

MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the **Amenities and Open Spaces Committee** held on the 22nd December, 2008 in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough at 8.00pm**

PRESENT	Councillor B. Castle Councillor Mrs P. Dow Councillor Mrs E. Fogg Councillor S. Radnedge Councillor R. Pitts Councillor G. Loosmore	Chairman Town Mayor
ALSO PRESENT	Mrs Pam Dobson Mrs Linda Chapman Councillor N. Fogg Councillor A. Ross	Town Clerk Civic Secretary Observing Observing
	Mr. N. Kerton 1 Member of the public	Wiltshire Gazette and Herald

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

365/08 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A. Spranger

366/08 DECLARATION(S) OF INTEREST

There were no Declaration(s) of Interest.

367/08 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to everyone involved with the supply and erection of Christmas trees and associated lighting, both on the Green and outside the Town Hall entrance. Our thanks go to the sponsors of the tree on the Green – Crest Nicholson

Councilors will have noted the installation of the bike planters on both the Bulge and at the bottom of Perrins Steps. The planters are topped off with promotional signs for the traders in the area. I wish to express this committee's thanks to Councillor Pitts, our outside staff and the Chamber of Commerce in this matter, which has been well reported in the latest edition of *The Weekly Adviser*. Agenda item 5(b) refers. Speaking for myself I am disappointed that a few traders continue to persist with their 'A' boards creating an untidy hazard on the pavement.

Returning to an earlier idea of providing a Community Orchard on the land we own adjacent to the River Og. I can report that the charity sponsoring such projects have reported that fruit trees would not thrive on such wet ground. This does not preclude at a future date the possible provision of some allotments, or more suitable community woodland.

Finally I wish to place on record my appreciation, and hopefully yours as well, to our outside staff who throughout the year have given a first class service of maintenance and value to our town.

368/08

FURTHER INFORMATION IN RESPECT OF CEMETERY CHARGES

The Committee received comparisons of other town's cemetery charges.

Following a discussion it was –

Proposed by Councillor B. Castle, seconded by Councillor Mrs P. Dow and –

RECOMMENDED: unanimously that the charges previously agreed should be retained but this should be reviewed in future years to maintain parity.

369/08

UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS

a) Salisbury Road Recreation Ground – Play Strategy

The Town Clerk reported that the Town Council's Solicitors have prepared the declaration on ownership for submission to KDC and the Lottery Fund. In the New Year, Colin Brown from KDC will be working with the Town Council to progress the procurement of equipment

b) Installation of bike planters and extension of scheme

The Town Clerk reported that the bike planters and signs are now installed – further tiered planters will be offered for sponsorship in due course.

Councillor B. Castle stated that the triple planter which was put by the railings at the bottom of Perrins Hill during the Mop Fair looked really good there and would it be possible to put one in that area. Councillor R. Pitts stated that the bike rack planter would need to stay in that location as it advertises the businesses in The Parade and Kingsbury Street, but he would look into the possibility of putting one in the area by the Town Hall toilets. Councillor Mrs P. Dow stated that she would like litter bin to be re-instated near the bulge. The Town Clerk reported that the bin would be located as close to the original site as possible but that it needed to be on a flat area.

c) Coopers Meadow River Bank remedial improvements via ARK.

The Town Clerk reported that the trees approved for removal have now been felled, work on the bank will continue in the New Year.

The Town Clerk read out a statement received from Charlotte Hitchmough of ARK as follows –

Tree work is now complete. Some timber has been retained on site to be used in bank revetment, the logs have been secured until they are needed. The remainder of the trunks will be left in-situ.

The contractors will start digging the scrapes on the far side of the meadow (away from the footpath) the first week of January. The soil will be needed for backfill later and will be left on site in piles.

John and Rob Hounslow will begin building the footbridges and putting stakes in the back channel during the second week of January. After which the volunteers (St John's students, Marlborough College Students and WWT) will begin to install coir rolls and plant up the banks.

