

STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL
held on Thursday 3^{1ST} March at 7.15pm in The Stour Hall, The Exchange

Present:

Cllr N Dobson
Cllr A Donaldson
Cllr M Jones
Cllr H Lacey – Vice Chairman

Cllr H Reed
Cllr J Rose

In Attendance: Kate Squire (Town Clerk), Jasmine Drew (Finance Officer), Louise Plumridge (Assistant Town Clerk – via Zoom) and Adam Dodson (Grounds Manager).

Members of the Public: 12

Minute No.	Comments
21/22/325	<p>PUBLIC SESSION</p> <p>A member of the public expressed concern regarding an incident of vandalism at Ricketts Lane. Cllr Rose advised that the matter had been dealt with.</p>
21/22/326	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies had been received from Cllrs C Fraser and P Marks. These apologies were accepted by the members present.</p>
21/22/327	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS</p> <p>No interests were declared and no written requests for dispensation had been received.</p>
21/22/328	<p>APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THE AMENITIES AND FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEES</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that the Amenities Committee on 24th March had been cancelled because the meeting would not have been quorate due to illness and absence.</p> <p>To avoid this situation in the future she explained that under Standing Order 4.d.v 'The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer five days before the meeting that they are unable to attend'</p> <p>The Town Clerk recommended the Council approve the appointment of substitute members.</p> <p>The Council resolved to approve the appointment of substitute members for the Amenities and Finance and Personnel Committees, members of one Committee could be a substitute for the other Committee.</p>
21/22/329	<p>OPEN SPACES GROUP AND CONSIDERATION FOR COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATION ON THE GROUP</p> <p>The Chairman of the Open Spaces Group, Vic Fox, had previously provided a report which had been circulated, and is attached to these minutes. He also expressed there was good liaison between the Open Spaces and Tree Groups but there was a need for a structure to be put in place so that all groups could work closely together with the Town Council. The Town Clerk suggested a Town Councillor could become a representative on the Open Spaces committee which would improve liaison and take the pressure off Vic Fox and Jeremy Read. Some ideas for representatives were</p>

Cllr Jones
Cllr Dobson



discussed but it was agreed to defer this item to the next Town Council meeting.

21/22/330

TRAILWAY ENTRANCE PROJECT

Cllr Jones reported progress was being made, with the gates, fencing and signal posts all being in place, they were now concentrating on noticeboards, a good designer had been found and he hoped the noticeboards would be installed in the next couple of months for the beginning of the summer. He thanked the Grounds staff for erecting the picket fence to the sides of the entrance and the dead hedging which has been put up to act as a screen for residents of Barnes Close.

Some residents of Barnes Close had enquired about taking over the maintenance of the bank. A Licence to Cultivate could be a possibility and whilst there is a cost to having a licence, it might be the most sensible way forward. The Clerk will talk to Adam Steele of Dorset Highways.

Action:
Town
Clerk

21/22/331

TREES WORKING GROUP

The Town Council's Trees Working Group had met and agreed a plan for planting trees on Town Council land in the future. The Grounds Manager noted that the Group would need to work closely with the Countryside Rangers who manage many areas on the Town Council's behalf. He added a Cornus Kousa had been planted in the Railway Gardens for the QGC project and there are also some donated trees that need planting.

21/22/332

STURMINSTER NEWTON HERITAGE TRUST – THE MILL UPDATE

A press release was circulated giving details of £14000 funding from Association of Independent Museums for a project on Swanskin, working with the residents of a place in Newfoundland where some of the Mill workers from Sturminster Newton had resettled.

21/22/333

BBQ PLINTHS AT THE MILL

The Town Clerk had been gathering information on the possibility of having BBQ plinths at the Mill;

The Sturminster Newton Heritage Trust had reservations due to the close proximity of the Mill building.

The Tree Officer didn't think plinths would pose any particular issues with trees.

The Town Council insurers would insure but this came with many conditions, making additional work for the Grounds Staff.

The Pitt Rivers Estate did not have particular worries.

The Town Council's Health and Safety advisors, felt BBQ plinths would be a cause for concern and would attract more use and possible trouble, they confirmed that displaying No BBQs signs would cover the Council from a health and safety point of view.

Council discussed the options and decided not to pursue the idea.

Cllr Reed asked the Town Clerk to investigate instating a by-law restricting BBQ's within the Mill site.

21/22/334

ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

The Chairman Barry Cuff reported that the tenancy agreements for both sites - Filbridge Rise and Chinnocks - had been updated as had the Association's Rule Book and he hoped this would help to make things run more smoothly. The documents are easier to understand and have 'closed' some loopholes on what is/isn't acceptable on allotment plots. He requested that a Town Councillor could be present when inspections were carried out.

He also enquired whether it would be possible to install CCTV at the Filbridge Rise allotments as there had been quite a number of incidents but no evidence of the perpetrators. The Town Clerk suggested it may be



possible to link this into the next Agenda item on increasing security of the Town's amenity spaces.

