

**STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH 26 AT 7.15PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER**



**PRESENT:**

Cllr L Cooper – Vice Chair  
Cllr C Fraser  
Cllr L Jackson  
Cllr H Lacey  
Cllr P Marks - Chair  
Cllr J Rose

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Cllr P Batstone  
Cllr A Donaldson

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

K Squire (Town Clerk) A Dodson (Grounds Manager)

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 1**

**MINUTE NO COMMENTS**

- 25/26/293 To receive comments and questions from members of the public**  
The Chair of the Allotments Association spoke regarding the Town Council grant award, the extension project and the lease agreement.
- 25/26/294 Apologies for absence**  
Apologies were received from Cllr Mantock. These apologies were accepted by members.
- 25/26/295 To approve declarations of interest and written applications for dispensation**  
No interests were declared and no written requests for dispensation received.
- 25/26/296 To approve the minutes of the previous Amenities Committee meeting held on 10 December 25**  
The minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on 10 December 25, having been circulated and published prior to the meeting, were taken as a true and correct record and duly signed by the Chair.
- 25/26/297 To receive a report from the Grounds Manager**  
The Grounds Managers report is attached to these minutes.
- 25/26/298 To receive a report from the Footpaths Officer**  
Cllr Cooper, the footpaths officer reported:
- The Right of Way Group requested a memorial to Alan Harrison be placed at the Trailway entrance. Organised and paid for by the group.
  - He asked if there was S106 developer funding for works to the bridge at Hole House Lane.

- He had contacted Hinton St Mary Estate about the Willow Tree in the river at Colber Bridge but had received no response.
- A 'Walk with Us' weekend was being planned for the 25/26 July using the walkabout leaflets. More details will follow.
- He enquired about planters in the Town Centre and if a recycled or environmentally friendly option could be considered when these need replacing but was mindful of the cost.

**25/26/299 To approve the following policies:**

- Memorial Bench
- Memorial Tree

The committee resolved to recommend to Council, approval of the memorial bench policy with the following edit: take out the sentence regarding the scattering of ashes.

The committee resolved to recommend to Council, approval of the memorial tree policy with the following edit: take out the sentence regarding the scattering of ashes.

**25/26/300 To receive a report from the Town Clerk**

The Clerk reported:

- Works to the mill had been completed and milling will recommence on the 10<sup>th</sup> April 26.
- An allotment lease agreement template provided by the National Allotments Society will be taken to Council for consideration, to help strengthen the application for developer funding and clarify responsibilities for health and safety.
- Work is being done on a proposal to transfer the open space at Market Fields to the Town Council, more details will follow as they are received.
- She is still working on obtaining legal advice regarding the buggy refuge at Ricketts Lane. A problem with multiple additional bags of rubbish on the site and rats has been reported.

**25/26/301 To receive information from members and proposals for future business**

• **Cllr Jackson**

Proposed working with environmental groups such as the Dorset Wildlife Trust to increase wildlife friendly areas in the Town with an emphasis on practical application that could be mimicked in private gardens.

• **Cllr Cooper**

Reminded members that the Police Community Contact Point was in The Exchange from 12-1 on Friday.

He also voiced support for the Town Council having a stall at the Big Lunch.

**The chair closed the meeting at 19:58**

**Chairs Signature.....Date Approved.....**

## **25/26/297 Grounds Report**

### **1. Grounds Staff**

The grounds staff have been carrying out grass cutting throughout the town. In addition to this, they have undertaken a variety of other tasks.

During the winter period, the team refurbished benches across the town. They also constructed a new single-slatted bench, which has been installed at the viewing area overlooking the river at the recreation ground on Ricketts Lane.

A skip was recently delivered to the workshop to facilitate the clearance of accumulated rubbish from recent years. Some items have been retained for reuse, including disused dog waste bag dispensers, which are being repurposed as birdhouses. Old timber is also being reused to create bug houses.

### **2. Community Garden – Old Market Hill**

The grounds staff have removed the majority of wooden boxes from the Community Garden and replanted the trees at Rixon Recreation Ground.

The wildflower areas were then cleared, rotavated, and reseeded using a wildflower mix that was successfully trialled at the cemetery last year. It is hoped that these flowers will provide enjoyment for residents while also supporting local wildlife.

### **3. Tree Works – Drovers/Jubilee Footpath**

Tree works along the Jubilee Footpath have now been completed.

### **4. Cemetery**

Following the success of last year's wildflower trial, additional wildflower areas have been created in the upper field of the cemetery. Pathways have been introduced to allow residents to walk through and enjoy the meadow.

Early signs of growth have already been observed in both the Community Garden and the cemetery.

### **5. Retaining Wall – South House**

I have spoken with the owner of South House regarding the collapsed retaining wall at the end of the recreation ground leading to Colber Bridge. The owner has confirmed that repairs will be carried out as soon as possible.

However, the remaining section of the wall appears unstable and will also require attention. As a temporary measure, it has been suggested that several buttresses be installed to provide lateral support on the outside of the wall.

The resident intends to write to the Town Council to request permission for this work, as the wall is located on Recreation Ground land.