

LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF GROUNDS & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
MONDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 7.30 PM

Present: Councillors R Berry (Chair)
 S Jones
 T Morris
 V Harvey
 A Gray
 P Snelling
 P Carberry
 C Palmer
 R Yates
 A Dodwell

Also in attendance: M Saccoccio, Town Clerk
 I Haynes, Head of Grounds and Environmental
 Services
 S Sandiford, Deputy Town Clerk
 M Jahn, Committee Officer

Members of the public: 3
Members of the press 0

118/GE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence was received from Councillor B Spurr (substituted by Councillor A Dodwell).

119/GE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor V Harvey declared a personal interest as a member of South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth and the Leighton Buzzard Society.

Councillor C Palmer declared a personal interest as a member of the Friends of Leighton-Linslade in Bloom and an interest in item 16 Allotments Update as his wife was an allotment holder.

No pecuniary interests were declared.

120/GE APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR FOR 2021-2022

It was proposed and seconded that Councillor S Jones be appointed Vice Chair of the Committee for 2021-2022. There were no further nominations.

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor S Jones Vice Chair of the Grounds & Environmental Services Committee for the municipal year 2021-2022.

121/GE QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A member of the public and representative of The Wharf Management Limited spoke about a proposal for planting a hedgerow along the length of the south side of the fence in Linslade Memorial Playing Field. This hedge would act as a barrier to balls constantly being kicked at the fence which had caused damage to at least one panel which had to be replaced. This would also potentially provide shelter for small animals and insects and enhance the look of the area. Any maintenance needed for the hedge would be carried out by a gardening company already employed by The Wharf Management Limited.

This would be discussed later in the meeting agenda.

122/GE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee received the draft minutes of the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee meeting held on 8 March 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 8 March 2021 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.

(b) Minute reference 102/GE Questions from the Public – a question was raised regarding whether the ownership of the perimeter fence at the rear of Linslade Memorial Playing field had been established. It was confirmed that discussion with the Canal and River Trust had taken place and a proposal that costs be shared for the removal of the old fence and installation of a new fence had been suggested. The Head of Grounds informed the Committee he had been asked to lead on the replacement and costs involved and would then go back to the Canal and River Trust to seek their agreement before being brought back to Policy & Finance for funding approval.

(c) The Committee received a record of decisions made in the period May-August 2021 by delegated authority in accordance with the scheme of delegation approved by Council, with email approval by a majority of committee members. A question was raised regarding the link between countryside access and health map and whether the downloadable map had been created by Central Bedfordshire Council's Countryside Team following the proposal on 26 July 2021.

123/GE PAGES PARK PAVILION HIRE

Members received and considered a report to seek direction in respects of Pages Park Pavilion being used for the purposes of boxing club hire. Two members of the Boxing Club attended the meeting to inform the Committee of their request to continue to use Pages Park Pavilion for boxing coaching as a temporary base for their club. Members agreed the boxing club

provided an important inclusive club for young people in the town and agreed to the temporary use of the Pages Park Pavilion until a permanent facility could be found. The Town Council would aim to assist the boxing club in locating a new premises where their equipment could be set up and stored on a permanent basis given the high intensity of the activity. It was universally agreed that the Pavilion was not ideally suited to this activity due to the potential for damage to the facility caused by the constant moving of heavy equipment and the nature of the activity, given that the building was also used by a variety of other hirers throughout the week.

The Head of Grounds and Environmental services had been in contact with Assets at Central Bedfordshire Council and after discussion the Committee agreed to keep the Boxing Club hire of Pages Park Pavilion as a standing item on the agenda to monitor the situation and agreed that a letter should be written to Assets at Central Bedfordshire Council if no communication received by the next meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

(i) To endorse the hire of sessions at Pages Park Pavilion by the Boxing Club for a twelve month period (to be formally reviewed at nine months), in accordance with standard Town Council terms and conditions of hire.

(ii) That the Town Council uses its reasonable endeavours to support the boxing club in finding a more suitable permanent venue that is more appropriate and capable of meeting its needs.

