

CREWKERNE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the AMENITIES COMMITTEE held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Crewkerne on Monday 12 November 2018 at 7.06 p.m.

PRESENT:

Cllrs. Mrs R. Jackson (Chairman), C. Aslett, M. Best, P. Bradly, B. Hodgson, Miss K. Pritchard, Mrs A. Singleton, N. Sturtivant and D. Wakeman.

In attendance: Town Clerk Mr P. Davidson, Deputy Clerk Ms L. Gowers, Amenities Operations Manager Mr M. Jay and 5 members of the public.

26 TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

18/19

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Mrs K. Head (personal), R. Pailthorpe (unwell) and Mrs A. Stuart (personal).

27 OPEN FORUM

18/19

- **Crewkerne in Bloom**: a member of the Crewkerne in Bloom group reported that a drop-in event was arranged for 28 November, between 2.30 p.m. - 4.30 p.m. at Bilby's, to highlight the group's achievements and future plans. She also asked for the Town Council's support in entering the town for the South West in Bloom competition.
- **Barn Street recreation ground**: a resident expressed his opinion that the Barn Street recreation ground should remain a dog-free area. He also pointed out that the "no dogs" signs needed to be replaced. With respect to the wayleave funding received linked to the installation of a gas main, he reminded the Council that there was an intent to use this funding to make good the recreation ground wall bordering Tower Hill Road.
- **Gullies**: a resident pointed out that the recent rain had highlighted that the gullies in Market Street and the bottom of Church Street were blocked.

28 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

18/19

It was **AGREED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Amenities Committee held on Monday 10 September 2018 be **APPROVED**.

29 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

18/19

Cllr. Mrs Jackson declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 8 (circular path at Henhayes).

The following Councillors declared a personal interest in the Aqua Centre-related elements of agenda item 5 (Project and Works report): Cllrs. Best, Mrs Jackson, Mrs Singleton and Sturtivant.

Cllr. Mrs Singleton declared a personal interest in the GRC-related element of agenda item 5 (Project and Works report).

Cllrs. Best and Mrs Singleton declared a personal interest in agenda item 10 (Christmas lights for Market Street).

30 **PROJECT AND WORKS REPORT**

18/19 **To receive the November 2018 report**

The key points of discussion on the November 2018 Project and Works report were as follows:

Projects

- Bincombe Beeches nature reserve: Cllr. Miss Pritchard reported that the disabled-related fencing and signage alterations at the Beechwood Drive entrance were expected to be carried out in the near future. The Bincombe Management Committee were in the early stages of investigating a proposal for a fitness trail at Bincombe and their recommendation was that the community should be consulted to assess the level of support for such a project.
- Sports pitches: Cllr. Mrs Singleton reported that a positive meeting had been held with Wadham school on potential pitch improvements. The school would be getting quotes to manage the badger and rabbit problem. In addition, Mr Hannis, the SSDC representative at the meeting, was drafting a community use agreement document. Commitment to this agreement would be a pre-requisite to release of any S106 funding.

Cllr. Aslett questioned whether the newly erected perimeter fencing at Wadham posed potential access issues. In response, the Chairman emphasised that the community use agreement would need to address the presence of the fencing. The Chairman also noted that the Wadham tennis courts were now also fenced in.

Cllr. Miss Pritchard made the point that Maiden Beech academy were in need of new changing facilities. In response, Cllr. Mrs Singleton emphasised that the S106 funding was specifically for sports pitches and that it had already been determined that the Maiden Beech pitches were used to capacity.

- CCTV system upgrade: Cllr. Best reported that he had finally had a reply from the Home Office, which had directed him towards the Police & Crime Commissioner. His next step was therefore to approach the Commissioner.
- Relocation of bus stop: Cllr. Mrs Singleton reported that the funding ringfenced by the County Council for bus stop relocation was now £40,000. She suggested that, if Highways were not going to progress the safety audit of the South Street/Market Street junction through a Small Improvement Scheme, then some of the ringfenced funding could be used to fund the necessary safety audit work. Councillors supported this approach and the Clerk was instructed to write to Highways with this proposal.
- Millers Garage: Cllr. Best reported that Cllr. Pailthorpe and himself had attended a meeting with the residents of Wyvern Court regarding the proposed car park. He explained that the residents had expressed their concern about the design of the proposed fencing between the car park and Wyvern Court and that he had fed these concerns back to the Planning authority.

Councillors expressed their disappointment at the lack of progress of the Millers Garage car park scheme planning application. It was therefore agreed that the Clerk should write to SSDC to urge them to accelerate progress.

Maintenance

- Town Hall: the Amenities Operations Manager reported that a contractor had recently assessed the problem of damp in the Town Hall. His report was due shortly, together with a quotation for remedial work.
- Falkland Square public toilets: the Chairman pointed out that the public toilets had been added to the list of maintenance issues as they were now in a poor state of repair and in need of major refurbishment. She added that this would need to be a consideration for the future Council.
- War memorial plaque in Falkland Square: Councillors expressed disappointment that the brass war memorial plaque in Falkland Square had apparently not been cleaned prior to the recent commemoration. In response, the Amenities Operations Manager pointed out that the plaque appeared to have a coating on it which meant that it could not be polished. The Clerk was asked to confirm that maintenance of the plaque was a Council responsibility and if so, to add this to the schedule of other maintenance work.

31 BARN STREET RECREATION GROUND

18/19

- a) To consider rescinding the current “no dogs” policy

After discussion, it was **AGREED that the Barn Street recreation ground would remain as a “no dogs” area.**

- b) To consider the purchase of new and replacement facilities

After discussion, it was **AGREED to approve the following enhancements to the Barn Street recreation ground:**

- **Replacement gate for the south eastern corner of the recreation ground, at a cost of £495.**
- **Erection of a handrail at the steps at the northern entrance to the recreation ground, at a cost of £188.**
- **Purchase of two disabled-friendly picnic benches, at a total cost of £976 (+ VAT).**
- **Purchase of a recycling waste bin, at a cost of £400 (+ VAT).**

Funds to be taken from the ‘Barn Street recreation ground’ Earmarked Reserves.

Councillors noted the earlier comment from a member of the public about missing “no dogs” signs and the Clerk was asked to arrange for replacement signs to be put in place.

The Chairman pointed out that Cllr. Sturtivant had put forward a suggestion of installing a barbecue pit in the recreation ground. She had asked the Deputy Clerk to undertake some research on this proposal.

Cllr. Best asked for clarification of the state of the wall/banking bordering Tower Hill Road. In response, the Amenities Operations Manager reported that the wall/banking was in a good condition, with no evidence of sliding and clear signs that the vegetation had stabilised the banking.

32 **BADGERS AT HAPPY VALLEY**

18/19

- a) To consider whether the next steps in ensuring that badgers do not encroach on the sandpit play area

The Deputy Clerk reported that the process of closing the badger sett in the sandpit play area was underway and would be complete on 23 November. It would then be necessary to destroy the sett as soon as possible after this date. The contractor involved in sett closure had provided a quotation for destruction of the sett.

It was **AGREED to authorise Blackdown Environmental to undertake the work necessary to destroy the badger sett in the sandpit play area, at their quoted cost of £848 (+ VAT).**

Regarding the next step of ensuring that badgers did not return to the sandpit play area, Councillors noted that the Deputy Clerk had investigated options with two parties. After a short discussion, it was **AGREED to instruct the Somerset Badger Group to badger proof around the edge of the sandpit where the badgers had excavated, through removal of the boulders, sand and turf around the edge of the sandpit and the laying of galvanised wire mesh to deter future excavation, at a cost of approximately £200 (+ VAT) for mini-digger hire and £250 (+ VAT) for materials and on the understanding that the services of Somerset Badger group would be provided free of charge.**

Cllr. Miss Pritchard asked about the situation regarding the alleged poisoning of pets at Happy Valley. The Deputy Clerk advised that the police had been informed and were investigating the allegation.

- b) To consider the wider issue of the damage being caused by badgers at Happy Valley and whether there are options to address the issue

Cllr. Wakeman pointed out that the play equipment in the sandpit play area was now old and coming towards the end of its life. In addition, sand as a material for the play area had significant shortcomings. This therefore needed to be factored into any future considerations.

Councillors were in agreement that, because a person was feeding the badgers, the population was likely to be higher than would naturally be the case. Given this, it was agreed that communicating with residents was key. The Clerk confirmed that the latest issue of the Council newsletter contained an article on the badger problem.

33 **CIRCULAR PATH AT HENHAYES**

18/19 To further consider a proposal from ABCD for a circular path around Henhayes recreation ground

Cllr. Mrs Jackson pointed to the Clerk's report, which highlighted that the Council had undertaken a considerable amount of work when the proposed path was first considered. She also pointed out on a plan of Henhayes those areas which had changed since that time, including:

- The positioning of the storage containers, which were now behind the dead ball line of the rugby pitch.
- The installation of a soakaway drain adjacent to the dead ball line of the rugby pitch next to the car park.
- The addition of floodlights.

At this point, Cllr. Mrs Jackson left the room and Cllr. Wakeman chaired this agenda item.

Cllr. Mrs Singleton made the following points:

- Members of ABCD had visited an equivalent recreation ground perimeter path at Merriott and had been impressed by how well the path there had been implemented and how well used the path was.
- ABCD recognised that there were pinch points around Henhayes but believed that options could be considered.
- With this in mind, ABCD's recommendation was that a working group was formed, involving the key stakeholders, to assess the feasibility of a perimeter path at Henhayes.

Councillors gave their support to this recommendation and it was **AGREED to form a working group to assess the feasibility of a perimeter path around Henhayes.**

Cllrs. Aslett and Wakeman kindly volunteered to be involved in the working group.

Cllr. Mrs Jackson re-joined the meeting and resumed chairmanship.

34 HANGING BASKETS AND BEDDING PLANTS

18/19 To approve expenditure for summer hanging baskets and bedding plants

After discussion, it was **AGREED to approve the purchase of summer hanging baskets and bedding plants as outlined in the Clerk's report.**

Cllr. Mrs Singleton noted the comment made earlier by the Crewkerne in Bloom representative about the proposal that the town should enter the South West in Bloom competition and asked that this be brought to the Council as an agenda item.

35 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS FOR MARKET STREET

18/19 To approve the purchase of a set of replacement Christmas lights for a section of the west side of Market Street

Councillors acknowledged the generous donation from the Christmas Committee towards replacement of a section of the Christmas lights for Market Street.

It was **AGREED to approve the purchase from Festive Lighting of a replacement set of Christmas lights covering the section of lighting on the west side of Market Street from the Nationwide building to the junction with West Street, at their quoted cost of £1,347.20 (+ VAT).**

36 CORRESPONDENCE

18/19 To consider correspondence received from the Henhayes Centre regarding banners on the Lucombe Oak fencing

The Clerk reported that the Henhayes Centre had queried CSYAL's use of the Lucombe oak fencing to advertise events and had asked whether other organisations were also allowed to place advertising on the fencing.

The Chairman pointed out that the Council had considered previously a request from CSYAL to place an advertising banner on the Lucombe oak fencing. The Council had supported their request, on the basis both that it was in the Council's interests to support

the financial viability of CSYAL and the fact that banners displayed directly on the GRC building were not visible from the road.

Councillors were not minded to allow any other organisations to place banners on the Lucombe oak fencing, as this would open up the potential for a free-for-all.

37 **TO RECEIVE SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES AND WORKING GROUP NOTES**

18/19

a) Bincombe Management Committee meeting held on 6 November 2018

Noted.

b) Crewkerne Aqua Centre bi-monthly meeting held on 5 November 2018

Noted.

c) The George Reynolds Centre bi-monthly meeting held on 17 September 2018

Noted.

38 **TO RECEIVE ANY MATTERS OF REPORT**

18/19

None.

39 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

18/19

Monday 14 January 2019 after the Planning and Highways Committee meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.24 p.m.

Signed:

Dated: