



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PUBLIC REALM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8TH MAY 2024 AT 19:00 AT IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, VALERIAN WAY, STOTFOLD. SG5 4HG

Committee Members present:

Cllr M Cooper (Chairperson), L Anderson (Vice-Chairperson), S Buck, J Headington, M Hyde, J Smith, J Talbot, S Hayes, B Saunders, B Woods.

Also present:

E. Payne – Town Clerk
S. van der Merwe – Democratic Services Manager
Mr V. Melani – Member of the public

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All Members were present at the Meeting.

2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Cllrs Headington and Talbot requested dispensation regarding items 8.8, 8.9 and 8.10 on the Agenda as they are allotment tenants, and Cllrs Hyde and Hayes as they are Trustees for the Eleemosynary Charity which owns the land on which the Common Road Allotment is sited.

3. PUBLIC SECTION

Mr Vladimir Melani was present in the Chamber to discuss item 8.3.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee held on 13th March 2024 were **ADOPTED** as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

5. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRPERSON

Following nominations from Members, Cllr Liz Anderson was elected as Vice-Chairperson for the forthcoming year.

At this point Cllr Cooper brought item 8.3 on the agenda forward to allow Mr Melani to address the Committee.

6. HAND CAR WASH

Mr Melani submitted a request to be able to use part of the land at the Stotfold Football Club parking lot for a hand car wash business. Mr Melani put forward a list of reasons he thought this spot may be most suitable. Cllr Buck provided information on an additional site that Mr Melani may be interested in near Fen End. Members felt that this site would not be suitable due the constant use of the site for football session parking, sustainability and ecological reasons.

It was **RESOLVED** that permission to use this land for a hand car wash is **NOT granted**.

7. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Town Clerk advised Members this item was not addressed at the Annual Statutory Meeting on 1st May 2024 as there were many items on the Agenda for that Meeting. These Terms of Reference will be reviewed here and then taken back to the next Town Council meeting for final approval.

The following amendments to be made:

- Street Lights: Change the contract length to three-yearly.
- Cemetery: Move “To review the leases for the Chapel of Rest and Mast, and renew, reissue or seek new tenants as required.” to the Buildings Management Committee Terms of Reference. In addition, all items related to the maintenance and management of the Chapel, Cemetery Toilet and lease should now fall within the scope of the Buildings Management Committee.
- Cemetery: Inspection of memorials: This will be amended to read that a section of the cemetery will be inspected every year and a report issued to the Public Realm Committee for consideration of the scope of work to be carried out. This will be a rolling 5-year plan for the inspection of memorials.
- Change “spraying of foreign growth” to “Arrange removal of foreign growth on footpaths as designated by the Committee”.
- Remove “Job description” as staff resource falls under the Governance & Resources Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL THAT** the amended Terms of Reference for the Public Realm Committee are adopted.

8. CLERK’S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES, FOR INFORMATION

- 8.1 Members were advised the snagging item listed is that one of the bags in the culvert as being dislodged.
- 8.2 Members expressed their thanks to the Town Rangers for removing the mattress from the river.
- 8.3 Cllr Anderson requested the toad sign should be closed as the seasonal migration of the toads is complete.

9. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

9.1 Notice boards

Members reviewed a report regarding installing noticeboards at The Green, Hallworth Drive, Norton Road Allotments and Brook Street Car Park. Members were provided a number of options and supporting costs and photographs.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk will provide final costings for the following to the next Public Realm meeting:

- a) Stainless Steel double door Noticeboards at The Green and Memorial Hall, painted in blue with the Stotfold Town Council logo and a finial or ball above;
- b) a single notice board for side of the toilets at Brook Street Car Park to provide notices in the town centre;
- c) a single notice board for the allotments.

9.2 Disc Golf Pitch at Riverside

Cllr Anderson advised there would be lighting impact on the site and there would be an effect on biodiversity on the site. Members expressed concerns about a number of risks to the public by players.

The Committee requested the Town Clerk to investigate footgolf at the Greenacres Recreation Ground.

It was **RESOLVED** not to proceed with the Disc Golf provision at the Riverside.

9.3 Hand Car Wash

This item was presented at item 6 above.

9.4 Play Area Signage

It was **RESOLVED** to purchase the blue and white signage such as the Greenacre Park Play Area sample, and add a What3Words location, a QR Code and a telephone number to be able to report faults or defects.

9.5 Community Litter Pickers

Community Litter Pickers requested a means of disposal of the litter collected.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council would arrange for printed Litter Angels labels with a telephone number to report waste to be collected by the Town Council Town Rangers to Community litter pickers.

9.6 Squirrell Taverners Logo

The Squirrels team applied for permission to add its logo at the Football Club.

It was **RESOLVED** that all the football teams are permitted to add their logos to the blank wall at the end of the building at their own expense.

Members requested that the Town Clerk assess the condition of the building wall and also obtain a cost from the artist who painted the container for similar artwork and to pass that on to the Football Club.

9.7 The Squirrell Pub – 2nd Team – Use of HRR

The Football Club have requested additional facility use for a second team.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee declines the application for use of additional facilities at Hitchin Road Recreation Ground.

Members requested that the Squirrel Pub team manager approach the Stotfold Juniors management team to request use of the facilities at the Stotfold Football Club as this is a Community football space and the Football Club does not have exclusivity over the Arlesey Road football facilities.

9.8 Allotment Security

A living hedge was installed at the Norton Road Allotments, and this is still growing. Officers have photographic evidence of damage to the fence by the public in order to get access to the allotments.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk should obtain quotes for a 2-metre-high fence as per an example of fencing at the Baldock allotments.

9.9 Allotments – Review of Paperwork and Procedures

The report proposed the review of the Town Council's Allotments management documentation by a Task and Finish Group made up of Town Councillors appointed by the Public Realm Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that an Allotments Task and Finish Group be implemented to include Cllrs Hayes, Hyde, Talbot and Headington.

9.10 Allotment Awards

Members were asked to consider a proposal for an annual Allotment Plots Competition to foster engagement with allotment plot tenants across both allotment sites.

Members requested that the Town Clerk write to the Clerk of the Eleemosynary Charity to add the competition awards to its July 2024 Agenda.

It was **RESOLVED** to implement an Annual Allotment Plots Competition for each allotment site, with two categories for each site – Best Kept Allotment for each site and Best eco-friendly plot.

It was **RESOLVED** that each category winner would be awarded £25 garden vouchers.

9.11 Use of the Green

Members discussed use of the green in recent events and the lack of damage deposits requested.

Cllr Hyde requested that the second weekend of May every year be set aside permanently for the use of the green by Stotfold Mill for its Steam Fair & Country Show.

Members and officers suggested that consideration should be given to creating a Policy for hiring the space that would into account:

- a) payment of a damage deposit;
- b) limit use of the Green to summer – after April and before the start of the football season;
- c) restricting hires to a maximum/set time period;
- d) there being an inspection of the Green's ground conditions the day before a hire starts;
- e) event hire being subject to weather conditions for the duration of the hire.

It was **RESOLVED** to **DEFER** this item to a future Public Realm Committee Meeting in order to allow for creation of a Policy governing event hire of the Green.

9.12 St. Mary's School – Use of the Green

It was **RESOLVED** that St. Mary's C of E Academy is granted permission to use the Green for its annual sports day on 8 and 9 July 2024 and in the event of inclement weather, the school would notify the Town Council of the re-schedule dates.

9.13 Cemetery Toilet Project

It was **RESOLVED** to **DEFER** this item to the Buildings Management Committee Meeting as per the change to this Committee's Terms of Reference at Item 7 on these Minutes.

9.14 Stotfold Youth FC

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council would write a letter of congratulations to Mr Andy Bainbridge for his long service to the Stotfold Junior Football Club which could be presented to him at the Football Club's awards ceremony in June 2024.

9.15 Stotfold Mill Weekend – Use of the Green

It was **RESOLVED** that Stotfold Mill is granted permission to use the Green as overflow parking for its annual Steam Fair & Country Show events.

10. HIGHWAYS REPORT

Cllr Smith advised Members that repairs are underway on Vaughan Road and Hitchin Road. Cllr Smith has requested a list of repairs to be effected in advance from Central Bedfordshire Council.

Cllr Smith asked Members to forward any reference numbers for fixmystreet.co.uk reports they make to him.

11. WORKS PROGRAMME

The report was **NOTED**.

12. PUBLIC REALM WORKS

There were no comments.

13. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

Members commented on the need for benches at the Arlesey Road Recreation Ground and this is on the agenda for 5th June 2024.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 5th June 2024.

The meeting closed at 20:47

SIGNED BY CHAIRPERSON: _____

MINUTES APPROVED (date): _____