(iii) That this remains a standing agenda item for the quarterly meetings of the Committee, to review the status of the hire arrangements and the progress with sourcing a more suitable permanent venue for the club.

124/GE THE WHARF MANAGEMENT LIMITED

Following the request made by The Wharf Management Limited Committee, Members agreed, in principle, with the proposal to plant a hedge along the boundary with Linslade Memorial Playing Field. A legal agreement would need to be drawn between the Town Council and The Wharf Management Limited. Costs for this document to be borne by The Wharf Management Limited. The representative from The Wharf present agreed to put this to the committee and get back to the Town Clerk as quickly as possible. Once this agreement had been reached planting could go ahead.

RESOLVED to endorse, in principle, the planting of a hedge on the boundary with Linslade Memorial Playing Field, subject to a legal agreement specifying that this would be managed and maintained by The Wharf management Limited in perpetuity.

125/GE SUB COMMITTEES AND TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

The Committee received the draft minutes of the Concessions Task & Finish Group 8 April 2021.

RESOLVED to receive the draft minutes of the Concessions Task & Finish Group 8 April 2021.

- (b) It was confirmed the Concessions Task & Finish Group had now been completed.
- (c) The Committee approved the minutes of 8 April, 2021 as a correct record.

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Concessions Task and Finish Group meeting held 8 April, 2021 as a correct record and that these be signed accordingly.

126/GE **COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PLAN**

The Committee received and considered the Committee Work Plan for 2021-2022.

A question was raised regarding number 48 on the plan - restoration of the Henry Finch Memorial Fountain in Linslade Recreation Ground and whether this should be looked at as a priority. The memorial was an important part of Linslade Heritage and a modest cost-effective restoration would be appreciated by the residents. A suggestion was made to bring this back to the December meeting of the Committee.

Another suggestion was made to look at the recycling point at the top of Parson's Close Recreation Ground. At present this was owned by Central Bedfordshire Council and it needed to be refreshed or repainted. The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services would look into this for the December meeting.

RESOLVED to note the Committee Objectives and Work Plan.

127/GE **THREE MONTH BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee received a three-month budget monitoring report the period April – June 2021.

RESOLVED to note the report.

128/GE **PARSON'S CLOSE RECREATION GROUND**

Members received a verbal update on the refurbishment project of Parson's Close Recreation Ground. Planning permission had now been received after a delay and this meant the project would be later in starting than had originally been anticipated. The play park would now be open during

October half term until the equipment was available for the redevelopment to begin. An update would be given at the December meeting but it was hoped that the project could be completed by March 2022.

RESOLVED to note the information.

129/GE RoSPA ANNUAL PLAY INSPECTION REPORT

The Committee received an update and findings from this year's annual independent playground and equipment inspections.

A question was raised asking whether the facilities listed as 'high risk' needed urgent action and would be exposing us to unwarranted risk. It was confirmed that the higher risk category could not be lowered as the increased risk was related to the type of equipment and facility in these parks.

RESOLVED to note the report.

130/GE GREEN FLAG RECOMMENDATIONS

No update had been received for Green Flag recommendations yet.

131/GE LINSLADE MEMORIAL PLAYING FIELD

Committee received a report regarding the potential re-siting of the Multi-Use Games Area in Linslade Memorial Playing Field, due to complaints received from neighbouring residents regarding footballs on their premises. It was proposed that contractors be employed to move the facility to a location on the eastern side of the park, facing into the park.

RESOLVED to endorse the relocation of the Multi-Use Games Area within Linslade Memorial Playing Field and for the maximum cost of £6,000 to be met from the play area improvements budget (Future Projects earmarked reserve 9500/925) (Currently £62,655 available).

132/GE PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR 2022-2023

The Committee received a presentation regarding potential priority projects for 2022-2023 and considered the recommendations contained therein.

Two projects were introduced –

1. H M Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee celebrations 2nd June 2022. The Grounds and Environmental service area would be taking the lead on the organisation of this event which would include a parade, lighting of a beacon and fireworks, subject to committee approval.
2. The purchase of an oak shelter for Parson's Close to replicate the

historic Coronation Shelter from 1937, together with oak benches on the site of the original shelter at the top of the park.

