

18 February 2020

To All Members of the **Amenities and Recreation Committee:**

:

Councillor Jim Halliday	- Chairman
Councillor Andrew Coveney	- Vice Chairman
Councillor Charlie Birks	
Councillor Grace Clifton	
Councillor Eric de la Harpe	
Councillor Jeanette Halliday	
Councillor Robert Maddison	

Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee (ex-officio)

To: All other Town Council Members for information only

Dear Sir/Madam

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the Amenities & Recreation Committee to be held on **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020** at **7.00 pm** in the Roysse Room.

Should any Member be unable to attend and wish to send a substitute to the meeting, they should inform me at [nigel.warner@abingdon.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.warner@abingdon.gov.uk) and cc [enquiries@abingdon.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@abingdon.gov.uk)

Yours faithfully

N. E. Warner  
Town Clerk

## **AGENDA**

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of interest from Members in relation to any items to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the Local Code of Conduct.

### **3 Minutes**

To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019 (previously circulated and approved by the Town Council as a report of the meeting; attached).

### **4 Matters Arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

To discuss any matters arising from the previous minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Item A12 – Cremated Remains – The creation of a garden area to accept the scattering of cremated remains is on the programme of the Works Team to carry out.

Item A15 – Roundabout Islands – There has been no response to this matter from the District Council.

Item A26 – Notice Boards – Officers have been informed that the delivery date for the new notice boards is 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020. The Works team will install these as soon after delivery as possible.

David Ogilvie Engineering Ltd are looking into manufacturing a round notice board (similar to the one attached pictured on page 17) at an indicative cost of £7,500.

Item A29 – Happy to Chat Benches – New signage has been installed on the benches in the Market Place and St. Helen's Wharf, replacing those which were originally displayed and unofficially removed.

Item A42 – Abingdon In Bloom – Twelve New planters and Basket Trees have been ordered and are now being manufactured. New hanging baskets to accompany the new planters have also been ordered.

Item A45 – Land in Stratton Way – The Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Town Council have approved a proposal that the said land is disposed of. This will now come under the Finance and General Purposes Committee as a property and land matter, and work will be undertaken to see if the proposal is possible.

Item A47 – Spring Road Cemetery Grazing – The Committee previously resolved to allow the grazing of sheep and the keeping of bee hives within the meadow area of the Spring Road cemetery. This will be carried out later in the year.

Item A48 – Spring Garden Cemetery Lodge Shower – the building has been surveyed and officers are waiting for a quote before going ahead with this item.

Item 49 – Benches on St Helen’s Wharf – All but one bench have replaced on St Helen’s Wharf with ones manufactured from recycled plastic. The final bench is on order and will be installed as soon as it arrives.

5 **Financial Report**

To receive and consider the financial report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 and the report of the Treasurer / Responsible Finance Officer.

6. **Risk Register Annual Update**

To receive the report of the Treasurer / Responsible Finance Officer regarding the Risk Register annual update.

7 **Cemetery and Works Supervisor’s Report**

To receive a report from the Cemetery and Works Supervisor (attached page 43).

8 **Tree Survey & Planting**

At the last Committee meeting the Tree Survey has just been received and there had not been time to assess what had been reported. The total estimated costs of work to be undertaken according to the survey was £89,975. Your officers have studied the report and have identified items that could be undertaken ‘in-house’ which would make an approximate saving of £27, 060. The Works Team have started to work through the survey and have currently undertaken about 50% of the work required. The remaining work, not undertaken by Council staff,

will be subject to a tender exercise to be undertaken shortly. Members are asked to note the actions being taken.

A request from Abingdon Carbon Cutters has been made to plant trees in the Boxhill Recreation Ground. There are problems with this request as listed below:

- The land is an infill site having been used as a tip for waste vehicles back in the seventies. The Council would have to test or get professional advice as to the suitability of the land to plant trees as well as the methane levels that may still be there or that any digging / tree roots may disturb.
- The land is leased to St. Edmunds Football Club and they will have to be consulted as to what space they use / require.
- The Boxhill Recreation Ground has been registered as a Queen Elizabeth II Field in honour of HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012, which ensures the designated areas give the public access to outdoor recreational spaces for sport and physical activity now and for generations to come. Any loss of space may involve some legal work which the Town Council would have to undertake.
- The Council would have to ensure that any trees planted are at a sufficient distance from any building / structure so that when they mature they do not become a nuisance as we are now experiencing from trees planted in the 1960's / 70's.
- The planting of trees would also make maintenance of the area more time consuming.
- Although planting and the initial upkeep of the trees would be in the hands of the Carbon Cutters, ultimate responsibility for the trees and the health and safety would lie with the Town Council.

Members are asked to consider this request and instruct their officers accordingly.

