

## HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

### Environment & Leisure Committee

1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: T McMahon Chairman  
D Abbott  
D Dixon-Wilkinson  
Y Farrell  
S Goodchild  
A Slough

Officers: Clare Evans Town Clerk  
Tony Luff Head of Grounds Operations  
Louise Senior Head of Democratic Services

Public: 0

Absent: Councillors: R Morgan

#### 11208 APOLOGIES

None.

#### 11209 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

#### 11210 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

#### 11211 COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS

Members were advised that in accordance with the Minute 111207 taken at Town Council on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 the following committee arrangements remain in place:

*Chair and Vice Chair of Environment & Leisure Committee*

The Chair and Vice Chair of Environment & Leisure Committee would remain as follows:

Chair – Cllr McMahon

Vice Chair – Cllr Slough

*Committee Functions & Terms of Reference*

These remain as most recently approved.

**Resolved: To note the report.**

#### 11212 MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

Members requested an update on minute number 11172 Tithe Farm 3G feasibility project. Members were advised that three consultants had submitted fee proposals and were to be interviewed later in the week.

**Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

#### **11213 2020/21 BUDGET REVIEW**

Members received a report on the Environment & Leisure Committees budget for 2020/21 supported by the relevant extract from the approved budget for 2020/21.

It was queried whether the outbreak of Covid 19 would have an impact on the budget. Members were advised that additional expenses had been incurred to support residents and there had been a loss of income. The exact impact had not yet been calculated.

Members requested an update on the electricity cost of Moore Crescent Pavilion. Members were advised that several cost saving measures had been put in place to reduce the cost of electricity used in the pavilion.

Members were advised that several grants had been applied for to facilitate the refurbishment of Orchard Close pavilion. The grant through Cricket East had been declined as it did not meet their criteria as The Pavilion was sited too close to the Cricket Boundary for any ECB (England Cricket Board). However, s106 funds was being looked into.

Grant funding for a community defibrillator at Orchard Close Cricket Ground had been successfully secured through Cricket East.

**Resolved: To note the report.**

#### **11214 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT**

Members were advised that the Income and Expenditure report was unavailable as the closure of the financial year 2019/20 had been extended due to the outbreak of Covid 19.

#### **11215 SPORTS FEES FOR 2019/20 SEASON**

Members were requested to consider a proportionate reduction in football sports fees for the 2019/20 season.

**Resolved: To issue credit notes to football hirers to a value of 6/35<sup>th</sup> of their 2019/20 season pitch fees to reflect the reduction in their season due to Covid-19.**

#### **11216 SPORTS FEES FOR 2020/21 SEASON**

Members were requested to consider a proportionate reduction in sports fees for the 2020/21 season should sports seasons not commence at the expected time.

Members were advised that the bowling green at Moore Crescent had been reopened to the Bowls Club, with social distancing measures in place in line with government guidelines.

**Resolved: To provide a proportional discount, relating to the number of weeks lost due to Covid-19, to sports hire fees in 2020/21.**

#### **11217 FAIR AND CIRCUS VISITS**

Members were advised that the Fair visit scheduled for May 2020 had been cancelled due to Covid-19. This represented a loss in income of approximately £1000.

**Resolved: To note the report.**

#### **11218 VISION UPDATE**

Members were reminded that the council worked hard during 2019/20 to develop its corporate plan for 2020/24 to shape the work of the council over this time period. The final stage in the plan was the formal agreement by Council. Due to Covid-19 this stage did not happen. However, as the plan was prepared for formal adoption, it was being presented to each committee for initial consideration and next steps.

Members of this committee were requested to view the specific Aspirations and Objectives against the Environment & Leisure Committee. Members were invited to put forward any specific thoughts and ideas. Staff were giving consideration to the Aspirations and Objectives and were endeavouring to incorporate them into ongoing work where possible.

**Resolved: To note the report.**

#### **11219 HOUGHTON BROOK UPDATE**

As an update Members received:

- Project summary notes;
- Before and after visuals

Members were advised of a further update provided by the Environment Agency (EA) as follows:

In early March the EA were preparing to start work on the Houghton Brook flood alleviation scheme. Planning permission was in place and the EA were working with their delivery partner to start construction in mid-April 2020. However, due to the Coronavirus outbreak and concerns about the safe working on site, it was decided to pause the start of construction.

However, the EA have continued all other activities including the Public Rights of Way diversion order, the Impoundment Licence and the submission of information for the discharge of planning conditions. Funding details had also been finalised with contributions now secured from SEMLEP and the Department for Education, to accompany other funding from Luton Borough Council, Thames Regional Flood & Coastal Committee and the Government. A grant from Central Bedfordshire Council under their Community Asset Grant scheme had also been secured (£11,794).

Members were advised that in line with most recent Government advice, the Houghton Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme would now go ahead to construction. Enabling works had been planned to commence in the week beginning 18 May 2020 and construction was to start at the end of June 2020. The scheme was due to be completed in early 2021.

**Resolved: To note the report.**

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.40pm**

**Dated this 21<sup>st</sup> day of September 2020**

**Chairman**