21/22/335

INCREASING SECURITY ON TOWN COUNCIL AMENITY SPACES

There has been increasing concern over vandalism in Sturminster Newton. The Town Clerk had been discussing with the Grounds Manager about extra CCTV footage. Dorset Council are working with a consultancy company and had passed on the contact details – the Town Clerk suggested the Council could ask the consultant to give an overview of the town's problems and prepare a quote. She added there may be some funding available through the Safer Streets Fund.

The Council agreed the problem seriously needed looking into.

The Council resolved to instruct the Clerk investigate further if funding opportunities are available through her Dorset Council contact.

Cllr Reed
Cllr Dobson

21/22/336

GROUNDS MANAGER'S REPORT

The Ground Manager's report had been previously circulated and is attached to these minutes.

21/22/337

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence had been received.

21/22/338

INFORMATION FROM MEMBERS

Cllr Reed – reported knowledge of several car break-ins, one being in Shortedge.

Cllr Donaldson –

Planning Application – advised that Dorset Councillor Carole Jones had requested the Hammond Building Contractor planning application in Penny Street to be heard by the Northern Committee.

Lighting of the Market Column – he had noticed the lighting of the market column wasn't working. Cllr Jones explained the stones at the base were causing a problem and needed to be replaced. He and the Grounds Manager were working to resolve this.

Cllr Jones – referring to the proposed fencing at Monteburg House. He wondered if it was possible to use traditional metal fencing. The Grounds Manager confirmed that black metal railings were going to be used.

Cllr Lacey – had attended the Civic Afternoon Tea earlier that day and commented it had been a lovely event. She also reported Stour Connect had won a charity excellence award and commended Andy Watson for his hard work.

Cllr Reed – advised that the Lunch Club has started again.

Information from the Town Clerk:

- There is a Northern Area Planning Committee meeting on 12th April in The Exchange to discuss the North Honeymead Field application. If anyone wants to speak they need to register by 8th April. Chair of Planning Cllr Donaldson advised he would attend but not speak.
- Bath Road is closed for a few evenings due to road repairs. There will be access for residents. Any HGVs will be directed down Old Market Hill.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm

Approved on Chairman's Signature





**Association of
Independent
Museums**
Helping Heritage
Organisations Prosper



Sturminster Newton Heritage Trust Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 27 JAN 2022

Sturminster Newton Heritage Trust awarded AIM grant to share stories of the Swanskin Seafarers of Sturminster

The Sturminster Newton Heritage Trust (SNHT) has been awarded £14,000 by the Association of Independent Museums (AIM) and National Lottery Heritage Fund to research and represent the Swanskin Seafarers of Sturminster.

The Swanskin Seafarers of Sturminster were people living in Sturminster from the 1600s to 1800s who left for the fishing grounds of the North Atlantic, especially to the coast of Newfoundland, Canada. Sturminster Newton mill supplied the seafarers with swanskin, a course white cloth favoured by those who worked the freezing Atlantic waters for its warmth and waterproof qualities. Records show that this was the main occupation of those who remained in Sturminster during this sustained period of long-term migration.

This *New Stories, New Audiences* grant from the AIM and the National Lottery Heritage Fund will enable the Sturminster Newton Heritage Trust to involve the local community in researching and telling the lesser-known stories of the local people who travelled thousands of miles in search of a better life.

Local students at Sturminster Newton High School will have the opportunity to become young co-curators, taking part in skills development workshops in historical research and helping to produce an exhibition and social media content for the museum themed around the Swanskin Seafarers. The SNHT will be partnering with Emerald Ant, a local arts company, to work with students to develop a story line for a shadow film inspired by the mechanics of the mill and historical sea shanties. This film will be projected at the Mill and Museum, making full use of the textures and wall spaces at the picturesque Mill to provide exciting spaces for small public projection events.

Emerald Ant will also help the Trust to establish a digital link with a school and community in Newfoundland with a strong Dorset heritage, to instigate a sharing of family stories. Young people will have the opportunity to explore these as part of their history curriculum, looking at how it felt to emigrate, why this was (and continues to be) a reality for many, and how local people from Sturminster settled in Newfoundland.

The Sturminster Newton Heritage Trust also hopes that this grant will be an opportunity to connect with families who have recently migrated to the area, especially from overseas. Through local community networks, and working with an oral history specialist in the County Archive (DHC), volunteers will record the stories of those who have migrated and settled in Dorset within the last ten years, to be integrated into the interpretation, and also for public access in the archive repositories.

Sylvia Denham, Curator of Sturminster Newton Museum says:

"We are delighted to have received this generous grant from AIM and the National Lottery Heritage Fund to tell the stories of these determined local people from Sturminster Newton, and the swanskin manufacture established in the town. This is a fantastic opportunity to connect with young people in Sturminster Newton, as well as those who have migrated and settled in Dorset in pursuit of better opportunities, who may relate to the story of the Swanskin Seafarers."

