

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE
OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE BEACON, PORTWAY, ON
MONDAY, 22 JANUARY, 2018, AT 7.30 P.M.**

Committee members present: Councillors S Trinder (Chairman), Mrs C E C Dickson (part), C S Dickson, E C Goldsmith, J Goodman, Mrs M Gradwell (part), Mrs J T Hannaby, K A Harris, B Mabbett (part), C McCarthy, Mrs J E Nunn-Price (part), and Major J Sibbald.

Others present: One member of the public (part)

Deputy Clerk: Mrs K Buckingham

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor P O'Leary.

Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Councillor Mrs Nunn-Price declared an interest with regard to being a director of Sustainable Wantage.

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2017

The minutes were altered as follows

26. From '...the Mably Way doctor's surgery' to '...the Mably Way doctors' surgery' and '...the Information Commissions Office' to '... the Information Commissioners Office'.

The minutes, as amended, were approved and signed.

31. Statements and Questions from the Public

None.

32. Allotment Matters

(a) Track surfacing at Naldertown allotments

No further quotes had been received from contractors for the work. It was suggested that the Fire Station Community Wardens be asked whether they wished to take on the work. Contact would be made with the Highways Authority for suggestions for an appropriate material, as they had begun to use a variety of different materials depending on the circumstances. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

Councillor Mrs Gradwell and Councillor Mrs Dickson arrived at the meeting.

(b) Use by Sustainable Wantage of land at Stockham/Naldertown

The Deputy Clerk had met with the group attached to Sustainable Wantage, who were keen to take on both parcels of land. Both areas would be planted up as woodland with the plants chosen to be a mix of trees of a native species, with perennials and edible plants as ground cover. The group would be sourcing trees from a Woodland Trust grant, with 105 saplings for each site, although this would not be available until the end of the year. The preparatory work and ground cover planting could take place in the interim.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Goodman
SECONDED by Councillor Trinder

IT WAS RESOLVED to proceed with instructing the contractor to clear and rotovate the land as necessary. Contact would be made with the Fire Station Community Wardens for any additional help which could be provided to the group for preparation and initial planting. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(c) Audit of plot sizes and Letcombe plot division

The Letcombe Fields plots would be reconsidered in numbering and a larger plot now available would be split down into an increased number of plots. There was no waiting list currently for Letcombe Fields and therefore this work was not considered to be a priority but would be taken forward come the Spring. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(d) Review of allotment policy

A memo had been circulated by the Deputy Clerk detailing the work carried out by the Allotment Working Group. This included a suggested new policy and tenancy agreement, the detail of which were discussed.

For Point 6 (c) of the Allotment Tenancy Agreement it was agreed to alter the text to read, "Bonfires are permitted, but are to be used only for plant waste created from the allotment plot and in a safe and considerate manner."

Point 6 (d) of the Tenancy Agreement would be altered to "No dogs, except for assistance dogs, are to be brought into or kept in the area."

In the Allotment Tenancy Agreement a shed bond of £50 was detailed. It was suggested that the exact amount be removed and wording be added to indicate "A bond, as specified by the Council, shall be paid to the Council on application for written consent."

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Major Sibbald
SECONDED by Councillor Mrs Nunn-Price

IT WAS RESOLVED to remove reference to the shed bond amount and to make the amendments as suggested.

The current Allotment Policy detailed that "...costs of operating allotments should be covered by the rent received from allotment holders". There was considerable discussion on this being part of the new policy.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Harris
SECONDED by Councillor Trinder

IT WAS PROPOSED to remove this paragraph entirely and to make no reference to costs of operating being covered by rent received. This was approved, 9 in favour and 2 against.

Details of expenditure on the allotments would be regularly communicated to the Committee and any large costs referred to it for approval.

It was agreed to make tenants at each of the sites aware of the changes made to the tenancy agreement and policy. This would be by the placement of notices at each site referring to the new documents being available on the website and within the office.

