

**LEIGHTON-LINSLADE TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF GROUNDS & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE**  
**MONDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2022 AT 7.30 PM**

Present: Councillors            R Berry (Chair)  
   S Jones (Vice-Chair)  
   T Morris  
   C Palmer  
   V Harvey  
   P Carberry  
   A Gray  
   P Snelling

Also in attendance:            M Saccoccio, Town Clerk  
   I Haynes, Head of Grounds and Environmental  
   Services  
   M Jahn, Committee Officer  
   Cllr G Perham (left meeting at 8.50 pm)

Members of the public:        4  
Members of the press            0

**211/GE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Spurr and Yates

**212/GE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor V Harvey declared a personal interest as a member of South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth.

Councillor C Palmer declared a personal interest as a member of the Friends of Leighton-Linslade in Bloom and being married to an allotment holder within the parish.

No pecuniary interests were declared.

**213/GE QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

A member of Leighton-Linslade in bloom spoke on behalf of the volunteers who work and give their time to enhance the town's environment. The volunteers were disappointed with the areas highlighted for improvement and the reduction to a silver gilt award in Anglia in Bloom and questioned whether the group should continue to enter the annual campaign in the coming year.

A member of the Croquet Club spoke to thank the Town Council for their

support over the years, which enabled the club to grow and become an essential social and competitive club for its members. The lawns were in need of levelling and the club hoped the Council could consider funding towards the cost of this work. The Croquet Club would be able to contribute £5,000.

A member of the public spoke regarding the land under the pylons at Roman Gate and asked whether the Town Council would be likely to adopt this land and if the Town Council and Central Bedfordshire Council were offered this. The Town Clerk would formally reply to the member of the public confirming the Town Council's position in this matter.

## **214/GE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

(a) The Committee received the draft minutes of the Grounds and Environmental Committee meeting held on 5 September 2022.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee meeting held on 5 September 2022 be approved as a correct record and were signed accordingly.**

(b) Minute reference 194/GE Minutes of Previous Meeting – it was confirmed the scan for the lions head on the Henry Finch Memorial Fountain had been cast and was currently going through chemical ageing before installation.

Minute reference 195/GE – it was confirmed the allotments at Alwins Field had all been cleared, bar one and 3 already let, and the next ten on the list would now be approached. Within the next few weeks, the same process would take place at Weston Avenue and be ready for let by March next year. Luton Borough Council in its capacity as HR provider to the town council was currently evaluating the allotment support positions with anticipated salary costs to be absorbed within the Grounds Budget. New contracts and tenancy agreements had been discussed with the Allotment Association and were well received. The waiting lists were still increasing even though some had been let now.

Minute reference 196/GE Car Park at Linslade Memorial Playing Fields and Garden of Remembrance – no progress had been made regarding the electric vehicle charging points in the car park.

Minute reference 199/GE Skate Park Condition and Future – it was confirmed that no tenders had been received yet for the park's refurbishment.

## **215/GE APPROVED DECISIONS**

The Committee received a record of the decisions taken since the previous discussion meeting by delegation to the Town Clerk with email approval from

most of the Council members.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

#### **216/GE COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES AND WORK PLAN**

The Committee received and considered the Committee Work Plan for 2022-2023.

A question was raised regarding improvements to the Skate Park, which had now gone out to tender with any irreparable parts being removed. A question was raised regarding the revision of the Sports and Physical Activity Development Plan since September 2020, and this should remain on the work plan as it sets out the ambition for sport in the parish.

No response had been received from Central Bedfordshire Officers regarding the additional cemetery land or allotment land on the eastern development, and members agreed that the question should be raised with Central Bedfordshire Council, regarding their status and likely availability.

**RESOLVED to note the Committee Objectives and Work Plan.**

#### **217/GE PAGES PARK FINE TURF LAWNS**

The Committee received a report to consider the potential levelling of the fine turf lawns at Pages Park and for the Policy and Finance Committee to consider potential direct funding sources.

The repair and improvement of the footpath was also discussed, and the Committee agreed these works should be completed at the same time as the levelling of the turf lawns. The Croquet club would contribute £5,000 towards the costs.

**RESOLVED**

**(a) To note the report**

**(b) To approve and endorse the levelling of the fine turf lawns principle and repair of the footpath leading to the pavilion and thereafter to recommend to the Policy and Finance Committee that it considers the funding options to deliver this £28,000 project.**

#### **218/GE ANGLIA IN BLOOM**

The Committee received a report to review the 2022 Anglia in Bloom campaign. All the volunteers were thanked for all their hard work and efforts for the town, and after discussion, the Committee recommended not to re-enter in 2023. It was suggested a date could be selected for a parish focused activity to celebrate the work undertaken by the volunteers and council staff to enhance the town's outlook. This could be a day of

celebration with the Mayor attending to show thanks. A vote was taken, and it was unanimously agreed to proceed with the day of celebration and not enter Anglia in Bloom in 2023.

**RESOLVED that officers come back to the next meeting with a date for a day of celebration and judging of the work carried out by volunteers and council staff around the town.**

#### **219/GE SIX-MONTH BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee received a budget monitoring report for the period of April – September 2022. A question was raised as to whether there were concerns regarding energy costs later in the year. Still, it was anticipated there was a sufficient budget to cover any increases. As billing was often done in advance on estimates and adjusted after with actual readings, any excess would be refunded.

#### **RESOLVED**

**(a) To note the report**

**(b) To approve the repairs and maintenance nominal line (4100/111) is allowed to be overspent, with the anticipated increase being met by the excess income anticipated to be generated from Pavilion hire (1000/111), which currently stands at 79.5% after 6 months.**

#### **220/GE FEES AND CHARGES FROM 1 APRIL 2023**

The Committee received a report to consider fees and charges for pavilion hire. It was suggested that the bookings for facilities should be monitored in the future and results brought back to the next meeting to ascertain the geographical location of hirers.

**RESOLVED to consider no increase to the fees and charges for pavilion hire, pitch hire and cemetery services from 1 April 2023 and to monitor bookings in the future to ascertain the location of hirers.**

#### **221/GE 2023-2024 BUDGET**

The Committee received and considered the draft Committee budget for 2023-2024.

A question was raised regarding staff levels for Grounds staff and whether more hours were needed for allotment cover. The Head of Grounds informed the Committee that consideration might be given to outsourcing some services if required. On going to a vote, the recommendation was carried with 7 in favour and 1 against.

**RECOMMENDED to the Policy and Finance Committee to approve the**

**proposed budget for Grounds and Environmental Services for the financial year 2023-2024.**

**222/GE BUILDINGS TEN YEAR MAINTENANCE PLAN**

The Committee received an update regarding the Town Council's objective to develop a ten-year buildings maintenance programme. Baseline data would be assessed, and EPC certificates would be provided for each building, and this could then feed into environmental decisions to fit in with Climate Emergency work.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

**223/GE CEMETERY UPDATE**

The Committee received an update report on the recent activities of the cemetery service. It was noted that in the Mausoleum Update, there were currently 19 names on the waiting list for a potential second mausoleum. An article could be included in About Town to highlight this option.

**RESOLVED to note the report.**

It was proposed and seconded that to continue the meeting past 2200 hours, Standing Order 3(x) should be suspended for a maximum of fifteen minutes.

**RESOLVED to suspend Standing Order 3(x) for a maximum of fifteen minutes.**

**224/GE CLIMATE EMERGENCY UPDATE**

The Committee received a verbal update on the progress with Smart Carbon in establishing baseline data. Members agreed that the achievements of the Council should be promoted and publicised in respect of the Climate Emergency. This could be done on social media, About Town and on the website to inform the public of our Carbon Zero strategies and how we aim to achieve them.

**RESOLVED to continue publicity via social media and About Town of our aims and progress with climate emergency.**

**225/GE OUZEL VALLEY PARK STEERING GROUP UPDATE**

The Committee received the notes of the meeting held on 7 November 2022 and considered the recommendations contained therein.

A quote was provided from the Greensand Trust for updating the Green Infrastructure Plan, as the last plan was dated 2014. The cost expected was £11,975, and funds were available in earmarked reserves for Ouzel Valley

Park Steering Group. It was also confirmed that £600 would be available from the Grounds Budget to fund the occasional use of a mini-bus to transport participants from Walking for Health to alternative areas like Rushmere.

**RESOLVED acceptance of spending for updating the Green Infrastructure Plan for £11,975.**

**226/GE LEIGHTON-LINSLADE AND HEATH & REACH SANDPIT STEERING GROUP UPDATE**

The Committee was informed that the restoration plan for Grovebury Quarry could be extended after 2026 for another 20 years, impacting the green leisure space available for the area. Billington especially had a lack of green space.

**RESOLVED to note the information.**

The meeting closed at 10.08 pm.

I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT THE FOREGOING IS A CORRECT AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2022.

Chair

6 MARCH 2023