

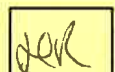
STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE****Held on Thursday 22nd March in the Council Chamber at 7.15pm****Present :**

Councillor H. Reed (Chair)
 Councillor P. Batstone
 Councillor A. Donaldson (*ex officio*)
 Councillor V. Fox
 Councillor H. Lacey
 Councillor R. Taylor

Absent : Councillor M. Jones and Councillor J. Rose

In Attendance: 2 members of the public, Jeremy Read (C-opted Member), Mrs Emma Lindsay (Town Clerk and Mrs Louise Plumridge (Assistant Town Clerk).

MINUTE NUMBER	COMMENTS	RESOLUTION <i>For each item, the proposer is named first followed by the seconder</i>
18/421	<p>PUBLIC SESSION</p> <p>Mrs Paula Harris addressed the Committee to seek permission from the Town Council for the Gardening Club to have a plant stall by the Railway Gardens. Mrs Harris gave a brief summary on the Gardening Club activities and how the plant stall was their main annual fundraiser. The Clerk advised that this request would be dealt with under Agenda Item 426.</p> <p>Mr Neil Watson, Chair of The Sturfit Trust, gave an update following his attendance at the Committee in July 2017. He explained that they are still exploring a number of options to secure a future for the Leisure Centre including a joint enterprise with the School and the Town Council taking on the lease from Dorset County Council. He also advised that the structure of the building had been deemed sound by surveyors and Sturfit has a £25k contingency for maintenance.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that she was exploring the DCC Living and Learning programme with Cllr. Batstone as a way of highlighting the Leisure Centre as an issue for the town with the County Council.</p> <p>Mr Watson also advised they were considering a bid to Sport England with the School for an astroturf pitch but that they needed to explore the viability of this project.</p>	
18/422	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies had been received from Cllr M. Jones and Cllr J. Rose These apologies were accepted by the Members present.</p>	
18/423	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS</p>	



Cllr A. Donaldson declared an interest in Agenda Item 426. He and the Mayoress Mrs Johnson are members of the Gardening Club.

18/424 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING

The minutes of the Amenities Committee Meeting held on 23rd November 2017 (pages 2507-2511) 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. Lacey
Cllr. Batstone

18/425 OPEN SPACES GROUP

Co-opted Member Jeremy Read's report is attached on page 2613 of these minutes.

He advised that the Tree Group remained concerned about the lack of notification of tree works in the town. Cllr Fox and the Town Clerk advised there were some anomalies with the NDDC portal system and they were still endeavouring to find the most reliable way to find out about proposed tree works.

18/426 REQUEST FROM STURMINSTER NEWTON GARDENING CLUB

The Committee considered the request from Sturminster Newton Gardening Club to site a plant stall adjacent the Railway Gardens on Saturday 19th May - 9am-12 noon.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Town Council **APPROVE** the request to hold a plant stall.

Cllr. Batstone
Cllr. Taylor

18/427 WHITE HART LINK UPDATE

Cllr M. Jones not present to give an update but Cllr P. Batstone advised the Group were making progress and presently working on governance and location of roundels.

18/428 PROVISION OF CYCLE RACKS IN THE TOWN

Discussion ensued about the need about the potential need for more cycle racks and it was agreed this should be incorporated within the next Agenda Item 429.

18/429 SIGNAGE IN THE TOWN

Cllr P. Batstone reported that the Exchange wished to apply for a tourist brown sign. The Committee discussed this matter and Cllr. H. Lacey advised that the request needed to be dealt with by Dorset County Council (DCC).

The Committee noted that signage was an issue in the town and it was agreed that it would be beneficial to set up a working group to look at all aspects of the Street Scene of Sturminster Newton; signage, street furniture and cycle racks.

The Town Clerk agreed to draw up the terms of reference for the Working Group. Membership will include Cllr H.Reed, Cllr H.Lacey, Cllr P Batstone and Cllr R.Taylor.

Cllr A. Donaldson requested clarification of Committees' responsibilities. The Town Clerk clarified the Street Scene would fall under the Amenities Committee governance any highways matters would remain with the Planning & Environment Committee.

The Committee RECOMMENDED that the Council APPROVE the setting up of a Street Scene Working Group .

Cllr. Batstone
Cllr Taylor

18/430 MIS-USE OF MILL CAR PARK

The Committee discussed the mis-use of the Mill Car Park and request for a gate. It was agreed that this Item should be deferred to the next Committee meeting. In the meantime a log of activities be recorded to provide evidence of mis-use.

The Committee RESOLVED to DEFER a decision on this Item.

Cllr. Batstone
Cllr. Taylor

18/431 AMENITY AREA MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Head Groundsman Adam Dodson's report is attached on pages 2613 to 2614 of these minutes.

18/432 GROUNDS MANAGER'S REPORT

Head Groundsman Adam Dodson's report is attached on pages 2614 to 2615 of these minutes.

Cllr P. Batstone asked if the finger posts could be sand blasted and powder coated. The Town Clerk will investigate costs and this can be a matter for the Street Scene Working Party.

The Council expressed their thanks to the grounds staff, their efforts very much appreciated. Cllr A. Donaldson will make a reference to this in the next issue of Unity.

18/433 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

The Town Clerk provided an update on a range of activities including;

The Skate Park remains well used. She advised that the team will shortly be planning the official opening event with plans to hold it when the grass is more established on the bund and around the bowl. The Town Clerk noted that she had received a request from the Cheese Festival Committee to put up a plaque to record their contribution of £3000. The Committee discussed this request in the context of other contributors to the Skate Park and decided that a plaque would not be appropriate.

Sturminster Newton Mill Heritage Lottery Fund bid has been submitted 9/2/2018 and the outcome will be known during April.

Following discussions with representatives of Broad Oak Residents Association it has been agreed to replace this year's and next year's lamp allocation in Financial Year 2018/19. A further 5 lamps will be budgeted for in 2019/20.

The wooden town sign near Durrant will be removed and stored in the workshop and there has been no interest to date regarding creating a replacement.

Cemetery re-consecration - the necessary planning permission has been obtained and we are now in a position to liaise with the Diocese regarding consecration.

Planning is underway for the next round of allotment inspections for mid- Summer.

Steps will be taken to adopt the phone box now that the Youth Club have commenced fundraising to maintain the box and purchase a defibrillator.

18/434 CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from Sturminster Newton Gardening Club dealt with under Agenda Item 426.

18/435 INFORMATION FROM MEMBERS

Cllr P. Batstone mentioned an article in the BVM about Gillingham Town Council and their tree pollinator friendly scheme. She would pass this onto the Open Spaces Group.

Cllr P. Batstone also asked about the DCC volunteers scheme and if they could help with painting the railings at the Mill. The Town Clerk advised she is dealing with this.

Cllr Fox advised that the Rangers are dealing with a dead cherry tree in the disused graveyard.

Cllr A. Donaldson reported he had formally opened the Silent Soldier in the Railway Gardens, compliments have been received for the grounds staff for their outstanding display.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.42pm.

*Emma Lindsay
Town Clerk*

Approved on:

Chair's signature: *HR Road*

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AMENITIES COMMITTEE 22ND MARCH 2018**OPEN SPACES GROUP REPORT****Butts Pond Meadows.**

Drainage Works. Work on the ditch between Yewstock and the Meadows was delayed by weather and has now been postponed to avoid damage to the newts. It will be carried out in the autumn, once the newts have migrated to land.

Open Day. An Open Day is planned for 7th June. This is primarily aimed at local primary and secondary schools, and is intended to make students aware of the environmental importance of the Local Nature Reserve. A number of schools have been invited to send parties, and there will be displays by the Rangers and conservation groups as well as tours of the Meadows.

Loss of trees in the town. It transpires that the problem reported at the last meeting concerned lack of notification of the Trees Group, by the Planning Department, of proposed tree work and felling. Cllr Fox is endeavouring to arrange a system of making the group aware of planned work, in time to offer informed comment and advice on such proposals.

Amenity Area Management Plans

In conjunction with the Open Spaces group and Graham Stanley from DCC Countryside Rangers, we have been working on designing management plans for all the Town Council owned amenity areas.

These areas include

- Ricketts Lane Recreation Ground
- Rixon Recreation Ground
- The Mill
- Cemetery
- North Fields
- Railway Gardens
- Chiverick Close
- Field Close
- Long Close
- Coles Close
- Drovers
- Jubilee Footpath

The management plans will be similar to those used at Butts pond nature reserve. They shall list the infantry such as play equipment, street furniture, memorials etc. Include planned and regular maintenance.

Organisations involved, what events are held and what the site is predominately used for.

Graham Stanley and I recently met up and visited the bigger sites and recorded the information. It is a time consuming exercise but very informative and worthwhile. Planned maintenance for jobs such as hedge laying and tree works will help so much with work organisation and budget planning. Having Graham's expertise is invaluable.

This is very much ongoing but we hope to have made significant progress by the next amenities meeting.

Grounds Manager Report

Thursday 22nd March 2018

Winter Work Plan

The Grounds staff had been very busy during the winter period. Grass cutting continued through to mid-December due to growing conditions.

A substantial amount of work had been workshop based, which included the refurbishment of wooden benches. A total of 21 benches had been brought back to the workshop, pressure washed, paint stripped down, repairs made then re-painted or re-stained before putting back out for use. Memorial plaques were cleaned and polished.

Hedge and tree works were carried out at many amenity areas, these included:

- North Fields
- Long Close
- Footpath 1 – Green Lane
- Chivrick Close
- Coles Close
- Rixon Recreation Ground
- Drovers (see pic attached)
- Ricketts Lane Recreation Ground
- Cemetery

There had been some works along the trailway which were carried out by the Countryside Rangers on our behalf.

Staff had carried out winter maintenance to machinery and vehicles. Repairs and maintenance to the public toilets are underway.

Extensive research and testing into the van replacement is ongoing.

Displays in the Railway gardens installed. Edging of paths and other maintenance carried out ready for the spring if it ever arrives?!

Project work is underway with the first section of railings removed from the car park at Ricketts Lane.

Installation of the new cremation area will commence next week.

Repairs to the fence at the Mill will take place soon. The Mill toilets will be open from next week and a tidy of the site will also take place.

Other minor works such as signage installation etc. has now been carried out. A review of our Health & Safety practise had been carried out with Ellis Whittam.

Snow and Ice policy

We were informed via DCC ice alert to expect heavy snow on the 1st of March 2018.

All staff had been briefed on the Town Councils policy and procedures and implemented them well. Extra grit/ salt were collected from DCC Gibbs Marsh in preparation and a precautionary grit was carried out on our priority routes including Broad Oak.

All Grit bins were checked and topped up where required. Clearance of priority routes around the town and the refilling of grit bins took place on Saturday 3rd March.

The beast of the east part two took place over the weekend of the 17th and 18th March.

All staff had been contacted on Sunday 18th and a new start time of 5am was agreed for the Monday.

Grounds staff worked well and had the Town centre pavements cleared and gritted by 8am including the medical centre and other pedestrian areas. Staff then moved on to Broadoak and Honeymead locations.

In total 22,000 square meters had been salted by hand by the grounds staff which equates to approx. 5 acres. This was at an application rate of approx. 40g per sq.

Spring Work Plan

There are a number of projects underway which will hopefully be completed before the Summer; these include the Cemetery and Ricketts Lane Car Park.

Unfortunately due to the weather condition experienced, some planned works had been postponed.

We usually carryout a full sweep of Sturminster and Shillingstone with the assistance of Dorset waste partnership 2-3 times per year. So far this has had to be postponed 3 times. Hopefully we shall find a window in April to carry this out.

Plants for the Railway Gardens and other town beds have been ordered. The pole basket for Station Rd Car Park will be installed and planted ready for the summer.

Since the turn of the year we have carried out 2 grass cuts of our larger amenity areas. The grounds staff will soon be actively cutting and enhancing all of our open spaces. We are hoping to include the edging of our road side verges and amenity areas this year.

Repairs and replacements to play equipment at Rixon Rec and Railway Gardens are being looked into.

Grounds staff will be cleaning all Council owned play equipment and other street furniture during the spring. Unfortunately our pressure washer has a fault, so we are hoping to borrow one while ours is repaired.

Grounds staff will also be painting other pieces of street furniture that cannot easily be removed once the weather improves. This includes rubbish bins.

JER