Action: Deputy Clerk

The new policy and tenancy agreement would be applicable to all new tenants but not to the existing tenants until the next rent renewal. At this point, the new tenancy agreement would need to be signed by each tenant. After this stage, the documents would be reviewed and consulted upon as necessary at the annual Allotment Holders Meeting.

The Allotment Policy Working Group was thanked for their time in reviewing and altering the documents.

(e) Allotment sites as Assets of Community Value

It was noted the Clerk had submitted an application for Wantage Hospital to become an Asset of Community Value. An application for both the Grove Road and the Larkhill allotment site would now be submitted. **Action: Clerk**

(f) Other allotment matters

The clearing of plots prior to being offered to new tenants, as standard, was considered. The most cost effective option for doing so was considered to be sheeting over an allotment plot once it was relinquished to prevent any significant growth between tenants. It was requested that an idea of costs for a contractor to do so be requested, based on a plot which needed little work prior to sheeting and one that would need strimming/ clearing first. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

33. Cemetery Matters

(a) General maintenance

Only one bench remained in the memorial garden, with the others having been moved to storage. The new bin had been installed on the pathway at the base of the cemetery and appeared to be being well used. There continued to be a litter issue in this part of the cemetery, particularly close to the entrance to the C of E School. It was requested that a letter be sent to the school regarding the continuing litter problem. The amount of litter would be monitored, before any additional bins were considered. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

Councillor Mabbett joined the meeting. The member of the public left the meeting.

The vehicular access gate at the base of the cemetery had been removed by the Council's contractor due to a vehicle having knocked the wall and damaged the bracket of the gate. The contractor had offered to repair the coping and wall and to fix the gate back into place for £130. If a curved coping was used, this was likely to be another £50 to £100. This work was agreed. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(b) Tree cuttings at the cemetery

Following the recent snow fall, several trees had dropped branches and foliage into the cemetery. These had been cleared off the paths but a lot of material remained. The contractor could chip and distribute the the material for £250 a day (likely to be a days work). This work was agreed.

A tree on the corner of the path near to the C of E school entrance had a branch which had snapped and was leaning on the fence. It was requested that this be removed and chipped whilst the contractor was on site. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(c) Cemetery Art Project

Work had moved forward on the Art Project and an artist had now been selected and was working on the design. Liaison had taken place with the Steering Group. The initial ideas drawn up would come to a future meeting for approval.

(d) Consideration of CCTV at cemetery

The Council had been made aware of a petition being put together requesting that CCTV be considered at the Cemetery although this had not been provided to the Council to date. It was agreed to look into the costings for CCTV on site and the various options which could be available and an update would be provided in due course.

Action: McCarthy

(e) Other cemetery matters

None.

34. Town Centre Matters

(a) Wantage Fire Station Community Wardens

The Deputy Clerk had met with a representative of Wantage Fire Station who was setting up the 'Wantage Fire Station Community Wardens'. The group would be looking to help the community in several ways including visiting those more vulnerable and linking in to community groups. The Community Wardens had linked up with Duke of Edinburgh students at King Alfred's School and were looking for jobs that the group could carry out around the town for the benefit of the community.

It was suggested that the Council prepare a list to pass on to the Community Wardens including the painting of benches around the town, assisting with the upkeep and repair of Alfred's Well, helping to prepare the land at the two allotment sites prior to planting and helping to clear overgrown foliage and litter at the cemetery.

Action: Deputy Clerk

(b) Review of Christmas decorations

The timescale for removal of the poles was requested and detail as to why there was such a delay for the removal of lights following the Christmas period. There was a discussion on whether the Red Cross shop should have lights the following year and the Clerk's advice on this was requested. It was suggested that more lights be provided on the trees next year.

Action: Clerk

It was requested that, for next year, the Clerk or a representative of the Council speak to each of the businesses/ shops regarding the lights prior to their installation. This would be in terms of the timing of the lights being installed, requesting permission to do so and also stating expectations for when these should be put on.

Councillor Mrs Nunn-Price left the meeting.

(c) Update on Markets

It had been agreed in the previous meeting for a working group to be put together to carry out an audit of the equipment that was available and to determine what needed replacement. The following Councillors agreed to be part of this working group: Councillors Goodman, McCarthy, Mabbett and Trinder. This would be passed on to the Clerk to arrange.

Action: Clerk

(d) Update on defibrillators

No further work had been completed on the defibrillator in the phone box next to the Post Office Vaults. However, the location of the new defibrillators around the town would be placed on a map on the website when this was available.

Action: Deputy Clerk Communications/Deputy Clerk

(e) Update on VC Forecourt and statue area

The majority of the work on the VC Forecourt had now been completed with only the noticeboard remaining to be rubbed down and painted. It was noted that the updated town map was available and this would be arranged to be installed. This would be located on the side facing Barclays Bank, with the side facing Costa for use by the Youth Town Council.

Action: Deputy Clerk

(f) Quote for street lighting on footpath 14 (Belmont)

A quote had now been received from OCC in relation to installing the additional street light at Belmont. This cost was £2954.85 for the one light which included the commuted sum to OCC.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor McCarthy

SECONDED by Councillor Mrs Hannaby

IT WAS RESOLVED not to proceed with the additional light unless external funding could be found for a significant proportion of the cost.

(g) Replacement of Belmont noticeboard

A two sided noticeboard had now been ordered. Arrangements for it to be installed would be made as soon as it was received.

Action: Deputy Clerk

(h) Alfred's Well

A quote had been received to make repairs to the area including new rails and steps for £250. It was agreed to instruct the contractor to complete this work. It was noted that there was now a new Letcombe Brook Officer in place, who had a complete list of the work required for updating Alfred's Well. Contact would be made with them as soon as possible.

Action: Deputy Clerk

Any additional work at Alfred's Well necessary could be offered to the Wantage Fire Station Community Wardens.

Action: Deputy Clerk

35. Other business

(a) Great British Spring Clean – 2-4 March 2018

This was to take place from 2 to 4 March 2018 and it was agreed to engage with the organiser to ensure that key areas of Wantage were attended to.

Action: Trinder

(b) Floral displays

Positive feedback had been received from several parties in relation to the hanging baskets provided in 2017. It was agreed to proceed with the same company, provided that the price was similar. It was noted that this included the pyramid planters, hanging baskets and the watering and maintenance of these.

Action: Clerk

(c) Salt/grit bins

There had been several reports over the period of snow fall of existing salt bins not having a supply of grit or that there were areas which would benefit from an additional/closer bin. A review would be undertaken of the bins currently available as the map on the OCC website was out of date. This would include noting where such bins were available and what the material was like within them **Action: Deputy Clerk**

An application would be made for three additional salt bins following this review, at Chain Hill, Charlton by Charlton Primary School and in the Market Place by the shed/Post Office Depot. It was suggested that a fourth be considered on Wallingford Street by Beckett House although this would depend on the location of others nearby and whether there was space available. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(d) French Markets

The French Markets would be attending on Friday 1 June and Thursday 29 November, although the Thursday date may change to a Friday. This would be updated in due course. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

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.

36. 1. "Bodycam" equipment for staff
2. Memorial bench at Barnards Way

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

The meeting closed at 9.08 p.m.

CONFIDENTIAL

LEISURE AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE: 22 JANUARY 2018

36. Confidential Items

1. “Bodycam” equipment for staff

Two cameras had been ordered and were now in use. The PCSO had given a briefing to those using the cameras to ensure that these were used in an appropriate manner. Any video footage taken would be downloaded at the office and dealt with as necessary.

2. Memorial bench at Barnards Way

The Chairman and Deputy Clerk had discussed with the family concerned that the existing new bench at Barnards Way could be used for a memorial plaque and the wording of said plaque had been agreed. This would be installed shortly.
