

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

Minutes of a **Meeting** of the **Amenities and Open Spaces Committee** which was held on **Monday
19 November 2018** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough** at 8.05 pm

PRESENT	Councillor M. Cooper	Chairman
	Councillor L. Farrell	Town Mayor
	Councillor B. Castle	
	Councillor A. Ross	
	Councillor M. Hall	
	Councillor P. Cairns	
	Councillor H. Forbes	
	Councillor D. Heath	
ALSO PRESENT	Mrs S. Parker	Town Clerk
	Mrs D. Whitehall	Administrator
	Mr N. Weatherly	Grounds Manager
	Councillor G. Loosmore	Observing
	Councillor N. Barrett-Morton	Observing
	Mr N. Goodwin	Marlborough.News
	Plus 3 members of the public	

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions

375/18

APOLOGIES

No apologies had been received

376/18

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

377/18

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked the Mayor, fellow committee members and everyone who had been involved with the build and opening of the upgraded play area at Coopers Meadow. The playground had received very positive feedback from young users and some good press coverage.

As Councillors were aware, Giffords Circus use The Common every August and it is always a sell-out. A letter had been received from the owners thanking the Town Council for the help it gives year on year.

Notice had been received that the path leading to Wye House Gardens would be closed for part of December for tree works. Planning permission was in place for this. The Warden at Wye House had issued a note to neighbours about it too.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to the Grounds Team for their excellent work in erecting the very impressive beacon on The Common for the Battle's Over event. Also to members of the Rotary and Rugby Clubs for all their work towards the event too.

378/18

MINUTES

Cllr. Ross noted that he had not been present at a meeting reported in **Min. 282/18** and asked that the Minutes be adjusted accordingly.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held 1 October 2018 were reported as a true record with one amendment and signed by the Chairman

379/18

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

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

380/18

GROUND MANAGER'S REPORT

The Grounds Manager's report was noted and he answered questions from Members about roses at the 7th Wiltshire Regiment and mowing equipment.

Swindon Road Bank

The Grounds Manager was currently looking into an option for bulb planting that could potentially result in a colourful display for approx. 6 months of the year. There had also been an offer of involvement from Marlborough Gardening Association. He recommended that a decision be deferred until more information was available about all the options.

RESOLVED: to defer a decision about replanting Swindon Road Banks until 2019

381/18

JUBILEE FIELD MANTON

Members noted a report from the Town Clerk about progress towards updating recreational facilities at Jubilee Field. Members again expressed their support and congratulations to the community group involved and recognised the benefit this upgrade would bring to residents of Manton and Marlborough.

The group had applied for funding from the Landfill Communities Fund. In order to secure this funding, they were asking the Town Council for a letter of support and a third party financial contribution.

RESOLVED: to write a letter to support the application for funding and to contribute £1,000 as the third party funder

382/18

THE COMMON

Members considered a request from Marlborough Rugby Club (MRFC) about advertising and signage on The Common, as well as an unrelated offer to control the rabbit population.

Fixture Board

Members discussed the proposed installation of a low level fixture board at the top of Herd Street (possibly using the same frame as used by MTC for the "Battles Over" banner) and ideally another at the top of Kingsbury Street:

- Whether the board should be owned by the Town Council or MRFC
- Whether the board should be dedicated to rugby fixtures or used for other notifications, e.g. Town Council events
- Whether to include other information about users of The Common, for example the Marlborough Model Flying Club
- That the board should be designed to be in keeping with its location in an area of outstanding natural beauty
- Whether the Town Council would be involved in the final design
- That MRFC was willing to make a financial contribution towards the cost of the sign

RESOLVED: (i) that the Town Council grants permission for a fixture board for Marlborough Rugby Club which will be owned and maintained by the Town Council

Barrier Advertising

MRFC was seeking to attract local sponsorship for the club via barrier advertisements to be hung from the new pitch barriers from Friday evening to Sunday afternoons during the rugby season. Members discussed:

- That the Town Council was the lawful authority to grant this permission in accordance with the Marlborough Common Byelaws
- It was not clear whether planning permission (advertising) would be required
- That the design should be appropriate for the location
- Whether to consult with North Wessex Downs AONB about design guidelines

RESOLVED: (ii) that the Town Council grants permission for advertising boards to be hung from temporary barriers at weekends during the rugby season and that these should be designed in a way that is sensitive to their location

Rabbits

Members considered an offer to help with control of the rabbit population on The Common.

RESOLVED: to decline the offer concerning rabbit control

Three members of the public left the meeting

383/18

PRIORY GARDENS

Moving of benches and bin

Members considered a request submitted to the Town Council to relocate two benches and a bin within Priory Gardens from the main High Street entrance to the opposite side of the gardens. This topic generated a lively discussion including:

- A statement by **Cllr. Barrett-Morton** of his concerns about the behaviour of some younger users of Priory Gardens
- Whether the move would reduce noise disturbance for residents of The Priory and Cromwell Court and Mews
- Whether people would use the proposed new location, or choose to sit on the wall in the current location instead of using the benches
- Whether the move would increase noise disturbance for residents of Figgins Lane
- The behaviour of some users of the Gardens
- Whether there were effective police patrols in the area (views were expressed both for and against this point)
- Whether the proposal would have an impact on the litter problem in the Gardens
- Whether the move would create a perception of 'demonising' young people – something Members had no desire to do

Cllr. Castle proposed, seconded by **Cllr. Forbes**, that the benches and bin should be moved for a trial period. There were 3 votes for the proposal with 4 against, therefore the proposal to move the benches and bins was not carried.

Unauthorised entrance

Members discussed an area of the riverbank next to Polly Gardens car park where an unauthorised entrance had been created. Suggestions had been put forward to either plant shrubs to form a defensive barrier or to erect a fence in the location. Members discussed:

- A shrub barrier had been tried in the past but the shrubs had been removed by persons unknown and thrown into the river
- How long it would take before the shrubs reached maturity
- Whether a temporary fence should be erected until the shrubs were mature
- Whether to extend the current barrier so that it goes beyond the riverbank into the river
- Whether creating an effective barrier would have any effect due to other access points (e.g. via The Priory car park, over the wall)
- Whether to seek quotations for a fence

RESOLVED: (i) to plant a prickly shrub barrier to prevent access from Polly Gardens car park

Out of Date Signage

The existing signage did not reflect the most recent decisions about opening times and usage of the gardens, as discussed and agreed following a meeting with St John's Academy. (Full Council of 22 January 2018 under **Min. No. 491/17 - RESOLVED:** (ii) that Marlborough Town Council supports the student proposals to monitor the gardens with a suggestion that an assembly is organised to remind students about responsibilities for all those using the gardens. Also, that the rules around ball games would be relaxed and a new notice issued asking that all respect the rights of other users to enjoy the gardens. In addition, the gardens to be locked at 4.30pm during the winter months.)

. Members discussed:

- Whether to remove all references to ball games and cycling
- Whether the sign should state that ball games and cycles were permitted at the discretion of the Town Council and asking users to show courtesy to all users and nearby residents
- Whether it would be too expensive to change the sign each time the rules changed
- Whether there was too much information on the sign, rendering it ineffective
- Whether to rescind the decision to relax rules around ball games
- Whether it was possible to enforce the rules

A proposal by **Cllr. Forbes** to rescind the decision to relax rules about ball games did not attract a seconder.

Members noted that the Mayor was to talk to students at an assembly within the next couple of weeks.

RESOLVED: (ii) to defer a decision on signage until after the Mayor had spoken to students during a scheduled St John's Academy assembly

384/18

CEMETERIES

RESOLVED: (i) that recently issued Grants of Exclusive Rights of Burial were noted

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

Cllr. Barrett-Morton left the meeting

Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) Report

Members considered an extensive report and recommendations from the ICCM.

RESOLVED: (iii) to form a one-off Working Party comprising all A&OS Members to consider the report in detail and make recommendations to the next Committee Meeting

Mr Goodwin left the meeting

Excavation of Former Chapel

A request had been received about taking forward a number of actions following work around the excavation of the former chapel in the Victorian Cemetery. Whilst acknowledging that the initial excavations had been undertaken without the Town Council's knowledge or permission, the project was undoubtedly a good one which would generate interest in the site. Members discussed:

- The extent of architectural merit attached to a building demolished as (relatively) recently as the 1960s
- Whether the excavations had value from a social history perspective
- Whether the foundations being exposed to the elements would lead to their deterioration, and how they might be preserved or marked
- Whether making a feature of the site would add to the appeal of the Victorian Cemetery
- Health and safety considerations
- Whether to seek advice from ICCM whose report made recommendations about the site of the former chapel
- Whether to install an information board and how it might be weather proofed
- That no more work should be undertaken without agreement by the Town Council

RESOLVED: to delegate to the Town Clerk and Grounds Manager to liaise with the ICCM about the excavation work and how it might work alongside recommendations set out in its management report and any related health and safety issues.

385/18

LIGHTING OF SKATEPARK

Members noted an update report on progress towards the installation of flood lights at the Skate Park.

386/18

MARLBOROUGH IN BLOOM (MiB)

Cllr. Forbes, the Town Council's representative to MiB, gave a verbal report on recent committee meetings and the AGM, which had been a successful and well-attended event. There had been general enthusiasm to form a joint working party between MiB volunteers and the Town Council to deal with the town's 2019 entry in to South West in Bloom. The Assistant Town Clerk, Clare Harris, would administer the Working Party and nominations for Councillor membership should be decided once a Terms of Reference had been discussed at an initial meeting.

RESOLVED: that a Working Party be established and that an initial meeting should agree membership as well as establishing a Terms of Reference

387/18

AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB) – CONSULTATION

Cllr. Heath gave a verbal update about the AONB Draft Management Plan, currently out for consultation. He encouraged Members to read through and make comments.

RESOLVED: to express support for the AONB Management Plan and acknowledge the extensive work that had gone into producing it.

388/18

BUDGET SETTING 2019/2020

Members considered this Committee's budget requirements for 2019/20 to be submitted to the Finance & Policy Committee for consideration. A draft schedule had been produced based on estimated figures, and a number of changes were agreed:

- Reduce the Jubilee Field project budget line to £500
- Reduce the budget line for replacement trees at Frees Avenue to £1,000
- To Reduce the Dark Skies project budget line to £500
- Reduce the Skate Park lighting project budget line to £500

RESOLVED: (i) that the estimated expenditure and income for 2019/20 for A&OS Committee with 4 amendments be submitted to the Finance & Policy Committee

RESOLVED: (ii) that the proposed 3% increase in charges for Open Spaces and the Cemetery to be effective from 1 April 2019 were agreed

389/18

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

390/18

TOWN COUNCIL-OWNED LAND

Members considered a request about Town Council-owned land. Members were reluctant to take a decision changing the current position without knowing the legal implications.

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk would seek legal advice concerning the implications of the request to the Town Council

The meeting closed at 9.50 pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date: