

A/4/2010-2011

WOOTTON BASSETT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 11th November 2010 at 7.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Station Road, Wootton Bassett

PRESENT: Councillors: Mary Champion, Susan Doyle, Linda Frost,
Mike Leighfield and Chris Wannell

Also in Attendance: Councillors: Peter Doyle, Jenny Stratton

Officers in Attendance: Johnathan Bourne, Town Clerk,
Michelle Temple, Administrative Team Leader
Ralph White, Grounds Maintenance Team Leader

27. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Steve Bucknell, Owen Gibbs and Bill Roberts.

28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of interest in accordance with the Local Authorities [Model Code of Conduct] Order 2007.

RESOLVED to note that no declarations of interest were made.

29. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- Civic Centre – retaining wall, the contract to stabilise the retaining wall adjoining Station Road at the Civic Centre is due to commence in the second week in January 2011 and will last for approximately six weeks.
- Wootton Bassett Town Guide has now been published and is in the process of being circulated.
- Land at Swindon Road/Churchill Close – it was noted that attempts are being made to retrieve the newt survey that has been undertaken by Wiltshire Council in the hope of progressing discussion in respect of this matter. It was noted that Chris Elias of the Rugby Club may also have some information helpful to this discussion as an ecological survey had been conducted as part of the Rugby Clubs application for their land.
- Repatriation Correspondence Working Party – the Chairman noted that the first meeting for this group had taken place and, at this stage, the working party is investigating the most appropriate way forward seeking advice from the County Museums Officer.

30. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED to confirm and sign minutes of a meeting of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 2nd September, 2010 [A/3/2010-2011]. Copy previously circulated.

31. **JUBILEE LAKE COMMUNITY GROUP**

Report on a meeting of the Jubilee Lake Community Group held on Thursday, 16th September, 2010. Copy circulated.

RESOLVED the report be adopted.

32. **EVENTS WORKING PARTY**

Report on a meeting of the Events Working Party held on Wednesday, 29th September, 2010. Copy circulated.

RESOLVED that the report be adopted.

The Committee was also asked to nominate a replacement to this working party following the resignation of Councillor Bill Roberts as a member of the group.

RESOLVED to make no re-appointment to the Events Working Party but continue with four members, being Councillors Sue Doyle, Linda Frost, Mike Leighfield and Jenny Stratton.

33. **PLAY AREA WORKING PARTY**

A report on a meeting of the Play Area Working Party held on Thursday, 21st October 2010. Copy circulated. The Committee, in noting the work undertaken to date RESOLVED that:

- (a) Full plan should be developed for new play equipment in the New Road play area. Consultation should include local schools.
- (b) All other schemes as detailed within the report should be brought back for approval as they are developed.

- (c) To proceed with the repair of wet pour at the Woodshaw Green play area.
- (d) To proceed with the repair/replacement of damaged equipment on the infant site at New Road.
- (e) To make safe the equipment at the junior end of the New Road play area, pending the development of a comprehensive plan as detailed in a) above.

Further RESOLVED to note verbal report from Mike Leighfield indicating the difficulties experienced in identifying suitable land for development as allotments. *Chris Wannell left the meeting.*

34. **TARMAC FOOTPATHS/VARIOUS AREAS**

Report from Ralph White, Grounds Maintenance Team Leader. Copy circulated. RESOLVED to accept the officer recommendations, namely:

Existing Paths: The total cost to repair / renew the paths at Otter Way, Old Court and Poets Field, and to reinstate the trench at Jubilee Lake is £9,398.89. It was recommended to obtain a further two quotations from surfacing contractors and to then proceed in having the works done. The cost of the works to be paid for from out of the Capitals Project Fund – 4921 / 409. It is recommended that £10,000 is made available to pay for the works so that a small contingency is in place for any unforeseen requirements.

New Paths: It is recommended not to install the new paths but to look into installing fencing, hedging or shrub beds to encourage school children to use the existing network of paths. To advise residents to make a formal application to the appropriate authority to construct a new path to connect the existing paths onto the main road side path.

35. **FLORAL DISPLAYS**

Report from Ralph White, Grounds Maintenance Team Leader. Copy circulated.

The purpose of the report was to inform Councillors of the possibility of adjusting the focus of the floral displays from the Civic Centre and the Cemetery to the High Street.

The officer recommendation was to proceed with purchasing barriers baskets and flower towers and to meet the costs of this from the floral display budget -4045/402.

It was recommended to reduce the amount of floral containers in the cemetery and at the Civic Centre; by doing this the staffing hours saved will then be used in planting and maintaining the new containers in the High Street.

RESOLVED to authorise the move towards use of flower towers but review this at the end of the season.

Further RESOLVED not to authorise the use of troughs in the High Street as it is considered that these will be at low level and, therefore, subject to vandalism.

36. **REFURBISHMENT OF BUS SHELTERS**

Wootton Bassett Town Council has allocated a sum of £25,000.00 for the refurbishment of bus shelters throughout the town. Members will recall that for a number of years, bus shelters in the town have been heavily vandalised and a number of different approaches have been taken to try and address this through the use of various types of poly carbonate, associated with different varieties of graffiti removal system.

None of these have been successful and where graffiti has been removed it invariably leads to the “clouding” of the poly carbonate.

In other towns the problem has been overcome through the use of reinforced glass, but experience has shown in Wootton Bassett that whilst this is easy to clean, it has been prone to vandalism by way of bricks being thrown at it, leaving broken glass which is potentially dangerous.

Approximately 18 months ago the Council’s bus shelter provider Euroshell, in conjunction with the Town Council trialled a form of perforated steel sheeting, which has proved highly resistant to vandalism and graffiti alike.

During the last 18 months there have been no complaints raised regarding the use of this material in the four shelters trialled, all of which were in prominent locations.

Given that 50% of bus shelters are in the ownership of Wiltshire Council, an approach was made to them to see if they would be prepared to come to an arrangement, whereby they funded the refurbishment of their bus shelters and then handed these formally to the town council for maintenance, something which is already happening in practice.

Discussions have continued over recent months and are now approaching a conclusion.

Legal documentation is with the Council’s solicitor and the Grounds Maintenance Team Leader is seeking alternative quotes, in order to test the market against our current supplier.

RESOLVED to authorise the Town Clerk to formalise the agreement with Wiltshire Council and arrange for the refurbishment of the towns bus shelters stock, utilising funding available in the budget and funding that will be forthcoming from Wiltshire Council.

37. **WILTSHIRE COUNCIL LEISURE SERVICE REVIEW**

Members were referred to the minutes of the last meeting A/3/2010-2011 item 25, which dealt with the committee's consideration of this item.

Since that time a meeting was held on Thursday 28th October 2010, at the Civic Centre, where members received a presentation from Robin Townsend, Head of Leisure Services Officer, Wiltshire Council, together with Nick Dye and Gary Walker, who operate the leisure centre at Cricklade on a community basis.

The committee was advised that whilst the consultation period has officially finished, Robin Townsend, Head of Leisure Services would be pleased to receive comments from the Town Council, noting that we had been unable to arrange the meeting with users until late October.

The Council received some copies of correspondence from those that attended the meeting on 28th October 2010 and these are available to members upon request.

The Committee was asked to consider its formal representation to Wiltshire Council in respect to this matter.

RESOLVED to comment as follows:-

- The Council would not support the closure of the Lime Kiln Leisure Centre and questions the criteria being used and does not support the devolvement of the management of the Lime Kiln Leisure Centre in its present state.
- Devolving the management of Leisure Centres to Community Groups is reported to be a good idea by Wiltshire Council, so if one is devolved then should not all be offered for devolvement.

- Wootton Bassett Town Council welcome and express willingness to consider a Campus facility including provision for Wootton Bassett School and other schools.

38. **ANNUAL ESTIMATES OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

The committee was asked to consider making recommendations to the Revenue and Resources committee, for its budgetary provision in the 2010-2011 financial year. Copies circulated.

Members were reminded that the draft estimates represent ongoing commitments and service provision at current levels. Changes have only been incorporated where there is a clear intent by the Council, to undertake change following discussion with the Chairman.

Members were also asked to note that to avoid the problems previously experienced, all recharges have been set to 0 for budgetary purposes only.

RESOLVED to confirm that the draft budget as prepared and recommend this for consideration by the Revenue and Resources Committee.

Further **RESOLVED** to recommend that the Revenue and Resources Committee and Full Council consider the future of the tourist information point at Wootton Bassett Library given the possibility that Wiltshire Council may wish to charge for this facility, noting the probable withdrawal of funding by Wiltshire Council for the information service at 117 High Street.

39. **PRESS RELEASES**

The Committee was asked to consider any Press Releases issued in respect of the Committee Agenda items.

RESOLVED to issue a press release in respect of the footpaths and the Civic Centre bank.

Meeting closed at 9.50pm