The Committee expressed positive support for both suggested projects and the Head of Grounds and Environmental Services would bring more detailed proposals to the December meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED to note the information and to await further information on proposed projects for 2022-23.

133/GE **REVIEW OF PARTNERSHIP PROJECT LIST**

The Committee received a request from the Partnership Committee to review the Partnership Project List and to consider any recommendations to Council in respect of potential changes. The Committee also received information from Central Bedfordshire Council in respect of S106 developer contributions for public open space matters.

Members agreed the list needed to be refined and looked at in detail and it was suggested that numbers 24 and 26 be removed at present.

RECOMMENDED to Council to remove numbers 24 (Provision of a clubhouse and launching site for Canoe Club) and 26 (a woodland cemetery, adventure play area, campsite and parking at Rushmere Country Park) from the Partnership Project List.

134/GE **ALLOTMENTS UPDATE**

The Committee received an update on the waiting list for the town council owned allotments. The demand for allotment plots was still high and the waiting list was currently higher than the national average. A plot would be allocated to the first person on the list when available and it remained the objective to allocate as soon as possible. The possibility of more plots on the new eastern development was still not confirmed by Central Bedfordshire Council.

Councillor Harvey reiterated she was unhappy about the size of the waiting list and the delay with the transfer of new allotment sites on the eastern developments to the town council from Central Bedfordshire Council.

RESOLVED to note the information.

135/GE **EQUIPMENT FOR GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

The Committee received and considered a report to approve the purchase of equipment fit for purposed by the Grounds & Environmental Service team.

RESOLVED:

- (a) To endorse the purchase of 1 x LWB Double Cab Tipper for £30,000.**
- (b) To endorse the purchase of 1 x New trailer for a maximum value of £5,000.**
- (c) All Town Council expenditure to be met from 950/9000 with available funds of £35,795.**

It was proposed and seconded that in order to continue the meeting past 2200 hours, Standing Order 3(x) be suspended for a maximum of thirty minutes.

RESOLVED to suspend Standing Order 3(x) for a maximum of thirty minutes.

136/GE NON DOMESTIC RATE BILLS FOR UNIT N/T ROWAN CORNER

The Committee received a report regarding back dated non domestic rate bills payments for the Town Council depot from Central Bedfordshire Council and considered the recommendations contained therein.

RESOLVED

- (a) To endorse that £6,248.98 be paid to Central Bedfordshire Council for back dated non-domestic rate bills for 2019/2020–2020/2021, payment to be made from 9024/950 with available funds of £34,444.**
- (b) To endorse that 2022/2023 Grounds and Environmental Services budget has monies made available for future non-domestic rate bills for Unit N/T Rowan Corner.**

137/GE OUZEL VALLEY PARK STEERING GROUP

The Committee received the minutes of the Ouzel Valley Park Steering Group held on 4 May 2021 and a verbal update from the Chairman regarding the meeting held on 2 September 2021.

Councillor Morris, Chair of the Ouzel Valley Park Steering Group, updated the Committee on the main points of the last meeting.

1. Councillor S Stock would shortly sign off the Green Wheel Masterplan once all amendments had been made.
2. BuzzCycles Cycling Strategy submitted to the Group for information.,
3. Concerns were raised regarding the land clearance at the rear of the Travelling Showman's site and to ensure the protection of the riverbank and possible installation of a boundary fence.
4. Recommendation to include Tiddenfoot Masterplan on the Partnership Project List.

RESOLVED to note the information.

138/GE **COMMUNITY TREE AND SHRUB PLANTING**

The Committee received and considered a motion submitted by Councillor Harvey to endorse the offer of funding for tree/shrub planting from the Tree Council, with the detail of what could be planted and where being delegated to the Town Clerk.

RESOLVED to endorse, in principle, the offer of funding for tree/shrub planting from the Tree Council and that the detail of what could be planted and where be delegated to the Town Clerk.

The meeting closed at 10.10 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER 2021.

Chair

6 DECEMBER 2021