

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2022, AT 7.18PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE.

Committee Members present:

S Buck (Chairman), Mrs L Anderson, B Collier, Mrs M Cooper, S Hayes, Mrs J Hyde, B Saunders, J Smith J Talbot

Also present:

Mrs K Elliott-Turner – Town Clerk and a staff member (virtual attendance)

113/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor A Cooper. Councillor Russell was absent without apologies.

114/22 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS ON MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE AGENDA AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of members interests. There were no requests for dispensation. Members were reminded that if at any time during the meeting they feel they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.

115/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES

None present.

116/22 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee meeting held on 13th July 2022 are confirmed as a correct record.

117/22 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

Nothing to report.

118/22 COMMUNITY GARDEN

Members considered a request from a resident for a community garden in Stotfold. The idea of a community garden is that people work together to create something, and it is about giving a sense of community as much as growing the food. It is about mental health and good wellbeing.

Members suggested an ideal location as the former Roecroft Lower School playing field on Church Road. A group of members had previously met with the former head of the Academy of Central Bedfordshire, who is sited adjacent to the field, and they were keen to do something with the school and the community, to integrate more. It is a central, green space, which could accommodate such a proposal. Ward Member Dixon has been discussing with Central Bedfordshire Council Assets. If the school still has access and benefits from it, then there may not be a requirement to remove its 'education use' status.

The school could have use of the site during school time, and then outside school times, or if there was supervision with the children, the community could access. The idea is that there would be an informal open area, a trim trail, an orchard, raised beds, formal planting – which the children could help maintain.

Ward Member Dixon is meeting with the new Headteacher of the Academy in the near future, and so these proposals are to be put to him to discuss further.

RESOLVED that we would like to investigate this proposal further, and we are looking at the former Roecroft Lower School playing field, amongst other sites.

119/22 ARLESEY ROAD PROJECT – MUGA, PLAY & OUTDOOR GYM

The Clerk attended a pre-start meeting yesterday with representatives of Jupiter, Kompan and Central Bedfordshire Council's Surveyor. Jupiter are providing the MUGA and Suto ball wall and Kompan are providing the outdoor gym and play equipment. There were two representatives from Play Innovation who are supplying the MUGA aspect of the project.

With regard to positions of equipment on site - nearest Larksfield Surgery and coming back towards the car park is the outdoor gym equipment, with a 25m gap to the Suto ball wall (powered), then the MUGA (powered for flood lighting) and play equipment. The first item to be installed will be the gym equipment, and they are scheduled to start on site on 9th November, with an anticipated completion end November/early December – weather dependant. Jupiter/Play Innovation will start 28th November to complete before Christmas.

Central Beds Council's Surveyor is looking at the original agreement with Assets regarding a link footpath from the outdoor gym equipment to the play equipment/MUGA. The original intention was that Assets would be constructing this, plus putting into the ducting for the powered Suto ball wall. We There is a possibility that this was overlooked and the town council may have to pay for this work.

The site compound for both contractors will be located on the scrub area immediately off the car park, to avoid taking up parking spaces.

120/22 RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELD REJUVENATION PROJECT

i) Update on MUGA refurbishment

Attempts have been made to obtain quotes to resurface the hard court surface of the MUGA and install fencing, with only one company willing to provide a quote. Costs have been increasing rapidly. The S106 money available and the Community Asset Grant doesn't cover the now increased cost for the work, and the longer we wait to try and find additional quotes, the more the costs will increase.

Quote for clearance work

A quote has been received to clear the debris and soil on the patio area to the side of the MUGA, following the removal of the container.

RECOMMENDED that Earmarked Reserves - MUGA Sinking Fund are used, as required, to make up the deficit from previously approved Community Asset Grant and specific Section 106 funds available, to enable the refurbishment of the Riverside Playing Field MUGA to go ahead at the earliest opportunity.

