

Abingdon Town Council

The minutes of a meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

**Present:** Councillor Peter Fulk - Chair  
Councillor Margaret Crick  
Councillor Alastair Fear  
Councillor Jeanette Halliday  
Councillor Tim Oates  
Councillor Audrey Tamplin

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

39. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from the Mayor of Abingdon Councillor Patricia Hobby and Councillors Sam Bowring, Lesley Legge, Janet Morter and Lorraine Oates.

40. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest declared at this point in the meeting's agenda.

41. **Minutes**

**Resolved:** *that the minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2009 be signed as a correct record.*

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

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

43. **Britain in Bloom Sub Committee**

Members received a report from the Project and Technical Manager updating the Committee on the results of the Britain In Bloom competition.

Members were informed that Abingdon had received a Silver Gilt award for the 2009 Britain In Bloom competition and that the Town had scored highly in all categories but that more work needed to be undertaken with regard to community involvement. The committee was informed that the Britain In Bloom Sub Committee would be making a special effort to involve the community more in 2010.

The meeting was also informed that the judges had told Members who attended the award ceremony that the Town should concentrate on future events such as the

Olympics and plan accordingly. Also that more could be made of the flower bed in the Market Place to give a greater visual effect and vibrancy.

Overall Abingdon's remarks were positive and something that the Sub Committee could build on in future years.

Ock Mini Park- the meeting was informed that the shrubbery in the area would be planted soon and work would be undertaken to install a pathway. A quote for the seating area was still being sought although the design was proving somewhat difficult for builders to undertake.

Margaret Brown Garden – The shrubs to complete the missing section of hedging would be planted shortly as this was the right time for this kind of planting to be undertaken.

44. **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 2008 to date as circulated with the agenda.

**Resolved:** *that the report be noted.*

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

The Committee received and considered the report from the Cemetery and Works Supervisor as circulated at the meeting and appended to these minutes.

**Resolved:** *that the report be noted.*

46. **Abingdon Cemeteries**

The report of the Project and Technical Manager, as circulated with the agenda, was received and considered.

- Waste Bins – The bins for the cemetery had been delivered. Once concrete bases had been laid the bins will be installed. It was anticipated that this would be complete before Christmas.  
Notice Board – A new notice board for the cemetery would be ordered shortly and the current notice board relocated to the Garden of Remembrance. **It was resolved that delegation for the purchase of new notice boards be given to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of Amenities and Recreation Committee**
- Pathways – **It was resolved that the Cemetery and Works Supervisor obtain a quote for the replacement road / pathway in the new cemetery and bring the figures to the next meeting of this committee.** It was not intended that this work be carried out until the new depot facilities were completed.
- Garden of Remembrance – Work has started on the new garden of Remembrance with the leveling of land and the installation of railings. This work would be undertaken as time permitted and would be ongoing for some months.
- At the last meeting Members approved that the cemetery walls be cleaned at a cost of £750. The order had been raised and the Council were now waiting for a date for the work to take place.

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

Members were informed that it was anticipated the painting of the churchyard railings would be completed by the end of the year.

An order had been placed for the treatment of the grassed areas of St Helen's churchyard.

48. **Allotment Working Party**

The Chair of the Allotment Working Party reported that a visit had been made to the Wildmoor allotment site and asked that arrangements be made to visit the two remaining allotment sites as soon as possible preferably on a Tuesday.

The meeting was informed that the preparation of the new leases was proving to be more intricate than originally envisaged. All the leases were with the Town Council's solicitor and the sites had also been referred for land valuation. However this has involved discussions with land owners and their legal representatives and this was taking some considerable time to achieve an outcome.

The Project and Technical Manager informed the Committee that the valuer was due to meet with the Town Clerk within the next few weeks and it was hoped the technicalities that had arisen could be speedily resolved although officers could not be sure.

The Chair asked that the item remain on the agenda and that a speedy resolution to this matter be sought if possible as it was holding up discussions with the relevant Allotment Associations.

Drayton Road Allotments – There had been no reply from the Environment Agency concerning the drainage at the Drayton Road Allotment site. The Chair undertook to pass on the details his contact at the Environment Agency to see if he could assist in this matter.

It was also reported that the Drayton Road Allotments had recently experienced vandalism and theft from the site with a number of sheds broken into and items stolen. The Allotment Association had reported the matter to the police.

49. **Play Area Working Party**

The Chair of the Play Area Working Party informed the meeting of the visit to the Saltex exhibition at Windsor Racecourse which they found interesting and very informative.

The Project and Technical Manager informed the meeting that he was currently undertaking visits to the play areas with play equipment providers to obtain quotes for new equipment in Caldecott, River Close and Hill View play areas plus some refurbishment of safety surfaces. It was hoped that the quotes would be ready before the next meeting in time for the Working Party to consider them.

Play Area Portfolio – Members asked for this item to remain on the agenda as it was not sensible to proceed until the new equipment had been installed.

Elizabeth Avenue Play Area – The Project and Technical Officer informed the meeting that the goal and kick board equipment at the play area had proved to be so successful that the youngsters had worn the ground away in front of the goal. This would have to be rectified and the Committee **resolved** to obtain quotes to establish a suitable surface to enable the area to be used all year round.

50. **Trees**

Members were asked to note that the work planned for the Atlantic Cedars in the Old Cemetery had been undertaken. Two trees were felled and the remaining trees pruned, however whilst undertaking this work it became apparent that the remaining trees had problems. The District Council's arboricultural officer was asked to advise the Town Council resulting in more pruning than was originally planned at a cost of £2,490 compared with the original quote of £1,800. The recommendation from the tree surgeons was to replace the felled trees and when these were established the remaining four Atlantic Cedars could be felled as they were becoming more problematic with age. This would be in approximately 10 (ten) years time.

It was **resolved** that the planting of new replacement trees in the old cemetery be deferred until the autumn of 2010 to allow the ground time to regenerate itself.

The Chair informed the meeting that he had been contacted about a triangle of land in River Close where the trees had started to uproot the pavement. The area of land was still in ownership of the builders of the estate as the District Council (or Borough Council) had not transferred ownership to themselves. The Town Clerk was to make enquiries with the Council's solicitor and then report back at a later date although it was not considered a Town council responsibility.

51. **Digital Mapping**

The Project and Technical Manager informed the meeting that although the digital mapping software had been installed and that an initial training session had been undertaken, the software is complicated and unless used on a regular basis it becomes difficult to operate.

Members considered that the digital mapping would be useful for them Project and Technical officer advised the meeting that more than one computer station would be required for group training and he would enquire about the possibilities of arranging the training for Members.

It was **recommended** through the Finance and General Purposes Committee that a computer station be installed within the Town Council offices for Members use and that the digital mapping software be installed amongst other software packages.

52. **Waste Audit Report**

The Chair informed Members that the Waste Audit Report carried out in November 2008 made some assumptions which would not necessarily work in the Council's interest. The report assumed that 6 x 1100 litre bins were equivalent to a 6 yard skip and would contain the same kind of waste. However the bins were not designed to take the kind of waste that a skip would take e.g. bikes, carpets, mattresses etc., and officers were asked to confirm this for the next meeting when a response could be made to the authors of the report.

53. **Corporate Identity**

Members were informed that Council had agreed to a corporate identity to be introduced for the Works team work wear over a period of time. The Project and Technical Officer informed the meeting that staff had previously received polo shirts with "Abingdon Town

Council" embroidered on them and now orders were to be placed for high visibility jackets, fleeces and shirts. Members **resolved** that *this action be undertaken*.

Councillor Jim Halliday entered the meeting it being 8.25pm

54. **Publicity**

The committee considered that there was no items at this stage which would benefit from publicity, however when the play equipment is installed this may be publicised.

55. **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next Amenities and Recreation Committee was confirmed as Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2009 at 7.00pm in the Old Abbey House.

56. **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. Revaluation of Grave Costs.

The meeting rose at 8.50pm

Signed ..... Date .....

Chair