

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE
OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE BEACON, PORTWAY, ON
MONDAY, 22 MAY, 2017, AT 7.30 P.M.**

Committee members present: Councillors S Trinder (Chairman), C S Dickson,
E C Goldsmith, J Goodman, Mrs M Gradwell,
Mrs J Hannaby, B Mabbett, C McCarthy and Mrs J Reynolds.

Others present: Two members of the public

Deputy Clerk: Mrs K Buckingham

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs C E C Dickson, K A Harris, Mrs J E Nunn-Price and Major J Sibbald.

Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None.

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2017

The minutes were approved and signed.

1. Statements and Questions from the Public

A member of the public was present to promote "Changing Places" toilets which had been discussed previously at the Town Electorate meeting. This was a current initiative to increase the number of fully accessible toilets in the area and to encourage any new development in particular to include space for such provision.

2. Allotment Matters

(a) To consider a date for Councillors' allotment inspection

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Mabbett
SECONDED BY Councillor Goodman
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Councillors' visit should take place on 1 July at 2pm, commencing at the Larkhill allotments.

(b) Resurfacing of pathway at Naldertown

It was agreed that the pathway at Naldertown needed to be assessed for re-surfacing. Quotes were to be obtained and suggestions sought for types of materials to be used.

Action: Deputy Clerk

It was noted that there was a lot of fly-tipping taking place along the path at Naldertown and this would be checked during the Councillors' inspection.

(c) Broken fence at KA's/ Naldertown Allotments

The fence area had now been closed by KA's (West Site) putting up palisade fencing on one side. The small section left requiring fixing had been dealt with by the Council's contractor.

(d) Protected species on allotment sites

It was noted that a plot remained unlettable at Letcombe Fields due to the presence of badgers, although this was well contained at present to the one plot.

Notification had been received from a tenant that there were potentially Great Crested Newts at the lower end of the Stockham Park allotments. Advice had been sought from the Vale of White Horse District Council Countryside Officer, who confirmed that the Wilts and Berks Canal was a known breeding ground. It was not necessary for work to cease on the lower allotment plots due to their long cultivation. However, advice would need to be adhered to in terms of the clearing vacant plots in the future i.e. by gradual clearing. Tenants at the site would also be made aware of their presence and guidelines if one was seen on a plot.

Action: Deputy Clerk

(e) Update on allotment waiting list

Following the increased promotion of available allotment plots, there was now a waiting list of nine with an additional three who were waiting for specific plots or additional plots. Offers would be sent out to at least eight in the following week. There had been a recent round of inspections and one or two further plots may shortly become available.

After the round of offers, if these were accepted, there would be no plots available at the Grove Road, Larkhill, or Letcombe Fields sites. There may be one and a half left at Naldertown and potentially three left at Stockham Park all of which were at the base of the site in the currently overgrown area. Due to the presence of the Great Crested Newts, these may be left vacant for the time being.

(f) Other allotment matters

The specification for the landscape contractor was discussed. It was agreed that the additional grass cuts on the communal areas of the allotment sites should not be carried out on a seasonal basis as this work was largely being carried out by tenants at present. Areas that required cutting may instead be booked in on an ad hoc basis if issues were noted at the allotment inspections. This would also be reviewed at the Councillors' inspection.

A letter had recently been sent to all of the tenants at the Letcombe Fields site in relation to the use of weaponry on the site and that this was prohibited in all forms.

3. Cemetery Matters

(a) Installation of hedge or fencing along boundary of new land

The original quote for a hedge along the new boundary was £5588. The Conservation Volunteers Group (TCV) who had carried out the work at Larkhill Allotments had provided a quote for the same specification of hedge. This would be for £1154.65 and they advised also using chippings to retain moisture for another £200. Due to the size of the plants used which would be whips with guards and stakes it was discussed that no maintenance cost would be required which would remove this costing going forward. Instead the TCV would come back in a year to check if any of the plants have died, for the cost of replacing these would be significantly cheaper than ongoing maintenance. It was noted that the planting of the hedge would be winter work and would likely require two days depending on the number of volunteers that could be found potentially within the local area. However, the cost of the work would be capped at two days. It was agreed to proceed with the TCV and to arrange for the hedge to be planted over the winter, including the chippings.