For the footbridges over scrapes ARK need to know

Whether the Town Council would like a handrail one side or both or neither? A footbridge with no handrail would look better and the bridge will only be a few foot above the marshy ground (it does not cross flowing river). Could you ask Gordon's advice please?

Work on the Mill Pool and main river will commence once the river level has dropped, we can't say exactly when this will be.

The duck and rat feeding stickers have been designed by Helen Dobie (paid for by ARK) and are about to go off for printing (Waitrose and KDC have kindly agreed to meet the cost of printing). Both the RSPB and the RSPCA have given their support and permission to use their logos. A copy of the leaflets and stickers was circulated to those present.

Councillor Mrs E. Fogg asked how wide the footbridge would be. The Town Clerk stated it would be wide enough to take the tractor. It was noted that the Committee felt the preferred option would be no handrail.

Councillor G. Loosmore stated that he was concerned about the ruts left behind following the removal of the trees. It was noted that ARK would be requested to make good any damage when work is completed.

d) Town Mill Project

The Town Council's solicitors are preparing to register the small triangle of land. Once this has been completed, two potential sources of funding have been identified; Landfill Communities Fund and AONB funding

e) Garden Share Suggestions

The Chairman had introduced the letter from Councillor A Kirk Wilson during his announcements at the last meeting. Cllr. Pitts reported that the Climate Pledge ar promoting the national garden share scheme organised by Hugh Fearnley Whittingstall.

Following a discussion it was agreed to put an article in the Newsletter asking anyone interested in the garden share scheme to contact the Town Council Offices and put a link on to the national scheme on the Council website in the New Year.

f) Suggestion for Tree Planting on The Green

The Chairman had introduced the letter from Mr. Sherratt during his announcements at the last meeting. Members noted that historically trees were only planted outside number 1 The Green and that vision for traffic needed to be considered. Following a discussion it was agreed that although we have a supply of oak saplings, We need to look at what would be the most appropriate species and location for use on The Green. It was agreed advice should be sought from Simon Turner, Tree Officer at Kennet District Council, on sites for the oak saplings and suggestions for appropriate trees for The Green.

370/08

OUTCOME OF TOWN COUNCIL NEGOTIATIONS WITH MARLBOROUGH GOLF CLUB

The Chairman stated that he would like to give full credit to the negotiating team of which he played only a small part. They have worked really hard to reach this conclusion which should satisfy most people.

Councillor Mrs E Fogg stated that she would like to congratulate everyone involved in these negotiations stating this is local government working at its best.

Councillor R Pitts gave a presentation on the information contained in the press release adding that he would like to thank St John's School for their survey which had been criticized at the Parish meeting as being unrepresentative, however the massive petition presented to the Town Council had reflected a similar percentage of residents. Councillor Pitts also thanked the Golf Club representatives for being open and considerate in the negotiations.

The summary of the document (which can be viewed via a link from the front page of the MTC website along with the map of the common) and the key points from the presentation are: It is proposed that the Golf Club lease will be varied to incorporate a new lease plan of the Council GPS mapping, where the new western boundary of the Golf Club Leased land will follow the RED Line in Figure 1. This will remove some 0.27 Ha of land from the lease, in exchange for a tidy up of the existing practice area, with the boundary being, a straight line as plotted in red. All the grass of the new practice area will be closely mown to allow golf ball collection. This extends the practice area by 0.16 Ha. ***Thus 0.11 Ha of Common is released from current Golf use.*** The important points to note regarding the proposal

1. The Council will be gaining and not losing land on the Common for general use.
2. None of the existing council mown paths will be lost. As already stated the practice area is extended by a very modest amount.
3. It is important to appreciate that the digital mapping, made publicly available, will ensure the defined sport areas are clear for all to understand. This will prevent any further confusion in the future.

4. Golfers will continue to aim into the centre of the practice area. The tee area will be as it is today, golfers driving off grass.
5. At this stage there will be no shelters or driving bays. The Golf club has found a wheeled single arch shelter; but they have no plans at present to purchase. At a later date they would need the Council's permission for such a mobile unit.
6. Effectively the common will not look much different from today, there being a "safety buffer" of long "rough" grass retained between the practice area and the council mown main central path of the common which runs parallel to the closely mown grass of the practice area.
7. The Golf Club will be looking into ways in which the practice facility could open up for public use. This will be discussed Phase II of the project.
8. There will be no lights, fencing, nets or any other barriers erected alongside the practice ground. The aim is to retain the open nature of the common. Small information notices will be placed at either end of the central path to advise walkers of the activities and sports that takes place on the common. We hope these will also include details of wildlife and plants to be seen.

Following Councillor Pitts presentation Councillor S. Radnedge raised the following concerns –

Point 1 – it was clear a lot of land had been lost over the years.

Point 2 – a previous path had been lost when the practice area was extended.

Point 4 – the golfers do not aim into the centre of the practice area now, the model flying club have picked up to 30 balls on their runway.

Point 7 - currently anyone can go up and use the practice area this will stop if the golf club make a charge.

Councillor R. Pitts stated that some of the points regarding the lease line were valid and had been the subject of much agonizing by the Town Council negotiating team, however in the interest of transparency this had been included on the map. Historically the plan used for repeated variations of the lease had not reflected the true picture and that some permissions may have never been included in the lease, therefore it was impossible to identify what was the correct line. The principle was to establish a line now, which could always be tested accurately to ensure this situation never arose again. However, the points about the aiming of the centre of the practice area along with the use of the practice area by non golf club members will be discussed further in Phase II of the project.

Councillor R. Pitts stated that the Golf Club Committee would also have the opportunity to have their say at a meeting on 16th January.

Councillor G Loosmore asked if we could suggest that a centre point could be marked on the map to ensure that golfers aim into the centre of the practice range.

Councillor B. Castle stated that he had raised this question himself and had been reassured that this would be adhered to.

Following a further discussion it was –

Proposed by Councillor B. Castle, seconded by Councillor R. Pitts and –

RECOMMENDED: unanimously that the following recommendation go forward –
1. Receive the Mapping of the Common as a true record. Councillor R. Pitts a digital mapping specialist has overseen the work and is very satisfied with the results.

Proposed by Councillor B. Castle, seconded by Councillor R. Pitts and –

RECOMMENDED: unanimously that the following recommendation go forward –
2. The digital mapping will be made available to the community at a later date via <http://www.openstreetmap.org/> linked to via <http://marlboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk/>

Proposed by Councillor B. Castle, seconded by Councillor R. Pitts and –

RECOMMENDED: by 4 votes for with 1 against that the following recommendation go forward –
3. Approve the proposal as contained in the Press release. This and the Mapping will be made available as PDF documents on <http://marlboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk/> and released to the press.

Proposed by Councillor B. Castle, seconded by Councillor R. Pitts and –

RECOMMENDED: unanimously that the following recommendation go forward –
4. Subject to approval of the Council, discussions will then move on to include the Tennis Club with consideration of the exact plans and details of the land required for the tennis courts and Golf Club landscaping. Once agreement can be reached in respect of all the land changes a comprehensive document will be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval.

371/08 PRIORY GARDENS

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update on the completion of Sarsen's work on the upper lawn stating that this work had now been completed.

372/08 CLERK'S REPORT

a) Report on request for the use of Priory Gardens and Common – for Marlborough Jazz Festival.

It was agreed that by 3 votes for with 3 abstentions that Marlborough Town Council have no objection to this request

b) Update on Regular Work Plan

Members had been made aware that the establishment of a work plan is in progress, and one of the first tasks had been to identify how much grass the outdoor staff cut and how often it requires cutting in the growing season. Members noted the information which had been circulated

c) Annual Meetings

The following dates have been offered to the Rugby Club and Leisure Centre 19th January and 2nd February 2009. The Town Clerk stated that the Rugby Club had provisionally agreed to the 2nd February 2009 but nothing had been heard from the Leisure Centre.

373/08

CEMETERY – For information (copy herewith)

- a) Exclusive Right of Burial/Notice of Internment
- b) Memorial Inscriptions/additional

This information was noted.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm