

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 10 SEPTEMBER 2018

Present: Councillors John Kane (Town Mayor), Nigel Warren (Deputy Town Mayor)
Liz Jones (Chairman), Lisa Bird (Vice-Chairman), Sid Abbott, Philip
Crawley, Gloria Martin and Ann Sparrow

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 (Sports and Leisure
Facilities Manager) and Ian Swinnerton (Grounds Operations Manager)

Apologies: Councillors Peter Hollick and Johnson Tamara

Public: None

147 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held
on 21 May and 11 June 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the
Chairman.

148 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

149 PLANS-SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meetings of Plans Sub-Committee held
on 5 June, 26 June, 17 July and 7 August 2018 be received.

150 CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE AND SPLASH PARK

The Sport and Leisure Facilities Manager presented a detailed report on recent
operations at the Centre including pitch and function hire, marketing and trading
account figures.

The league season had now started and the pitch was in excellent condition
considering the hot dry summer period. However, the cost of intense watering over
the summer period would have an impact on expenditure.

Councillor Abbott requested that consideration be given to including CO2 reports
within future building and environmental updates

AFC had held a football festival with over 120 teams attending and Whipsnade Zoo
and London Zoo had hired the main pitch for a match, which attracted 200 spectators.

Bennett's Splash and the Splashside Café had now closed for the summer. Overall, the splash park had been well attended in the extended period of excellent weather but the recent poor weather had resulted in the splash park closing early on 5 occasions.

Members acknowledged the hard work of the Creasey Park and Grounds staff throughout the splash season.

A splash park operations review meeting was to be held on 12 October and the Chairman requested that two other members attend along with the Town Clerk and Chief Executive and the Sport and Leisure Facilities Manager.

RESOLVED: that Councillors John Kane, Liz Jones and Sid Abbott attend the splash park operations review meeting on 12 October.

151 RECREATION GROUNDS, TOWN CENTRE GARDENS, CEMETERY AND ALLOTMENTS

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

a) Recreation Grounds

One incident of vandalism had occurred since the last report to the Committee to a swing at Downside play area.

Maverick Industries had spent two days carrying out various repairs at the skate park. The work carried out under the warranty.

b) Town Centre Area

Green Flags had been retained both at Priory and Grove House Gardens and both sites had increased their overall scores and ratings significantly. Members congratulated the officers and staff on retaining the Green Flags and keeping the flowers looking good despite the drought conditions.

Works to refurbish the Dunstable War Memorial were progressing well. New bronze plaques were currently being cast and would include the names of those originally missing from the memorial.

c) Town Ranger Service

The Town Ranger had worked alongside volunteers from the National Citizens Agency to paint the knee rail fencing at Markham Crescent.

CBC had indicated that if they were able to retain the funding, they would like to renew the bus shelter cleaning contract with the Town Ranger. This had generated an income of £990.

d) Dunstable Cemetery

Members received the burial figures for June and July 2018 along with the profiled income and expenditure figures as at the end of July 2018.

The Friends of Dunstable Cemetery had now met on a number of occasions and had continued to clear notable graves and litter pick. They had also had a guided tour of the cemetery to hear about the history of the cemetery and some of the stories of those that were buried there. They were planning on holding an evening meeting on 30 October to try and encourage more volunteers to the group.

e) Allotments

There were currently 47 people on the waiting list, which was comparable to figures reported to the Committee in June 2018. Members received the detail of the waiting list.

152 FUTURE BURIAL PROVISION IN DUNSTABLE

The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services presented a report to consider future burial provision in Dunstable and how this might be funded.

In 2006/07 the Council had acquired 2.5 hectares of private allotment land that was subsequently laid out to include a new roadway, pathways, landscape infrastructure planting, fencing and water taps. This extension had been in use since February 2016 and currently provided full-body burial in earth graves, interment of cremated remains below ground and in sanctums and a small memorial plaque area.

The average burial rate over a ten-year period had been calculated and it was estimated that there was sufficient full body burial space to last 9 years and 2 months and sufficient cremated remains space for 6 years and 10 months.

It was not possible to indicate at this time how much funding would be required to purchase sufficient land to ensure the continuation of future burial provision. It was therefore proposed that a new allocated reserve be established as part of the 2019/20 budget setting process.

RESOLVED: that this Committee recommends to Finance and General Purposes the principle of establishing an allocated reserve for future cemetery provision as part of the 2019/20 budget setting process.

153 IMPROVEMENTS TO RECREATION GROUNDS

The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services presented a detailed report that asked the Committee to consider a programme of improvements to parks and recreation grounds to deter unauthorised encampments.

Since June 2018, the Council had suffered four unauthorised traveller encampments. Officers had used a number of means to evict the travellers including bailiffs serving eviction notices and assistance from the police to use their Section 61 powers. The cost of these evictions and associated clean-ups was around £6,000.

Officers had since met with the Community Policing team and the CBC Traveller Enforcement Officer and had been advised that the police were willing to use their Section 61 powers on 'primary sites' to evict travellers. They were, however, minded to avoid overuse and looked to the Council to ensure all appropriate target hardening measures were in place to prevent or deter access.

The Committee received a comprehensive table that provided a summary of existing arrangements and potential improvements at each site along with estimated costs.

RESOLVED: that the Committee recommends to Finance and General Purposes the release of up to £22,500 from the General Reserve if there are insufficient in-year revenue savings available in 2018/19

154 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

CBC Development Management Committee:

Councillor Jones reported that there had been no Dunstable planning applications at any of the recent meetings.