

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2016 AT 8.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SIMPSON CENTRE, STOTFOLD**

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Committee Members present: Mrs M Cooper (Chairman)

Mrs A Clarey	B Collier
S Hayes	Mrs J Hyde
S Jackson	C Phelps
B Saunders	J Talbot

Also present: the Town Clerk

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**216/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Cooper.

**217/16 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS ON MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE AGENDA**

Councillor Talbot declared an interest in the item relating to allotment fees as his wife is an allotment tenant. Councillors Mrs Hyde and Hayes also declared an interest in the item relating to allotment fees as they are both Trustees on the Eleemosynary Charity of William Field which owns Common Road Allotments.

**218/16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES**

None present.

**219/16 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION**

**Matters Arising**

Minute 211/16 – Following a previous response from Central Beds Council that they were unable to provide us with the schedule for litter picking for Stotfold as it was contract sensitive information, we have since been advised that Stotfold centre is litter picked twice every week. The other roads are done twice every six weeks but if the roads are reported as having large amounts of litter they can make extra visits.

Minute 214/16 – a letter drop has been carried out to properties which the office had been advised were the properties backing onto Olivers Lane with overgrown shrubs/trees, however an unhappy resident has since advised that it is not his property. Members are asked to establish the correct house number to advise the office so that letters can be written to the correct residents. Councillors Hayes and Mrs Cooper will investigate this matter during their walkabout of the recreation grounds at the weekend.

Minute 214/16 – With regard to the overgrown shrub encroaching onto the footway outside the old BT exchange building on Regent Street, attempts to establish ownership has proved difficult. Due to safety concerns now expressed by residents using the footway, the Clerk has instructed the Landscape Contractor to cut back enough overgrown to ensure safe passage along the footway. Cost £25

Minute 214/16 – the company which provided the basket swing and witches hat climbing unit have been advised of their current faults, with a query as to whether they are still in warranty. The company is investing the matter so that appropriate repairs can be carried out as soon as possible. The Handyman is to be asked to remove the basket swing from its mounting as incorrect use due to damage could cause further damage.

## 220/16 RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELD ACCESS

There has been a recent dramatic increase in levels of vandalism and antisocial behaviour at Riverside Playing Field, which includes dangerous driving, loitering, etc in the car park. Members were asked to consider installing a gated access to the car park, to be locked shut overnight, with appropriate signage. This does not need to be on a permanent basis, and could be temporary until vandalism and antisocial behaviour in this area reduces.

Members felt disinclined to gate the car park as it would hinder use by legitimate users during the evening, such as dog walkers. It was felt that the increase in vandalism could be as a result of the reduction in police officers and PCSOs for the area.

**RESOLVED** that the Police and Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire is advised of the current problems we are experiencing, and request that more PCSOs are provided for this area. With regard to recent vandalism damage, replacement litter bins are to be purchased as required.

## 221/16 RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELD – UPDATE PLAY EQUIPMENT

Councillor Saunders provided information on section 106 fund categories and the monies currently available within them:

### Children’s Playspace (LREC)

- a) Formal Play Areas: these are formally laid out play sites, surfaced and fitted with a range of play equipment or demonstrative play features.
- b) Informal Playspace: this is space which provides opportunity for casual play, such as ball games, etc.

### Outdoor Sporting Open Space (LOUT)

This includes formal sports pitches, sports courts or greens, properly laid out, equipped and with the provision of pavilion and car parking facilities necessary to cater for the sporting uses intended.

### Informal Recreational Open Space (LINF)

This is space laid out to function primarily for quiet enjoyment, walking for or other forms of informal recreation.

Money available for:

Children’s play equipment	£63,327 (£27,806 from Taylor’s Road development, £30,439 from The Green development, £5,082 from various other developments)
Outdoor sporting open space	£33,312 (£19,776 from The Green development, £13,536 from various other developments)
Informal recreational space	£3,657 (various other developments)

Any proposals on spending the above figures must be discussed with Lisa White, Section 106 Officer for Play, who gives final approval to applications for funding.

With regard to the specifics for each development, the Taylor’s Road development requires that money allocated is to be spent ‘in the local area’ – there is a query as to how local is local. The Green development requires that the money is spent ‘off-site’, so could be spent in any location in Stotfold.

Members discussed areas which are felt need updating in terms of play equipment, particularly as previously highlighted, Riverside Playing Field. It was felt that The Green also needs improvement to its play equipment provision. There was caution over allocating money to the Arlesey Road site until we

have had sight of the lease from Central Beds Council and it is confirmed that any equipment provided on that site will be relocated to a new site (as agreed) should Central Beds Council wish to terminate the lease. There were also concerns about allocating any money to update equipment at Riverside Playing Field with the current vandalism and antisocial behaviour issues.

The following proposal was put:

- £27,000 (Taylor's Road development) is allocated to Riverside Playing Field for play equipment – if all needed,
- £30,000 and £19,000 is allocated to Arlesey Road (The Green development) is allocated to Arlesey Road for play equipment and outdoor sporting open space, and
- £4,000 is allocated to Arlesey Road (various other developments) for informal recreational space, i.e. picnic benches, etc.

The proposal fell at the vote.

A further proposal was put, and succeeded at vote:

**RESOLVED** that

- £32,888 is allocated to Riverside Playing Field for play equipment,
- £30,000 is allocated to The Green for play equipment,
- £19,000 and £13,000 is allocated to Arlesey Road for outdoor sporting open space, and
- £4,000 is allocated to Arlesey Road for information recreational space

Installation of play equipment is to be completed in Spring 2017.

Riverside Playing Field play equipment should cater for children between 11 and 15 and add to existing equipment.

