

Sevenoaks Town Council
Minutes of the Open Spaces & Leisure Committee held on 21st September 2015
In the Council Chamber commencing at 7.00 p.m.

Committee Members Present

Cllr S Arnold, Mayor	Present	Cllr O Schneider	Present
Cllr N J Busvine OBE, Vice Chairman	Present	Cllr P E Towell	Present
Cllr J M Canet	Apologies	Cllr E Waite	Present
Cllr A Eyre, Chairman	Present	Cllr Mrs P C Walshe	Present
Cllr R J Parry	Present		
Cllr S G Raikes	Apologies		

In Attendance: Town Clerk and Open Spaces Manager

188 Requests for Dispensations

No Requests for Dispensations had been received from Members to enable participation in discussions on items on the agenda where the Member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (s 31 & 33 Localism Act 2011).

189 Declaration of Interest

Cllr Waite referred to his Declaration of Interest as a member of SAHA.

190 Minutes of the Meeting held on 10th August 2015

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of the Open Spaces & Leisure Committee held on 10th August 2015 be received and signed as a true record.

191. Statement of Accounts to 31st July 2015

RESOLVED: to note the statement of accounts to 31st July 2015.

192. Open Spaces & Cemetery Managers Report

i) St James Road Planters

Sevenoaks District Council has requested that the Town Council takes over the responsibility for the two brick planters that flank the entrance to the small car park in St James Road.

The planters were overgrown with large shrubs but recently the District Council had cleared these and replanted with a limited number of lavender plants. Sevenoaks Living Landscapes were approached but had no spare capacity to maintain them but they have offered to provide a planting plan of nectar rich plants.

RESOLVED: Sevenoaks Town Council take over the responsibility of the two planters at the entrance of the car park in St James Road to demonstrate its support to the local shopping area subject to the following:-

- Sevenoaks District Council be requested to provide a one off payment of £500 for the initial works to the planters.
- Local businesses be asked to sponsor the planters.
- The creation of a local Retail Association be encouraged to be involved in this and other local matters.

ii) Knole Paddock

Bournes Amenity had installed the drainage scheme on Pitch 1. The project went well with no unforeseen problems. The pitch will need a settling in period and so further top dressing with sand has been factored into the management plan for the next two years.

The Town Council has also worked with SRFC to move the scoreboard to new Pitch 1 and installed two new benches on a new viewing area at the end of the pitch. The cost of the benches will be shared between SRFC and the Town Council.

These small works will complement the grant aided works carried out earlier during the year and should provide all users of the site with an improved facility.

iii) Cemetery Fees

Over recent years the Town Council has received several complaints and appeals concerning the fees for burial of residents who have subsequently moved away.

Residents who purchase a plot for themselves and possibly a partner, who late in life move out of the parish, frequently to obtain nursing care in the last years of their life, then incur the higher burial fee when they are buried.

Officers had Recommended that consideration be given to adopting a single midpoint cost neutral price to all applicants and retain a two tier Residents and Non-Resident cost for the purchase of burial plots.

The Committee considered that this would result in an increase of costs to current residents of the parish.

RESOLVED: The current fee system to remain as present with the Town Clerk having delegated discretionary powers to address appeals.

iv) Open Spaces Yard Tractor

For 20 + years a redundant tractor from Greatness Cemetery has been based at Knole Paddock. It is a small 18 hp Kubota Tractor with a loading shovel has proved very useful and reliable for general work such as tidying compost, loading sand and soil and running the log cutting saw.

As the Open Spaces department continues to expand (Environmental Park) a review has been undertaken of the equipment available and it is recommended to replace the old vehicle with a slightly larger road registered tractor which would make grass cutting possible. It would also provide cover for when other vehicles break down or have regular maintenance.

RECOMMENDED: The provision to purchase a nearly new 25 – 30 hp Compact Tractor with front loader at a cost of £12,000 be placed within the 2016 / 17 draft budget.

193. Summer Play Provision

The Committee received and considered a report on the 2015 Summer Play Provision. The free play days are offered at four locations during the summer – The Vine; Greatness Recreation Ground; Hillingdon Rise Play Area and Julian's Meadow (cancelled due to bad weather).

It was noted that all of the events that took place were well supported and the Committee were keen to continue to provide such provision in the future.

194. Café on the Vine

It was noted that the new Café on the Vine would open to the public at 11.00 a.m. on Saturday 26th September 2015 with entertainment provided.

195. Environmental Park Play Area

Sevenoaks Town Council has leased an area of the Environment Park for the creation of a new town centre play area. The lease commences on 1st October 2015.

Sevenoaks Town Councillors will be taking part in a working party clearing day at the Sevenoaks Environmental Park on Saturday 17th October 2015, 10 a.m. – 2.00 p.m.

The Town Council has committed £50,000 towards the £100,000 new play area and the result of a funding application was expected in the next week. The Sevenoaks Town Partnership also held a fundraising raffle at the 2015 Business Awards.

The supplier for the new play area equipment is Sutcliffe Play. The following changes were made following a public consultation:-

- All metal work to be in green
- Two additional benches to be added to the original design
- Front gate to be supplied by another contractor
- Additional safety matting under the zip wire.
- Fencing to be added around the toddler area.

Knole Estates had agreed to the extension of the current entrance and a separate entrance to enable Town Council vehicles access to the area. The removal of one tree in the centre of play area had also been approved by Knole Estates. Pre Planning advice was currently being sought.

RESOLVED:

- i) The leased area be renamed Buckhurst Lane Play Area
- ii) Allotment holders and resident associations be invited to participate in the volunteer clearing day.
- iii) Low level fencing or similar be used to delineate the leased area.

196. Draft Revenue Estimates 2016 / 17 & Rolling Capital Programme

- i) **Draft Revenue Budgets 2016 / 17**
- ii) **Open Spaces Capital Programme for 2016 / 17**
- iii) **Property Maintenance Schedule for 2016 / 17**

It was noted that the draft Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Property Maintenance Schedule for 2016 / 17 contained considerable financial allocations for capital projects and these would need to be reviewed when the Town Council considered its total budget for the following year.

RECOMMENDED: The draft Revenue Budget, Capital Programme and Property Maintenance Schedule for 2016 / 17 as presented with the Open Spaces & Leisure Committee Agenda on 21st September 2015 be considered within the Precept allocation.

iv) General Charges

RESOLVED: Delegated to the Chairman of Open Spaces & Leisure Committee and Town Clerk to research the implications and action the increase of allotment fees to non-parishioners in line with non-parishioners fees for the cemetery.

v) **Cemetery Fees**

RESOLVED: All fees to be increased by 2% and rounded to the nearest £5.
Infants grave to be charged at £130.

vi) **Sports Fees**

RESOLVED: All fees to be increased by 2%.

197. South & South East in Bloom

The Chairman congratulated all of those involved to enable Sevenoaks to be awarded a Silver Gilt in the 2015 South & South East in Bloom competition. The Chairman in particular congratulated the Town Council's horticultural team who has received excellent marks.

It was noted that the 2015 entry had increased in points from 2014 and was 12 points away from receiving a Gold.

It was also noted that there had been a drop in points allocated in the Community Involvement section and it was hoped that this section could be improved on for 2016.

RESOLVED: Sevenoaks be fully committed to trying to achieve Gold level in the 2016 competition and an Action Plan to address this be provided to the next Open Spaces & Leisure Committee.

198. Vine Pavilion Structural Report

The recently carried out structural report for the Vine Pavilion had been circulated with the agenda, feedback had also been received from the Vine Pavilion Club. Within the draft 2016 / 17 budget £100,000 had been allocated for repairs.

RESOLVED:

- i) A further inspection take place looking behind panels of walls etc as originally requested.
- ii) Specification be prepared and quotations for repairs to be sought.

199. Councillors Tour of Town Council Owned Sites

The Committee received and considered proposed dates for the tour of sites.

RESOLVED: The Councillors tour of Town Council owned sites take place from 1 p.m. 14th November 2015 – starting at Council Offices.

200. Current Matters

RESOLVED: To note the report relating to current matters.

201. Press Release

RESOLVED: To issue a press release relating to the South & South East in Bloom results.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.05 p.m.

Chairman

Dated