that extra enforcement would be needed. Also that there are no large lorries that make deliveries to the east side of Market Street, therefore no use of the bus bay would be needed in this respect, plus it is unlikely that lorries making deliveries to Boots, Bilbys' and One Stop will park at the new proposed



bus stop, as it would mean them continually crossing the road with their deliveries. Any pedestrians making a last dash from the east side of Market Street, will be most at risk from the traffic travelling in a southerly direction, and the proposal does not affect that visibility. When standing at the crossing, the line of sight outside the near end of the zigzag lines is to the far end of Stuart Marsh. This is a linear distance to the crossing of 80 feet, and the stopping distance at 30mph (Highway Code) is 75 feet. The proposal cannot be considered to create any additional risk to pedestrians. There is only one occasion, in the morning, when two buses will use the stop at the same time, and one of these is the smaller villages bus. Thus there is no reason to expect the buses to cause the view down Market Street to be restricted. With regard to the aesthetic view, only one tree will be removed and two Town Planning experts have stated that this removal will not be detrimental to the townscape and environment in the area, plus a benefit of the proposal is that a dead tree currently in Falkland Square could be replaced at the same time. The proposal that Inspector Coombes put forward about making the Town Hall a large bus roundabout would negate one of the main aims of the proposal, namely to stop the buses having to use the Town Hall as a roundabout with the attendant risks. In particular, crossing North Street at a blind spot. That idea would also involve the loss of several car parking spaces. The local taxi firms have stated they do not want a rank by the Town Hall as it is too far from the town shops, which also applies to the bus stops. Colin finishes by stating that he believed none of the points Inspector Coombes stated could be considered to have any substance or validity. Inspector Coombe explains he wrote from a practical and safety point of view, and agrees that more research needs to be done, he summarised by saying that he was simply raising concerns and is not worried if his points are not given too much acknowledgement. Colin asks that the matter stay on the ABCD agenda in order to continue with research and information.

8, Skate Park –

The ABSIC group approached Diane with a view to improve the skateboard facilities in the town. They were seeking funding into the project and made contact a day after the previous ABCD meeting, asking for our support. Diane then emailed the ABCD members asking for their opinion and input and it was unanimously agreed to give the group £500 - £250 from ABCD and £250 from the funds ring-fenced for Health.

9, Update from Project Groups –

- Promoting Crewkerne- Zoe is looking at a meeting in late March in order to progress on the promotion of Crewkerne, with regard to local businesses and marketing the town in general. Diane said that it is recognised that the Crewkerne Local Information Centre (LIC) Facebook page is extremely popular and is doing a great deal to promote local events and businesses, and would like to thank Vikki.
- Crewkerne Arts –A workshop with Tangle took place in November at the Kings Arms, followed by an open mic event at the Royal Oak in December. Both were successful. The next will be the New Rope String Band on their farewell tour, who will be in Victoria Hall in April. Tickets are already available from Meg Rose and the LIC.
- Later this year, Poetry in Shops will be taking place, with the Hip Yak Poetry Shack. This will comprise 6 workshops in Crewkerne in April, making up poems about local businesses and the town. Some will then be chosen and performed in various venues around the town on May 16th, which is also Farmers Market day that month. There will also be a ‘slam’ poet who



will attempt to compose verses on the spot when given subjects by local residents. Funding has been obtained thanks to a successful grant application from the Arts Council.

- Community Pounds – Angie reported that a member of Aquacentre staff is being trained to deal with clients referred for obesity and diabetes reasons, and asked the ABCD for some help with the funding. It was agreed to fund half the amount required, and the staff member in question will be giving the ABCD regular updates on their progress.
- Friends of Henhayes Park – Rick reports that he is awaiting figures for a feature piece, a galleon, which ties in with Crewkerne’s sailcloth heritage, and then a bid will be made for funding to the Lottery Commission.

10, ABCD Membership and Circulation –

Zoe will be contacting all ABCD members who are currently contacted via the email, asking them to ‘opt in’ on whether they wish to receive ABCD emails in the future.

11, A.O.B –

Rev Jane Sperring has asked for opinions on a Town Christmas Carol Service, from the Churches Together Group, which they are discussing holding on a weekday, in the week before Christmas. ABCD all agreed this would be a very popular idea.

Zoe reports on a funding fair, a free local workshop, which is taking place on March 5th at the George Reynolds Centre, via the South West Foundation. This organisation looks at small grants and funding to help local charities and charitable causes. Lots of information will be available, and places can be booked by email or telephone. Information is also to be found online.

Zoe also reports that the South Somerset Disability Forum contacted her, saying they are very keen to work with the ABCD with regard to accessibility improvements on any town projects and offer their support. Zoe is adding them to the email list.

Tony reports that the British Legion now have a new website and that they have received an award for their work in recruitment and promotion in the Crewkerne area, and would also like to continue their support and input into ABCD. They also are added to the email list, and ABCD are very appreciative of their support.

12, Future meetings

7pm March 12th Heritage Centre

7pm May 28th Heritage Centre