Action: Deputy Clerk

(b) Memorial garden – benches and bins

The contractor had been instructed to fix the benches in the area and this should take place shortly.

It was agreed to add a bin to the memorial garden, in addition to two further bins on the path that led to the C of E Primary School. This could be one bin near the entrance from Chain Hill and one closer to the school gates. In terms of the design of the bin in the memorial garden, this should reflect the others within the cemetery environment but the bins on the path could be more functional.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Dickson
SECONDED BY Councillor Goodman

IT WAS RESOLVED to delegate the design and type of bin to the Chairman and Deputy Clerk. **Action: Chairman/Deputy Clerk**

(c) Tree cuttings at cemetery

Following the trimming of foliage at the cemetery, the tree cuttings had been left stacked at the base of the trees. Most were insignificant in size but others were larger logs and branches and it was agreed to obtain a cost for having these removed. The landscape contractor would be asked to provide a cost for removing the material. It was also suggested that Stockham School may be interested in the larger logs for their forest school and this would be looked into before obtaining a quote for removal.

Action: Deputy Clerk

(d) Consideration of s106 contribution to art at the cemetery

No options had yet been brought to be considered and this was being looked into by the Vale of White Horse District Council. One option was an archway at the entrance to the cemetery. It was believed that the Section 106 contribution was in the region of £5000. This item would be taken off the agenda until there were detailed options to consider.

(e) Other cemetery matters

The five lampposts had now been painted with the tops to be fixed shortly. The replacement of the path was discussed in terms of the best method of doing so; whether this should be replaced in its entirety with packed or compacted gravel or whether the cracked elements be broken out and patched up in sections.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Goodman
SECONDED BY Councillor McCarthy

IT WAS RESOLVED to patch up as previously agreed and to potentially review this for a longer term resolution going forward. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

It was discussed that the post which blocked vehicular access down the pathway of the cemetery was permanently left flat, which was not fulfilling its purpose. Options would be discussed at the Councillors' inspection.

4. Town Centre Matters

(a) Update on benches

The two benches, one for Barnards Way and one for outside The Nelson Public House, had been ordered. Benches generally in the area were discussed and a list had been

prepared of the benches which had been installed by the Town Council or those that may need to be taken on in terms of maintenance. The condition of each bench would be assessed and details brought back to the next meeting to discuss if any works were required. **Action: Goodman/ Deputy Clerk**

(b) Update on Market issues and Market Place licensing

There continued to be concern at the emptiness on the western end of the Wednesday market and whether all of the stalls could be moved to this end, mainly to free up parking. The presence of lorries for the stall holders exacerbated the issue as these also removed several car parking spaces. The main aim in consolidating any of the stalls placement would be in freeing up the parking area at the eastern end. It was agreed that, as a first stage, a proposed layout be discussed in more detail.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Mrs Hannaby
SECONDED BY Councillor Dickson

IT WAS RESOLVED to prepare a scaled plan with measured out pitch sizes to confirm the exact location of each pitch and whether there was sufficient space for all to be accommodated within the western end of the Market Place. **Action: Clerk**

The Market Place licensing would be investigated and progressed in due course.

(c) Update on defibrillators

Quotes had been sought for the installation of the cabinet on the side of The Beacon and these were for £300, £240 and £188 and it was agreed to pursue the lowest cost for installation. The cabinet would have the defibrillator from Oasis Dental and would be a locked box. This would leave the defibrillator in The Bear for the time being.

