

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 18 MARCH 2019

Present: Councillors John Kane (Town Mayor), Nigel Warren (Deputy Town Mayor), Liz Jones (Chairman), Lisa Bird (Vice-Chairman), Sid Abbott, Philip Crawley, Peter Hollick, 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 for Absence: Councillors Jeannette Freeman, Gladys Sanders and Johnson Tamara

Public: None

42 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 14 January 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

43 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

44 PLANS-SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meetings of Plans Sub-Committee held on 8 January, 29 January and 19 February 2019 be received.

45 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) Dunstable Cemetery

Members received the burial figures for December 2018 to February 2019 along with the profiled income and expenditure figures as at the end of January 2019. These indicated a positive variance of £43,900.

Friends of Dunstable Cemetery and children from Weatherfield Academy had met to clear notable overgrown graves as well as debris from the recent windy conditions.

Work was under way to ready the cemetery for the Green Flag judging. This had included installing bird, bat and owl boxes, new signs for the office, chapel and toilets as well as 5mph speed signs. The waste skip area had also been enclosed by new fencing and gates.

b) Allotments

There were currently 58 people on the waiting list. Members received the detail of the waiting list.

The renewal of tenancy agreements and annual rent payments had resulted in 24 tenants vacating their plots. These would soon be offered to persons on the waiting list.

The Grounds Operations Manager was looking into erecting notice boards and information signs at the entrances to all the allotment sites.

Members were informed that community groups could now apply to take on an allotment plot.

c) Recreation Grounds

Works to install the new adventure play area at Bennett's had commenced. The double zip wire had been erected and most of the excavations and foundations had been completed. The contract was on schedule for completion by the end of April.

Members considered three names suggested by Officers for the name of the new adventure play area, namely: Bennett's Adventure Play, Bennett's Play or Bennett's Adventure. On the suggestion of the Chairman, it was

RESOLVED: that the public be invited to choose their preferred name for the new adventure play area via a Facebook poll, from the three agreed options.

The recreation ground security arrangements were nearing completion. Height restriction barriers had been installed at Luton Road, Downs Road and Frenchs Avenue and drop down bollards had been installed at Ridgeway Avenue and Markham Crescent. Bow top fencing had also been ordered for Frenchs Avenue and would be installed in late March.

d) Town Centre Area

Improvement works to the croquet lawn had been arranged. Moss and worm control treatment would be carried out followed by fertiliser treatment and broadleaf weed control. The grounds team would then scarify, over seed and top dress the lawn before the start of the croquet season.

It was hoped that a number of new projects and initiatives that were emerging could be showcased to the In Bloom judges this year. These included a gardening project at Westfield Nursery, the new garden at the Old Palace Lodge and the sustainable drainage border in West Street.

Councillor Sparrow informed Members that the In Bloom Committee were looking for volunteers to help dead head the flower displays to help them keep looking their best.

e) Environment and Sustainability

The Committee were updated on some of the actions and initiatives within the grounds service that supported the Councils Environment and Sustainability Policy. This included composting last year's leaves to make mulch for the flower beds, introducing a recycling scheme at the cemetery requesting plant pots and green waste be separated from general waste and the purchase of battery powered trimmers and cutters.

f) Town Ranger Service

The Town Rangers had been making improvements to enhance the area within the vicinity of the Ashton Square toilets. This had included removing shrubs and sowing grass seed on areas that were previously litter traps.

Members commented that they liked the introduction of photographs within this report.

46 CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE AND SPLASH PARK

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

Creasey Park had hosted the Eastern Regional finals for the Disability FA People's Cup. Eight teams competed and the winners were to play at Wembley.

At the recent CBC Executive Meeting, £90,000 of funding was approved to install a grass pitch irrigation system for both the main pitch and the community pitches. It was hoped this would be installed by the end of July.

The Committee noted that the trading figures were showing a deficit of over £15,000. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive advised that further analysis was being undertaken and the current position would be reflected in the Financial Monitoring report to be submitted to the next Finance and General Purposes Committee. He also advised that at the June meeting of this Committee it would be recommended that a working group be put together to look at the future of Creasey Park. Members expressed their concerns that the Council were having to subsidise the centre and agreed this needs to be looked at in detail.

47 VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT RESERVE SPENDING

The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services presented a detailed report that requested authorisation from this Committee to purchase various new grounds equipment from the vehicles and equipment reserve.

RESOLVED: that the Committee recommend to Finance and General Purposes Committee the release of up to £9,500 from the allocated Vehicle and Equipment reserve.

48 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

CBC Development Management Committee:
No updates.