

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEISURE AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE OF  
THE WANTAGE TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE BEACON, PORTWAY  
ON MONDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 2023, AT 7.30 PM**

Committee members present: Councillors J T Hannaby (Chair), R Fitzjohn, P Kirby-Harris (from item 12f), S Third and L Todd

Members of the public: Four members of the public were present.

Deputy Clerk: S Sanders

Town Centre Manager (TCM): A Yates

Town Clerk Designate: J Evans

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Menzies and P O’Leary

**Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interests, other registrable interests and any non-registrable interests.**

None

**To sign the minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2023**

The minutes were approved and signed.

**11. Statements and Questions from the public**

None

**12. Allotment Matters**

a) Allotment inspections/availability and waiting list.

The schedule of allotment inspections was almost complete. The current waiting list of 31 is mostly people waiting for a specific site/plot. There are currently 18 plots to be offered.

b) Update on additional/replacement fencing – Stockham Park

Two councillors had visited the site. It was agreed that a further site visit should be arranged for other councillors to meet one Saturday morning. **Action: Chair**

c) Update on request to plant trees in the car park area - Grove Road

It was agreed that Councillor Third would arrange a meeting with the Tree Service Team (Oxfordshire County Council) to discuss planting possibilities. **Action: Third**

d) Update on review of the allotment policy

The review was work in progress. **Action: Third**

e) To agree the date to hold the allotment holders’ meeting

It was agreed to hold the meeting on Monday 30 October 2023 at 6.30pm. Tea and coffee would be available. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

f) Kingsgrove allotments/toilets

This item was to be discussed at the PM&F Committee meeting on 2 October 2023.

g) Other allotment matters

Three signs (Access for Allotment Tenants Only) had been received. One had been erected. The others would be erected when a suitable post had been found to mount them on. **Action: Third**

**13. Town Centre Matters:**

a) Update on Changing Place facility - Portway toilets

The work was due to commence on 9 October 2023 and was expected to be completed by 1 December 2023. The facility would be out of use during this period. There were a couple of artisan markets where a toilet facility would be required for stall holders and members of the public. The District Council is looking into the possibility of opening The Beacon for these occasions. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

b) Update on active travel signage proposal

The proposal for the signposting was still being worked on and would be presented at the next Climate Emergency Sub Committee meeting on 23 October 2023.

c) Update on trees for Market Place

The Chair and the Deputy Clerk had met tree officers from Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) to discuss the feasibility of planting trees in the market place. Any planting would be subject to approval from OCC Highways due to the significant impact on the highway. There had been no feedback from the team yet. Meanwhile it was suggested that the idea should be submitted using the project form that had been received from OCC. **Action: Deputy Clerk**

d) Update on historical information boards

There had been 11 locations identified for the boards/plaques. The TCM was to investigate further and work on the cost of the project. **Action: TCM**

e) Charter markets (Wednesday and Saturday)

It was noted that some stall holders were encroaching onto the highway/pedestrian crossing. This was to be monitored. **Action: TCM/Deputy Clerk**

f) To consider the refurbishment of hanging baskets and finger signposts

26 posts had been identified as needing painting and refreshing. It was agreed that the TCM and Chair would meet to look at the requirements. **Action: Chair/TCM**

g) To consider the quotes for the installation of Christmas lights

The TCM had received a quotation from CDC Electrical for the installation/removal of the Christmas lights. She had not been able to identify any other contractors to provide a quotation. It was agreed that the work carried out by the contractor, who has been responsible for the installation for a few years was of a good standard.

ON THE PROPOSITION OF Councillor Hannaby  
SECONDED BY Councillor Fitzjohn

IT WAS RESOLVED TO accept the quotation from CDC of £ £12134.40.

It was noted that due to there being a tree planted in the brick planter at the eastern end of the market place, there would only be one Christmas tree installed at the western end.

h) Damage to the statue of King Alfred

There had been a few separate incidents where a traffic cone had been placed on King Alfred's head and his axe swivelled to face the wrong direction, resulting in damage to the axe head. CCTV had been reviewed but the police did not identify the culprit. The most recent incident captured a vehicle registration plate. The police had not yet reviewed the footage.

**Action: Deputy Clerk**

i) Complaint about the siting of an Openreach DSLAM cabinet in Grove Street

A complaint had been received from a member of the public about the siting of an Openreach cabinet. The Deputy Clerk had been in contact with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) who confirmed that the cabinet had been placed outside the conservation area and met network regulations. Openreach were not prepared to relocate it as it serves approximately 400 properties, who would have to be re-supplied by another cabinet at a cost to British Telecom. The Deputy Clerk had put the member of public in touch with the officer from OCC who had explained this outcome. A response would be made to the complainant advising that Wantage Town Council did not have the authority to request relocation of the cabinet but had noted the concerns.

**Action: Deputy Clerk**

j) £106 monies available for public art

It was agreed that a working group would be set up.

**Action: Chair**

k) Update on leisure facilities assessment

The report had not been received. It was due in October 2023.

l) Oxfordshire County Council tree planning project

It was agreed that the suggested planting for the allotment sites (Grove Road and Stockham Park) and the town centre should be submitted via the project form that had been circulated by Oxfordshire County Council.

**Action: Deputy Clerk**

m) Other town centre matters

The District Council were offering free parking days in their car parks in the run up to Christmas. The three dates agreed were 9,16 and 23 December 2023.

**Action: Deputy Clerk**

**14. Cemetery Matters:**

a) Update on development to the cemetery extension

The Chair and the Deputy Clerk had attended an online meeting with the Environment Agency (EA) to better understand their requirements for water monitoring at the proposed site. The review by the EA of T2 risk assessment submitted by consultants CDS concluded that there was insufficient data to define if the site was a medium or high-risk area and that a monitoring well should be installed for a 12 month period. The Deputy Clerk had sent photos of an area of the field south of the proposed site where construction work was in progress, which shows an area dug to 10m and was waiting comment from the EA.

b) Update on purchase of a noticeboard

Three suitable noticeboards had been identified and the details had been circulated to all members of the committee prior to the meeting. An agreement had not been reached. A decision would be made at the Council meeting in October.

**Action: All**

c) Other cemetery matters

None

The meeting closed at 8.35pm

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