RESOLVED that the quotes to clear the debris and soil from the MUGA at £130 for the digger work and £260 for a skip, are accepted.

ii) Wider options outcome

The options outcomes were previously circulated, which clearly show preference to play equipment, skate park, etc, and not the community activity hub. Approval had previously been given for chargeable pre-application discussions as to whether the activity hub would be feasible. However, informal discussions found that due to its proposed location and highway access to it, it would be very unlikely to receive approval in this location. Therefore, the formal pre-application was not undertaken.

RESOLVED that the option to provide new play equipment and skate park is taken forward, on a phased basis, and the option to provide a community activity hub in this location is not pursued.

121/22 STREET NAME REQUEST 'LITTLE LONDON'

The public right of way leading from The Green to Riverside Playing Field/Silver Birch Avenue has long been known as 'Little London'. It is a historic name, but there is no definitive explanation as to why it is so called.

RESOLVED that a request is made to Central Bedfordshire Council to ask if a street sign is installed at The Green end of Little London footpath, as it is part of the history of Stotfold.

122/22 STREET TRADING APPLICATION

Members considered an application for a street trading license for an ice-cream van to serve all areas of Stotfold.

RESOLVED that we have no objection to the application.

123/22 LAND IN FRONT OF THE HAVEN

Members considered requesting adoption of the Highways owned land at the front of The Haven, in order that the council can maintain it for public enjoyment. The Principal Highways Officer has indicated that they would be willing to transfer the land to the town council, and it would require an application for a Stopping Up Order.

RESOLVED that an application for a Stopping Up Order is made in order that the town council may adopt the highways land in front of The Haven.

124/22 ELECTRICITY SUPPLY TO HITCHIN ROAD RECREATION GROUND CONTAINER

Members considered quotes to supply the container with power supply for lighting and a socket from the changing room/tractor shed.

RESOLVED that the quote from Griggs Electrical in the sum of £1,918.40 plus vat is accepted.

125/22 EXECUTIVE ACTION – JUBILEE TREES – QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY

Members noted executive action taken to purchase x3 trees, as the Town Council's contribution to the Queen's Green Canopy, due to timescales for planting season,

availability of trees and the short time the quote was held for. Cost £272.55 plus delivery and vat. Location for town council purchased trees previously agreed as Prince Charles Avenue and The Green. Councillor Anderson has sourced the costs.

126/22 JUBILEE TREES – PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- i) Members noted the results of the recent public consultation as to suggested locations for tree planting under Central Bedfordshire Council's Tree Planting Grant Scheme – as part of the Queen's Green Canopy. An application with the full list of suggestions will be forwarded to the Tree Officer, who will assess each site individually.
- ii) Members considered permitting planting of trees on town council owned land, should Central Bedfordshire Council find that it is suitable under their grant scheme.

RESOLVED that should Central Bedfordshire Council find that suggested planting locations on town council land are suitable, we give approval.

127/22 JUBILEE BENCHES – PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Members considered the results of the recent public consultation as to suggested locations for the three Jubilee benches and determine final locations for installation.

RESOLVED that the Jubilee benches are located as follows:

- at the front of the Greenacre Centre
- Millennium Green – by the river
- The Green – by the town council Jubilee trees

128/22 NORTON ROAD ALLOTMENTS – BOUNDARY FENCE

Members considered a quote to install new mesh fencing on the allotment boundary with the adjacent farm (A507 side). The farmer will put forward an £800 contribution, together with removal of remaining tree stumps on the boundary following recent felling.

RESOLVED that the quote from Gilks Fencing Ltd to supply and install mesh fencing on the allotment boundary with the farm, at £4,653.94 plus vat, and the contribution of £800 from the farmer is accepted.

129/22 NORTON ROAD ALLOTMENTS – NEW PLOT

Members noted that following recent hedge and scrub clearance work by the farmer on land adjacent to the allotments, this has resulted in a large area of cleared scrub which could be better utilised, and subsequently two half plots have been created.

