

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15TH JANUARY 2020 AT 7.12PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE
CENTRE, STOTFOLD**

Committee Members present: Mrs M Cooper (Chairman)

Mrs S Bundock	Mrs A Clarey
A Cooper	Mrs J Hyde
C Phelps	J Talbot

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

1/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Collier and S Hayes.

2/20 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 point.

3/20 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSE

None present.

4/20 CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

Matters Arising

Minute 121/19:

Central Beds Council – Highways

- Drainage clearance and footway surface sweeping is required at the Brook Street/Coppice Mead junction.
Reported to CBC ref. 333287 04/12/19 Progress chased: They have stated it will be dealt with on their next gully clearance in the area. A timetable has been requested. Chased 20/12/19 and was told it had been scheduled for 03/12/19. Someone will come back to me to confirm that was done. 06/01/20 Rang CBC Highways and they said this should have been completed.
- Rook Tree Lane (particularly by the school) and The Green – there is a large amount of fallen leaf debris causing drain blockage and slippery surface hazards.
Reported to CBC ref. 333288 04/12/19- Chased- Biffa have checked the drain which needed no further action. The leaf clearance has been passed to Waste Services ref. 19-067081 for the job to be done. 04/01/20 chased: job was signed off as completed 17/12/19

Members noted that the last report of drains having being cleared in Rook Tree Lane is incorrect, as they are still blocking with water.

Minute 128/19:

Central Beds Council – Highways/Public Rights of Way

- X3 drains on the High Street, outside Peking House Chinese takeaway are full of silt.
Reported 20/12/19 Ref. 334512 for drain outside Peking House, ref. 334513 for further two drains.

Update: Highways plan to inspect the site during the next instance of significant rainfall (that takes place during working hours) and decide on the best course of action. 06/01/2020

- X2 drains in Howard Close, which should drain into Pix Brook, are not on the Highways Area Steward's map of drains. Some months ago, he confirmed they would be added and then cleared; However they still remain blocked.

Reported 20/12/19 to Nick Carafalo regarding this issue also. He asked for a plan to show where the gullies are, and he will arrange for them to be cleaned out and plotted on their asset database. Office has advised – left hand side going into Howard Close, and directly in line on left hand side before crossing the road to the bridge. 10/1/20 Nick Carafalo has reported that this is an unadopted road, which is why the gullies have not been cleared. Howard Cottage Housing Association has been contacted to ask them to get the drained unblocked

- Footpath from High Street to The Crofts and Alexander Road – green bollard has been knocked over and is now nearly out of the ground

Reported 20/12/19 ref. 334516. Chased 07/01/19: No further update yet

5/20 RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELD – KINGFISHER WAY LIGHTING COLUMNS

Following committee's request for the first two columns in the row of lights along the Riverside Playing Field part of Kingfisher Way, car park end, to be fixed and the lantern heads to be turned around to face the recreation area, this work has been completed. Our lighting contractor has noted that there are two additional lighting columns, near the MUGA, which have not worked for some time, and require complete lantern replacement and re-wiring. Members considered a quote from TCS Electricals at £500 plus vat.

RESOLVED that the quote from TCS Electricals at £500 plus vat to supply, wire and fit x2 new 10watt LED lanterns to the brackets of the two lighting columns nearest the MUGA is accepted.

6/20 DIRECTIONAL SIGN – HIGH STREET TO GREENACRE CENTRE

Members considered a quote from Central Beds Council (and their contractor) to supply and install a new post and directional sign for the Greenacre Centre, to be positioned on the High Street. It was felt that two more signs were required – on Hitchin Road directing into the Greenacre development, and on Tansy Avenue, just off the Norton Road/A507 roundabout directing into the Greenacre development. The wording for the proposed sign is 'The Greenacre Centre'; members requested additional wording 'Town Council'.

RESOLVED that the quote to supply and install a new post and directional sign for the Greenacre Centre and Town Council offices at £168.96 plus vat is accepted – for the High Street sign. The Clerk is given delegated powers to purchase and have fitted two further signs for either end of the Greenacres development, as noted above. Costs to be reported to the next appropriate meeting.

7/20 HITCHIN ROAD RECREATION GROUND – TREES OVERHANGING PITCH

Following a request considered at the last meeting from Stotfold Junior Football Club for trees overhanging the pitch area to be cut back, quotes were considered.

RESOLVED that the quote from A1 Tree Specialists at £320 to cut back lateral branches of x4 Cherry trees overhanging the football pitch, and shape and balance remaining lateral branches, is accepted.

Members noted that the second tree in from the road, right hand side, looks like it has canker. Our Landscape Contractor is asked to inspect and remove branches if appropriate or advise if a tree surgeon is required to carry out work.