Grounds Report

Amenities Meeting

Thursday 31st March 2022

21/22/336

Community Garden

16 trees have now been moved from the site and planted in the ground.

15 trees have been relocated to Rixon Recreation Ground along with the relevant plaques.

1 tree has been relocated to the railway entrance. There are 11 trees remaining at the community garden, which will be relocated in February 2022.

The grounds staff have made 3 replacement planters so far. The top half will be planted with shrubs, while the bottom half has been converted to Hog houses.

Wildflower seeds will be sown over the next couple weeks.

Railway Gardens

The Centre bed has had a makeover. The Grounds staff have installed a membrane to suppress the weeds which will reduce the amount of time it takes to maintain. A variety of plants/ shrubs have been introduced which will eventually fill 75% of the bed. An irrigation system will be installed to reduce the time watering by staff.

Woodchip sourced from Conygar at Okeford Fitzpaine has been used to cover the membrane.

Storm Eunice 18th February

Sturminster was fortunate compared to some parts of the Country with the amount of damage caused by the storm. The grounds and office staff worked tirelessly responding to emergency calls, reporting and contacting relevant authorities.

A live electric cable snapped on Bath Rd and was laying across the pavement and carriageway. Grounds staff closed either end of Bath Rd, directing traffic while awaiting the power company to attend.

Vandalism

We have seen an increase of minor vandalism, which although minor, it does take up a lot of staff time. Damage to public toilets at Station Rd and Ricketts Lane Recreation Ground, signage and planters through the town centre. Damage to the play equipment at Rixon Recreation Ground has also occurred.

Grounds Staff

Tom Matthews left the Town Council Grounds team earlier this month. Tom started as an apprentice and completed over 12 years service. He has moved on to Bryanston School to maintain their sports pitches. We all wish him well.

With the changes we have made during the pandemic and the current staff capabilities, we are going to evaluate what is required within the team. Alternative equipment, appropriate staff training and cancellation of some service contracts maybe required. The Town Clerk has agreed for the grounds staff to continue without a replacement for the next few months and see if we can operate successfully.

Play areas

We have been obtaining quotations to replace and repair many of the Town Council play facilities.

Due to the costs involved and budgets available, Play area replacements need to be prioritised in order of their condition and usage.

There are currently 6 active sites with play facilities on them.

Ricketts Lane Recreation Ground, Rixon Recreation Ground, Coles Close, Chivrick Close, Field Close and Long Close. The Town Council had agreed to convert Long Close play area into a nature area as there is very little play value in the small space. This is on the project list for this year.

The cost to replace every piece of equipment for new would be estimated at £425,000. Obviously, it is not being suggested to replace everything, as most of the equipment is in a safe useable state of repair. This is a guide price of what the play facilities cost.

The areas identified as needing immediate work or replacement are as follows.

Ricketts Lane – Replace the multiplay climbing frame, swing set and cable way. These were installed in 2006 by Record Play grounds.

Rixon Rec – Replace Toddler area and Mobilus unit. Installed by Hags play in 2007. There is a swing set that requires repair.

Chivrick Close –play area donated by the Housing developer

Drovers – Again, a donated play facility from the housing developer.

I have spoken with 3 companies at present who have designed and quoted for the above works. I have the designs to show what types of equipment would be beneficial for each area.

It would not be possible to carryout all the replacements in one go as the estimated cost is more than £80,000.

4 units that need to be replaced are metal construction, while 9 are wooden.

The play equipment would ideally be replaced over the next 3 years. This is dependant on the budget.

It would be good practice to involve the local schools in the design of the play equipment, as the Town Council has done in the past, as these children would be the ones using the equipment.

Due to the costs involved, we need to choose the correct equipment that provides excellent play value, while being relatively easy to maintain and provide many years of use.

Open Spaces Group Report March 2022.

I have to report that the OSG has not met so far this year, the incapacity of our Secretary Jeremy Read has been keenly felt and at the moment I am not sure if he will wish to continue due to his health issues, he is back home with care assistance, in the meantime, all the OSG files etc are in his office awaiting his decision.

I have been closely involved with our Trees Group who are currently formulating a plan on how to gather support for community involvement in the Queen's Green Canopy scheme this year and it urgently needs a meeting with the Town Council Group to make sure each knows where responsibility lies in relation to events, publicity and fund raising, there was a meeting with interested parties in the Exchange which led to many voluntary groups across the Town expressing an interest in either helping with planting or fund raising and this enthusiasm need directing hence the need for a meeting with the Council.

The Countryside Rangers have been hedge laying at the Riverside Meadows where they have also planted a number of apple trees which should be the foundation of a small Community Orchard.

They also planted more at Butts Pond and a new hedge near the boundary with Hinton View.

All the ponds are filled with clean water and I saw very little litter when I visited this week and attached is a photo of the first *Fritillaria Meleagris* or Snakeshead Frattillary to flower this year.

Victor Fox

Chair.

