

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8TH NOVEMBER 2017 AT 7.18PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, STOTFOLD

Committee Members present: Mrs M Cooper
Mrs S Bundock Mrs A Clarey
A Cooper S Hayes
Mrs J Hyde J Talbot

Also present: 1 member of the public and the Town Clerk – Mrs K Elliott-Turner

127/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Collier and C Phelps.

128/17 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS ON MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE AGENDA

There were none. 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 time.

129/17 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES

None at this time.

130/17 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

Matters Arising

Minute 111/17 - Councillor Cooper advised that correspondence had been received from the Junior Football Club regarding the Hitchin Road Recreation Ground Changing Rooms, who appear to have misread our previous minutes where we were querying the appearance of the replacement purpose built changing room unit itself, not their workmanship should we have chosen to take them up on their offer to refurbish. We will be contacting them to clarify the misunderstanding.

131/17 NORTON ROAD – RESIDENTS PETITION

As referred from the November Council meeting, Members were previously provided with a copy of a petition from residents in Norton Road regarding primarily speeding, but also traffic noise nuisance, lack of access to public transport and unsafe footway surfaces. A large number of Norton Road residents had attended the November Council meeting and Members listened to their concerns. Members were asked to consider supporting the residents.

RESOLVED that this Council (as delegated to this Committee) supports the residents of Norton Road with their petition and the concerns contained therein. Forward a copy of the petition to Central Beds Council, advising that the residents attended a meeting of the Town Council, and that we put forward the following suggested actions:

- 1) That the residents set up a Speedwatch group for that particular area of town – this may have the added benefit of encouraging other groups to be set up elsewhere in the town where speeding is also an issue

- 2) Extend the 30mph speed limit to the county boundary sign, and provide clearer signage to reinforce the limit
- 3) To help reduce traffic speeds, introduce a new speed table in Norton Road
- 4) Request that Bedfordshire Police use mobile speed detector cameras in Norton Road and carry out appropriate enforcement
- 5) Request that Arriva provide bus stops in Norton Road, to serve the buses which already travel through – request for support to also go to Central Beds Council transportation team
- 6) Use the defined cyclist crossing on Norton Road and extend for pedestrian use, installation of Belisha beacons?

132/17 EXECUTIVE ACTION – PARKING ON THE GREEN

Members were asked to approve executive action taken by the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman to approve parking on The Green for the annual Stotfold Football Club Fireworks & Bonfire Display, Sunday 5th November 2017.

RESOLVED that executive action taken by the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman to approve parking on the Green for the Stotfold Football Club Fireworks & Bonfire Display on Sunday 5th November 2017 be approved.

133/17 FOOTPATH ADJACENT TO FORMER ROECROFT LOWER SCHOOL PLAYING FIELD

Members were asked to clarify whether this Council wishes to apply to make the footpath running adjacent to the former Roecroft Lower School playing field, from Church Road through to Home Close and beyond, a public right of way.

Councillor Mrs Clarey explained that she had produced a time line dating back to 2009 when Sustrans suggested that the footpath in question, known locally as the Old Brewery footpath, would connect St Mary's and Roecroft Lower Schools. She has copies of minutes and emails which show discussions regarding the application for this footpath to be added to the Definitive Map. She also has an email from Central Beds Council which says that our application is in a queue – that would be a 4/5 year wait so far! On the plus side, the two men at Central Beds Council who have been referred to in previous minutes/correspondence, both still work at the Council – Drew Gwillam, Public Rights of Way Officer and Adam Maciejewski, Senior Definitive Maps Officer.

RESOLVED that Adam Maciejewski is invited to Stotfold to discuss issues and re-start the application process to include the aforementioned footpath on the Definitive Map.