It was agreed that the conversion of the Listed phone box to a defibrillator box still be pursued and that costs be obtained as soon as possible from the Community Heartbeat Trust for installation and ongoing maintenance. An application for Listed Building Consent to be submitted. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

A defibrillator had been purchased by the Tennis Club and Bowls Club to be positioned at the Manor Road Memorial Park and this was also likely to be installed shortly.

A local event related to defibrillator training was noted which would be taking place on 24 May at 7.30pm at the Old Mill Hall in Grove. This was being run by the Community Heartbeat Trust.

(d) Update on VC Forecourt and statue area

The contractor had been instructed to complete the works on the VC Forecourt with the work to start imminently. The part of the axe handle on the statue which had been reported as chipped off was to be repainted. The contractor would also be asked to attend to this. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(e) Litter and weeds

The first weed killing treatment had now taken place, within the town centre area. The next weed treatment would be for the whole town, in June/ July with the town centre only again in August/ September. It was requested that particular streets be pointed out to the treatment company for attention including Alfred Street, Vicar's Row, Ormond Road and Foliat Drive. It was noted that there was a two week window after the

treatment had taken place for any that had been missed to be pointed out to the contractor and this would be alerted to the Councillors at the time.

The email that had been received in relation to litter throughout the town had been circulated and noted. Discussion was had as to how to deter litter dropping and whether CCTV could be picked up particularly in the Wallingford Street area, whether any additional signs should be put up and also advertisement of voluntary litter picking. A letter would be prepared in reply. **Action: Deputy Clerk/ Chairman**

(f) Christmas decoration sponsorship

The sponsorship of the Christmas tree hoardings had been taken forward to the Chamber of Commerce to consider. There was no update at this time.

(g) Issues arising from the attendance of the May Fair

It was agreed to defer consideration of this item to the end of the meeting to be dealt with as a confidential item.

(h) “Changing Places” toilets

It was discussed that this was a campaign which was sponsored by the equipment provider. There was also “Space to Change” which was more related to existing spaces and retro fitting. The provision of a ‘Mobiloo’ was being considered at the Armed Forces Day event to make this inclusive to all. In terms of the promotion of this initiative, this would be discussed in the Promotions, Communication and Events Committee meeting in more detail.

(i) Other Town Centre Matters

The current condition of the noticeboards was discussed in relation to the three sided noticeboard at Belmont and that this needed to be cleaned and refurbished or potentially replaced going forward. It was requested that the other noticeboards be changed from having Bluetak to magnets so there were not areas left with Bluetak in when they were not full. This would need to be reviewed across all noticeboards as to whether more magnets would need to be purchased. **Action: Clerk**

Confirmation of whether the flower planters would be planted up soon was requested and it was noted that this should be within the next week.

5. Other matters

(a) Update on street lighting on footpath 14 (Belmont)

The Inspector was still awaiting a commitment from SSE and to put together a total cost for consideration by the Council. This was not yet available but would be reported in due course. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(b) Repair of bandstand at Manor Road Memorial Park

Contact had been made by a district council agency concerning the poor condition of the bandstand. It was agreed that there was a wish for the bandstand to be retained, but whether it was better to repair or re-build in a larger size remained unclear.

It was agreed that it was not possible to give any commitment in terms of donation to costings until there was an idea of the overall costs involved in repairing or building as

new. It was also suggested reviewing whether there were any Section 106 funds available for rebuilding or refurbishing the bandstand as an art project. It was agreed to reiterate to the agents that there was a wish to keep the bandstand but to request costings. **Action: Clerk**

6. General correspondence

None

Confidential Items

ON THE PROPOSITION of the Chairman
IT WAS RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

4 (g) Issues arising from the attendance of the May Fair (see Clerk's memorandum dated 17 May 17)

7. To sign the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2017 and consider matters arising.

8. To consider Clerk's memorandum dated 17 May 2017 regarding beverage stalls.

ON THE PROPOSITION of the Chairman
IT WAS RESOLVED that the resolutions made in confidential session be adopted.

The meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.
