

ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 4th June 2015 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room at Royal Wootton Bassett Rugby Club, Ballards Ash, Royal Wootton Bassett.

PRESENT: Councillors: Susan Doyle, Linda Frost and Janet Georgiou.

Also in Attendance: Councillors Mike Farrow, Ian Ferries and Paul Heaphy (late).

Officers in Attendance: Johnathan Bourne, Town Clerk, Michelle Temple, Administrative Team Leader, John MacIndoe, Grounds Maintenance Team Leader, Andy Clinch, Grounds Maintenance Team, Emily Maiden, Administrative Assistant.

4. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mary Champion, Jai Cunningham, Sue Hughes, Mike Leighfield and John Wilks.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with sections 10 and 12 of Wiltshire Council's Members Code of Conduct, as adopted by Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council at a meeting held on 12th July 2012.

RESOLVED to note that no Declarations of Interest were made.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked the Grounds Maintenance Team for all the hard work that they undertook to assist with the clearance and re-opening of the Woodshaw Green play area. Many compliments have been received from residents who have been very impressed with the upgrade of the play area.

7. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED to confirm and sign Minutes of meetings of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 5th March 2015 (A/6/2014-2015), and Thursday 28th May 2015 (A/1/2015-2016), copies previously circulated.

8. LITTER REPORT

The Committee received the latest copy of the Litter Report from the Grounds Maintenance Team and were pleased to note that there were no call-outs for any extra litter removal or incidents of vandalism since the last report was compiled.

9. ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT SPORTS ASSOCIATION

Councillor Paul Heaphy joined the meeting, 7.45pm.

The Committee received a verbal presentation from Mr Paul Harrison, Relocation Manager for the Sports Association, updating members on progress of the project. Mr Harrison circulated a map of the site showing the location of all pitches, tennis courts and other amenities. It is hoped that the formal opening of the facility will take place at the beginning of August. Traffic lights should be in place during the latter part of the week ending Sunday 7th June 2015 in order for the required highway alterations to be made, which include the addition of a footpath/cycleway and toucan crossing to provide safe access to the site for pedestrians.

The report also covered a request for the Committee to consider providing grounds maintenance services under contract to the Sports Association, the details of which would be covered during the course of the private session item later in the meeting. Mr Harrison expressed the hope that the Sports Association can continue to work in close partnership with the Town Council and the community as a whole to deliver an excellent service for residents of Royal Wootton Bassett.

The Committee thanked Mr Harrison for his attendance at the meeting and congratulated him on the excellent work that he and his colleagues have undertaken to create the sports facility, which will be an asset to Royal Wootton Bassett and its residents.

10. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE VEHICLES

The Committee received a verbal presentation from Grounds Maintenance Team Leader John MacIndoe, updating members on maintenance issues in respect of the Council's existing Ford Transit 3 way tipper. A workshop equipment review was previously discussed by Members in 2014, when this item was identified as requiring replacement in the near future.

John MacIndoe has since received details of a pre-MOT assessment to the vehicle that was undertaken in recent weeks. Whilst the assessment noted that the vehicle would pass an MOT, a number of defects have been identified for which the cost of repair is estimated to be between £3,000-£4,000. Aside from the structural defects noted in the vehicle assessment, it was noted that the Transit is limited in its capacity to provide safe storage of tools and materials and in its ability for off-road travel that has to be undertaken by the Team as part of their regular duties. Since the vehicle was acquired 12 years ago, newer models have been upgraded to provide extra storage space within the cab, are built using better quality materials, and are now suitable for the type of off-road driving which is regularly undertaken by the Grounds Maintenance Team.

Over the lifetime of the vehicle, a budget to cover its eventual replacement has been built up as part of the asset replacement reserve. The amount of funding ear-marked for the replacement of the Transit Tipper exceeds the cost of a new vehicle, therefore the Committee was asked to consider inviting tenders for its replacement, funded from the asset replacement reserve.

RESOLVED to: -

- Approve the replacement of the Transit Tipper.
- Circulate the quotations obtained by John MacIndoe via email in order for the Revenue and Resources Committee to compare the details and approve a price and supplier.

11. WILTSHIRE COUNCIL AMENITY SERVICES

Over the past 12 months there have been increasing concerns about the ability of Wiltshire Council to fund local amenity services in the current funding crisis. Wiltshire Council has sought assistance from local councils offering to work in partnership with them to provide some of the

services where there is local need and an offer of local funding. In Royal Wootton Bassett particular problems have arisen in respect of Wiltshire Council's policy for its community area transport group (CATG). The Town Council in February resolved not to fund minor highway works, which has caused some unhappiness at CATG.

An exchange of emails between the Chair of the Area Board and the Town Clerk was previously circulated. The correspondence explores some of the frustrations but also indicates a clear commitment on both sides to fully engage and work together.

The Committee at this stage was invited to discuss this matter and the wider provision of amenity services with a view to suggesting ways in which the Town Council might consider whether there is a better way that we can work with Wiltshire Council to help the town to fulfill its aspirations.

Members were advised that the office staff are now receiving numerous telephone calls and complaints regarding changes to Wiltshire Council services such as grass cutting, waste collection and the replacement and installation of litter bins. It was suggested that Members email the office with any related matters to assist with the creation of a master list detailing the level and type of complaints received over the past 12 months in relation to a reduction in service provision. Further discussion will be opened up to the Revenue and Resources Committee at their next meeting, with a full report being taken to Full Council for consideration in July.

12. COMMUNICATIONS

The Committee was asked to consider whether it would like any Press Releases or other Communications issued in respect of the Committee Agenda items.

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Council was asked that members of the public and press be requested to leave the meeting to allow discussion of the establishment, property and finance matters as it is considered the publicity would be prejudicial by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.