

ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Amenities Committee held at 7.30pm on Thursday 5th January 2017 at Manor House, Lime Kiln, Royal Wootton Bassett.

PRESENT: Councillors: Mary Champion, Susan Doyle, Linda Frost, Janet Georgiou, Mike Leighfield, John Wilks.

Also in Attendance: Councillors: Paul Heaphy, Chris Wannell (late)

Officers in Attendance: Johnathan Bourne, Town Clerk, and Michelle Temple, Administrative Services Manager, John MacIndoe, Grounds Maintenance Team Leader, Emily Maiden, Administrative Officer and Committee Clerk.

Question Time

Mr Tom Brandenburg of 2 Keats Close was in attendance and raised concerns over the speed of cars along Stoneover Lane. Mr Brandenburg enquired as to whether it would be possible to erect further speed limit signs in the area as a reminder to drivers. The Council thanked Mr Brandenburg for his attendance and comments, and assured him that his concerns would be raised with Wiltshire Council, the local Highway Authority.

43. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Steve Watts.

44. 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 received.

45. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Members back after the Christmas break and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

46. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED to confirm and sign minutes of meetings of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 3rd November 2016 (A/4/2016-2017), copy previously circulated.

47. LITTER REPORT

The latest Litter and Vandalism Log was circulated at the meeting, covering the Christmas and New Year period as well as the weeks since the last Amenities Committee meeting.

Members noted that the Grounds Maintenance staff were on call over the festive holiday period as part of the Town Council emergency contact scheme, and that they had attended Old Court Play Area during the Christmas week to clear up rendering which had come off the wall at Old Court. The Grounds Maintenance Team Leader was in attendance and explained that the rendering was prone to becoming loose and that children often played on or near the wall, exacerbating the problem. Whilst the Grounds Maintenance Team are able to keep the area safe and tidy, the wall will need to be addressed in the future. It was also noted that Old Court is a popular place for groups of youngsters to gather in the evenings due to the lack of street lights.

It was suggested that signage encouraging people not to drop litter could be considered should the level of litter call-outs increase.

Members thanked John MacIndoe for his attendance and for attending the call outs over the Christmas week as one of the Town Council emergency contacts.

48. PLAY AREA AND OPEN SPACES WORKING PARTY

Councillor Chris Wannell left the meeting, 7.45pm

At the meeting of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 3rd November 2016, it was resolved to obtain quotations for the provision of a youth shelter at Otter Way Play Area, and a zip wire at Poets Field. The Chairman of the Amenities Committee and Lead Officer of the Play Area and Open Spaces Working Party obtained two quotations, which were brought to the meeting for discussion.

As a result of changes to legislation under the Public Procurement Directive, all contracts over the value of £25,000 must be registered with HM Government's Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities. At a meeting held on the 8th December 2016, this legislation was incorporated into the Council's Financial Regulations to reflect the changes in national policy.

The legislation requires the Council to follow the Public Procurement Directive and make use of the Government Contracts Finders website when sourcing quotations. A detailed specification of the required works is needed in order to utilise the Contracts Finder function. Both quotations received were considered in order to assist Members to compile a specification which takes into account the preferred aspects of each quote. This specification will then be uploaded to the Contracts Finder website in line with the Public Procurement Directive.

The Committee was asked to consider the quotations received and draw up a specification for the play area works, to be added to the Government Contract Finder website in line with the Council's Financial Regulations and national policy.

RESOLVED to include the following features in the updated design specification: -

- No table-top surface within the youth shelter to discourage drug abuse.

- One bay of swings with 2 toddler seats and 2 flat seats, making four in total.
- Include a roundabout with wheelchair accessibility.
- Smaller pirate ship design with stairs and slide preferred.
- Soft landing ‘runway’ for any zip wires.

49. JUBILEE LAKE EROSION WORKS

Naomi Ashcroft of Peter Brett Associates attended the meeting to give a presentation on the options for remedying the erosion at Jubilee Lake, following initial investigative works into the issue. The options available to the Council were explored in full, outlining the ways in which this project can be taken forward. A preliminary timescale for the project was estimated for September 2017, depending on the options decided upon.

