

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12TH JULY 2017, 7.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, STOTFOLD

Committee Members present: Mrs M Cooper (Chairman)

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

Also present: the Town Clerk – Mrs K Elliott-Turner

92/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none, as all Committee Members were present.

93/17 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS ON MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE AGENDA

Councillors Hayes and Mrs Hyde declared an interest in the item relating to allotment fees, as they serve on the Eleemosynary Charity of William Field who own the Common Road Allotments. Councillor Talbot declared an interest in the same item as his wife is a tenant at the Common Road Allotments. Members were advised 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 time.

94/17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES

None present.

95/17 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

Matters Arising

Minute 82/17 – a copy of the legal Order regarding verge parking is attached for Members' information. Central Beds Council's Traffic and Safety Team also believe that the Order could be used to address parking on a cycleway.

"The proposed Order is considered necessary for avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road, preventing damage to the road and for facilitating the passage of traffic, including pedestrians...The probation covers all of Central Bedfordshire but is only enforceable when the necessary traffic signs have been installed. Residents would be consulted before any restrictions are made enforceable in their street.

If the proposed Order is brought into operation, the following procedure will be followed before the prohibition is made enforceable:

Stage 1

For a street to be considered for verge and footway enforcement at least one of the following criteria must be met (streets meeting more than one criterion will be given a higher priority):

1. The Central Bedfordshire Ward Councillor(s) support(s) the introduction of verge and footway enforcement at this location;
2. The Police, Fire Service, Ambulance Service or local Town/Parish Council have requested a prohibition;
3. Where the Council has clear evidence that verge or footway parking is affecting the safety of pedestrians.

Stage 2

1. Deliver letters to households and post leaflets on vehicles parking on the verge or footway advising them of the Council's intention to introduce the enforcement of verge and footway parking in that street.
2. Monitor parking activity over a three week period to determine whether the letters and leaflets have resulted in a satisfactory reduction in the level of verge and footway parking.
3. If the problem has been removed take no further action. If the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved or any previous notices have failed to maintain a sustained reduction in verge and footway parking proceed to stage 3.

Stage 3

1. Erect signs to enable enforcement to take place
2. Undertake appropriate level of enforcement"

The Clerk will ask the public to give their views on areas where parking on verges and footways is considered to be a problem – article in Stotfold News, Town Council website and Facebook page. Feedback will be considered by this Committee at their September meeting. Clarification will be sought as to whether there is a difference in prohibition under this Order and usual Road Traffic Regulations, and what are the penalties.

Correspondence

Central Beds Highways advise that the Velocity Patcher has been brought in again to tackle potholes across Central Bedfordshire. It will visit all areas where repairs are most needed, based on engineer investigations and customer reports via the online system. When previously in Central Bedfordshire for 17 days in May, it was able to repair over 1,200 defects. It is able to fix potholes within two minutes, rather than the hour that conventional filling methods can take.

A copy of the CPRE Beds Matters Summer 2017 edition is available for Members.

A copy of the Wildlife Trust's Local Wildlife Summer 2017 magazine is available for Members.

96/17 WATERS END POST & RAIL FENCING

Members considered two options and quotes from the Handyman with regard to replacement of the fencing at Waters End open space, adjacent to Pix Brook:

- i) To remove existing chain link fencing and replace with post and rail fencing, supply of skip for disposal of waste materials: £2,100
- ii) To remove existing chain link fencing and replace with birdsmouth barrier, supply of skip for disposal of waste materials: £1,565

RESOLVED that the quote in the sum of £2,100 to remove existing chain link fencing and replace with post and rail fencing, supply of skip for disposal of waste materials, is accepted.

97/17 MUGA FENCE – PIX BROOK PLAY AREA

Members considered a quote to increase the height of the rear fence of the MUGA at the Pix Brook Play Area (boundary with Brook), to prevent balls from going over and into the Brook. Miracle Design & Play Ltd provided the original MUGA and play equipment, and advised that they are unable to do a simple extension of the existing fencing for structural reasons. The quote provided is to replace the whole length of fencing (along Brook boundary), plus cranked over panels at the top. £15,079.36. A copy of the quote was provided for Members.

Members felt the quote was very high, but this may be because it was from a play equipment company, rather than a fencing company. Further quotes will be obtained from fencing companies for the same

length and height of fence, to include the cranked over top, for consideration by Committee at the September meeting.

98/17 RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELD CAR PARK

This time last year, Members considered the increase in levels of vandalism and antisocial behaviour at Riverside Playing Field, which included dangerous driving, loitering in the car park, etc, and whether a gated access to the car park, to be locked overnight would be appropriate. We have again this year received a different complaint from a resident regarding the now unbearable situation they find themselves in, with loud music late at night, large groups of youngsters making the resident feel threatened and intimidated. They have requested that Members consider shutting the car park at night. A copy of Facebook correspondence was provided to Members for information. The Clerk has reported this matter to the Police as an ongoing problem and has been given a reference number. The Police Antisocial Behaviour team have been asked to advise the Clerk on their plans to tackle this problem.

RESOLVED that we acknowledge the situation the resident is in, however the car park at Riverside Playing Field cannot be close off as we do not have the staff resources to lock and open up a gate and it also penalises other uses of the ground, such as dog walkers who also use the playing field during the evenings and early mornings. It is suggested that the resident keeps a diary of noise, time and duration as it may constitute a statutory noise nuisance and this could be taken up with the Public Protection team at Central Beds Council. The Police reference number will be forwarded to the Police as a priority area at the next Community Priority Setting meeting on 22nd August.

99/17 ALLOTMENT FEES

Members considered the current allotment plot tenancy rates and whether to apply an increase for the allotment year commencing 29th September 2018, giving the required one year's notice. Current rates are: £44 full plot, £22 half plot. A £2 increase was applied last year to half plots, £4 increase to full plots, 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.

RESOLVED that from 29th September 2018, the Norton Road and Common Road Allotment tenancy fees are increased and will be as follows: £50 full plot, £25 half plot.

100/17 GREEN WHEEL

Members were previously provided with a copy of the Green Wheel Stakeholder Group minutes of their meeting held on 5th May 2017. Their next meeting will be held on Friday 14th July. A roadshow outlining the proposals for the Green Wheel project, plus the consultation will be held in Stotfold between 24th July and 7th August at the Greenacre Centre, with Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity and Central Beds Council staff on hand to answer questions on Thursday 3rd August, 10am to 2pm.

101/17 GENERAL WORK

RESOLVED that the following is actioned as appropriate:

Central Beds Council – Highways/Environmental/Public Rights of Way

- High Street – deep road hole at no. 105
- High Street - deep road hole at junction with Queen Street
- Church Road – road no outside no. 23/25 – very close to recent patching
- Murrell Lane – road hole at Norton Road junction, very close to work currently being done
- St Mary's Avenue – road name posts need renewal

- Buttercup Road – waste bins need to be emptied urgently – also door to be fixed on one
- Footpath to Poggles Wood from Mill Lane is overgrown again, particularly at the bottom at junction with road – there are large brambles preventing access and moving walkers into the adjacent field
- Wooden public footpath sign on Millennium Green by St Mary’s Academy has fallen over again

Landscape Contractor

- Query when the hedge around The Green is to be cut as part of the contract, as the hedge opposite the Coach & Horses is very overgrown

102/17 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

A copy of the Allotments Report for the Eleemosynary Charity was circulated for information.

Millennium Green has recently been cut, flailed and baled – this has generally been accepted well by users of Millennium Green.

On Thursday 13th July, 7pm – 9.30pm at the Greenacre Centre, a volunteer recruitment/training evening is being held and hosted by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity. They host the Upper & Bedford Ouse Catchment Partnership and one of the projects is a Volunteer River Warden Scheme. They are particularly looking for volunteers in the upper Ivel and its tributaries, including the areas in and around Arlesey, Stotfold, Fairfield and Shefford. Volunteers will record, monitor and report wildlife, flytipping and littering and invasive species around the watercourse.

The British Trust for Ornithology has recently taken on the River Ivel. In May this year they undertook a bird count along the river, and another will be held during July. They monitor the health of rivers and the diversity of bird life along them.

A recent walkabout took place along Pix Brook. The Town Council wasn’t invited, but Councillors Cooper and Talbot (as Town Council representatives on the flood emergency team) did go after notification from local residents who were invited. This was part of the modelling scheme for the Brook which is currently underway. It was confirmed by the River Ivel Drainage Board that they, and Anglian Water, have taken into account the 3000 proposed houses in Baldock and 1000 houses proposed for north of Letchworth in their modelling scheme. The debris collection gantry has now been removed from the Brook by the Brook Street bridge and the adjacent bank has been stripped and seeded. The temporary fence is to be removed. An adjacent resident has had agreement from Central Beds Council that they will remove any debris collected by residents from the Brook and adjacent banks.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.06pm

CHAIRMAN

DATED