

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 15TH DECEMBER 2022, AT 7.18PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE.

Committee Members present:

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

Also present:

Mrs K Elliott-Turner – Town Clerk

151/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors A Cooper and G Russell.

152/22 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS ON MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE AGENDA AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of members interests or 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.

153/22 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES

None present.

154/22 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee meeting held on 9th November 2022 are confirmed as a correct record.

155/22 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

Following a complaint that the footbridge over the brook tributary from Campion Avenue is very slippery when wet, anti-slip strips have been ordered and will be installed at the earliest opportunity. This will include the second footbridge from Gentian Gardens to Sorrell Drive.

156/22 GREEN WHEEL

Members noted minutes of the Green Wheel meeting held on 18th November 2022.

It was confirmed that Cliff Andrews (BRCC) has now been promoted and they are looking for a replacement for his role.

Councillor Mrs J Hyde expressed an interest in joining the Green Wheel group, following the passing of Councillor Clarey.

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Hyde joins the Green Wheel group, as a town council representative.

157/22 GREEN WHEEL - BENCHES

Members considered locations for siting of benches being offered by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC), which are to be sited on or near to the Green Wheel route. There is no indication of number available.

RESOLVED that the suggested location for a Green Wheel bench is at Riverside Playing Field, near the mound looking towards the river.

158/22 MUGA GAMES WALLS

Members noted the cost of the three games walls, x2 for Arlesey Road (football) and x1 for Riverside (tennis) MUGAs, at £18,165 plus vat from PlayInnovation. The purchase of three games walls gave us a total discount of £6,285. All three are to be installed after completion of the new MUGA project at Arlesey Road and the renovation of the Riverside Playing Field MUGA.

159/22 HITCHIN ROAD RECREATION GROUND – TRACTOR SHED – FIRE PREVENTION CEILING LINING

RESOLVED that executive action taken by the Clerk (as per Establishment Committee minute 94/22) to have the ceiling of the tractor shed lined for fire prevention measures is approved. Also noted action taken to have fire sensors and sounders fitted for safety of those using the adjacent changing rooms.

160/22 HIGHWAYS REPORT

Members considered a report from our Highways Representative, Councillor Smith:

Stotfold Highways Update December 2022

Regarding the work to install **traffic calming on the Astwick Road corner** near the junction with The Green the following from the Highways Improvement team still applies:

“The scheme is included on this years Annual Plan and is expected to be delivered before the end of the financial year. There is currently a provisional date for Start of Works in December, however we are still waiting for final clarification that this start date can be achieved.”

Works are underway, as of Thursday 8th December, to install new edging to the road in Astwick to prevent traffic from encroaching onto private land.

Work to repair the worst parts of the cycle way on Arlesey Road have been completed, near Arlesey road rec.

As most are aware an issue with the main sewer for Stotfold has developed this week. Work is currently ongoing to clear the sewer and dig down to identify where the blockage is. (08/12/22)

Status Updates:

Site	Issue	Action
Silver Birch Avenue	New Pavement Overlay failures	Contractor has been chased, no date to rectify. Regularly chasing this issue. No update.

The Green	Blocked Drains/Gulley's	Contractor needs to revisit after initially marking as completed. Scott at CBC is chasing this for us. Another revisit required.
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. No date has been given for the work.
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. Nothing yet, although it has been noted that Anglian water has been looking at some of the drains separately
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. Still not started so looking like the New Year.
Brayes Manor	Pavement repair	CBC have agreed that Pavements need to be resurfaced, no current date for repair. No update.
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. No update.

Regent Street	Pothole near Meadow Way	Have been promised that this is on the schedule for repair. No date yet.
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Other issues are to be addressed with no current update:

Speed limit signs on the High Street: We have asked the Highways Improvement team again about this as the type of signs/banners we want can be found in other areas, such as on the way into Hitchin, so we're looking for an agreed way forward that we can use such banners, even for a temporary period.

High Street Potholes: These have been 'made safe'. We are looking for confirmation that the High Street will be resurfaced in 2023. No confirmation of this though.

School line markings near St. Mary's: These are on the schedule to be repainted but no date yet.

Double Yellow Lines on the corner of St. Mary's Avenue and Church Road: We have been asked by a resident for Yellow lines to be added to the above junction. It can be almost impossible to see oncoming traffic in either direction when exiting St Mary's Avenue as cars park right up to the junction. I have asked the Traffic Management Team at CBC to investigate this for us. **No change.**

It was noted that works at the Astwick Road/The Green junction are now to commence 23rd January to 3rd February.

Reference was made to numerous requests from residents to purchase and install grit bins at the end of their roads. Central Beds Council has been advising residents that if they ask the town council to purchase and install them, we have to do it. The Clerk has contacted our Highways officer to discuss this, no response as yet, asking who would assess which roads should have them, as obviously we can't install grit bins on all roads, and some could be considered to be higher priority than others, who provides the grit, who tops them up. Because the rock salt is hygroscopic, once it gets wet or damp it soaks up water and becomes solid. This has always been a problem in the past with existing grit bins.

'Main peak hour bus routes' and 'most school bus routes' are gritted, under Priority 1 gritting routes. Details of priority routes, together with a map showing gritting routes throughout Central Bedfordshire can be found on their website https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/55/transport_roads_and_parking/594/salting_and_gritting_-_winter_road_gritting_and_salt_bins

The Clerk advised that the Handyman had used a ton of rock salt to grit the cemetery this week following the ice and snow fall, to enable a hearse to reach the top of the hill for a funeral. He also gritted Brook Street car park which was very icy, the Memorial Hall pathways and around the Greenacre Centre. The vicar has thanked the Handyman for gritting the roads in the cemetery to allow the funeral to go ahead.

161/22 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.

Items reported for action

- There is a town council light out on the footpath running from the Church car park towards the Chequers.

162/22 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

The Clerk advised that we have experienced issues with the drainage running under the Arlesey Road car park from the public toilets and have had to get this section of drains cleared. The Football Club are now reporting that one of their toilets was not draining properly and called out a drain clearance company. Investigations by the drain technician found that there are large blocks of concrete or bricks were in the system below the car park. They have recommended CCTV inspection and the Football Club directors feel that the town council should pay towards blockage clearance and CCTV inspection. Costs for the initial inspection were £120 plus vat, costs for CCTV plus a jet-through will be £325 plus vat for up to 2 hours on site, and £125 plus vat per hour thereafter. If two technicians are needed, then it would be £195 plus vat per hour. The Football Club lease provides for a 50/50 split on costs relating to car park maintenance. Members were happy that the Clerk authorises 50% council contribution towards CCTV inspection and jet-through to clear any blockages in the drains running under the Arlesey Road car park.

Members were advised that the Clerk has been working on the grounds maintenance and grass cutting contract tender documents, and once completed, it will be circulated to members for information prior to the tender being advertised. The contract has been written, and the Clerk is spending a lot of time plotting all the separate bits of land which need cutting – open spaces and individual verges, using the Parish Online mapping tool. The tender will be advertised before Christmas.

Of the three Jubilee trees the council purchased, one has been planted in Prince Charles Avenue by Teasel, and the two Limes are currently awaiting planting, once the snow and ice has gone. It is the Handyman's intention to plant before Christmas, once the rain returns and the ground has thawed.

Councillor Hyde and the Handyman are meeting this week to determine the location of one of the Jubilee benches, on Millennium Green.

The next agenda is to include a proposal to name the open space we are due to adopt, behind Aspen Gardens, as 'Jubilee Meadow', as it was the intention to have completed this transfer in the Jubilee year.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.01pm

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: