

STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
held on Thursday 30th March, 7.15pm in The Council Chamber.

Present:

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| Cll N Dobson | Cllr P Marks |
| Cllr A Donaldson | Cllr H Reed |
| Cllr H Lacey – representing Cllr Jones | Cllr J Rose |
| Cllr D Mantock – representing Cllr Fraser | |

In attendance:

K Squire – Town Clerk, L Plumridge – Assistant Town Clerk (by Zoom) and A Dodson - Grounds Manager

Members of the Public: 3

| | |
|------------|----------|
| Minute No. | COMMENTS |
|------------|----------|

RESOLUTION for each item the proposer is named first followed by the second

22/23/249 **PUBLIC SESSION**
 No comments were made in the Public Session

22/23/250 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
 Apologies had been received from Cllr P Batstone, Cllr C Fraser and Cllr M Jones.
 The apologies were accepted by the members present.

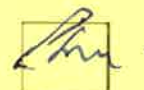
22/23/251 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS**
 Cllr Mantock declared in relation to item 22/23/254 that she had attended the recent Allotments Association AGM in a personal capacity and had made it clear at the AGM that she was not representing the Town Council by her presence.
 Cllr Lacey declared in relation to item 22/23/260 that she was a member of the Cheese Festival Committee and in relation to item 22/23/261 that she was a Trustee of the Community Buildings Trust.

22/23/252 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**
The minutes of the meeting held on the 24th November 2022 having been circulated and publicised prior to the meeting, were taken as read and approved for signature by the Chairman as a true and correct record.
 Cllr Donaldson abstained from voting having not been able to attend the meeting.

Cllr Reed
 Cllr Rose

22/23/254 **ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT UPDATE**
 The members agreed to move this item forward as Allotment Association committee members were present.
 The Town Clerk gave a background summary of the situation preceding the resignations of the previous Allotment Association Chairman and Secretary. Then introduced Mr M Burt the newly elected Chairman.
 Mr M Burt, expressed a desire to work closely with the Town Council to ensure the smooth running of the allotment sites. A meeting had already been arranged to discuss matters moving forward.
The committee recommended that Cllr Rose and Cllr Mantock would share the role of Council representative to attend meetings whilst Cllr Fraser recovers from illness.

Cllr Reed
 Cllr Donaldson



22/23/253

REDUCTION IN HEIGHT OF TREE ON FOOTPATH 1

The Grounds Manager outlined a request for works on a field maple backing onto Dashwood Close. He confirmed the tree is within the boundary of Council land. Residents have requested a reduction to the height of the tree at their own expense due to it overhanging their property. The Grounds Manager confirmed that the Dorset Council Rangers had no issues with condition of the tree. Cllr Donaldson, Tree Officer for the Town Council, advised that while he could see no issues with minor works to the tree, he was concerned about setting a precedent. He stressed that similar cases should be considered by Council individually, that the tree officer should be informed of intended works, that only qualified professionals should be used and either a Countryside Ranger or the Grounds Manager should be present while the work is carried out

The committee recommended that the residents go ahead with the height reduction of the tree at their own expense, subject to consent from the Dorset Council Tree Officer and under the supervision of the Town Council Grounds Manager or a Dorset Council Ranger.

Cllr Donaldson
Cllr Rpsse

22/23/255

OPEN SPACES WORKING GROUP

The Town Clerk advised that the former Open Spaces Group had disbanded. She suggested that a Town Council Open Spaces Working Group be created to respond to suggestions, and progress projects relating to the Towns Green Spaces.

Cllrs Donaldson, Marks, Mantock and Lacey volunteered to be on the Working Group, with Cllrs Jones and Fraser also invited.

Council terms of reference for working groups were agreed.

The Council recommended a new Open Spaces Working Group should be formed.

Cllr Reed
Cllr Rose

Cllr Marks will arrange a first meeting.

Action:
Cllr Marks

Cllr Lacey enquired whether there were funds left over from the previous Open Spaces Group. The Town Clerk will check with Vic Fox and Cllr Dobson will check with the SN Community Benefits Society.

Action:
Town Clerk
Cllr Dobson

22/23/256

TOWN COUNCIL TREE PLANTING SCHEME

- Cllr Marks advised of a successful tree planting event at Filbridge Rise Green on Saturday 25th March. Local residents were consulted and with 20-1 support the local community were invited to help with the planting. Beech, Cherry and Horse Chestnut trees were planted along with Blackthorn and Hazel hedging. These were added to the official Queen's Green Canopy website, which is a website to log all trees planted in honour of the Queen's Green Canopy project.
- The Grounds Manager displayed a map showing areas of Town Council land where the Council can continue with their tree planting scheme, areas will include Riverside Meadows, Rixon Rec., the cemetery, Long Close and the Trailway.

The Town Clerk expressed thanks to Cllr Marks and the Grounds Manager, Adam Dodson for their hard work.



22/23/257 | **UNDERUSED LAND AT COLES CLOSE**

A recent meeting of the Town Council tree's group to identify areas for planting, had led to discussions about the area of land at Coles Close. The Town Clerk advised that the basketball court there is underused and the area is uninspiring but it a good space to consider for something. A play area had been suggested many years ago but residents in the surrounding houses had strongly objected. It was confirmed the area belonged to the Council but investigations into any covenants on the land needed to be made. The Council discussed possible options for the area – social housing and the possibility of creating parking spaces.

The committee recommended the Clerk investigate what is possible and if there are restrictions and to bring back to the committee to assess.

Cllr Rose
Cllr Donaldson
Action
Town Clerk

22/23/258 **WALKABOUT LEAFLETS**

The walkabout leaflets have proved to be very popular, existing supplies have almost run out and the office is frequently asked for more. The Town Clerk advised the leaflets are also out of date and should really be amended.

The committee recommended to agree to the cost of a reprint of the leaflets and for the Clerk to look into the costs for an amended leaflet and to also investigate sponsorship.

Cllr Lacey
Cllr Rose

22/23/259 **BENCH AT FRIARS MOOR**

The Grounds Manager explained a resident of Friars Moor had asked for the bench opposite the vets to be removed due to anti-social behaviour. The bench had been removed due to winter maintenance and had recently been put back. Whilst it was removed the Grounds Manager had received several complaints from elderly residents who had missed the bench as a resting point when walking back from town. Once the bench had been returned the resident who had previously raised concerns about anti social behaviour, made another complaint. After discussion and on balance the Council felt the bench was doing more good than harm.

The Clerk advised that she had spoken to the local police and asked them to be aware of the residents concerns.

The committee recommended the bench at Friars Moor should remain in place.

Cllr Lacey
Cllr Mantock

22/23/260 **CHEESE FESTIVAL WIFI**

The Grounds Manager reported the organisers of the festival were investigating having Wi-Fi masts installed on the Recreation Ground at Ricketts Lane. This would provide full internet coverage for the traders and entrance gates.

At present there are two options:

- 1) Install a temporary mast near the Town Council workshops.
This would then emit via bridges to other masts erected around the recreation ground to provide coverage to traders.
- 2) Install a fixed mast to the Town Council workshop.
Temporary masts will still be required throughout the grounds as above. As this would likely benefit other users the Council may want to consider contributing to the cost.

The committee recommended looking into option 2.

Cllr Mantock
Cllr Reed



22/23/261 **HANGING SIGN OUTSIDE THE COUNCIL OFFICES**
On behalf of Cllr Fraser, Cllr Mantock reported Cllr Fraser was interested in having a Town Council hanging sign over the door of the Council offices as some people still don't know where the offices are. The Town Clerk advised Cllr Jones had already prepared some preliminary hanging sign designs. Planning permission may be required. The Council agreed this was a good idea if not too expensive.
The committee recommended the Clerk investigate designs and costs and determine if planning permission is required then report back to the committee.

Cllr Mantock
Cllr Lacey

22/23/262 **GROUNDS MANAGER REPORT**
The Grounds Manager presented a report to the committee, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.
Cllr Marks expressed thanks to the Grounds staff for all their work and their assistance with the tree initiatives. The committee wished to notes that they are very proud of the Grounds staff.

22/23/263 **TOWN CLERK UPDATE**
Having been on leave the Town Clerk did not have an update.

22/23/264 **CORRESPONDENCE**
There was no correspondence to be discussed.

22/23/265 **INFORMATION FROM MEMBERS**
Cllr Mantock – noted the bench on the Bath Road near the traffic lights looks precarious needs some attention.
Cllr Dobson;
• SN Community Benefits Society is looking to fund free parking at car and other events.
• A High Sherriff award is being presented to Mr J Romans for gifting the Emporium building to the community.
Cllr Donaldson – advised a planning application at Banbury Cross Kennels, Fiddleford will be raised at the next Town Council. Cllr Donaldson felt the Council should submit a comment out of courtesy, even though it is outside the Town Council area. The Clerk will speak to Okeford Fitzpaine Clerk to ascertain if they usually comment on applications in this boundary area.

Action:
Office to report to
Dorset Council

Action:
Town Clerk

Meeting closed at 8.35pm

Approved on 29th June 2023

Chair's Signature 

