

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GROVE HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH,
DUNSTABLE**

ON MONDAY 13 MARCH 2017

Present: Councillors Peter Hollick (Town Mayor), Gloria Martin (Deputy Town Mayor), Liz Jones (Chairman), Sid Abbott (Vice-Chairman), Steve Elliott, John Kane, Ann Sparrow, Nigel Warren and Andy Whayman

In Attendance: David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), John Crawley (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services), Mary Dobbs (Cemetery Manager), Kelley Hallam (Office Administrator), James Slack (Sport and Leisure Facilities Manager) and Ian Swinnerton (Grounds Operations Manager)

Apologies: Councillors Lisa Bird, Jeannette Freeman and Des Moffatt

61 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 16 January 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

62 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

63 PLANS-SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meetings of Plans Sub-Committee held on 24 January and 14 February 2017 be received.

64 CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE

The Sport and Leisure Facilities Manager presented a detailed report on recent operations at the Centre.

The weather had caused a great deal of disruption in January and February with 8 main pitch matches and 3 weekends of youth matches cancelled.

The February half-term had been extremely busy. On the Monday, 350 girls, plus spectators, attended County FA fixtures organised by the Bedfordshire FA's Girls Advanced Coaching Centre. The rest of the week was used by the Luton Town youth development squads who played fixtures against teams from Derby, York, Colchester and Northampton and had over 1,000 players and spectators attend.

The Committee received the profiled income and expenditure report as at the end of January 2017.

The kitchen extension had suffered an unexpected delay due to incorrect original drawings from the initial build. The revised completion date was the end of April.

65 SPLASH PARK AND CAFÉ NAMING

The Sport and Leisure Facilities Manager presented a report that asked the Committee to determine new names for the splash park and café that would be situated in Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground.

The facility would be open in summer 2017 and names needed to be decided before any marketing, promotions and branding could start.

The Committee considered suggested names and

- RESOLVED:** i) that the splash park be named as Bennett's Splash
ii) that the café facility be named Splashside Café.

66 MARKET TOWN REGENERATION FUND UPDATE

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented an update report on Market Town Regeneration Fund projects relating to this Committee.

a) Enhanced Town Centre Cleansing

The new service was now fully operational. Initial feedback had been very favourable.

b) New Splash Park and Associated Café Provision

Contractors were now on site and the project was progressing to an end of June opening.

Splash park contractors would be on site on 3 April to begin the groundworks.

c) New Entrance Features for Priory Gardens

Initial sketch designs for the new gateway had been submitted to Central Bedfordshire Council's Conservation and Archaeology Officers for comment but had been rejected as being too big and not in keeping with the street scene. New designs were now being considered with further assistance from the CBC officers.

67 TREE RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME AND SURVEY

The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services presented a report that sought approval of the release of the allocated reserve funding to implement a 5-year tree maintenance programme.

The Council owned and managed 1,037 trees located across various parks, open spaces and cemetery land and had a duty of care to take reasonable steps to prevent trees on its land causing harm or damage to people or property. Current guidance recommended that a full Tree Risk Management Survey be undertaken at least once every 5 years.

Members received and noted details of the 5-year programme along with estimated costs.

All Members agreed that it was important that the Council continued its obligation of the safe management of its tree stock.

RESOLVED: i) that the Committee recommend to Finance and General Purposes Committee the release of allocated reserves in line with the programme detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

ii) that the Head of Grounds and Environmental Services, in consultation with the Chairman of Grounds and Environmental Services, be authorised to incur additional expenditure from the allocated reserve should the extent and costs of the necessary works in any given year exceed the current estimates.

68 RECREATION GROUNDS, TOWN CENTRE GARDENS, CEMETERY AND ALLOTMENTS

The Grounds Operations Manager and the Cemetery Manager presented a detailed information report covering all areas of the Council's grounds maintenance responsibilities.

a) Recreation Grounds

Since the last report to this Committee there had been no incidents of vandalism in the play areas or Grove Skate Park.

It had been noted that there continued to be a further reduction in football bookings on the recreation ground pitches due to more teams withdrawing from the leagues.

Grass cutting had commenced in some areas but the main schedule of grass cutting was due to commence on 27 March.

b) Town Centre Area

A grit-based footpath had now been laid at the Priory Gateway.

The new Transit tipper van to replace the one damaged by arsonists had now been delivered.

This year marked the 10th Anniversary of the Croquet Club that played at Priory Gardens. Club members had expressed their thanks to the grounds and Priory House staff for the manner in which they maintained the lawn and looked after the club members.

c) Town Ranger Service

The Town Ranger continued to provide local residents with assistance to deal with eyesores and other environmental related issues. The Ranger had dealt with 167 requests since April 2016.

The Town Ranger Service had now set up a Facebook page to promote their work and interact with the public. This was proving extremely popular.

d) Dunstable Cemetery

Members received the burial figures for January and February 2017 along with the profiled income and expenditure figures as at the end of January 2017.

The grounds team were working hard to get the cemetery ready for the Green Flag inspection which was due to take place between late March and the end of May. Some older pathways between sections had been removed and replaced with wildflower areas.

e) Allotments

There were currently 36 people on the waiting list which was comparable to figures reported to the Committee in January. Members received the detail of the make-up of the waiting list.

There were currently 19 vacant plots as a result from tenants not renewing their tenancies in January. These were in the process of being let out.

69 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

CBC Development Management Committee:

No report.