

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

The minutes of a meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held in the Roysse Room, Guildhall, on Wednesday 3rd September 2014 at 7.00pm.

Present:

Councillor Helen Pighills	- Chairman
Councillor Marilyn Badcock	- Vice-Chairman
Councillor Alice Badcock	
Councillor Samantha Bowring	
Councillor Angela Lawrence	- Mayor
Councillor Jan Morter	

In Attendance:

Councillor Julie Mayhew-Archer	
Mr. Nigel Warner	- Town Clerk
Mr. Stephen Rich	- Head of Services (Clerk to the meeting)

A1 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sandy Lovatt (Chairman of Finance and General Purposes), Councillor Jeanette Halliday and Councillor Andrew Todd.

A2 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest raised at the meeting.

A3 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

Resolved: *that the minutes of the meeting held on 28th May 2014 be signed as a correct record by the Chairman.*

A4 **Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the Agenda**

Minute A13 – MG Garden

It was reported that the Mayor officially opened the MG Garden on Thursday 17th July 2014.

Minute A58 – Flood Forum and Land Holdings

The meeting was informed that the Community Services Officer and Assistant were now in post and would be taking the forward the Committee's ideas on a Flood Forum event.

The Committee, on discussing Land Holdings, asked that a meeting be arranged in October, after the Fairs, between the Working Group and the Town Council's advisor, to discuss progress on this matter.

Minute A10 – Play Areas

The meeting **resolved** to purchase two new roundabouts to replace ones that could no longer be repaired and to delegate the purchase and installation to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee, from the budget set aside for new play equipment.

Officers would return to the Committee with a report on safety surfaces for the next meeting.

Minute A55 – Christmas Lights

The Chairman of the Christmas Lights Working Party would inform officers of her availability to meet with the Town Council's contractors to discuss the 2014 Christmas lights display.

A5 Abingdon in Bloom 2014

The meeting was informed that the Council had received many favourable comments regarding the 2014 floral displays around the town.

The meeting was also informed that watering the displays would cease towards the end of September to allow the hanging and barrier baskets plus the flower beds to dry out and die back before removal and the arrival of the Michaelmas and Runaway Fairs.

After the Fairs depart from the town winter planting would begin. This year would follow the same as last year's popular colourful display of Polyanthus and Wall Flowers.

The Committee agreed that a letter of thanks should be sent from the Mayor to Mr Chris Ford of Wick Farm Nurseries congratulating him on the standard of floral displays around the town.

A6 Summer Events Working Group

The Committee received the minutes of the Summer Events Working Group held on 10th July 2014 and **resolved** to accept the recommendations therein.

The Chairman of the Summer Events Working Group informed the meeting that an events company has made representations to work in partnership with the Council for the 2015 Fun and Music in the Park event. It had also been suggested that a Christmas event could also be held in the town centre working in partnership with the same company.

There was some considerable discussion between the Committee Members regarding this request and it was **resolved** that *Councillors Alice and Marilyn Badcock, Helen Pighills, Lesley Legge, the Mayor and Town Clerk look more closely at the proposals and report back to the Amenities and Recreation Committee.*

The Committee were also informed that the flags decorating the town centre will be removed on Monday 29th September in time for the arrival of the Michaelmas Fair. It was **resolved** that *the used flags would be offered, by way of advertisement on the Council's website, to members of the public for a £5 donation to the Mayor's charities.*

A7 **Finance Report**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Treasurer in relation to the above. It was **resolved** that *the report be approved.*

A8 **Cemetery and Works Supervisor's Report**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Cemetery and Works Supervisor as circulated with the agenda.

The Committee asked that the two Working Groups, one for New Cemetery and one on Large Funerals should meet in October after the Michaelmas and Runaways Fairs.

A9 **Cemetery**

Members had asked that this item be an agenda item for future meetings. The Working Group set up to discuss a new cemetery would meet in late October.

A10 **Royse Court Garden**

A Member had asked for this item to be placed on the agenda and the Committee was content with this although it was noted any changes to the hard landscaping of the area was under the auspices of the Guildhall Committee. The Vice Chairman of Amenities and Recreation Committee had been in discussion with the Chairman of the Guildhall Committee and it had been agreed that a temporary refurbishment of the Garden could be made, which would still enable time for the plans for the Guildhall to be finalised at which stage the landscaping would be discussed and finalised.

The meeting asked that the Head of Services report back to the next meeting with ideas and costs. Members also requested that the Chamber of Commerce is informed when work was to take place.

A11 **Fishing**

The Committee discussed the proposed new charges for the Abingdon-on-Thames Fisheries and were informed that there had been some comments made from local fishermen and their representatives. The Committee were informed that these people had been given the opportunity to either meet the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the

Amenities and Recreation Committee or were asked to write in with proposals for this meeting. Neither had taken up these offers and it was therefore **resolved** that the new charges be accepted to run from 1st September 2014.

It was also **resolved** to write to the Fishing League asking what, where and when matches were to be held so that invoices could be sent for the appropriate fee to be paid to the Town Council for the use of the Town's fisheries.

The Committee also asked that the Environment Agency be contacted with a view to finding out what penalties can be imposed for misuse of the fisheries.

A12 **Allotments**

The Committee was informed that the three Allotment Associations had come together to organize a competition for the best allotment in the town. The Mayor, Councillor Angela Lawrence was asked to judge the competition and the presentation of the award would be made in the Mayor's Parlour on Wednesday 10th September 2014.

A12 **Bus Shelters**

The Head of Services informed the meeting that the Oxfordshire County Council would be replacing Bus Shelters in the Wootton Road using Section 106 funding. Also two new shelters would be installed on the Marcham Road at Tesco's and Fairacres. All these shelters would become the responsibility of the Town Council for maintenance and cleaning once installed.

Members asked that the splash board at the Boundary House bus stop be looked at with regard to replacement.

A12 **Publicity**

Members requested that the following items be given publicity:

- Fun / Music in Park – 6th June 2015
- Fishing Charges on Portal
- Extravaganza – 29th November 2014 and 28th November 2015
- Jubilee Trees
- Salt Bin Locations

A13 **Items for Next Meeting**

Members were reminded that the next meeting would be the Budget Meeting whereby requests for funding of projects or specific purchases should be made. These would then go, as a recommendation, to the Finance and General Purposes Committee and then for approval by the Town Council.

A14 **Dates of meetings for 2013/2014**

The dates for future meetings of the Amenities and Recreation Committee are;

- Wednesday 26th November 2014
- Wednesday 11th February 2015

A15 **Exclusion of the public, including the Press**

It was moved by the Chairman and **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.

A16 **Adoption of Land**

Members received a verbal report from the Head of Services that a section of footpath leading from Hendred Way to Chilton Close still formed part of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy (UKAEA) land portfolio. The other section that comprises the footpath belongs to the Town Council and this part was resurfaced a few years ago as it had been subject to flooding and frost damage.

The pathway (UKAEA section) has fallen into disrepair and complaints had been received from parents of children attending Rush Common School that there were hazardous sections of that part of the path belonging to the UKAEA.

Members discussed the possibility of adopting the section of footpath belonging to the UKAEA and it was **resolved** *that adoption could take place subject to the following conditions:*

- *The footpath is brought up to highway standards for such surfaces and that all broken fencing/wires are either renewed or removed.*
- *A commuted sum of money is placed with the Town Council to allow for maintenance for the following five years.*
- *All legal costs regarding the adoption of the section of footpath is paid by the UKAEA.*
- *That the Town Council is satisfied all the above conditions have been met.*

The meeting rose at 9.25 pm

Signed Date