

**MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL
AMENITIES & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a Meeting of the **Amenities & Open Spaces Committee** which was held on **Monday, 29th January 2018** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough** at 8.15pm

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|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| PRESENT | Councillor L. Farrell | Chairman |
| | Councillor M. Hall | Town Mayor |
| | Councillor B. Castle | |
| | Councillor A. Ross | |
| | Councillor M. Cooper | |
| | Councillor H. Forbes | |
| | Councillor S. Price | |
| | Councillor A. Wilson | |
| ALSO PRESENT | Councillor G. Loosmore | Observing |
| | Councillor N. Barrett-Morton | Observing |
| | Mrs S. Parker | Town Clerk |
| | Mr N. Weatherly | Grounds Manager |
| | Mrs D. Whitehall | Administrator |

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions.

510/17

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Cairns.

511/17

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr. Wilson – agenda item 12 – Spring Boundary Walk – non-pecuniary interest.

512/17

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Even though she had been unable to attend, the Chairman thanked the Golf Club for hosting a meeting on Saturday, 13th January to update Councillors on its plans. Thanks too went to the Tennis Club for giving a tour of the new courts on the same morning.

513/17

MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held Monday, 20th November 2017 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman

514/17

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk's report was noted. There were no questions arising.

515/17

GROUND MANAGER'S REPORT

Members noted the report from the Grounds Manager who answered questions on machinery and repairs to footpaths in the Cemetery.

516/17

STONEBRIDGE MEADOW MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Members noted the minutes of the Open Meeting which had taken place on 18th January and the draft review of the Management Plan. They also considered points to be taken to the next Management Committee meeting on 22nd February. Main discussion points were:

- Around 20 members of the public had attended the Open Meeting and all had been positive and supportive
- Whilst Action for the River Kennet (ARK) and Marlborough Town Council (MTC) were equal partners in terms of ownership, Members acknowledged the huge efforts ARK and its volunteers put into work and projects with the MTC Grounds Team in a supporting role
- One issue raised during the Open Meeting had been the proposals to extend pitch provision at Marlborough Town Football Club. A 2014 public consultation about Stonebridge Meadow had shown that 67% of respondents did not favour an extension of the Club into the meadow. (*A total of 208 people responded to that question in the consultation*). These extensive plans had not been taken forward but, as highlighted in Wiltshire Council's Open Spaces Study, there was a shortage of this type of recreational land and a very small extension into the meadow to allow for a larger pitch facility may need to be considered in the future (*it was one of the reasons listed by MTC for buying the land in 2011*). Although it should not be listed in the current objectives in the joint Action Plan, with MTC's obligations to the whole community, it should remain in the background paper at the front of the overall Management Plan until discussions with the Football Club were concluded
- Councillors agreed that there remained ongoing confusion about the name of the meadow. Two signs were currently in place: a 'Stonebridge Wild River Reserve' sign along Stonebridge Lane between the allotments and the river/bridge, and 'Stonebridge Meadow' on a Council notice board near the Elcot Lane entrance. The meadow was also described Stonebridge Meadow as 'part of the Stonebridge Wild River Reserve.' It was noted that all existing documents used 'Stonebridge Meadow', including the Deed of Trust. Naming of the area ought to be resolved especially given the new focus being placed on tourism.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council's representatives ask that reference to a small extension into the meadow for the Football Club remains in the background pages to the Management Plan and that a solution to the naming of the site is discussed at the Management Committee meeting.

517/17

MARLBOROUGH GOLF CLUB

Members noted the Town Clerk's report.

RESOLVED: (i) that Members noted the change to limited liability status for the Golf Club and delegated to the Town Clerk to follow up any necessary legal recognition of this as part of the lease arrangements (e.g. via a Deed of Variation)

RESOLVED: (ii) that the Town Council welcomes and agrees to the proposal for new mobile practice bays to extend the Club's offer to its members and the community

RESOLVED: (iii) that parking will be permitted on The Common during works to resurface the approach road to the Clubhouse, and the Club should liaise with the Grounds Manager

518/17

CHURCHILL COURT

Members noted a report from the Town Clerk about a strip of land owned by the Town Council running alongside the River Kennet adjacent to Churchill Court and discussed:

- That a previous planning permission to erect a public walkway and metal railings had not been pursued and was now expired. (Town Councillors had since resolved not to take the proposal forward)
- The current owners of the Churchill Court site had recently confirmed that they did not want to take ownership of the land, even at a nominal fee of £1
- The Town Council's Health & Safety advisers had made recommendations including that a suitable fence is erected
- The Town Council would be liable for any injury occurring in this area
- Whether to erect warning signs to the effect that "people entering the area do so at their own risk" and whether this would be adequate to negate liability
- The Town Council already maintained trees on the riverbank
- That fencing of the area could entail more work for the Grounds Team, as it was understood that the grass cutting was currently undertaken by Churchill Court

RESOLVED: (i) to erect warning signs in the short term

RESOLVED: (ii) that the Grounds Manager would obtain quotations for a variety of fencing styles

RESOLVED: (iii) that the Town Clerk would contact Churchill Court in order that the warden and residents could be informed

Cllr. Barrett-Morton left the meeting

519/17

THE GREAT BRITISH SPRING CLEAN

Members considered a report from the Town Clerk about getting involved with the Great British Spring Clean over the weekend of 2-4 March 2018:

- Whether to select a single day, or identify different zones for each day of the weekend campaign
- Whether any sort of branding/printed clothing could be obtained
- Whether this could be linked to the dog fouling campaign
- Whether to link with other local organisations, for example youth groups, ARK, Scouts, Cubs, Brownies, Marlborough in Bloom etc

- The timing of each day's efforts could be linked to the weekend shift pattern for the Grounds Team to facilitate litter picking equipment drop-off and the disposal of the litter at the end of the day

RESOLVED: to support the Great British Spring Clean over the weekend of 2-4 March 2018 and to cover different areas of the town on each day, at the recommendation of the Grounds Manager.

520/17

DOG FOULING CAMPAIGN

Members noted a report about a campaign due be launched in Town Council-owned open spaces and considered a date for the launch. The Town Council was working in partnership with Drove Vets.

RESOLVED: to discuss with Drove Vets whether there were opportunities to link this campaign to the Great British Spring Clean to enhance its visibility.

521/17

SPRING BOUNDARY WALK

Members noted a report and plans by the Marlborough Lions Club to hold a Spring Boundary Walk on Sunday, 8th April 2018 starting and finishing at the Marlborough Community & Youth Centre, and noted requests for help with marshalling and serving refreshments. Cllr. Farrell volunteered to be involved in some way, and the Town Clerk agreed to contact all Councillors nearer the time to seek their involvement.

RESOLVED: to provide free use of the Marlborough Community & Youth Centre

522/17

TREE REPLACEMENT PLAN

Members noted the Grounds Manager's report concerning a proposed autumn programme to replace trees which had been lost due to damage or disease on The Common:

- Hardwood trees such as oak, beech and copper beech were recommended which although slower growing would have a long life span and require very little care once they reached maturity
- It was possible to purchase 3-4m high specimens in blocks of 10 which would prove more cost effective
- Whether larger trees could be obtained, and what the costs of associated logistics were likely to be
- That the Free family (who had planted the original horse chestnut trees) be informed of these plans
- Whether a previous Council's proposal to offer the community the option of paying for and planting a memorial tree could be followed through, and whether this should be publicised.

RESOLVED: to purchase 3 blocks of 10 trees of types recommended by the Grounds Manager and to publicise the planting programme soon so that members of the community could take the opportunity of sponsoring a memorial tree.

523/17

CEMETERIES

RESOLVED: that recent grants of Exclusive Rights of Burial, Notices of Interments, Purchases and Memorials, Inscriptions and Additional Inscriptions were noted

524/17

PLUME OF FEATHERS GARDEN

Members noted and welcomed an update report from the Richmond Fellowship outlining their plans for the next few months. They also discussed an issue with land registration and discussed possible next steps based on the advice from the Town Council's solicitors.

RESOLVED: to instruct the Town Council's solicitors to move forward with a review of the HM Land Registry title

525/17

MARLBOROUGH IN BLOOM (MiB)

Members noted the Town Clerk's report and the minutes of the MiB meeting held on 9th January 2018 and that all Members were invited to attend the forthcoming Working Party meeting on 5th February.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the MiB meeting held 9th January 2018 were noted and that the Working Party meeting on 5th February should clarify roles and responsibilities for all parties

526/17

ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

Members noted a report by the Town Clerk. **Cllrs. Castle and Cooper** and relevant staff had attended a meeting with the Allotment Association on 6th December 2017 and Cllr. Cooper summarised the meeting. The AGM would take place on 1st March and Members focused on items to be taken forward to that meeting along with a number of requests received. Matters arising included:

- A desire to maintain a good relationship with the Allotment Association
- The increasing workload on both Grounds and Administration staff meant that other jobs often had to take priority over administration or maintenance works for the allotments
- The average annual plot cost of £21/year and was not adequate to cover all services the Association might like the Town Council to provide
- Whether plot holders would be prepared to pay higher fees for more services
- Rather than increase fees, whether certain powers and responsibilities could be devolved to the Allotment Association and/or plot holders (e.g. issuing letters, collecting rent) as was the case with other allotment groups
- Whether three distinct groups could be formed to represent the different needs of plot holders at the three sites in the town
- Whether a user's group might provide an alternative substitute if a new Association could not be formed due to lack of membership
- The need for a clear agreement setting out the roles and responsibilities of the Town Council, the Allotment Association and individual plot holders

RESOLVED: (i) that budget constraints meant the request for an additional gate at Elcot Lane could not be granted

RESOLVED: (ii) that Members supported a suggestion to invite a representative from the National Allotment Association to the AGM and that the Town Council would help promote the meeting

527/17

SAVERNAKE PARISH COUNCIL

Members considered a request from Savernake Parish Council asking for the Town Council to clean a bus shelter at Savernake Hospital, within the parish of Savernake.

RESOLVED: that the Grounds Manager should draw together a quotation for the work to be provided to Savernake Parish Council

The meeting closed at 9.32pm

Signed: Date:
Chairman