The Green play equipment should include extension of the young children's fenced area, plus add equipment for older children.

## **222/16 LIGHTING COLUMN – FOOTPATH 11**

Members considered a quote from our lighting contractor, Terry Seymour to supply and install a new lighting column in footpath 11 adjacent to the new development of the former Pig & Whistle Public House site: £1,700 plus vat.

Although previously suggested by this Committee to also install a double headed light on the existing column at the Brook Street entrance to the footpath, Terry Seymour feels that a high efficiency LED set at an angle would give higher light output but at a lower level. A double headed light might attract complaints from adjacent residents due to its close proximity. Cost to replace the existing column lantern with a new 36watt lantern £360 plus vat.

**RESOLVED** that the quote from Terry Seymour to install a new lighting column in footpath 11 at £1,700 plus vat and to replace the lantern on the existing column at £360 plus vat is approved.

## **223/16 WATERS END FENCING**

Members considered a quote from Neal Saggars and Rik Golder to remove the existing fence on the green at Waters End, and to replace with post and rail fencing. Quotation included cost of skip hire and all materials and labour £1,800 plus vat.

**RESOLVED** that the quotation from Neal Saggars and Rik Golder to replace fencing at the green area of Waters End with post and rail fencing at £1,800 plus vat is accepted.

#### **224/16 LIMB REMOVAL FROM TREE – 9 HITCHIN ROAD**

Reference minute 179/16 – Members considered a quotation from A1 Tree Specialists for removal of branches and trunk of a collapsed Hawthorn tree immediately adjacent to land purchased by 9 Hitchin Road, to facilitate erection of a new fence. Cost £400.

**RESOLVED** that the quotation from A1 Tree Specialists to remove branches and trunk of a collapsed Hawthorn tree is accepted at £400.

#### **225/16 EXECUTIVE ACTION – USE OF HITCHIN ROAD RECREATION GROUND**

Members were asked to approve executive action taken by the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, to permit Stotfold and District Children’s Centre to use Hitchin Road Recreation Ground for their play in the parks session over the summer holidays – 27<sup>th</sup> July and 17<sup>th</sup> August, 10am to 11.30am.

**RESOLVED** that executive action taken by the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman to approve use of Hitchin Road Recreation Ground for Stotfold and District Children’s Centre parks sessions during the summer holidays is approved.

#### **226/16 REQUEST TO USE THE GREEN FOR PARKING**

Members considered a request from a resident to use The Green for parking on the occasion of a wedding party being held at the Conservative Club. A copy of the request was provided to Members.

**RESOLVED** that a reply is sent to the resident to advise that we take on board their concerns regarding parking, but it is with regret that we cannot allow parking on The Green for what is ostensibly a private event.

#### **227/16 ALLOTMENT FEES**

Members considered the current allotment plot tenancy rates, and whether to apply an increase for the allotment year commencing 29<sup>th</sup> September 2017, giving the required one year’s notice. Current rates are £40 full plot, £20 half plot. No change was made to charges last year, applying to this September. Any increase applied to Norton Road Allotments will also apply to Common Road Allotments being managed by the Town Council on behalf of the Eleemosynary Charity of William Field.

Having previously declared an interest, Councillors Mrs Hyde and Hayes left the meeting during voting on this item.

**RESOLVED** that allotment charges are increased from 29<sup>th</sup> September 2017 to £44 full plot, £22 half plot.

#### **228/16 GREEN WHEEL**

Members were previously provided with copies of the Green Wheel Stakeholder Group minutes from 15<sup>th</sup> April 2016 and 24<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Copies of the Underpass Survey carried out by Saul Ackroyd (ACORN), Richard Lawrence (BRCC), Pam Manfield and Larry Stoter were also circulated to Members. In relation to this report, Members were asked to consider the suggestions resulting from the survey, and implications to the Town Council’s routine grass cutting contract of these areas.

Members felt that entrances to the town should be kempt and large areas of wildflower and grasses at these points does not create a good impression and could be seen as being left wild. A balance is required between smart areas and wildflower meadows.

**RESOLVED** that Richard Lawrence at BRCC and Saul Ackroyd at ACORN are asked to stop their proposed planting of plugs in the underpasses and roundabouts around Stotfold, and to meet with the Committee to present their proposals in order that we can

consider them against our requirements with our Central Beds Council grass cutting contract and our own grass cutting contract.

## 229/16 GENERAL WORK

**RESOLVED** that the following is actioned as appropriate:

### Rik Golder, Landscape Contractor

- The hedge on The Green, opposite the Coach & Horses Public House, is overgrown and needs cutting back.
- The hedge at Hitchin Road Recreation Ground needs cutting.

### Neal Sagers, Handyman Contractor

- Remove the Regiment Fitness sign from the railings at The Green.
- Cut back the brambles and weeds on footpath 11 from the Memorial Hall to Brook Street.
- Strim around the seats on Millennium Green.

### Town Council office

- Write to the owner of the property on the corner of Brook Street/Hitchin Road and respectfully request that they cut back their overgrown conifer hedge as it is encroaching onto the adjacent footpath.
- Purchase a new dog waste/litter bin, Handyman to install it at Swallowfields, Astwick Road, and ask Central Beds Council to include it on their bin emptying rounds.

### Aragon Housing

- Ask to cut back the overgrown Hawthorn at the back of The Haven.

### Central Beds Council's Tree Officers

- There is a dead Horse Chestnut tree at the Queen Street/Baldock Road junction.
- Ask when the TPO will be in place on the new tree outside 35 High Street.

## 230/16 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

Nothing to report.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.50pm

**CHAIRMAN**

**DATED**