

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14TH FEBRUARY 2018 AT 7.32PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, STOTFOLD

Committee Members present: Mrs M Cooper (Chairman)

Mrs S Bundock
B Collier
Mrs M Cooper
Mrs J Hyde
J Talbot

Mrs A Clarey
A Cooper
S Hayes
C Phelps

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

10/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jackson.

11/18 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS ON MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE AGENDA

Councillor Mrs Hyde declared an interest in the request from Stotfold Mill to use Millennium Green for parking, as she is the tenant of the land adjacent, referred to in the request. 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.

12/18 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES

None present.

13/18 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

Matters Arising for Information

Minute 147/17 – a response has been received from Central Beds Council's Principal Highways Officer, Steve Lakin following our request for the new road hump in Norton Road to be formally designated as a pedestrian crossing place. They advise that "the raised table crossing of Norton Road serves both as a pedestrian and cycle crossing and speed reduction feature. At present there are insufficient crossing movements to justify a controlled crossing arrangement at this location, either in the form of a zebra or toucan crossing. The guidance we refer to when assessing crossings is LTN 1/95, available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-assessment-of-pedestrian-crossings-ltn-195. The raised table courtesy crossing of Norton Road is one of a number that have been installed across the authority. These crossings have been observed to work successfully. By keeping vehicle approach speeds low, drivers will frequently stop to allow pedestrians to cross, even though this is not obligatory. As with all crossings including zebras, pelicans, toucans, etc, we encourage pedestrians never to assume that a vehicle will stop and to make eye contact with drivers before stepping out into the carriageway".

Members asked that information is put in the next available Stotfold News to explain how the road hump is to be used by pedestrians.

Minute 148/17 – The Clerk continues to ask residents to provide evidence of current and persistent problem areas where people are parking on verges and footways, causing a danger to pedestrians – in order to apply for the Central Beds Council's Prohibition of Waiting & Loading on Verges & Footways Order 2014. Despite asking for evidence to be emailed in or posted to us, we continue to have complaints about areas via our Facebook page – with no suitable evidence being provided. It is acknowledged that some residents do not like taking photographs of 'offending' vehicles and showing persistent incidences can also be difficult. The Clerk will speak with relevant Highways officers to ascertain if there are other ways we can pursue the

implementation of this Order, without having to provide such amounts of evidence.

Central Beds Council will be asked if it would be possible for bollards to be installed on identified problem verges to stop parking which is causing a danger and damage to the surface.

Minute 149/17 – Following a request for the Central Beds Council Highways and Flood Risk Management teams to advise what their plans are for a replacement bridge on Brook Street, if decided that one is required, and a request that we are involved in the planning and decision stages, the following response has been received from Iain Finnigan, Senior Engineer, Flood Risk Management team “The study is about to enter its modelling stage followed by consideration of possible options in April i.e. bridge replacement. The draft report is expected to be available in June for consultation purposes with all stakeholders. On the assumption that a bridge replacement recommendation will be in the final study report, any design in terms of appearance and alignment would be later in 2018 and lead by our Highways team. The best thoughts I have at present is that we need to contact you when we have some tangible options available to us that will allow us to provide further consultation. One of the complications amongst several is that a second service conduit has been identified at the Brook Street Bridge in the base slab, which will influence what can be considered, along with the surface mounted conduit along the bridge deck. We will advise you once we have the main report outputs available to us, which will allow informed consultation, which I anticipate to be in a May/June window”.

Minute 135/17 – With regard to a complaint by a resident about barriers on some footpaths causing obstructions to those using mobility scooters or who have pushchairs, Councillor Cooper has investigated potential barrier obstacles on the following footpaths/access point:

‘Little London’ from The Green to Silverbirch Avenue and Riverside Playing Field

Rook Tree Lane through to St Mary’s Church

Brook Street through to Hitchin Road Recreation Ground, to the side of the Bowls Club

Riverside Playing Field from the car park along Kingfisher Way

Mill Lane along Kingfisher Way

Baldock Road along Kingfisher Way

The Green – access to The Green behind the fenced play area

Photographs of these areas were circulated to Members. The footpaths of most concern are Brook Street, ‘Little London’ and access to Riverside Recreation Ground. Public Rights of Way Officer, Andrew Gwillam will be advised of our concerns and asked to make a visit to these sites to discuss potential improvements.

14/18 PIX BROOK PLAY AREA

Following complaints from residents about the quality of the grassed area within the Pix Brook Play Area, and reports that the soil has eroded in places, leaving poor quality surface and some exposed flint, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, the Handyman and Landscape Contractors had previously inspected the area.

It was reported that the erosion of surface is not considered a concern, and following two stone picks by the developers prior to handover of the area to the Town Council, there are very few stones which could be considered a hazard.

However, it was noted that the double gate for maintenance access is being used by those visiting the play area, and when the gate bolt into the ground is left dropped, it is causing a significant gouge in the footpath, thereby is considered a trip hazard.

RESOLVED that following inspection, this Committee does not feel that the minor soil erosion and few stones in the grassed area of the Pix Brook Play Area are not a concern and do not constitute a hazard. However, the double gate for maintenance access does have a trip hazard where the bolt securing it shut cuts into the footpath when left dropped. This gate will now be padlocked for maintenance access only, with pedestrians only using the pedestrian access gates.

15/18 REQUEST TO USE THE GREEN FOR PARKING – FRIENDS OF ST MARY’S CHURCH

Members considered a request from the Friends of St Mary’s Church to use The Green for parking for its annual Car Boot Sale on 14th July 2018 (was 7th but has been moved to avoid clash with the Church Summer Fete). Proceeds of the event will be used towards continuing restoration work on St Mary’s Church.

RESOLVED that the request from the Friends of St Mary’s Church to use The Green for parking on 14th July 2018 for their annual Car Boot Sale is approved, subject to the usual conditions regarding damage to surface and no clashes with football teams using the pitch.

16/18 USE OF THE GREEN – FAIR VISIT 2018

Members considered a request from James Dean Funfair to use The Green for two visits

- i) April – arrive Sunday 22nd, open Thursday 26th, Friday 27th, Saturday 28th and leave Sunday 29th
- ii) September – arrive Sunday 2nd, open Thursday 6th, Friday 7th, Saturday 8th and leave Sunday 9th

RESOLVED that the request from James Dean Funfair to use The Green for two visits in April and September 2018 is approved, subject to the usual conditions regarding damage to surface and no clashes with football teams using the pitch.

17/18 USE OF THE GREEN – CIRCUS VISIT 2018

Members considered a request from Circus Tyana to use The Green for their annual visit – 3rd to 10th June 2018. No details on opening/closing days as yet.

RESOLVED that the request from Circus Tyana to use The Green for their visit in June 2018 is approved, subject to the usual conditions regarding damage to surface and no clashes with football teams using the pitch.

18/18 USE OF MILLENNIUM GREEN, THE GREEN & FOOTBRIDGE

Members considered a request from Stotfold Mill Preservation Trust to use Millennium Green for parking for their annual Stotfold Mill Steam Fair & Country Show on Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th May. Car parking will be free of charge and will be marshalled. They would also like permission to use The Green as overflow parking, should the need arise. A request has been made for permission to use the temporary footbridge across the river from the car park in Millennium Green to Bury Meadow where the event is taking place. Full risk assessments will be provided to the Clerk.

Concern was expressed that the Trust appears to be continuously reusing an old letter of request, year after year, which is very out of date. This is in reference to their comment that ‘there is concern amongst the organisers that the ploughed section of the field behind St Mary’s will not be suitable for parking this year’. This field has not been ploughed for several years.

RESOLVED that permission is given for Stotfold Mill Preservation Trust to use Millennium green for parking for the 2018 Mill Steam Fair & Country Show on 12th and 13th May. They may also use The Green for overflow parking, if required, and also to use the temporary footbridge across the river between the car park and event field. They are to be asked to ensure that for future event requests, they ensure that they submit a letter with the correct, up to date information.

18/19 EXECUTIVE ACTION – ROSPA INSPECTION TRAINING & EXAM – HANDYMAN CONTRACTOR

Members were asked to approve executive action taken by the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, to book the Handyman on a ROSPA 2-day training course to inspect play equipment – Routine Visual Inspections RPII Level 1 & Operational Inspections RPII Level 2, £526.34, on 20th and 21st February 2018. The Handyman’s previous play inspection training certificate has now expired.

RESOLVED that the executive action taken by the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, to book the Handyman on a 2-day ROSPA training course to inspect play equipment on 20th

and 21st February, at £526.34 is approved. Funds from Open Spaces – Maintenance & Repairs budget.

19/18 LIGHTING COLUMNS – MILL LANE

At the last meeting, Members were asked by Stotfold Mill to consider sharing the cost of extending the number of street lamps further along Mill Lane. A quote has been obtained, and Members were asked to consider firstly whether they feel there is a need to extend the lighting along Mill Lane, and secondly, to consider the quote provided by our Street Lighting Contractor. To install x2 lighting columns, excavate trenches, supply cabling, ducting and liaise with UK Power Networks to connect electricity supply £5,540 plus vat.

Members discussed the safety aspects of adding to the stretch of lighting along Mill Lane, now that it has become more popular with walkers, and although it is a preferred Quiet Lane with less lighting and limited street signage and furniture, the benefits of lighting the tight corner along from the Mill were obvious.

RESOLVED that two new, single-headed lighting columns are to be connected to the last double-headed column on Mill Lane, beyond the Mill car park up to the road bend, in the direction of the Cemetery.

With regard to funds, the Clerk advised that by the end of the current financial year, there will be no funds available for this purpose in either the budget or the Earmarked Reserves due to the large street lighting electricity bill which must be met. It was therefore:

FURTHER RESOLVED that installation of the lighting columns is put on hold until the new financial year, the offer from Stotfold Mill to meet 50% of the costs is accepted, and Town Council will meet the other 50%.

20/18 ETONBURY GREEN WHEEL – ACTION PLAN

A copy of the Etonbury Green Wheel Action Plan has previously been circulated to Members, and highlights short, medium and long-term actions/projects, and which stakeholder has been identified as requiring to meet those actions. Members were asked to assess whether correct stakeholders against identified actions are correct.

Members agreed that all actions identified are to be met by the correct stakeholders, but made the following comments:

During early discussions about the Green Wheel, there was a suggestion that an information board could be installed in Common Road, near the orchard in Common Road Allotments which has been funded by the Eleemosynary Charity of William Field. This suggestion has not been included in the Masterplan or the Action Plan, but is something which the Charity could consider doing in the future.

4.5 in the Action Plan detailing the Astwick Community Green – this area is actually within Stotfold Parish, rather than Astwick, but Astwick Parish Meeting is happy to take this action on, and so we are in agreement.

RESOLVED that there all actions identified in the Green Wheel Action Plan are to be met by the correct stakeholders – Cliff Andrews of BRCC is to be advised as such.

21/18 GENERAL WORK

RESOLVED that the following is actioned as appropriate:

Central Beds Council - Highways

- Rook Tree Lane – cat 1 defect in road opposite no. 59

- Mill Lane – two cat 1 defects in road adjacent to Arc Progress. This whole road was programmed to be patched and then surfaced. Work is not finished. The length from the Mill to the junction with Queen Street/Rook Tree Lane has been ignored and needs attention now
- High Street – road hole previously reported, repaired badly, now cat 1 defect again, at no. 106.
- Public footpath from Church Road into the churchyard, between the Vicarage and the Roecroft Centre – several deep potholes
- The Green – series of road holes, outside no. 59
- Following several recent near misses of vehicles travelling from The Green into Regent Street, and those coming down Regent Street near the newly built houses by the Conservative Club, we request installation of double yellow lines on the corner of The Green, and Regent Street to avoid vehicles having to travel on the opposite side of the road to avoid parked cars

22/18 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

Councillor Mrs Hyde advised that the hedge between Millennium Green and Great Close Meadow has been flailed today.

She also advised that there have been recent problems with trail bikes using the bridleway at the end of Common Road, causing damage on fields and a hazard to dog walkers. There has also been unauthorised access through to the field behind the allotments, via the bridleway. The farmer has spoken with Andrew Gwillam, Public Rights of Way Officer about gating the bridleway, as the route is a public right of way. Mr Gwillam has agreed to a gate to prevent vehicular access and will also install a kissing gate. The Eleemosynary Charity of William Field will also be putting in a gate to their field adjacent to the allotments. Those who need vehicular access to the field and bridleway will be given a key.

The footpath at Wrayfields was re-routed incorrectly some time ago, and was shored up with wood, which is now falling into the adjacent ditch. The Public Rights of Way Officer is looking to rectify this problem, but support is also requested from this Council.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 8.32pm

CHAIRMAN

DATED