8/20 ARLESEY ROAD – UPDATE ON PROVISION OF NEW COMMUNITY USE MUGA

The Clerk and Councillor Saunders have met with Central Beds Council’s Assistant Building Surveyor – Minor Projects and the Head of Facilities Management to discuss the S106 funded project to provide a new community use MUGA for Arlesey Road. A location has been determined (plan provided for members), and meetings have been held with PlayInnovation, who previously presented ideas to committee on a MUGA facility.

It was previously intended that this project would follow a Framework Agreement, however further to discussions with Central Beds Council, a Direct Contract approach is being taken. Central Beds Council will oversee the project on behalf of the Town Council, with Conamar who will act as principal contractor, novating services of PlayInnovation.

Central Beds Council’s Surveyor has submitted an application for planning, and PlayInnovation have produced an indicative design, based on the requirements identified by this committee. A copy of the indicative design was circulated to members – this is subject to change, depending on budget and cost of design. Members were very pleased with the proposals, and suggested to aid costs, the front and part-side sections of fencing around the MUGA could be lowered to half height. Concerns were expressed regarding the blocks which can be used as seating as they felt that the hard corners might be a hazard, and suggested replacing with shaped seats, or serpentine flowing seating. This will be forwarded to PlayInnovation.

9/20 PLAY EQUIPMENT CONSULTATION

The Clerk gave a brief presentation on the play equipment consultation findings, and circulated reports outlining the condition and age of existing play equipment, the detailed consultation responses and examples of play equipment requested in the consultation.

The Council’s recently adopted Corporate Strategic Plan identifies our aim to increase recreational activities for all age groups, to encourage healthy lifestyles and wellbeing of our residents. The Plan outlines our aim to enhance play equipment with good quality, high play value, equipment to our younger residents. A programme of refurbishment/replacement of older play equipment is to be produced under our Forward Plan timetable of ‘current to March 2023’, with a high priority. Funding opportunities are to be explored.

Rather than identifying play equipment to suit budgets available or physical space we have available, it is important to understand what the value to children might be, and then produce a design/programme to fit around that key point.

Key design elements that can enhance high play value include the ability to understand the environment through use of natural elements such as mud, water, moveable parts, variable landform; provide for fitness and challenges such as balancing, jumping, climbing and running; being creative - enhanced by moving parts, different textures, materials, heights, vegetation

and varying landform; educational exploration of shapes, sizes, numbers and movement; and providing a social space for small and large-scale interactions.

Areas with play equipment within the Council's current responsibility:

Hitchin Road Recreation Ground

The Green

Riverside Playing Field

Pix Brook Play Area

Members were reminded that this committee's Rolling Programme identifies play areas requiring development, however the last review of this document was in 2013, and will require further review to ensure it meets the Corporate Plan aims.

The results of the consultation found that the most popular items children said they like to use are swings, zipwire, slides and climbing – which includes monkey bars, climbing frames, spider-type climbers (known as 'witches hats'). Other items noted were roundabouts, seesaws, balancing beams, sandpits and most popular with parents - a splash park.

Examples of some of the comments from parents, grandparents, carers included:

- more inclusive play on other play park sites – a reference to the inclusive play equipment already provided at Hitchin Road Rec
- wooden traditional equipment
- more adventure playground/adventure trail type equipment
- play equipment that works for all ages so it grows with the child
- 'we would love a splash park'

Any refurbishment, replacement or provision of new play equipment requires funding. Members were reminded of the current sums held in Earmarked Reserves for such purposes. There are also S106 funds available to claim from Central Beds Council and other external funding sources such as grants or matched funding.

Members were asked to take away the information from the presentation and the consultation findings, and for a future meeting to consider which items might need replacing/updating, which play areas this should apply to, whether we wish to add completely new equipment to enhance what already exists, the age range of children this should cover, and how we will be enhancing the play value of our play areas.

10/20 GENERAL WORK

RESOLVED that the following is actioned:

Central Beds Council - Ecologist

- To inspect and advise on what the plant is growing on the banks of the Riverside Playing Field and adjacent field heading north. Question if it is bamboo, and if this is positive or negative on wildlife and river invertebrates

Handyman/Landscape Contractor

- Riverside Playing Field – the area under the Willows by the river needs clearing of litter and overgrowth
- Riverside Playing Field – collect the fallen kissing gate from Kingfisher Way access to the playing field, which is in the car park – the office is to chase the Public Rights of Way team for its replacement, and advise that we hold the gate
- Brook Street – on the cycleway, where the brook goes under the road, on the northern side of the road there is a sycamore sapling growing out into the cycleway – please remove

11/20 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

As Church Warden, Councillor Mrs Hyde advised that with regard to the requested footpath through the churchyard, linking public rights of way, a Faculty has now been granted by the Diocesan Board, giving permission for the construction of the footpath through the church grounds. This has been forwarded to Central Beds Council. Following the Highways Area Steward's agreement to surplus tarmac from highways works being deposited in the church car park, this is now looking much better.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.33pm

CHAIRMAN

DATED