134/17 LAND ADJOINING DEVELOPMENT AT TAYLORS ROAD/ASPEN GARDENS

Developers have been granted planning approval for change of use of agricultural land to countryside recreation/informal open space, including soft landscaping, associated with planning approval to develop up to 95 dwellings on land to the rear of Silver Birch Avenue, South of Alder Green and Aspen Gardens. Members were asked to consider whether to recommend to Council that we take on ownership and maintenance of this area of open space/recreation land, once completed. A copy of the developer's plan and relevant sections of their Green Infrastructure Strategy for the land was provided for Members.

Members discussed the points for and against taking on this piece of open space, with positive comments including enabling protection against development; preservation of open spaces was the biggest thing highlighted in the Town Plan and Green Infrastructure Plan; it would complement

the Green Wheel plans for this area and Central Beds Council's Leisure Strategy for open space; and it had always been the wish of this Council to create a linear park along the River Ivel – a schedule was drawn up in 1935 and parts of this have been resurrected by the creation of Kingfisher Way and the work of the Green Wheel. Members expressed some concern over the potential cost of maintenance of this piece of land, however it was felt that the wish of residents for more open space in the town far outweighs the potential costs, which would be spread across the town's tax payers.

RECOMMENDED that this Council takes on the ownership and maintenance responsibility of the open space land adjacent to the approved development to the rear of Silver Birch Avenue, South of Alder Green and Aspen Gardens. The developers, Taylor Wimpey, and Central Beds Council are to be advised of our interest in this piece of land.

135/17 FOOTPATH BARRIERS

Last year we received correspondence from a resident concerned about obstacles on footways, such as zig-zag and other barriers, hedges, dropped kerbs, pavement gradients, affecting use of disability scooters, wheelchairs and pushchairs. At that time, the matter was considered by the Recreation Ground, Public Lands & Lighting Committee and the Town Plan Implementation Group. Overgrown hedges and footway surfaces were reported, and are continually reviewed and reported – letters are written to residents with overgrown hedges and poor footway surfaces are reported to Central Beds Council Highways team.

At the March 2017 Annual Town Meeting, the resident brought his concerns forward, and was assured by Central Beds Councillor Dixon that he would pass those concerns to the appropriate teams at Central Beds Council.

Members discussed other potential barriers/obstacles:

- Access from Riverside car park to the playing field – as this forms part of a public right of way, the Public Rights of Way Officer was looking to improve the entrance, but this has not happened. The Council could look at improving the surface by laying hard-core or paving slabs and when the car park is extended in the future, resurfacing the footpath entrance could be included. This will be included on a future agenda.
- Approved plans for the now developed Drovers Lane, included pedestrian access through to Riverside Playing Field. The footway goes up to the boundary, but no access has been created. As this land is in the ownership of Central Beds Council, but leased by the Town Council, a request would need to be made to create such access through the boundary.
- A request should be put to the Public Rights of Way Officer to look at improving the surface of the stretch of Kingfisher Way running through the Riverside Playing Field to 'Little London' footpath, as its bark surface is not considered suitable for wheelchairs, mobility scooters or buggies.
- There are concerns about the narrow width of the footway at the corner of The Green into Malthouse Lane and it is felt that the footway could be diverted to behind the trees on the corner, so that they act as a safety barrier between pedestrians and vehicles.

It was agreed that a new list of potential barriers/obstacles is to be drawn up, and that a test is made, preferably using a mobility scooter, of width of footways and potential barrier obstacles around the town.

RESOLVED that Councillor Cooper will investigate width of footways and potential barrier obstacles, and report to the Recreation Grounds, Public Lands & Lighting Committee, before forwarding to the Public Rights of Way Officer or Central Beds Council Highways team, as appropriate.

136/17 WILLOW TREE – CENTENARY WOOD

Following the last Teasel report highlighting their concerns regarding the large Willow tree at Centenary Wood, adjacent to Malthouse Lane, quotations have been obtained to carry out necessary work. They advise that the tree is in good health and no significant works are required, just removal of dead wood and reduction of limbs overhanging the road.

Quotations received:

- 4Seasons Specialist Tree Surgeons £240 plus vat
- A1 Tree Specialists £400

RESOLVED that the quote from 4Seasons Specialist Tree Surgeons at £240 plus vat is accepted.

137/17 BENCHES – THE GREEN

Further to a request at the last meeting, Members considered purchasing two benches to be sited at The Green. Quotations for backed seats and non-backed benches were provided to Members, some of which also include arms. Members were also asked to determine the location of the benches. Cost to install by the Handyman £50 per bench.

Quotations received – for one bench:

- Streetmaster (South Wales) Ltd – 1800 Colwyn seat with arms (includes ground anchor) £298 plus vat, plus £65 carriage
- Glasdon (as used in our Cemetery) – Countryside seat £467.63 plus vat, anchor kit £29.39 (free carriage)
- Glasdon Countryside bench (backless) £308.68 plus vat, anchor kit £29.39 (free carriage)
- EA Ltd – Forest-saver seat £388 plus vat (includes ground anchor), £48 carriage
- EA Ltd – Forest-saver bench (backless) £264 plus vat (includes ground anchor), £48 carriage

RESOLVED that x2 1800 Colwyn seats are purchased from Streetmaster Ltd at £596 plus vat, plus carriage, and are sited near the newly installed play equipment on the front boundary. The Handyman is to install the benches at £100 total, and funds are to come from the Maintenance & Repairs budget.

138/17 PIX BROOK PLAY AREA – MUGA FENCING

Members considered 3 quotes to increase the height of the MUGA fence – boundary with Pix Brook. Options to replace one length of the fence plus two returns to goal recess, or to replace both lengths plus four returns to goal recess. Members discussed whether it would be preferable to replace all sides at this point, rather than possibly having to come back to agree to put in more fencing at a later date, at a likely higher cost, as there may still be a problem with balls going over the low fence if only one side is replaced.

Quotations and options received:

- SportsCourts UK Ltd £5,382 plus vat (remove and replace 1 side and 2 returns)
- SportsCourts UK Ltd £10,764 plus vat (remove and replace 2 sides and 4 returns)

- Miracle Design & Play Ltd £15,079.36 plus vat (remove and replace 1 side and 2 returns)
- Farm & Country Supplies Ltd £14,890 plus vat (remove and replace 1 side and 2 returns)

RESOLVED that the quote from SportsCourts UK Ltd to replace two sides and 4 returns at £10,764 plus vat is accepted. Should there be additional costs for security fencing, this is also approved, as required. Funds from Earmarked Reserves – Rec Rolling Improvement Fund.

139/17 GREEN WHEEL MINUTES

Copies of the minutes of the last Green Wheel meeting held on 20th October 2017 were circulated to Members.

Councillor Mrs Clarey advised that the Green Wheel consultation period is now over, and the document is now with Caroline Romans at Central Beds Council. Officers there will approve the draft document which will then go back out for public consultation and approval at Town Council level.

140/17 GENERAL WORK

RESOLVED that the following is actioned as appropriate:

Highways

- Road hole outside 36 The Green
- X5 street lights out on A507/C131 (Hitchin Road)
- Street lights out by Fairfield Gardens building site, going towards Dickens Boulevard
- Road hole at 19 Church Road – previously reported, now bigger
- Deep hole on edged footway at Fish & Chip shop on Regent Street
- Deep road hole at 105 High Street – previously reported, not yet repaired
- High Street – either side of Vega Fish & Chip shop, gulleys are not clearing water, despite them being cleaned 3 to 4 weeks ago

Town Council Lighting Contractor

- S1 Hazel Grove has been out for the last three weeks

141/17 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

Councillor Talbot advised that he had recently met with Aragon Housing regarding the land adjacent to Pix Brook on Brook Street. Fencing and paving slabs will be laid by Aragon in due course. Thanks were given to Councillor Talbot for chasing and meeting with Aragon Housing.

Councillor Mrs Cooper reminded Members that the Orchards East event takes place this Saturday at Fairfield Community Hall between 10am and 3pm. Entrance is by registering online only.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55pm

CHAIRMAN

DATED