Members were reminded of the progress of the project thus far, including the points below: -

- Peter Brett Associates (PBA) were appointed as Project Managers for the erosion remedial works at a meeting of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 2nd June 2016, having been recommended by the Environment Agency to oversee this complex project due to the highly technical and specialised nature of the work. This is in line with the Town Council’s Financial Regulations regarding tendering and appointing contractors. The pool of possible companies to appoint from was narrowed due to the nature of the project, which therefore led to the Council seeking recommendations from the Environment Agency.
- A fee proposal submitted by Peter Brett Associates was approved at the meeting of 2nd June 2016, containing figures for approximate costs to begin the project. This included base costs for consultancy fees for the initial stages of the project, surveys, and the review of previous documentation. At the time of the Amenities Committee meeting, PBA anticipated design costs in the region of £8,000 - £10,000 with a further £4,000 to prepare contract documentation, meaning that consultancy fees in the region of £14,000 were presented to the Amenities Committee in June 2016. The Committee approved these costs.

- The Town Clerk reminded Members that the £14,000 may increase now that further work has been undertaken, as the figure brought before the Amenities Committee in June 2016 was approximate and used to illustrate anticipated costs prior to any in depth work being carried out. In view of this, the Town Clerk outlined the anticipated budget cost for the whole project, as below. The Amenities Committee had requested regular updates on the financial status of the project to avoid the issues which had arisen in 2014-2015 when the Council installed the Stone Poppy. The Committee was asked to note the following: -
 - 1) It is anticipated that £50,000 will be required to fix the man-made channel into Jubilee Lake. During her presentation, Naomi Ashcroft provided the Committee with a range of detailed options for the completion of this part of the project. It was noted that the Town Clerk has contacted Wessex Water in relation to this matter, as erosion in the channel is being exacerbated by surface water run-off from a site owned and maintained by Wessex Water. The Council's solicitor has been instructed to liaise with Wessex Water regarding land ownership issues in the vicinity of Jubilee Lake.
 - 2) It is estimated that the erosion remedial work to the banks of the lake will cost in the region of £50,000. Naomi Ashcroft outlined a range of detailed options which could be implemented to address the issue with the lake banks.
 - 3) It is anticipated that consultancy fees for the project will cost in the region of £50,000. Approximately £14,000 of this anticipated figure has already been approved at a meeting of the Amenities Committee in June 2016.
 - 4) Approximately £60,000 will be allocated to the Amenities Committee for this project through earmarked reserves. A further £60,000 is allocated to the project in the Town Council's 2017-2018 budget. The remaining £30,000 will be applied for from the Revenue and Resources project fund, which totals £221,000 in the 2017-2018 budget.
 - 5) Expenditure of £5,105 was authorized by the Town Clerk and Chairs of the Amenities and Revenue and Resources Committees immediately prior to Christmas 2016. This was to cover the cost of topographical and ecological surveys, and was therefore very time sensitive. Trees need to be felled before the nesting season, therefore authorisation for the expenditure was a matter of urgency.

Prior to the presentation, Councillor Chris Wannell expressed concerns regarding the possibility of large scale development on land to the North-East of Jubilee Lake, which could cause an increase in surface water run-off into the channel. Naomi Ashcroft addressed this concern in her presentation.

Members raised concerns about possible risks associated with undertaking the project. Naomi Ashcroft assured the Committee that PBA produce a Risk Register on all projects and that this is comprehensive, covering all possible risks and how these would be mitigated.

RESOLVED to authorize the continuation of the scheme, noting the progress thus far, and that the highly technical and specialist nature of the work has lead Councillors to request frequent financial updates.

50. 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.

RESOLVED to place a small information item regarding the improvements to Poets Field and Otter Way Play Areas in the Community Magazine or Bulletin when appropriate.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm