

# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023, AT 7.30 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, STOTFOLD

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## Committee Members present:

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

## Also present:

Cllr J Headington	Councillor
E Payne	Town Clerk
H Child	Environmental Services Co-ordinator

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### **149/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Venneear

### **150/23 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

Councillor Hyde declared a personal interest on two Items, 6.6, Hedgerow Project and 6.9 PSPO's.

### **151/23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES**

There were none.

### **152/23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2023 were received and, after a correction of item 142/23, regarding the tennis nets, which should read 'two days per week during the winter season' and not year-round. It was **RESOLVED** to:

#### ***Approve the Minutes***

### **153/23 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION**

The Clerk's summary report, pertaining to items arising from previous meetings was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

**Additional item** - Email received from a resident requesting that the four shrub beds in Greenacre Park are weeded and made to look tidier. This is being managed by our Grounds Maintenance Team, as part of a cyclical programme. They are scheduled to carry out this work within the next few months. Two of the shrub beds are intended to be for wildflowers.

Item 5.3 – Agreed that STC pay IDB a licence fee to carry out the culvert work crossing the ditch from Riverside Recreation Ground to Jubilee Meadow.

Correspondence received from CBC regarding Recreation Open Space Survey – CBC requested info about what we currently have. EP compiling a survey with officer's support.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Note the Clerk's Report***

**154/23 COMMITTEE BUDGET 2024-25**

Members received a proposed budget for this committee and noted that it was still work in progress.

**Riverside Muga** An increase from £1,800 to £2,250 reflects the additional electricity costs arising from the installation of floodlights.

**Allotments** – Pest control, an increase up to £750 was agreed to the allotment budget for pest control; namely rats, in-ground wasp nests, etc.

**Open Spaces** - Section 27 - Tree work, budget is Included in EMR. A proposed increase of £10k in this year's budget and another proposed uplift of £10k in next year's budget.

**Jubilee Meadow** - Not yet included in the landscaping project. Transfer process is in the hands of the Town Council's solicitors and will come over in the next 12 weeks. Suggested budget will allow easier payment to multiple contractors. Work will be needed in 24/25 financial year. Discuss the use of the small mower, with Countrywide. Request costings for paths and strimming on a regular basis. David Johannsen to conduct an annual hay cut and collect. A new cost centre for Jubilee meadow maintenance is to be included in the budget.

**Norton Road Allotment** - Hedge laying at Norton Road will come out of 2023/24 budget.

**155/23 MULTI-WHEELED SPORTS FACILITY**

The multi-wheeled sports facility tender document, prepared by Councillor Hayes is ready to go and can be put out to tender within a set timescale for the tender process to be assessed. Earlier discussion in June 2023 agreed that Stotfold Town Council would fund £100k, however further funding could be available if necessary.

Potentially, the contractor could undertake the background work, consultations, grant funding applications etc. on our behalf.

**Car Park Extension** –Currently the project needs to be pushed forward to mitigate parking problems. The library would also use the extended car park and money could be diverted from The Riverside car park extension. Members considered that this project should have a tender, to be delivered round about the same time as the multi-wheeled sports facility, to accommodate both the library and the skate park, which would help alleviate some of the parking problems. Planning would be needed for both car park extension and wheeled facility. The two projects to work simultaneously with each other.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

a) ***Include the car park extension in the plans for the Wheeled Sports Facility but produce a separate tender document, in consultation with a specialist car park contractor.***

b) ***Advertise the Wheeled Sports Facility tender on Contracts Finder.***

**156/23 BIODIVERSITY DUTY**

Members received a proposed Biodiversity Policy, which is a legal requirement under the Biodiversity Act 2021. Members noted that there had been a previous Herbicide Policy and considered that this should be included in the Town Council's policy. It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Include the Herbicide Policy previously considered in the Biodiversity Policy to be considered at the next meeting.***

**157/23 COMMUNITY GARDEN**

Grand Union are conducting work at The Haven, in preparation for the Christmas Lights Switch-on. Members considered the inclusion of a community garden at this site which would be discussed at a future meeting. It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Add this to the work programme for this committee.***

**158/23 PLANTING OF BULBS**

An offer was received from Countrywide for us to identify sites around the town in which they can plant spring bulbs, Martin Davenport and Councillors have suggested various sites. It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Accept Countrywide's gift of Spring bulbs. Countrywide to provide details of what they have planted and where.***

**159/23 HEDGEROW PROJECT**

Cllr Hyde declared an interest in this matter as she rents the land from the Stotfold Farming Cooperative and still has oversight.

As part of the Hedgerow Heroes campaign, funding opportunities are available from CBC. An initial expression of interest has been submitted to CBC, with final grant submissions required before 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Suggestions were requested to identify new areas for the planting of additional hedgerows around the town.

Councillor Hyde suggested a site; Great Close Meadow owned by CBC and rented by the Stotfold Farming Cooperative. David Johansen cuts this land, although it is widely used by the public, as public footpaths run through it.

There is currently no hedge along this section of Malthouse Lane, between the dog bins to opposite the Riverside Rec car park. This would be an ideal place for a hedge, particularly if funding can be sourced.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Investigate funding opportunities to plant a hedgerow at this location on Malthouse Lane.***

**160/23 REPLACEMENT TREES - GAC**

Councillor Cooper produced a map identifying eighteen dead Silver Birch trees that run along the trench of land behind Roecroft playing field, running through to Valerian Way. As this area has now been adopted, it was proposed that we plant some new trees, to replace those that are dead. It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Obtain quotes for different types of trees, Rowan, Bird or Wild Cherry, Field Maples, Alders. Office staff to submit a grant application as part of CBC initiative to plant more trees.***

**161/23 PEDESTRIAN GATE**

Members considered the installation of a safer pedestrian access for children at the Arlesey Road site. Councillors were asked to visit the site to review the current set-up and determine methods to improve safety and pedestrian access to the Football Club. It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Make two entrances to the car park, one from Pendleton Way and one from New Road, leading up to Pix Brook School. This work would be funded from the Rec rolling EMR.***

**162/23 PSPO**

CBC are consulting on Public Space Protection Orders in the town and if the Town Council wishes to change the order that have been in place since 2021.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

***Additional areas to be included to PSPO are Pix Brook School Road, New Green Space Recreation areas, Jubilee Meadow, Prince Charles Play Area, and Arlesey Road Recreation ground.***

**163/23 EXTENSION TO HARDSTANDING**

Members were advised that quotes were required for this work. It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Defer to next meeting.***

**164/23 WORK PROGRAMME**

Members received the Work Programme for this committee. It was **RESOLVED** to:

***Note the report.***

**165/23 HIGHWAYS REPORT**

A summary report was prepared, outlining a couple of issues along the old bit of Norton Road cul-de-sac, south of the by-pass. Residents have brought to our attention, concerns about an influx of vehicles that are causing parking issues.

**166/23 PUBLIC REALM WORKS**

There were none.

**167/23 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY**

There were none.

**168/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The meeting closed at 2100.  
Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023 @ 7pm.

**MINUTES APPROVED (date):**

**SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN:**