

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE
OF THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE BEACON, PORTWAY, ON
MONDAY, 5 MARCH, 2018, AT 8.20 P.M.**

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

Others present: Two members 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 at Sustainable Wantage.

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2018

33(b) ... 'tres' should be altered to 'trees'.

The minutes, as amended, were approved and signed.

37. Statements and Questions from the Public

None.

38. Allotment Matters

(a) Track surfacing at Naldertown allotments

Advice was awaited from OCC on the type of surfacing material to use. This would be chased up. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

It was the unlikely that the Fire Station Community Wardens and Duke of Edinburgh students would be able to lay the material due to the distance from the town centre but it was a matter which would be kept on their list for the future.

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

The group were sourcing trees from a Woodland Trust Grant, but these were likely not be available until the end of the year. Discussion had taken place with the contractor regarding timing for clearing and rotovating. The group could start to carry out work as soon as it was cleared and would not be delayed by the wait for the trees. Ground cover plants would be used, including a wild flower meadow. The contractor was therefore to be instructed to start as soon as possible. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

The two members of the public present stated that the intention was for both areas of land to become a forest garden, with edible plants, able to be used as an educational resource. It was agreed that a demarcation of the areas from the allotments and adjoining land should be considered (perhaps a post and rail or chain link fence) and that there should be a 'no dogs' policy (for which signage would be required).

(c) Audit of plot sizes and Letcombe plot division

There was still the intention for these to be reconsidered in numbering and for the large plot now available to be split down to increase the number of plots. However, with there being no waiting list currently, this work was not considered to be a priority. This would be taken forward in due course.

(d) Update on allotment policy review

Following the amendments agreed at the previous meeting, the Allotment Policy and the Tenancy Agreement had now been finalised. These would now be applicable to all new tenants but not to the existing tenants until the next rent renewal. At the point of the renewal, the new Tenancy Agreement would be requested to be signed by each tenant.

A notice had been prepared to be placed at each of the sites, which detailed out the main changes proposed to the Tenancy Agreement going forward. The notice indicated that the full copies of both documents would be made available on the website, within the office and posted out on request. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(e) Allotment sites as Assets of Community Value

Work had not yet commenced on the two sites being put forward as Assets of Community Value, mainly due to the work required on whether the Council would take on the green spaces on the Crab Hill development and the implications of this going forward. **Action: Clerk**

(f) Clearing of vacant plots

Consideration had been given to whether vacant plots could be sheeted over once a plot was relinquished to prevent any significant regrowth between tenants. The contractor had been asked for an idea of costs to do so, although he had provided an initial indication that this was likely to be expensive and difficult to achieve in terms of finding material which would stand up to long term use. An update on costings would be given once available. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(g) Other allotment matters

None.

The two members of the public left the meeting.

39. Cemetery Matters

(a) General maintenance

The litter at the base of the cemetery was being monitored. A letter had been sent to the C of E School regarding the litter problem. Any reply would be reported back in due course. It was noted that there was a significant amount of litter on the slope by Chain Hill, outside of the Cemetery boundary, but was likely to be coming from inside the Cemetery. Consideration may need to be given to a different form of fencing along the top boundary or the type of bins used to reduce this issue. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(b) Tree cuttings and recent cemetery inspection/review

A recent inspection of the cemetery had taken place by Councillor Crawford and separately by the Deputy Clerk. It was noted that there were several areas where foliage

and brambles needed to be cleared from graves and adjacent to paths. A list would be prepared of the work required and the easily accessible areas would be passed to the Fire Station Community Wardens. More complicated tasks, or those in sensitive locations such as on graves, would be passed on to the contractor to cost. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

The removal of the ivy and the self seeded tree from the area adjacent to the entrance wall had already been instructed to allow space for the Cemetery Art Project to proceed.

It was noted that the paths had not yet been fixed and that these were not an easy repair. There were several areas where the path had cracked and wholesale replacement of the paths may be needed. It was considered that it may be necessary to meet a contractor on site to discuss. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(c) Cemetery Art Project

A brief had now been provided by the artist Suzanne O'Driscoll. This showed the piece of art along the entrance wall, incorporating the artwork onto the stone wall itself. The design would take into account the different heights along the top of the wall and would be visible from the drive, the adjacent roadway and from the pathway in the cemetery. The design incorporated plants, flowers and slopes with the aim of showing the character of the adjacent Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This could be finished in black painted steel or a matt stainless steel (which would be easier to maintain). It was noted that if in black, the artwork could potentially blend into the background more than stainless steel.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Mabbett

SECONDED by Councillor McCarthy

IT WAS RESOLVED to proceed with design number two as detailed in the brief, in stainless steel finish and with design number two for the entrance sign, also in stainless steel. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

It was reported that there may be funding available, leftover after the signage was in place, to improve the roadway surfacing on the way into the cemetery.

(d) Consideration of CCTV at cemetery

CCTV was still to be costed at the cemetery and consideration could be given to including positioning towards the art at the entrance as well as towards the memorial garden. The costings for the CCTV were to be investigated in due course.

Action: McCarthy

(e) Other cemetery matters

The hedge had now been planted on the southern boundary of the cemetery extension. The cost had come out less than originally envisaged at £1037.20.

It was requested that Section 106 funds earmarked for the cemetery be investigated and contact be made with the Section 106 Officer to establish what was required to obtain these. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

40. Town Centre Matters

(a) Wantage Fire Station Community Wardens

The Community Wardens had been working already on the list which had been provided to them by the Council. This included painting several benches around the town centre. Unfortunately, on liaison with the co-ordinator for the project, it had been established

that the Duke of Edinburgh students working alongside them were only able to carry out work close to the town centre due to time restrictions. Some benches would therefore be too far, and consideration would need to be given as to whether a contractor should be employed to repair these. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

In terms of alternative work, a list of the cemetery requirements and litter picking areas would be passed on. The co-ordinator had also been put in touch with the Letcombe Brook Officer for carrying out work along the Letcombe Brook, such as clearing of foliage, litter picking and general tidying up. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

It was noted that the Fire Station Community Wardens may be able to assist in terms of putting the flags up around the town and this would be taken forward with them as a suggestion. **Action: Deputy Clerk Communications**

(b) Update on Christmas decorations

The timescale for the removal of the poles was discussed. It was reported that the removal was delayed due to a key member of the contractor staff departing after Christmas. It was also noted that more tree lights should have been put up but that the contractor failed to take this on board, not helped by the early timing of the Dickensian Evening and the weather conditions.

It was discussed that liaison with every shop-owner prior to installation could be time consuming and a strain on current staff resource. All shops were currently informed by letter of the intentions. It was requested that only those that were making connections or were new shop owners or occupiers be liaised with directly. It was agreed that the matter be taken off the agenda. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(c) Update on Markets

It was confirmed that the working group would be meeting to start the audit of the equipment available at 10am on Tuesday 6 March. This would initially be providing a list of the current equipment available and that which could be replaced or supplemented. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(d) Update on defibrillators

There were still no costs available for the likely maintenance costs of the phone box, if adopted by the Council. This was proving difficult, partly because of the listing of the structures. Although BT may be able to fund costs of the actual maintenance of the equipment, it was the listing that could add to the cost. It was suggested that Ardington and Lockinge Council be contacted in relation to the likely maintenance cost of their defibrillator box. It was also requested that disappointment be expressed to BT in terms of the time they had taken to provide advice. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(e) Update on VC Forecourt and statue area

All of the work on the VC Forecourt had now taken place. There was a request that the notices within the noticeboards be put up earlier if possible as some were only just making it in to the noticeboards prior to an event and it was asked that this be passed on as appropriate. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

It was noted that the Youth Town Council noticeboard was now in action and that the new town map had been put in on the other side.

(f) Replacement of Belmont noticeboard

A quote had been received for the installation of the noticeboard of £217 and this had been instructed.

(g) Alfred's Well

The majority of the work had now taken place at Alfred's Well with foliage having been cleared off the slope and the railing and steps having been fixed. Some further work may be necessary in the area later in the year and this would be monitored going forward.

(h) Floral displays

An order was in for the planters in late May/early June. The pyramid planter at the eastern end of the Market Place would need to be reinstalled prior to this time. It was asked that an earlier date be considered for the floral planters, perhaps late April/early May and also it was questioned why the contractor that had removed the flower planter had not been asked to reinstall this. **Action: Clerk**

This item could then be taken off the agenda.

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

Due to the snowy weather this had been postponed until the 15 April.

(j) Salt/grit bins

The review of the grit bins had taken place and been distributed to the Councillors. Information had been passed on to OCC for those bins which needed to be replaced or refilled and asking for confirmation as to which on the list they maintained. Since distributing the list, additional grit bins had been noted on Manor Road and on Larkhill and these would be added to the list, which would be passed on to OCC.

It was agreed that new bins be considered for Witan Way (by the zebra crossing/roundabout), the Market Place near to the Post Office depot, Charlton Village Road near to the church and Charlton Primary School and Wallingford Street. The location on Wallingford Street would be discussed with Councillor Hannaby as to an appropriate location. **Action: Hannaby/Deputy Clerk**

OCC would be notified of the locations for the new grit bins. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

(k) Other town matters

The former proposal for street lighting on footpath 14 (Belmont) was discussed. The cost for this lighting would be £2954.85. It was reported that the residents who used the path were willing to pay for half of the cost, if the Council agreed to pay the other half.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Nunn-Price

SECONDED by Councillor McCarthy

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Council would meet half of the costs, if the other half could be arranged. **Action: Nunn-Price/Clerk**

41. **Other business**

(a) Consideration of whether to endorse District Council in use of S106 funds for upgrade of outdoor courts at Wantage Leisure Centre

An application was being put forward by the District Council for the use of Section 106 (generated from the St Marys development) funds to upgrade the outdoor courts at Wantage Leisure Centre. The wording of this clause was ‘...towards the provision of a new tennis court and refurbishment of existing tennis courts at the Memorial Park in Wantage or such other Leisure facilities within the Wantage area’. Of the total of £101,400 available for this use, the Leisure Centre were applying for £75,000 and the Tennis Club would have the balance of £26,400, part of which they had already received. The works proposed were to upgrade the floodlight heads to LED and to resurface the courts.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Councillor Goodman
SECONDED by Councillor Mabbett

IT WAS RESOLVED to endorse the application of the District Council for the remaining S106 money from this development for tennis provision.

Action: Deputy Clerk

(b) Parking

The current parking fines for the town owned parking area were discussed in terms of the percentage of parking fines being paid. It was noted that in the initial activity in October 62% of fines were being paid but by January, this had dropped to 46%. It was likely that this pattern would follow on for February and March figures. It was requested that figures be put together for how much income had been generated over the months from the fines which had been paid and the percentage that paid within the first week of the fine being given (the lesser fine).

Action: Deputy Clerk

The meeting closed at 9.35 p.m.
