

MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES

Minutes of the meeting of the **Amenities and Open Spaces Committee** held on **Monday 23rd July, 2007** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough** at 8.00 pm

PRESENT	Councillor B. Castle Councillor Mrs. P. Dow Councillor R. Notton Councillor A. Spranger Councillor G. Loosmore Councillor S. Radnedge Councillor R. Pitts	Chairman Town Mayor
ALSO PRESENT	Mrs Pam Dobson Mrs Linda Chapman Councillor S. Dobson Councillor Mrs E.M. Hannaford-Dobson Councillor A. Ross	Town Clerk Civic Secretary Observing Observing Observing
	2 members of the public	

NOTICE OF MEETING – Public Notice of the Meeting has been given in accordance with Schedule 12, paragraph 10 (2) of the Local Government Act 1972.

135/07 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

136/07 DECLARATION(S) OF INTEREST

Agenda Item 9	Councillor Mrs P. Dow-Member of the Bowls Club
Agenda Item 14	Councillor R. Notton- Friend
Agenda Item 14	Councillor G. Loosmore-Friend

137/07 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to the Marlborough Jazz Festival for a very successful weekend. Marlborough Town Council played its part by allowing the free use of both the Priory Gardens and The Common, together with input from our staff, for the record it is a matter of regret that our Council received no public acknowledgement of this important support in kind. I have been re-assured by a few influential committee members of that organisation, that next year our significant contribution will be acknowledged in all the appropriate 2008 literature.

- a) Over the weekend record-breaking rainfalls for July fell over much of the country. Here in Marlborough we experienced heavy rainfalls but not sufficient for the River Kennet to overtop its banks. The rainfall was however sufficiently intense to cause the manhole cover of the storm drain in Cooper's Meadow to blow out. As a result sewage pollution and other toilet contents flowed out into the meadow, in the vicinity of the cover, and directly into the river. This is the third time this has happened this year. I have asked the Town Clerk to press Thames Water to clear the remnants of this offensive material from our public park and to ensure that this particular incident does not happen again.
- b) A flood warning for the heavy rain was issued by the Environment Agency and as a result, in order to alleviate any potential flooding of property, the sluices at Town Mill were fully opened. The sacrificial destruction of the riverbank of the meadow immediately opposite the millpond continues. Unless remedial action is taken soon in the form of expensive engineering we will eventually lose a significant part of Cooper's Meadow, including the public footpath. It has been suggested that Cooper's Meadow should be handed back to its owner, namely Kennet District Council, to maintain and fund.
- c) Following on from the flood warning, the Town Clerk, Councillor A. Kirk Wilson (our new flood warden), myself and some concerned members of our community liased on the immediate possible needs of certain householders. I wish to thank the Town Clerk and those members of our ground staff who came in on Saturday to fill sandbags, for their time and dedication. All the weekend incidents, both here and nationwide, should concentrate our minds regarding a total emergency plan for our town. The Environment Agency has today issued an ALL CLEAR message for the Kennet.

138/07

UPDATE FROM TOWN CLERK ON ITEMS DISCUSSED PREVIOUSLY

To receive reports on the following items and make decisions or recommendations where required –

a) Priory Gardens

The prickly planting has been undertaken and the majority have taken well, any that fail will have to be replaced if gaps appear. There has been damage to the new fence installed by Sarsen.

This was noted.

b) Salisbury Road Recreation Ground

The Skate project on Tuesday evenings seems to be very well attended, it is due to continue until 4th September.

The consultation with the local parents via the Schools to obtain their views on the Salisbury Road Recreation Ground is underway, there is a steady return of consultation forms.

This was noted.

c) Annual Meetings

There are a number of annual meetings to be arranged in the near future, bearing in mind the schedule of Committee Meetings, do members wish for the meeting with the Rugby Club to be arranged before the next Committee meeting.

Following a discussion it was agreed to arrange a meeting with the Rugby Club before the next meeting of this committee.

d) Public Rights of Way Allocations

Councillors are each allocated a number of public rights of way paths to inspect during the year. Consideration needs to be given to how and when these will be allocated?

The Chairman stated that he felt ward members should walk the footpaths in their own ward. Councillor Mrs E.M. Hannaford-Dobson requested that she would prefer her walk to be in the town rather than where she walks at present as it is rather isolated and made her feel extremely vulnerable.

e) Waitrose trolleys

Further to previous discussion please find attached response from Waitrose regarding the suggestion to introduce coin-operated trolleys.

This was noted.

f) Update on Tree Survey

The tree survey is underway, one tree was identified as an immediate danger and had to be removed. The completed survey once received should enable a programme of long-term maintenance to be addressed.

This was noted.

g) Tractor Mower Breakdown and replacement

The mower used on the tractor to cut the Common etc, suffered a breakdown in June, the repair costs were quoted in excess of £900. The cost of a replacement was quoted at £4,000. As grass cutting is at its peak a decision had to be taken and after discussion with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Amenities & Open Spaces and Chairman of Finance a new flail type mower has been obtained on a 3 year operating lease. The cost annually will be £1,092, however we have been offered a trade in against the old machine of £300. The total cost after 3 years will still be significantly less than purchasing a replacement and can be up-graded regularly. The change from a roller mower to a flail has also allowed for the cutting of Coopers Meadow to be undertaken by our own staff.

Councillors reported that the new flail type mower had left clumps of grass at Jubilee Fields and the Recreation Ground however this had improved with subsequent cuts.

h) Letter from Riverbank thanking Town Council for the use of Priory Gardens.

This was noted.

139/07

ARK – Proposals for Priory

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders at 8.20pm to allow Charlotte Hitchmough to show drawings of the proposed improvements and answer questions.

Following a discussion The Chairman re-instated Standing Orders at 8.33pm and the following proposals were made -

Fencing

Proposed by Councillor G. Loosmore, seconded by Councillor R. Pitts and

RECOMMENDED: by 4 votes for 1 against and with 2 abstentions that Marlborough

Town Council have no objection to replacing the temporary fencing with a feature fence.

Gate

Proposed by Councillor R. Pitts, seconded by Councillor G. Loosmore and –

RECOMMENDED: by 6 votes for and 1 against that Marlborough Town Council have no objection to replacing the gate between Figgins Lane and Priory Gardens with a custom made gate in a similar style to the new fencing.

Seating

Proposed by Councillor R. Pitts, seconded by Councillor G. Loosmore and –

RECOMMENDED: by 4 votes for 1 against and 2 abstentions that Marlborough Town Council have no objection to two new seats being placed in the Priory gardens.

Picnic Table

Proposed by Councillor Mrs P. Dow, seconded by Councillor S. Radnedge and –

RECOMMENDED: unanimously that Marlborough Town Council have no objection to the existing picnic tables being restored.

Footpath

Proposed by Councillor G. Loosmore, seconded by Councillor R. Notton and –

RECOMMENDED: unanimously that Marlborough Town Council have no objection to the resurfacing of the area of footpath where it is in poor condition.

140/07

JUBILEE FIELD AT MANTON – Safety Issues

The Town Clerk circulated a report on recent incidents at Jubilee Field at Manton (copy attached)

Confirmation of Responsibility for the area.

This was noted.

Reported problems

Following a discussion it was –

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Dow, seconded by Councillor R. Pitts and –

RECOMMENDED: unanimously that Marlborough Town Council should install a kissing gate for pedestrian access and a farm gate. Wiltshire County Council have been asked to put up playground signs and consideration should

be given to requesting a 20mph speed limit as suggested by Manton residents .

141/07

MANAGEMENT OF THE OLD CEMETERY

The Town Clerk read out an additional report written by Kim Wakeham, including her meeting with Daniel O'Donoghue of the Richmond Fellowship. (copy herewith)
The Chairman stated that the council would like to thank Kim for all her hard work putting this report together.

It was agreed to accept the report and progress it.

142/07

ELCOT LANE ALLOTMENTS

The Town Clerk stated that a quote had been received for the removal of the spoil heap at the Elcot Lane allotments. Once removed this would give two extra allotments which considering the length of the waiting list would be welcomed. It was agreed that the Town Clerk should do more investigation into the removal of the spoil heap, especially alternatives for disposal .

Also it has been brought to the Town Clerks attention that a few of the allotments are not being tended properly and therefore the Council needs to look as to whether it should be taking these back if left untended for any length of time. It was also suggested that allotment holders should be offered the opportunity to have a half size allotment which again would make additional plots to reduce the waiting list.

Following a discussion it was –

Proposed by Councillor R. Pitts, seconded by Councillor Mrs P. Dow and –

RECOMMENDED: unanimously that the Town Clerk should write a letter to the allotment holders stating that if they have not improved the state of their allotment within the next three months then steps may be taken to take it back.

Councillor Mrs P. Dow Declared an Interest and left the room at 9.10pm.

143/07

BOWLS CLUB ADDITIONAL GRASS CAR PARK

The Bowls Club has made a request to turn the additional grass car park into a tarmac hard standing car park at their own expense. Members had serious concerns regarding the loss of the green area, and suggested that as with the Rugby Club car park alternative surfaces such as grasscrete is considered.

Following a discussion it was –

Proposed by Councillor R. Pitts, seconded by Councillor G. Loosmore and –

RECOMMENDED: unanimously that any resurfacing work carried out on the area must be in a surface such as grasscrete not tarmac and subject to council approval of the suitability of the specified material to be used .

144/07

GRAFFITI IN OPEN SPACES/PLAYAREAS

The Town Clerk stated that there had been a recent spate of graffiti and showed the committee some photographs of the problem in Wye House Play Area where permanent marker has been used. Although the items have been cleaned this is difficult to remove from a painted surface. The surfaces will need repainting and the Town Clerk suggested anti graffiti varnish be used as a trial.

The Chairman stated that this be noted and thanked the Town Clerk for her prompt action in dealing with this nuisance.

145/07

MARLBOROUGH TOWN JUNIOR FC

An e-mail has been received from Tracey Lavis, Junior Secretary of the Marlborough Town Junior Football Club requesting that a discussion takes place to look into the possibility of putting a junior football pitch on the Elcot Lane Village Green.

Following a discussion it was –

RECOMMENDED: that the Town Council should open a dialogue with the Junior Football Club and requested that the Town Clerk reply positively and await their response.

146/07

REPORT ON OPEN SPACES SITE VISIT

The Chairman gave a verbal report. (copy attached).

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders at 9.38pm to allow Charlotte Hitchmough to answer questions put to her by the committee in connection with the erosion of the riverbank.

The conclusion being that an expert needs to monitor this and talk to the River Authorities but unfortunately there are no easy answers.

The Chairman re-instated Standing Orders at 9.44pm.

147/07

REPORT ON PLUME OF FEATHERS PRE OPEN DAY VISIT

The Chairman gave a verbal report on the visit to the Plume of Feathers Pre Open Day visit (copy attached).

Councillors R. Notton and G. Loosmore Declared an Interest and left the room at 9.52pm

148/07

ERECTION OF BOUNDARY POSTS OUTSIDE EAGLE HOUSE, THE GREEN –

The committee discussed the erection of the boundary posts outside Eagle House, The Green.

Following a discussion it was –

RECOMMENDED: that a letter should be sent to the residents responsible asking them to remove the boundary posts and await a response.

Councillors R. Notton and G. Loosmore returned to the room at 9.58pm

149/07

CEMETERY

- a) Exclusive Right of Burial/Notice of Internment
- b) Memorial Inscriptions/Additional Inscriptions
- c) Replace existing Memorial

RESOLVED: That this information be noted.

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm