

4th July 2017

Minutes of the proceedings of the **AMENITIES COMMITTEE** meeting held on this day in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, WOKINGHAM** from 7:30pm to 9:27pm.

PRESENT

Cllrs N J Campbell-White (Chairman), C R George, Ms L Forbes, T J Lack, C D Moore and M L Richards

IN ATTENDANCE

Amenities Officer (AO)
Buildings and Grounds Officer (B&GO)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from:

Cllr M A Ashwell (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr P M Lucey (The Mayor)
Cllr S Odedra

MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interests from members.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC (Agenda Item 3)

There were no questions from councillors or members of the public.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 4)

It was proposed by Cllr Ms L Forbes and seconded by Cllr T J Lack and it was

**RESOLVED
29572**

that the minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on 1st March 2017 (pages 15365 to 15371) be received as a true and correct record and they be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

MONITORING REPORT (Agenda Item 5)

The AO and B&GO updated the Committee on how the work to deal with the items on the monitoring report dated 27th June 2017 is progressing.

Item 88: the AO said he has been approached unofficially by Wokingham Horticultural Association (WHA). It is considering the purchase of a bench to commemorate a past president Mrs Gwen Hardwick. The AO has suggested installing such a bench by Glebelands Road/ Clare Avenue, subject to



Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) approval. The purchase of the bench is to be considered by the WHA committee at its 6th July 2017 meeting.

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

Item 103: this matter will be dealt with under agenda item 6.

Item 104: the AO said that he has obtained a price to hire free-standing white picket fences for use around the main Christmas tree of £800 per annum. The same fences can be purchased outright for a similar amount. The AO is investigating a number of potential solutions in regard to the storage of the fences.

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

Item 105: the B&GO has not yet heard from WBC about possible funding for a hard-standing footpath behind Morrisons supermarket, Woosehill.

ACTION: BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS OFFICER

Item 106: Cllr T J Lack said that the ownership of the trees in the far corner of St. Paul's Gate allotment site is unclear. It is considered that the likely cost of reducing the height of these trees would outweigh the lost income from taking one or two plots out of productive use. The AO was instructed to remove this item from the monitoring report.

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

Item 107: this matter will be dealt with under agenda item 14.

Item 108: the B&GO said that the existing entry keypads on the external Town Hall doors can be programmed with multiple codes. He explained that he is in discussion with the Information Centre Officer about the most practical way of managing this for regular and occasional hirers.

The B&GO said that establishing group codes for Wokingham Town Council (WTC) councillors, staff and market traders et al could be a way forward. He was asked to provide a detailed update at the next Amenities Committee meeting.

ACTION: BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS OFFICER

Item 109: this matter will be dealt with under agenda item 9.

Items 101/110: the AO said that as the Mulberry Grove allotment site should be handed over to WTC early in 2018 a concerted effort to attract allotment tenants from the housing development has begun.

The AO attended a recent evening event sponsored by WBC. He has posted advertising leaflets through the letterboxes of all occupied dwellings at Mulberry Grove. Copies of this leaflet have been given to Crest Nicholson's on-site marketing manager to include in its welcome pack for new purchasers. The availability of plots has been advertised on WBC's Mulberry Grove Facebook page. From early August 2017 WTC's in-house marketing channels will be used to further promote the plots.

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

The AO advised that the Town Clerk is in discussion with WBC about the arrangements for the legal transfer of ownership of the site to WTC.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK



Councillors were insistent that Crest Nicholson should be bound to make good any significant faults pertaining to services, land and infrastructure in the early months subsequent to handover.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

The AO said that a greater concern could be the set-up of the site at handover. He was instructed to ensure the set-up arrangements will be as previously agreed by WTC councillors, especially with regard to the condition of the soil. At present Crest Nicholson is using the allotment site as its works compound.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK/ AMENITIES OFFICER

Councillors said that they will intervene directly with WBC officers if the AO feels that the set-up arrangements are falling short of WTC's requirements. They expressed their concern about soil contamination from rubble, diesel and chemicals.

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

Item 111: the AO said that this matter will be attended to in September 2017. Councillors rightly pointed out that watering the whips after installation is crucial to their long term health.

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

GRAFFITI WORKING PARTY (Agenda Item 6)

Cllr Ms L Forbes said that the inaugural meeting of the Graffiti Working Party (GWP) is set for 5th July 2017.

Councillors expressed their disappointment with the police response when set against expectations at the beginning of the year.

The AO reported the positive action taken by many organizations and businesses in removing graffiti from the exterior walls of their premises.

He suggested that live recording cameras could be installed on the buildings on both sides of Luckley Path to deter and, if necessary, record further instances of graffiti to the walls of Subway and M and Co. He was instructed to investigate the feasibility of this and to proceed if the cost is deemed by him to be affordable.

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

Cllr C R George said that it may be possible to link one of these proposed cameras to Subway's current camera set-up.

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

Cllr C R George also said that cameras he owns may be suitable.

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

The Chairman thanked the AO for his work in dealing with graffiti around the town centre.

The GWP was asked to consider dealing with graffiti across the wider town and what stance to take with graffiti on private dwellings.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF ELMS FIELD PLAY AREA (Agenda Item 7)

The B&GO said that the start date for the development of Elms Field has been delayed.



Cllr N J Campbell-White undertook to ask Cllr J P Mirfin (WBC, Regeneration) about this as well as WBC's response regarding WTC's play area feedback.

ACTION: CLLR N J CAMPBELL-WHITE

AMENITIES COMMITTEE SPENDING 2017-18 YEAR TO DATE (Agenda Item 8)

The relevant extract from the 2017-2018 budget detail by centre report dated 30th April 2017 was received and considered.

The Chairman asked councillors, if on reading through the budget detail they had queries about any item, that they seek clarification from the Responsible Finance Officer or BGO or AO as appropriate, before the meeting.

The AO confirmed that a refund of £810 nett from Gala Lights has been received. Therefore, its final invoice for the provision of Christmas lights will now be settled (code 101/4515).

AMENITIES COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES (Agenda Item 9)

Cllr T J Lack provided an additional category of objective for councillors to consider, which he called 'look and feel'. The AO was instructed to incorporate this into the committee's other objectives and to circulate to members prior to the next committee meeting.

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

TOWN HALL EXTERIOR LIGHTING PROJECT (Agenda Item 10)

Report 05/2017-2018 dated 27th April 2017 from the Town Clerk was received and considered.

The B&GO confirmed that ground level uplighters for the Town Hall will be installed during the Market Place improvements works. Additional electrical points will also be installed. He said he is confident that external lighting of the upper floor of the Town Hall can be fed from the building's existing electricity supply. This should remove the need for any subsequent excavation.

The councillors want to include exterior lighting for the upper floor of the Town Hall on the Amenities five year plan with an approximate cost of £45,000. It is hoped that funding for this work will be approved by the Finance and Personnel committee within the next two years.

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

RECONSIDER PROPOSED MARKET RELOCATION FEES (Agenda Item 11)

The B&GO said that the Amenities Committee's proposal to reduce the fees charged to market traders by 20%, with conditions attached to this reduction, has been challenged to the Market Working Party. The B&GO felt that this arrangement would not best support WTC's efforts to encourage its current market traders to remain loyal whilst the area around the Town Hall is improved. He reported that traders were anxious about losing business whilst retailing from a temporary secondary location for many months.

The B&GO said that he is concerned that if stallholders do experience a significant reduction in their turnover some may decide it is not economic to



continue. He pointed out that WTC's current fees are more than double those of Newbury's.

Cllr N J Campbell-White said that WTC's overriding concern must be that the existing traders continue to use Wokingham markets.

It was proposed by Cllr N J Campbell-White and seconded by Cllr Ms L Forbes and it was

**RESOLVED
29573**

- (a) to reduce all existing market fees by 50% whilst the markets are relocated from Market Place.
- (b) To return fees to their pre-move levels when the markets come back to Market Place.

ACTION: BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS OFFICER/ RESPONSIBLE FINANCE OFFICER

WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL'S RISK REGISTER (Agenda Item 12)

The relevant extract from WTC's operational risk register dated June 2016 was received and considered. The B&GO said that WTC is duty bound to review its risk register annually.

Councillors discussed all identified risks with a total score of six or above.

It was proposed by Cllr Ms L Forbes and seconded by Cllr T J Lack and it was

**RESOLVED
29574**

that the Amenities element of WTC's operational risk register accurately identifies and grades the potential disruption WTC could face.

POTENTIAL PROJECTS AND FUNDING REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2018-19 (Agenda Item 13)

The Chairman invited councillors to consider what projects and work the Amenities Committee should ask the Finance and Personnel Committee to fund in financial year 2018/19.

The AO said that an agreed, prioritized list needs to be arrived at by the November 2017 Amenities Committee meeting.

The B&GO said that:

- that the surface of the play area at Joel Park will need to be replaced in the near future
- the three Town Hall boilers may need replacing in the near future – at the recent service the engineer recommended that these twelve year old boilers be replaced. Another opinion is being sought: if replacement is the most economic option a cost of £25,000 is thought to be likely
- that it is necessary to establish a much safer route to the roof of the building – at present this involves crawling along a difficult path whenever flags have to be flown: estimated cost £5,000

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

The AO was instructed to amend the five year plan as follows:

- add resurface the play area at King George V Playing Field - £6,000
- remove Christmas lights for Howard Palmer Gardens



- increase the estimated cost of air conditioning for the Town Hall staff offices to £6,000
- move to 2019/20 the extension of the play area at Joel Park

ACTION: AMENITIES OFFICER

The requirements of Woosehill Community Hall are to be fully explored at the 13th September 2017 Amenities Committee meeting.

ACTION: BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS OFFICER

MAIN HALL REDECORATION WORKING PARTY (Agenda Item 14)

The B&GO said that the Main Hall Redecoration Working Party will hold its next meeting on 6th July 2017. At this it is planned to decide on paint colours for the walls, dado rails and skirting boards. These will be presented to the Amenities Committee for approval at its 12th September 2017 meeting.

ACTION: BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS OFFICER

The B&GO said that he has received an indicative price of £7,000 for the removal, storage and return of the chairs, artefacts and paintings. Storage in a temperature controlled facility is a prerequisite.

The Chairman advised that the large mirror in the main hall will remain in situ during the redecoration works.

The B&GO said that work is scheduled to start shortly after 13th January 2018 and will last for six to eight weeks.

AMENITIES COMMITTEE INFORMATION (Agenda Item 15)

There were no matters raised for inclusion on the 12th September 2017 Amenities Committee meeting agenda.

The meeting closed at 9:27pm.

CHAIRMAN

