

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PUBLIC LAND & OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE HELD ON
20 SEPTEMBER 2016 AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, THE OLD
COURT HOUSE, SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE**

Present: Cllr B Briars (Chair), Cllr M Foster, Cllr F Foster, Cllr I Bond, Cllr Mrs H Ramsay,
Cllr M North, Cllr D Strachan
Mike Thorn – Deputy Town Clerk
Sue Crowther – Administrator
Members of the public – 4

Also present: Cllr D Albone, Cllr J Medlock

20/0901 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr P Biernis and Cllr R Kerfoot

20/0902 2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

0902.1 (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item - none declared

0902.2 (b) Non-Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item – none declared

20/0903 3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, pertaining to matters listed on the Agenda.

Each Speaker will give their name to the Chairman, prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the Minutes, unless that person requests otherwise. Each Speaker will be allowed (one) three-minute slot.

0903.1 Carolyn Bay, a resident of Kings Reach, said that trees in the area had been chopped down to make room for a Basketball Court, new trees and shrubs have been planted, but they are now dead and full of weeds. The area looks a mess. Also, that although the play area has play equipment installed, it is still not open for children to use.

Cllr B Briars replied that the area is still under the control of the developers, not the Town Council, but he would take up the issue of the landscaping and see what could be done.

Mike Thorn said that there are known issues and the developer was in the process of appointing new contractors to replant and reseed where necessary. The Town Council will need to ensure that the work is completed to a satisfactory standard before adopting any of the areas. The play equipment installed still needs to be inspected before it can be used by children.

0903.2 A second member of the public asked if the open area at Stratton Way, between the recreation ground and the cemetery, could be locked, as the area is used at night by dog walkers and youths etc.

MT replied that the Council does not lock Public Open Spaces, but is aware of previous problems.

20/0904

4. **MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

0904.1

- a. Members received and approved the minutes of the Public Lands and Open Spaces meeting held on 21 June 2016.

20/0905

5. **MATTERS ARISING**

0905.1

- a. From the Public Land and Open Spaces meeting held on 21 June 2016.

Page 3 – item 0607.3 – Graffiti Boards – Cllr D Albone asked if they had been any further development.
 MT replied that there is no further progress to report.

20/0906

6. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

0906.1

- a. **Delegation Agreement & Terms of Reference**

Members were asked to consider adopting the terms of reference and delegation agreement for the Public Lands and Open Spaces Committee.

The delegation agreement has been adopted by the Town Council, TCM, F&GP and Personnel committees.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the terms of reference and delegation agreement be adopted, subject to the following amendments:

Page 12 – items 3.1 and 3.2 – the following to be added to ‘Delegation of Functions Column 2 –

- **Strategic overview to Committee**
- **Operational management to Town Clerk**

0906.2

- b. **Biggleswade Splash Park Committee**

The Biggleswade Splash Park Committee intend to apply for grant funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to build the proposed splash park at Franklin Recreation Ground.

As part of the grant application, the committee would like to incorporate additional features to enhance the site and have asked for the Town Council’s views and consideration for improvements for inclusion with the grant application, including for example:

- Heritage information
- Information on rare species and specimen trees
- Reinstatement of a bandstand
- Additional play equipment
- Improved fencing
- Kiosk design
- Accessibility
- Additional car parking

Members were asked to consider the Splash Park Committee’s request for items to be included within the grant application.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council accept the Splash Park Committee’s request with the following additions:

- Pathway improvements
- Links to the Biggleswade Green Wheel
- Possibility of children's changing rooms

0906.3

c. Quotations for Bow Top Fencing and Gates at Fairfield Road Play Area

Members were asked to consider quotations for the supply and installation of bow top fencing and gates around play equipment at Fairfield Road Play Area adjacent to Biggleswade United Football Ground, to be funded from available 321 EMR Dev Contributions and General Reserve.

Contractors have been asked to quote for 1.2m high galvanised bow top fence as well as an option for galvanised with powder coat finish. The gates have been specified as one Pedestrian Easy-Gate and one Maintenance Easy-Gate in keeping with other sites. Quotations are attached to this agenda and are summarised below.

Option 1, to include galvanised fence:

Quote A	£6,514.00 plus VAT
Quote B	£7,315.09 plus VAT
Quote C	£4,062.00 plus VAT (not Easy-Gate brand)

Option 2, to include galvanised fence with powder coated finish:

Quote A	£7,354.00 plus VAT
Quote B	£8,116.46 plus VAT
Quote C	£4,720.00 plus VAT (not Easy-Gate brand)

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council accept: **Option 1 Quote A**

0906.4

d. Grounds Maintenance Workshop and Storage Facility

The Town Council's current workshop and storage facilities at Drove Road are at capacity. A number of items are stored outside and exposed to the elements, and as equipment deteriorates it is affecting productivity and increasing maintenance costs.

It is anticipated that as additional areas of public open space are adopted, the pressure on workshop and storage facilities will further increase. The Town Clerk has explored options for an additional area of land with Central Bedfordshire Council. There is currently no provision as part of the Kings Reach development and an offer of land on the industrial area will be at a cost of in the region of £435,000 to £500,000.

The alternative is to construct a new secure facility within the Town Council's existing estate with the ideal location being adjacent existing facilities at Drove Road. This would require relocating the tennis courts to an alternative site.

Members were therefore asked to consider a proposal for officers to further explore the options for the construction of a secure grounds maintenance workshop and storage facility at Drove Road.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Town Clerk explores all options available.

0906.5 e. **Kennel Farm Road Allotment Security**

Members were asked to consider installing a gate to restrict vehicular access to the car park at the Kennel Farm Road allotment site. Security continues to be a problem at site with sheds have being broken into, damage caused and items stolen. There is also an issue with unauthorised vehicles accessing the site. Previous attempts to improve the situation by installing a combination padlock at the access gate by the black barn on Kennel Farm Road and there were issues with tenants of the paddocks being concerned about access arrangements. Installing a gate closer to the car park would help to restrict unauthorised vehicular access but would not interfere with the paddock tenants.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council agree in principle, but defer making a decision until after a site meeting and consultation with rural Police.

0906.6 f. **Biggleswade Allotment Group Office/Store Room Proposal**

Members are asked to consider a request by the Biggleswade Allotment Group for outline approval to install a site container at the Kennel Farm Road allotments, to be used by the group as an office/store. Further information is attached to this agenda including a superimposed illustration of the proposed container and a site plan. The original request was for the container to be located on ground to the left of the allotment car park entrance gate, however due to the lack of space an alternative proposal is to site the container within the car park. The group has confirmed that the proposal would be for a green container. The group are requesting outline approval for the scheme before committing to expenses for planning permission, etc.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that Town Council agree to this request, subject to BAG obtaining planning permission.

20/0907 7. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

0907.1 a. **Ragwort infestation on Biggleswade Common**

We have received a letter from Fen Reeves regarding the above. (A copy was attached to the agenda).

This information was noted.

A request was made to enquire of the Fen Reeves to ask what action is planned to control the Ragwort.

0907.2 b. **Heather Drive Play Area**

Works to improve the play area at Heather Drive have been completed and the site reopened for public use. An application to draw on £4,326 from S106 monies was successful and has been offset against the £26,000 project cost.

Cllr Briars also commented that the concrete rings at Eagle Farm Road have now been removed and a replacement lockable bollard installed at Drove Road Cemetery.

This information was noted.

0907.3 c. **Grounds Maintenance Equipment**

The Town Council owns and operates a Hayter T424 five gang cylinder mower, used on a constant daily basis to cut large areas of grass including sports pitches, recreation grounds and verges. The current machine is eight years old and requires regular ongoing maintenance to keep it in operation.

Officers are currently looking at options for replacement grass cutting machinery with a view to providing quotes at the next PLOS meeting.

This information was noted.

0907.4 d. **Kitelands Recreation Ground MUGA Panels**

Installation of the MUGA panels is expected to take place in the autumn.

This information was noted.

20/0908 8. **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

To adjourn for a period of up to 15 minutes to allow members of the public to put questions or to address the Council, through the Chairman, in respect of any other business of the Town Council.

Each Speaker will give their name to the Chairman prior to speaking, which will be recorded in the minutes, unless that person requests otherwise. Each Speaker will be allowed (one) three-minute slot.

0908.1 A third member of the public asked to clarify if the intention was for the Splash Park Committee's grant application to consider improving fencing all around Franklins Rec, or just around the Splash Park.

BB replied, the whole park.

0908.2 MOP 2 said that moving the gate at the allotments (as discussed under item 0906.5) might cause problems for the Farmer. Also, there needs to be more hedgerows and hawthorns planted, to act as a natural deterrent and to help with security at the allotments

BB said he would look at the possibility.

MOP 2 said that the allotment holders would help dig the holes for bushes.

20/0909 9. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

The following resolution will be moved that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item +issue(s) is discussed.

There were no exempt items

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council **resolve** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.