



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PUBLIC LAND AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 21 MARCH 2017 AT 7.00PM AT THE OFFICES OF BIGGLESWADE TOWN COUNCIL, SAFFRON ROAD, BIGGLESWADE.

PRESENT:

Cllr I Bond
Cllr B Briars (Chair)
Cllr F Foster
Cllr M Foster
Cllr M North (Vice Chair)
Cllr D Strachan
Cllr S Watkins
Mr M Thorn, BTC Deputy Town Clerk
Mrs J Durn, BTC Meetings Administrator

Members of Public x 5

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr Mrs H Ramsay

ABSENT WITHOUT APOLOGIES

Cllr P Biernis, Cllr S Watkins

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- (a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in any agenda item – none
- (b) Non-pecuniary interests in any agenda item – none

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.

There were no questions.

4. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

- a. Members received and approved the Minutes of the Public Lands and Open Spaces meeting held on 6 December 2016.

5. MATTERS ARISING

- a. Minutes of the Public Lands and Open Spaces meeting held on 6 December 2016.

There were no matters arising.

6. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

a. **Dan Albone Picnic Area**

A request has been made to CBC to fund additional picnic benches, knee rail barrier and lockable bollard from S106 monies for Countryside Recreation Space and Green Infrastructure Projects.

At the PLOS meeting of 6 December, Members were asked to consider the choice of materials for additional picnic benches to be installed at Dan Albone Car Park. This item was **DEFERRED** due to insufficient information at that time.

Further details have now been received, and Members considered quotations and additional information attached to this agenda for the supply of three picnic benches.

Members **RESOLVED** to accept quote D for timber/concrete picnic benches with a combination of 2 x 8 seater picnic benches and 1 x 10 seater/wheel chair accessible picnic bench to be funded from S106 monies.

b. **Planned Works**

Members were asked to consider schedule of proposed priorities for a programme of work for 2017/18, subject to Recommendations to Town Council on the use of Reserves.

Following an in-depth discussion Members felt they would be in a better position to prioritise this work following a planned "walk-about" by Councillors later in the year. It was however felt that Watkins walk gate replacement and relocation should take place as soon as possible, and that enquiries should get underway in order to obtain quotations for the rest of the work.

Members **RECOMMENDED** that the following works should be given priority for 2017/18 and that quotations are sought for consideration by PLOS with further recommendations to be made to Town Council.

- Replacement and relocation of the gate at Watkin Walk play area
- Drove Road Cemetery paths
- Drove Road Cemetery Chapel repairs

c. **Biggleswade United Football Club Lease**

A request has been received from Biggleswade United Football Club to renew their lease on land at Fairfield Road, which is due to expire on 1 January 2019.

Members **RECOMMENDED** to form a Working Group consisting Cllrs Mark Foster, Ian Bond, Bernard Briars and Duncan Strachan to look at the terms of the lease and for this matter to be brought to Town Council for consideration. It was also **RECOMMENDED** that BUFC should be requested to pay the Town Council's legal fees for renewal of the lease.

7. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

a. **Tender for the Supply of a Five Unit Cylinder Mower**

The Town Council took delivery of a new Toro T4240 mower in January. The purchase price of £49,905.20 has been offset by part exchange of the old machine at £8,000 and a successful application for S106 funds of £10,167.99.

This information was **NOTED**.

b. Brunel Drive

Legal documents have been received ready for the adoption of Public Open Space including play area at Brunel Drive, with a commuted sum of £26,000. However, Officers have now identified a boundary issue. The agents for Taylor Wimpey have been asked to resolve this as a matter of urgency and prior to the completion of the transfer.

This information was **NOTED**. The Deputy Town Clerk will keep Members informed of progress.

c. Grounds Maintenance Workshop and Storage Facility

Site surveys have been completed at Drove Road and Stratton Way Recreation Grounds in preparation for plans for an improved workshop and storage facility at Drove Road and the possibility of relocation of the Tennis Courts to Stratton Way.

