

Abingdon Town Council

The minutes of a meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on Monday 26th May 2010.

Present: Councillor Samantha Bowring
Councillor Duncan Brown - Mayor (for item 1 only)
Councillor Margaret Crick
Councillor Alastair Fear
Councillor Lesley Legge
Councillor Jan Morter
Councillor Tim Oates

In Attendance: Councillor Jim Halliday
Mr Nigel Warner - Town Clerk
Mr Stephen Rich - Project & Technical Manager
Mr Tim Badcock - Cemetery and Works Supervisor

1. **Election of Chair**

It was proposed by Councillor Tim Oates and seconded by Councillor Margaret Crick and **resolved** that Councillor Alastair Fear be elected Chair of the Amenities and Recreation Committee for the civic year 2010 / 2011.

2. **Election of Vice Chair**

It was proposed by Councillor Jan Morter and seconded by Councillor Margaret Crick and **resolved** that Councillor Samantha Bowring be elected Vice Chair of the Amenities and Recreation Committee for the civic year 2010 / 2011.

3. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from the Councillors Patricia Hobby and Jeanette Halliday.

4. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Jim Halliday declared a personal interest in the item relating to allotments (minute 66) as his sister holds an allotment on the Wildmoor site also on any items involving the Vale of White Horse District Council as he was also a Member of that Council.

Councillor Samantha Bowring declared a personal interest in item 11 on the agenda – Play Area Working Party – and also any items involving the District Council as she was also a Member of that Council.

5. **Minutes**

Resolved: *that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th March 2010 be signed as a correct record.*

6. **Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

Councillor Jan Morter said she noted that the Committee had previously agreed to delay compiling a portfolio of play equipment / areas but thought it was too important to leave and offered to arrange publication of the document. The Committee thanked Councillor Morter and asked her to include costs of equipment where possible.

7. **Britain in Bloom Sub Committee**

The Committee was informed that progress had been made on the Ock Mini Park and that meeting had been held with the MG Car Club who had offered to help.

The Committee agreed that an application for funding should be made to the Abingdon Joint Environmental Trust to assist in this project.

8. **Finance and Best Value Monitoring Report**

Members received the report of the Town Clerk in relation to Income and Expenditure for the period from April 2009 to March 2010 as circulated with the agenda.

Resolved: *that the report be noted.*

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that the objectives set for the coming civic year for the Amenities and Recreation Committee were:

- Abingdon In Bloom
- Play Area Updating
- Cemetery Improvements
- Improvement in Allotments

The Committee felt that, taking on board the planning application for a New Depot Building and other major project this year the Works Team would be pressed to take on any further objectives this financial year. It was **resolved** *that the above objectives be accepted for the year 2010 / 2011.*

9. **Cemetery and Works Supervisor's Report**

The Committee received and considered the report from the Cemetery and Works Supervisor which was circulated to members with the agenda.

Resolved: *that the report be noted.*

Councillor Jan Morter wished to record her thanks to the Works Team's assistance during a recent event she had organised as a Market Place event.

Councillor Jeanette Halliday wished to record her thanks to the Works Team for the painting of the town map casements and the Chair thanked them for the work in the closed churchyard of St Helen's for painting the railings and gate.

The Meeting was informed that unfortunately advertising banners displayed from the hanging basket trees were damaging the poles and hanging baskets and could pose a health and safety risk when the baskets were in place. Members **recommended** *that*

banners already planned would be honoured, as far as possible this year and that future hangings should be from the flag poles with vertical displays.

10. **Abingdon Cemeteries**

The report of the Projects and Technical Manager was received and considered.

- Notice Board – Procurement delayed until after the new depot facilities have been installed.
- Garden of Remembrance – This work was ongoing.

The Committee was informed that grave space within the Catholic Sections of the Spring Gardens cemetery was almost full and that future Catholic burials would be within the remainder of the cemetery in the unconsecrated areas where the participating priest can bless the individual grave, as is the practice in most other cemeteries.

The Committee **resolved** that future Catholic burials would take place outside of the Catholic area in unconsecrated land once grave space within the section had been depleted. This would be subject to informing the Priest in charge at St Edmunds Roman Catholic Church and the Church in Abingdon.

The Committee was also informed that, as previously agreed, the Works Team would be ensuring that the Garden of Remembrance area is maintained in accordance with the cemetery regulations so that the appearance of the area is improved and grass cutting can be carried out more easily and without risk to the works team. Members confirmed their previous agreement that enforcement of the cemetery rules should be undertaken and whilst these would be enforced in a sensitive manner any adverse publicity would have to be dealt with as and when it arose.

Resolved: that the report be noted.

11. **St Helen's Closed Churchyard**

The report of the Projects and Technical Manager was received and considered.

Members noted that the painting of the railings within the closed churchyard of St Helen's had been completed and that lawn treatment of the area would take place over the spring, summer and autumn months.

Resolved: that the report be noted.

12. **Allotment Working Party**

The report of the Projects and Technical Manager was received and considered.

Members **resolved** that the Allotment Working Party would meet before the next meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee due to be held on 25th August 2010.

The allotment leases were progressing slowly and meetings had taken place with land Valuers. The District Council was preparing a draft lease for allotment land it owned and other negotiations with land owners was still ongoing.

Drayton Road Allotment flooding – The District Council had been in touch with the company extracting gravel in the area and had agreed with them that certain works

needed to be undertaken in order to ensure water flowed through ditches adjacent to land they were extracting from.

The Committee agreed to release a grant of £400 to the Drayton Road Allotment Association, as agreed at the previous meeting, on recommendation of officers who confirmed that discussions had taken place to ensure suitable materials were used on the refurbishing of tracks within the allotment area.

Resolved: *that the report be noted.*

13. **Play Area Working Party**

The report of the Projects and Technical Manager was received and considered.

It was **resolved** that the Play Area Working Party meet shortly to visit all sites to acquaint themselves with the various play areas and to progress the purchase of new equipment and replacement / supply of safety surfaces. In order to assist the Working Party in their recommendations an independent review by the Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association of the play safety surfaces would also be undertaken.

The District Council had informed the Town Council that they were holding £20,000 of Section 106 funding to install equipment at the Chaunterell play area. A request from the District Council to install "teenage" equipment would be considered by the Working Party.

Members asked officers to speak to PCSO's regarding the installation of a "Teenage Shelter" near the Chaunterell play area.

Members were informed that, taking into account funds rolled over from 2009 / 2010, the budget for 2010 / 2011 and the Section 106 funding there was a sum of £69,300 for play area improvements.

Resolved: *that the report be noted.*

14. **Trees**

The report of the Projects and Technical Manager was received and considered.

The replacement trees for the felled Atlantic Cedars in the Spring Road cemetery would be planted in the autumn.

The Works Team continued to progress the work required on the Town Council tree stock as stated in the Tree Survey.

Resolved: *that the report be noted.*

15. **Digital Mapping**

The report of the Projects and Technical Manager was received and considered.

The meeting was informed that members had now received training on the Digital mapping software and was available to them for use on the Members computer situated in the Committee Room of the Old Abbey House.

Resolved: *that the report be noted.*

16. **Corporate Identity – Workforce Workwear**

The report of the Projects and Technical Manager was received and considered.

The Meeting was informed that no new clothing had recently been purchased for the Works Team. However when new clothing was required it will include the Town Council logo.

Resolved: *that the report be noted.*

17. **Publicity**

It was **resolved** that publicity be sought for the newly refurbished play areas once each area had been completed.

18. **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next Amenities and Recreation Committee was confirmed as Wednesday 25th August 2010 at 7.00pm in the Old Abbey House.

19. **Exclusion of the public including the press**

Resolved: *that in accordance with section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, as summarised below:*

Items for discussion:

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting.
2. Matters Arising.
3. Works Depot Facilities.
4. Review of Cemetery Fees and Charges.
5. Cemetery Pathway / Road
6. Allotment Leases

The meeting rose at 9.20pm

Signed Date
Chair