

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

Minutes of a **Meeting** of the **Amenities & Open Spaces Committee** which was held **Monday 2 July 2018**
in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough** at 7.00pm

PRESENT	Councillor M. Cooper Councillor L. Farrell Councillor B. Castle Councillor M. Hall Councillor P. Cairns Councillor D. Heath	Chairman Town Mayor
ALSO PRESENT	Mrs S. Parker Mrs D. Whitehall Councillor A. Kirk Wilson Councillor N. Barrett-Morton Mr N. Goodwin Plus 2 members of the public	Town Clerk Administrator Observing Observing Marlborough.News

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions.

109/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Ross, Forbes and Northeast

110/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations

111/18 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked his fellow Councillors for voting him the Chairman of this Committee. There was a lot to get through in the next year but progress was already being made.

Good luck was passed to Marlborough in Bloom, our Grounds Team and the whole town for South West in Bloom's Judging Day which was next Tuesday, 10 July.

112/18 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held Monday, 30 April 2018 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman

113/18 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk's report was noted.

Cllr. Castle passed on a question received from a member of the public about the roundabout in the play area at Cooper's Meadow. The **Town Clerk** confirmed that health & safety inspections were regularly carried out by the Town Council's insurers and no issues had been reported. It was also noted that the equipment would be replaced later in the year as part of the Cooper's Meadow Play Area Project.

114/18 GROUND MANAGER'S REPORT

The Ground Manager's Report was noted. Matters arising included:

- The Ground Manager was actively following up on a high cost of repair received for machinery
- The relocation of litter bins nearer to the goalposts in the Recreation Ground had not yet taken place
- A grazing licence had been issued for Cooper's Meadow, but as yet the sheep had not arrived. Action for the River Kennet (ARK) was following up to ensure the sheep would be regularly monitored and there were questions about whether the grass would need to be cut back before they arrived, which the **Town Clerk** would follow up
- Members noted the request from Marlborough Community Orchard (MCO) for a new tree to be planted in Wye House Gardens. There was discussion about suitable siting, and preference for this not to be in the lawn or where it would shade flowerbeds once it grew

RESOLVED: to delegate to the Grounds Manager to liaise direct with Marlborough Community Orchard regarding the siting of a new tree in Wye House Gardens

115/18

COOPER'S MEADOW PLAY AREA

Members noted a project update report. Matters of note arising were:

- The project timetable was noted (with the work to the playground planned to be carried out in September/October)
- An Extraordinary Town Council Meeting would take place on 16 July to consider project tenders
- A consultative event would take place on 18 July at Marlborough St Marys between 3-5.30pm which would be open to members of the public after 4pm
- Whether to carry out a letter-drop explaining the project and timetable to residents of surrounding houses
- That it was important to carry out PR via local media and online
- That, subject to ongoing investigations concerning funding, Members preferred Option 2 which would include the whole area being covered in new surfacing

RESOLVED: (i) that the scope and timetable of the consultation was agreed

RESOLVED: (ii) that the scope and timetable of the PR around the play area was agreed, and to delegate to the Town Clerk to liaise with local media

RESOLVED: (iii) that to be able to completely resurface the play area, it was agreed to investigate the possibility of further S106 funds being made available, and that the balance could be drawn down from existing budgets

116/18

PRIORY GARDENS

Members considered concerns raised by neighbours to Priory Gardens and also the protection of fishing rights.

The Use of Priory Gardens

The Town Council had received correspondence from neighbours raising concerns about the use of Priory Gardens. Members discussed:

- With the advent of good weather, the gardens were in more use and there had been some increase in litter as a result. It was noted that birds also removed and scattered litter from bins
- A number of Councillors were now visiting the Gardens regularly and talking to users, particularly about litter. This had generally received a good response

- There had been an increase in cycles in the park, as well as ball games (the Town Council having relaxed rules around this) but this had not been noted as causing any particular problems
- Local police had increased the frequency of their patrols of the Gardens for the summer
- It was important that antisocial behaviour, particularly at night, should be reported to the police
- People could gain easy access to the Gardens whether or not the gates were locked (at the river end and from the High Street): other points of entry included from the riverbank via Polly Gardens car park, through The Priory car park which remained open, and by climbing over the wall
- New procedures were being put in place by St John's Academy in September to work with parents and set out clear expectations around students' behaviour in and around the town
- Marlborough College students were not allowed to use Priory Gardens
- Older users (not necessarily St Johns students) were using the gardens at night, and the school could not be expected to take responsibility for that
- Although there had been reports of people smoking cannabis in the Gardens, this was not unique to this location and was noted in other areas of the town (and was also common to other towns)
- Whether to install CCTV coverage as the installation of CCTV at the Recreation Ground had resulted in a reduction in antisocial behaviour. The feasibility of this was being investigated

RESOLVED: (i) that the Town Clerk would respond to the correspondence including to highlight the positive actions being taken by the Town Council, St Johns Academy and local police

Cllr. Kirk Wilson left the meeting

Fishing/Poaching

There had been recent reports of people fishing in the Kennet, both in Priory Gardens and Coopers Meadow. Members discussed:

- Fishing without the permission of the land owner is illegal
- Local police had advised to dial 999 if poachers were sighted removing fish from the river
- 'No fishing' signs should be erected to ensure users of Town Council open spaces were aware that fishing was not permitted
- Whether multi language signs were necessary

RESOLVED: (ii) to erect 'No Fishing' signs in Priory Gardens and Coopers Meadow

Cllr. Barrett-Morton left the meeting

117/18

THE COMMON

Members considered requests by Marlborough Rugby Football Club about its use of The Common, and a question about daffodils from Marlborough Gardening Association.

Marlborough Rugby Football Club (MRFC)

In order to comply with RFU regulations, MRFC had requested a number improvements following the promotion of the senior side to Southern Counties League 6.

During a suspension of Standing Orders, representatives from MRFC answered questions and agreed to a number of compromises. It was noted that Section 38 approval under The Commons Act 2006 may be required – the **Town Clerk** would research this, including whether it could be applied retrospectively in order to meet timescales for the new playing season. MRFC agreed to work jointly with the Town Council towards this. The proposals discussed were:

- Pitch fencing – a temporary plastic barrier (one bar) fence was requested around the pitch during the playing season, to be removed in the closed season. In order to facilitate public access, it was agreed that this should be left open at the two short ends of the pitch rather than enclosing the entire pitch
- A scoreboard – an electronic type scoreboard on wheels, only for use during games
- A permanent board – near the road/Clubhouse on Frees Avenue to advertise fixtures. It was agreed that rather than a permanent fixture, a board could be erected during the playing season, to be removed during the closed season (an advertising banner on the building itself had raised objections from the previous council)
- Temporary stands x 2 – for 50 people each, to be wheeled onto The Common only during games
- Extra pitch – help and support with finding one additional pitch for the Club
- Improved car parking facilities – for the benefit of MRFC and the community

RESOLVED: (i) that the Town Council approves the requests for improved facilities outlined above, particularly those for the start of the season (temporary fencing, scoreboard and seating)

RESOLVED: (ii) to establish a Joint Working Party with MRFC as soon as possible to work through requirements under the Commons Act 2006 – Town Council members to be Cllrs Hall, Cairns, Cooper and the Town Mayor

Daffodils alongside A346 at Port Hill (“Swindon Banks”)

Marlborough Gardening Association had informally approached the Town Council about the possibility of daffodils being planted continuously along Swindon Banks and had offered to carry out the planting. Members raised a number of questions:

- Funding – it was not clear if MGA was offering to provide the bulbs
- Whether to vary the planting with other bulbs to prolong the flowering season
- Whether there were health & safety and liability issues associated with members of the public planting bulbs on this steep slope near a busy road
- The impact on maintenance for the Grounds Team
- Whether the planting would create an obstruction for people using the bank to access the Common (rather than using the steps)
- The visual impact of the flowers on a main approach road to the town when in bloom and the 6 week wait before the grass could be mown afterwards.

It was agreed that more information would be required before a decision could be made.

RESOLVED: (iii) that the Grounds Manager should meet with Marlborough Gardening Association to clarify the proposal and that the item be brought back to the next meeting (1 October 2018)

Two members of the public left the meeting

118/18

RECREATION GROUND, SALISBURY ROAD

Members considered the purchase of a drinking fountain with integral water bottle filler to be located at the Recreation Ground, Salisbury Road. Points discussed included:

- The benefit to users of the Recreation Ground
- Support for reducing the use of single-use plastic bottles
- Location – if sited on the Marlborough Community & Youth Centre building, it would require plumbing and also the permission of the landlord of the building (Wiltshire Council)
- It was not yet clear whether planning permission would be required
- Whether the idea could be extended to other Town Council locations such as George Lane toilet block
- Budget – whether this would fall to this Committee or the Property Committee budget. Models varied in price between £300 and £2,500

RESOLVED: (i) that a combined drinking fountain and water bottle filler is purchased following more research, which was delegated to the Town Clerk

RESOLVED: (ii) before purchase, permission is sought from Wiltshire Council as well as confirmation about whether planning permission is required

RESOLVED: (iii) a recommendation be made to the Property Committee about this purchase

119/18

SKATEBOARD PARK LIGHTING

At the A&OS meeting of 12 March 2018 it was agreed that a proposal for lighting be approved and that initial advice was sought (Min. 574/17). Members considered initial costings for this proposal together with correspondence received from a neighbour of the site. Points discussed included:

- The project had been requested by young people using the site
- Members had noted that some users were currently using car headlights to illuminate the skatepark
- Additional illumination of the area should discourage anti-social behaviour
- The lighting would not be required year-round but would be of benefit in winter months when it was dark by 5/6 pm
- That the lights should not be left burning all night with a reasonable switch-off time in consideration of neighbours to the site
- Light pollution/environmental impact: downward facing/low impact lighting was recommended
- Costs: initial estimates were £13,300. £5,000 had been earmarked to the project (Town Council Meeting, 25 June 2018, Min. 97/18)
- The likelihood of obtaining financial support externally, such as from the Local Youth Network (LYN), Area Board or Lottery funding

RESOLVED: (i) to explore external funding options in order to move the project forward

RESOLVED: (ii) that the Town Clerk respond to the neighbour setting out the points above

120/18

WORKSHOP

Members considered alternatives to the current workshop arrangements at the Recreation Ground, Salisbury Road. Points of note were:

- The Grounds team had grown in number, and additional and larger equipment was being used : the workshop capacity had now been exceeded and had already necessitated the temporary use of part of the George Lane toilets building for storage
- More devolved services would come down from Wiltshire Council, adding to the workload of the Grounds team
- Whether an additional structure could be erected at the current site
- Whether temporary structures would be suitable, e.g. shipping containers
- Whether to investigate an alternative site where a purpose built facility might be possible
- That the Property Committee should consider these options
- £30,000 had been set aside in ear marked reserves
- A Working Party would likely be required to move the project forward if approved

RESOLVED: that more research should be carried out into a possible alternative site, and the proposal should be submitted to the Property Committee

121/18 STONEBRIDGE MEADOW

Members noted the minutes of the Stonebridge Meadow Management Committee held 18 June 2018.

122/18 TIN PIT/RIVER OG

Members noted a report by the Grounds Manager about land at Tin Pit and the path to the River Og. The discussion included:

- **Cllr. Castle** raised concerns about the nature of the path, being uneven/bumpy and, in places, on a steep slope. He also suggested that something could be done to open up the wider area for the amenity of the local community
- It was noted that any work other than monthly in-season mowing of the path at Tin Pit would be outside the scope of the Town Council's agreed Action Plan for 2017-2021
- There had been discussions in July 2017 which included a resolution to budget for an interpretation board and signage but this had not yet been implemented (Min. 166/17)

123/18 CEMETERIES

RESOLVED: (i) that recent Grants of Exclusive Rights of Burial and were noted

RESOLVED: (ii) that approved memorials and inscriptions were noted

Victorian Cemetery

Members noted an update report on work progressing in the Victorian Cemetery.

Some initial draft designs for signage had been prepared and these were shared with Members who commended **Mr Sherratt** on his work. It was hoped that the designs could, at some point, be used to help promote the site. However, these had not yet been shared with the Friends of the Old Victorian Cemetery, which had originally requested permission for a notice board rather than signage.

A visit had been arranged by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management in August and it was agreed, as at the previous meeting (Min. 693/17) to defer any further planting until after that date.

124/18 ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

Members noted the minutes of the Allotment Association AGM and considered an email received from the newly formed Committee about proposed changes to working arrangements.

RESOLVED: that Marlborough Town Council welcomes and will consider the positive suggestions made by the newly formed Allotment Association Committee

125/18 MARLBOROUGH IN BLOOM (MiB)

Members noted an update from **Cllr. Forbes** which had been circulated and included information about progress towards South West in Bloom 2018.

126/18 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential or commercial nature of the business to be transacted

Mr Goodwin left the meeting

127/18 TOWN COUNCIL-OWNED LAND

Members considered a report by the Town Clerk about Town Council owned land.

RESOLVED: to issue a confidential minute

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm

Signed: Date:
Chairman