#### 9. **Bus Shelters.**

An order has been placed for a new bus shelter, with seating, on the Oxford Road travelling south near the Boundary House.

The Committee, at its last meeting, also requested officers to cost up and order a new shelter for the Vineyard travelling north, near the petrol station. However, the Green Scrutiny Committee made a request that this shelter should have a 'green roof' where grasses and moss grow and this comes at a greater cost. Two estimates have been gained by your officers and they are both in the £16.3K region with a further £3.2K installation fee.

This is far above the cost of a normal cantilever shelter which the Town Council is replacing in the Oxford road for a total cost of £6.8K plus removal of the old shelter.

Regarding notice boards currently attached to some bus stops it is proposed that these are now used for public information by the Town Council. These notice boards were originally intended for use by the bus companies but they have not done so. If Members agree this action it may be possible to delegate the updating of these notice boards to community groups who have indicated that they may be able to help.

Members are asked to consider these matters and instruct their officers accordingly.

10 **New Cemetery**

To receive a verbal update from the Assistant Town Clerk / Head of Services on progress in this matter.

11. **Bicycle Racks Outside the Abbey Cinema.**

A Member has requested that this item be brought to the Committee's attention for action.

It was suggested some time ago that bike racks be placed outside the Abbey Hall (Abbey Cinema) for use by the general public. There is room to have bike racks put in front of the disabled ramp and it is officers recommendation that six racks are purchased, similar to those used at the bus stops on the Oxford Road and those once in the High Street which are now waiting replacement after a vehicle accident.

Officers also request that Members give consideration to a covered bike shelter in the car park of the Abbey/Guildhall area for staff and visitors bikes.

There may be some cross-over with the Guildhall Committee on this matter and it is up to Members to decide how this matter should be expedited including funding.

Members are asked to consider this request and instruct their officers accordingly.

12. **Drayton Road Allotment Request.**

A request has been received from the Treasurer of the Drayton Road Allotment Association requesting funding for rain water storage and distribution (attached page 45).

Members should be aware that the £2K grant available annually to each allotment association was intended to help with the maintenance of the site so that the call on Town Council staff time would be minimal.

Members are asked to discuss this matter and instruct their officers accordingly.

13. **Twinning Directional Post**

A Member has requested that the Council install a directional twin town post in the Roysse Court Garden as a tribute to the twin towns of Abingdon (see similar attached page 47).

Members should be aware that there is no funding for twinning activities and, if Twinning is to be re-established then a recommendation should be made to the Finance and General Purposes Committee to get matters sorted.

The Member also raised the fact that this year, 2020, Abingdon celebrates 50 years of twinning with Schongau in Bavaria, Germany and it is suggested that a plaque is placed in the County Hall flower bed celebrating this fact. The suggestion came too late to amend the planting for the summer season as the colour scheme had already been decided and ordered.

Members are requested to consider these suggestions and make a recommendation to the Finance and General Purposes Committee as well as instructing their officers accordingly.

14. **Green Scrutiny Committee**

Attached (pages 49 – 50) is a report from the Green Advisory and Scrutiny Committee (GASC) which has an impact on the workings of the Amenities and Recreation Committee.

Members are asked to study the report and note there is a lot of cross-over between the two committees where discussions are taking place twice for the same matters. Also, matters decided by the Amenities and Recreation Committee have had to be put on hold due to requests from the GASC thus causing delays in projects undertaken.

The cross-over is causing some difficulties at officer level and indeed the right officer is not always consulted.

Members will note there is a standard item now on all agendas for Environmental Implications and Members will need to address the matter of how the GASC impacts on established committees such as the Amenities and Recreation Committee.

Members are asked to discuss this matter.

15 **Environmental Implications**

The Committee is requested, if it has not already done so, to consider the environmental implications in relation to matters on the agenda, in particular having regard to the Council's resolution in relation to the Climate Change Emergency. Note that this matter will be further addressed at all future meetings.

16 **Police Community Support Officers**

To consider the current involvement with the town's PCSOs and make recommendations regarding partnership working. *This was resolved to be an agenda item for all committees, at the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020.*

17. **Publicity**

The Committee is requested to consider any items on the agenda which would benefit from publicity.

18. **Items for Next Meeting**

Members are requested to consider items to be included on the agenda of the next meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee. This will enable officers to explore future items with a view to giving some guidance at future meetings.

19. **Date of Next Meeting**

The dates for future Amenities and Recreation Committee meetings will be on:

- 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020

20. **Exclusion of the Public, Including the Press**

*If necessary, due to confidential matters being introduced to the Committee's deliberations, the Chair may move a motion for the approval of the Committee, to exclude the public including the press:*

*"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."*

Items to be discussed:

1. Cemetery Matters
2. Town Council Land Usage – to receive a report from the Cemetery and Works Supervisor Attached)