130/22 NORTON ROAD ALLOTMENTS – REPLACEMENT COMPOST AREA

Members considered instructing the Handyman to construct a more robust tenants compost/manure area adjacent to the turning circle, to replace the now rotten wooden pallet structure, using surplus bricks.

RESOLVED that the Handyman is asked to remove the old compost area construction and to build brick retaining walls to house compost/manure deposited off the turning circle.

131/22 ARLESEY ROAD – USE OF OPEN SPACE FOR PARKING

Councillor Saunders declared an interest in this item, as he submitted the request. Members considered a request from Stotfold Football Club to allow parking on grass, outside of the overflow parking area, for their annual Fireworks Display event on 5th November 2022, and to permit use of the car park for some fair rides. Note, additional parking will be available this year at Pix Brook Academy, and stewards will be in attendance for parking on the grass.

RESOLVED that permission is given for Stotfold Football Club to use a grass area outside of the overflow parking area for their annual Fireworks Display and for use of the car park for fair rides.

132/22 HIGHWAYS REPORT

Members considered a report from our Highways Representative, Councillor J Smith.

Still waiting for the Gulley's crew to do their work, this more than likely means repairs will not be completed before the scheduled Astwick road traffic calming works are due to start. This is still the case even though the Astwick road works have been delayed.

I am in regular contact with Scott about these and other issues and the status can be found below:

| Site | Issue | Action |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| Silver Birch Avenue | New Overlay failures | Contractor has been chased, no date to rectify. Regularly chasing this issue. |
| The Green | Blocked Drains/Gulley's | Contractor needs to revisit after initially marking as completed. Scott at CBC is chasing this for us. |
| Regent Street | Blocked Drains/Gulley's | Road Closure is required so contractors can access drains and gulleys on both sides of the road. I have asked why this hasn't been planned yet. Awaiting answer. |
| High Street, Brook Street to Crossroads | Blocked Drains/Gulley's | This was initially marked as completed in June but the contractor has since admitted that they didn't do anything. Scott has asked for this, The Green and Regents street be completed as soon as possible. |
| Astwick Road Corner | Traffic Calming and Bus Stop removal | Scheduled for the end of September. This did not happen, still waiting for an answer as why this is the case and what the plan is now. |
| Brayes Manor | Pavement repair | CBC have agreed that Pavements need to be resurfaced, no current date for repair. |
| Arlesey Road | Tree cutting | CBC have been asked to cut the trees back along Arlesey Road and cycle path as they are blocking signage, streetlights and some branches are at cyclist head height. |

Other issues are to be addressed with no current update:

Astwick road surface and verge repairs, both on the Stotfold and Astwick stretches of Astwick road. CBC have been made aware of the disrepair. The road surface is to be repaired in several areas and the verge status has been recorded. Construction traffic has contributed to the verges collapsing in some areas.

The above is not an exhaustive list. Any confirmed action will be included in the table above on future reports.

133/22 PUBLIC REALM WORKS

Members were reminded that matters for Central Beds Council can be reported via <https://www.fixmystreet.com/> and if they have any matters that are to be reported to other parties or are general repair or maintenance work for the council, these should not be held until the next committee meeting but should be reported to the office.

Refer to other parties

At the back of the changing rooms, where the goal posts are stored, the gate fixings to the wall are becoming loose, and need repairing.

134/22 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

Members were advised that the quote to repair the path to the side of the tractor shed leading into Hitchin Road Recreation Ground was received after the agenda for this meeting was issued and will therefore be considered at the next meeting.

A member advised that they have requested the office write to residents in Hallworth Drive to ask them to cut back their overgrowth which is spreading into footpath 11 to the rear of Hallworth Drive.

A member referred to the kissing gate near to Arc Progress which needs replacing. Teasel are happy to carry out the work, but we are to purchase the materials.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.23pm

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: