

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12th APRIL 2023, AT 7.15PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE.

Committee Members present:

S Buck (Chairman), A Cooper, M Cooper, S Hayes, J Hyde, B Saunders, J Smith, J Talbot

Also present:

Ms C Jenkins – Assistant Clerk and 2 Members of the public

44/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors L Anderson, B Collier and G Russell.

45/23 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.

46/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES

Two Hazel Grove residents addressed the committee to highlight the problems with the flow of the Pix Brook. Cans and bottles have been found in the river. The drainage board are only interested if the water flow stops. They are only concerned if the brook is flooding. They have no provision to clear the rubbish, this is for the Council to clear.

The new nearby Linear Park adjacent to Riverside was also designed with a pond, together with bullrushes and a wild flower area, grassed areas have been cut back 2-3 times a year but again the river has not been cleared. It was requested that in the future, more trees and wildflowers area could be installed.

Councillors have regular meetings with IDB. They have been contacted regarding the above points as many people have complained. IDB will be chased again on this topic as Stotfold Town Council have highlighted this previously.

New gate has now been installed on Sorrell Drive as IDB needed access to area by the river. IDB are working to deliver plan for the river area together with multiple agencies.

It was stated that once the Town Rangers were in place, they could be asked to look at clearing the river of rubbish.

Councillors stated that certain areas had been planned to create wild flowers areas in the town, this would be worked together with Central Bedfordshire Council and the Town Councils new grass contractors.

There is a 9 metre right of access either side of the brook for access, so trees are not planted in this area.

47/23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee meeting held on 8th March 2023 are confirmed as a correct record.

48/23 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

Nothing to report.

49/23 FOOTBALL PITCH FUNDING

Members received information from Central Bedfordshire Council regarding funds available to help with yearly football pitch maintenance.

Pitches at Arlesey Road are beginning to look of poor quality. Team coaches have been asked to rotate the use of these pitches, but this seems to not have helped.

The Assistant Clerk recently attended a webinar regarding funding available for pitch maintenance from Central Bedfordshire Council. Funding would be available following a pitch report being carried out.

The fund provides a 10 year maintenance plan based on your PitchPower report and a 6 year grant, with funding tapering down over the term of the grant:

- Years 1 & 2 - £3200 per 11v11 pitch/ £2590 per 9v9 pitch/ £1920 per mini pitch (100% funding)
- Years 3 & 4 – £2144 per 11v11 pitch/ £1735 per 9v9 pitch/ £1286 per mini pitch (67% funding)
- Years 5 & 6 - £1056 per 11v11 pitch/ £854 per 9v9 pitch/ £633 per mini pitch (33% funding)

Match funding is required from Year 3 but if your pitch has gained good condition status in the first two years you only need to spend what you need to maintain this.

Maintenance has already been carried out by the Town Council on pitches at Arlesey Road. Councillors also mentioned alternative pitches and their conditions at Hitchin Road, Riverside Recreation Ground and The Green.

Councillors discussed number of pitches available and relevant sizes. A decision was made to concentrate the funds on the possible total 9 pitches at Arlesey Road.

RESOLVED the junior football club would be asked to clarify the number of pitches marked out regularly, and that further information would be obtained to raise this item again at the next Town Council meeting.

50/23 REQUEST TO USE MILLENNIUM GREEN

Members were asked to consider a request from Stotfold Watermill to use Millennium Green for parking for the weekend of 13th and 14th May for Live@theMill music event.

RESOLVED that Millennium Green can be used for Parking on 12th, 13th and 14th May 2023.

51/23 SURFACE TREATMENT - RIVERSIDE

Members were asked to consider costs for treatment for cleaning the MUGA surface at Riverside Recreation ground.

Work has been recently carried out to the Macadam side of the MUGA. This was now just waiting for a return visit to spray this a green colour. Treatment would be to provide visits per year to pressure wash, remove debris, apply moss inhibitors to the 3G side of the surface.

Councillors also discussed the need for the surface to be re-sanded after the pressure wash treatment.

RESOLVED: agreed that 3 visits per year to pressure wash and treat the 3G surface would be charged at £1040.00+VAT. The contractor will be asked about re-sanding the surface and additional costs.

52/23 GREENACRE CENTRE CHAIRS

Members were asked to discuss the future use of the Oak Hall chairs, with a possible use at the Memorial Hall.

RESOLVED: that this item would be referred to the Buildings Committee for discussion.

53/23 LITTER BIN REQUEST

A Resident had requested for a litter bin to be installed on the pathway in the memorial hall car park. This would greatly help with his weekly litter pick of that area.

RESOLVED: All councillors thanked the resident for his great help in keeping the area tidy, this was very much appreciated. It should be noted that there are large rubbish carts at the back of the memorial hall that can be used for rubbish from the immediate area.

54/23 HIGHWAYS REPORT

A report received from Councillor Smith, Highways Representative:

Potholes in the town are now being fixed, Hitchin Road is quite bad and will be treated next.

The roundabout has now been installed at the green. New system seems to be working well.

New barrier has been installed on Astwick Road to avoid cars reversing into the nearby ditch area.

55/23 PUBLIC REALM WORKS

It was noted that there is a post on Brook Street holding 2 dog bins. The older green bin now needs replacing. Central Beds Council will be informed.

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.

55/23 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

Valerian Way – the post and rail fence has been damaged on the boundary of the A507. Central Beds Council will be notified.

Rear fence at Arlesey Road has sections that have been damaged. Pix Brook academy has their own metal fence. It was discussed whether broken fence could be removed. Once the Town Rangers were working, this would be addressed.

Arlesey Road has a kissing gate that is still to be installed in the fencing. This was to separate pedestrians from vehicles entering.

It was also noted that the Arlesey Road car park surface has holes that still need to be mended. Quotes for this work are to be sourced.

A complaint had been received about a puncture in the car park due to nails. An inspection has been done and hoping this is a one-off incident. It was also noted people park cars at their own risk.

Signs have not yet been displayed in the Brook Street car park for the charging EV points. Central Beds Council to be chased on this.

A column in Brook Street Car Park has also been removed – Central Beds Council to re-instate?

Concerns were raised about the installation of the charging points at the memorial hall car park repairs have been made, but location of cables could be a future issue.

A request to have a sign for the Little London Footpath was raised. Staff are looking into organising a fingerpost to be placed on existing post.

It was raised about the possibility of asking our previous Grass Contractor to do a monthly walkabout of the pitches and grass areas to maintain standards of works. The previous contractor is going to meet with the new contractors provide a full handover. The conditions would be monitored in the interim and if needed this could be implemented.

It was noted that noticeboards at the Co-op are out of date, and pins have been removed. The Town Rangers will be responsible for this.

The new town ranger will be starting next week. Members were notified that we have had around 25 initial interests in the 2nd Town Ranger position. The closing date is 28th April 2023.

Members raised the possibility of a 2nd vehicle for the Town Rangers use. Councillors agreed that 1 vehicle was adequate for the time being. This would be monitored as the roles develop.

It was noted that works had been carried out at the tractor shed. Heating needs to be added if this is to be a place of work. The container for the flood equipment needs work to be carried out on the roof, as it is not a perfect seal.

It was raised that the junction box in tractor shed is not fire proof, there is also a need for the addition of electric sockets, smoke alarms etc. The roof needs some insulation works, but as this will not predominately be a place of work, it's a storage shed at present.

It was raised that staff are unable to reach the noticeboard at the Green due to the wide hedge in front of it. As this would be updated by the Town Rangers in future, this is to be monitored.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.55pm

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: