



## TOWN AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Town Amenities Committee meeting held in the Cowie Room, Public Hall on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024 commencing at 7.00pm.

Mr Biggs advised the committee he had obtained grant funding via the Co-op membership scheme to purchase tree saplings, including fruit trees with the intention of planting a community orchard in conjunction with Beaminster School.

Dorset Councillor Craig Monks advised he had raised the lack of grass/verge cutting with the Ranger at Dorset Council who confirmed the Council had introduced a re-wilding policy. Two areas of land had been identified within the town that Cllr Monks considered unsuitable for re-wilding and agreement had been reached to cut those areas on a more frequent basis.

Cllr Monks also advised that due to budget constraints Dorset Council would not be clearing ditches and gullies this winter, he had raised his concerns for the potential impact on Beaminster.

Cllr Turner expressed his concern at the rapid spread of Himalayan Balsam, Cllr Monks urged the public to report problem areas direct on the Dorset Council website.

- 350 PRESENT:** Cllr Gunning (Chairman), Cllr Body, Cllr Dawkins and Cllr Turner; also Christine Bright (Town Clerk), Alex Alexander (Head Groundsman) and Mr M Runyard (Beaminster Football & Cricket Club) and two members of the public.
- 351 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**  
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Gillings and Matthew Camps (Groundsman)
- 352 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**  
The Minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 having previously been circulated were confirmed and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.
- 353 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS**  
No declarations of interest were received.
- 354 MEMORIAL PLAYING FIELD**
- (a) Children's Play Area**  
Members **NOTED** works to replenish the sand in the children's play area and repairs/resurfacing of the car park had been completed.
- (b) Lime Trees**  
Members **NOTED** pollarding works to the three remaining lime trees in Memorial Lane had been completed at a cost of £660.

**(c) Storage and redundant equipment**

Storage capacity both at the Playing Field and the Public Hall had been an issue for some time. It was **AGREED** to delegate Cllr Gunning and the head groundsman to undertake an audit of equipment at both locations with a view to the disposal of redundant items to increase storage capacity.

**(d) Boundary hedge**

Subsequent to the decision taken by the Finance & General Purposes Committee to reduce the height of the boundary hedge around the children's play area a resident of Fleet Street had expressed their concern at the loss of privacy. The head groundsman advised that he had visited those residents whose properties would be affected, he suggested the hedge height be reduced to fence height behind the Magna properties to allow light into the garden and step the hedge up to retain its height at the rear of Star Cottage to protect privacy. **AGREED** to be a suitable compromise.

**(e) Items raised by Cricket/Football Club representative**

**Cricket Club**

On behalf of the Cricket Club Mr Runyard enquired the council's position with regard to the possibility of installing two solar panels on the roof of the Cricket Club's building at the far end of the field. Members had no objections in principle. Mr Runyard also advised that he had occasion to speak to a small number of away team supporters who had brought dogs with them to watch the match.

**Football Club**

On behalf of the Football Club Mr Runyard reminded members that the condition of the pitch had to be borne in mind this winter particularly during/after heavy rain although the number of matches for the 2024/2025 season had reduced in number which could allow time for the pitch to recover.

He spoke again at the frustration, particularly from visiting teams at the lack of parking as a result of those parking who were not using the facilities on the playing field. The chairman advised that the committee were due to consider this issue later in the meeting and he would report back to Mr Runyard.

Mr Runyard also re-iterated the current position with regard to management of the pavilion and its financial position.

**355 CEMETERY**

Members **NOTED** the new burial ground had been levelled and seeded in recent weeks and currently looked in good condition.

**356 PUBLIC HALL**

**(a) Water leak**

Members **NOTED** all works related to the water leak had been completed at a cost of £2,699.

**357 FURLAND ALLOTMENTS**  
**In the absence of a representative no issues were raised.**

**358 PUBLIC TOILETS**  
No issues were raised for discussion.

**359 THE SQUARE**  
No issues were raised for discussion.

**360 GENERAL**

**(a) Purchase of litter bins**

Following the decision taken by the Finance & General Purposes Committee to purchase two additional litter bins on making enquiries the cost to purchase the bins would be considerably more than first advised and therefore exceed the budget.

Head Groundsman advised he had identified a litter bin that would be suitable for relocation to another site if Dorset Council would agree to the request, in addition the Council currently had a litter bin in storage which could be utilized. **AGREED** head groundsman to action.

**(b) Purchase of plane blade**

Research into how staff might save time trimming the bottom of the Christmas trees had identified a turbo plane blade that could be attached to an angle grinder which would strip the bark and trim down the bottom of the trunk to the desired size at a cost to purchase of £105.40 + VAT. **AGREED** to purchase.

**361 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting had been scheduled for Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024

**362 PUBLIC BODIES (Admission to Meeting) Act 1960**

To **RESOLVE** that public and press be excluded from the meeting whilst discussion takes place on the following item on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of business to be transacted in respect of consideration of quotations received.

**(a) Controlled access to Memorial Playing Field**

Details of additional costs associated with the installation of a controlled access barrier had been obtained that would require Council funding in addition to the grant of £5,000 awarded for the project. **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** to proceed with the project and fund the shortfall via the Leisure & Amenities EMR.

**(b) Replacement of play equipment**

The cost to replace one of the springers in the children's play area had been obtained in the region of £1,000. **AGREED** the head gardener would ascertain whether it would be necessary to replace the spring mechanism.

**(c) Public Hall floor**

A small section of floor in the main hall had lifted, a quotation had been obtained to undertake a repair at a cost of £650. **RESOLVED** to **ACCEPT** quotation.

**363 MEETING**

The meeting which started at 7.00pm closed at 8.30pm.

Chairman

19<sup>th</sup> November 2024