This information was **NOTED**. However, Members felt that they would like to see the plans and proposals so that they may be better informed.

d. Allotments

During the winter months, the internal roads have been securely closed to prevent rutting of the tracks when the ground is soft. The roads are expected to reopen at the end of March, subject to improvements in ground conditions.

The installation of dip tanks has now been completed. The water supply is planned to be turned on again at the end of March. Barley straw will continue to be used in the dip tanks as a natural remedy to prevent algal growth.

Management of the green waste area has improved following repairs to the Town Council's wood chipper. However, it is disappointing that the green waste area continues to be contaminated with general waste. Allotment waste is also being dumped at various locations around the site. Consideration has been given to supplying a skip, but there would be access issues for delivery and removal which could exacerbate the problem.

Members **NOTED** this information; however, since unacceptable waste has been dumped at the allotments (wash-handbasin, etc.) it was **RECOMMENDED** that a letter be sent to all Allotment Holders to ask that they dispose of rubbish in the correct manner as agreed on the contract. If this request is not adhered to then the Town Council will have no alternative but to increase the Allotment fees to cover the additional cost of clearing the rubbish.

e. Trees in Franklin Recreation Ground

Phase two of a three-year plan of tree management in Franklin Recreation Ground is scheduled for April 2017. Work will involve reducing canopy size, raising canopies and removal of damaged and decaying trees.

This information was **NOTED**.

f. **Antisocial Behaviour**

The Town Council's amenities are subject to ongoing problems due to criminal damage and antisocial behaviour. A list of cases that have been dealt with by Town Council staff over the last 12 months is attached to this agenda. The list does not reflect the time spent clearing litter and dog foul.

Members asked that the Town Council investigate the possibility of installing lamp-posts in order to supply cctv in badly affected areas such as Eagle Farm Road, and Drove Road Cemetery. It was agreed that this issue be taken to Town Centre Management Committee for inclusion on the next Agenda.

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.

Caroline Broadbent: Speaking as an allotment holder, and also resident in Stratton Way. Would like to point out that she feels it is the Council vehicles which actually making the ruts on the road at the allotments, and that the road is in fact dry and should be opened up for use. Also, the chain was actually off last weekend, leaving the area open for anyone to dump rubbish. As plots become vacant they are asked to clear the plots and leave their vacant plot as a blank canvas for the new holder. This will obviously involve fencing and general rubbish. Allotment Holders are very conscious of the rules and do abide by them. Once the area is vacated at darkness, it is open to any members of the public to come and "dump" rubbish. The chain is not a deterrent.

Regarding anti-social behaviour at Stratton Way. Dog fouling signs have been removed and dogs run free both in the park and around the goal posts. Can this be stopped by locking the gates? Biggleswade East was built near fields, so surely these people can find somewhere else to go with their dogs?

The Deputy Town Clerk said that although the access issue for allotment holders was appreciated, it is in fact the other side of the road that is excessively muddy and rutted and is causing the problems; hence the need for the road closure. As soon as conditions dry out the road will be open for use.

With regard to Stratton Way: the Dog Control orders at Stratton Way only restrict dogs going into the play area. There is no restriction for dogs to be in the park, kept on a lead. CBC has only one dog warden to cover the whole area, which does stretch policing to the maximum.

Anne Philp (allotment holder): Skips are very expensive and if you put one at the allotments it would be full in no time! For the removal of rubbish could Council staff bring a trailer – perhaps on a Saturday – say the first Saturday of the month? In our Tenancy Agreement we are not supposed to "dump"; however the situation has got worse. There is a lack of security which does not help. Anyone can get on there when the plot holders have gone home.

Richard Dilks (Allotment Group member)

It is quite clearly stated in our contracts that we must not dump anything at all.

Eddie Wayne: Regarding the relocation of the tennis courts mentioned earlier. Surely this will simply be another problem as they will still be vandalised. What about using the old putting green area?

The Chairman (Cllr B Briars) said that these areas will all be covered by the Council "Walk about". Following which a plan will be drawn up for discussion.

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.

- Item 10 a. EE Tenancy Agreement**
- Item 10 b. Heads of terms – Car Park**

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.

Meeting ended 8.35pm