

**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Environment & Leisure Committee**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**7<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: T McMahon Chairman  
D Dixon-Wilkinson  
Y Farrell  
M Kennedy Substitute (*attended virtually*)  
R Morgan  
S Thorne

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

Public: 4

Apologies: Councillor: A Slough

Also present: Councillors: J Carroll  
D Jones

**11642 ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Members were invited to elect a Chair for Environment & Leisure Committee for 2021/22.

Nominee: Cllr McMahon Nominated by: Cllr Farrell  
Seconded by: Cllr Dixon-Wilkinson

No other nominations were received. On being put to the vote, Councillor McMahon was duly appointed as Chair of the Environment and Leisure Committee for the municipal year 2021 - 2022.

**11643 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Cllr A Slough (Cllr Kennedy substituted).

**11644 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

A member of the public suggested a community garden including vegetable plots and composting on Parkside Recreation Ground.

**11645 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS**

Cllr McMahon declared an interest in agenda item 16, Houghton Hall Park, of Houghton Regis Heritage Society and a member of MAG.  
Cllr Thorne declared an interest in agenda item 16, Houghton Hall Park as she was a member of Houghton Regis Heritage Society.

Accordingly, neither councillor took part in discussion relating to this item.

#### **11646 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

Members were invited to elect a Vice-Chair for Environment & Leisure Committee for 2021/22.

Nominee:	Cllr A Slough	Nominated by:	Cllr Morgan
		Seconded by:	Cllr Dixon-Wilkinson

No other nominations were received. On being put to the vote, Councillor A Slough was duly appointed as Vice-Chair of the Environment and Leisure Committee for the municipal year 2021 - 2022.

#### **11647 MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021.

**Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 22nd February 2021 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

#### **11648 COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS & TERMS OF REFERENCE**

In accordance with Standing Order 4.j.iv. Council was required to review its delegation arrangements to committees and sub-committees.

These arrangements were set out in the Committee Functions & Terms of Reference. This document set out the system of delegation to the Committees, Sub Committees and Working Groups of the Council.

Members received the extract from the approved Committee Functions & Terms of Reference which related to this committee.

Members received this report for information.

#### **11649 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT**

Members received the income and expenditure report, which highlighted significant variances, for Environment & Leisure Committee to date.

#### **11650 PARKSIDE FAMILY GAMES AREA**

Members were requested to consider a project to deliver a family games area on Parkside Recreation ground.

Members were advised that this project ties a number aspects within the vision together.

Funding had been received from the Police and Crime Commissioner for just under £3500 for this project. There would also be the opportunity to apply for the Central Bedfordshire Council Community Asset Grant funding. It was noted that although funding was limited, this project could be progressed phased over financial years.

Members were advised that the total cost of the project would be around £12,000.

It was suggested that local residents and local groups be contacted, and their ideas shared with the council.

**Resolved: To support the establishment of a family games and seating area within Parkside Recreation Ground.**

#### **11651 RECYCLING AT PARKS AND OPEN SPACES**

Members were advised on waste collection in parks and play areas.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To conduct an anti-litter campaign over the summer including information on what happens to waste in the parks and play areas;**
- 2. To replace bins should the budget be available in due course.**

#### **11652 WILDFLOWER PLANTING**

Members were requested to consider a project to deliver wildflower areas in the town.

It was suggested that signage be placed in the areas of planting to alert residents that the wildflower planting was intentional and not neglected land.

**Resolved: To seek to deliver wildflower community bombing events in the following locations (subject to landowner approval):**

- The overgrown piece of land behind the fence on Woodlands Avenue**
- Land adjacent to Frogmore Rd**
- Woodside Link Community Orchard**
- The old part of the Cemetery under the trees**

#### **11653 TITHE FARM ALL WEATHER PROJECT UPDATE**

Members were updated on the Tithe Farm Recreation Ground Sports Project.

Members were advised that more accurate costing forecast had developed as project ideas had progressed. Phase one would be the development of the 4 changing room pavilion, phase two would comprise of a community room attached to the pavilion. The predicted cost of phase one was £1.4m which left a £50,000 shortfall. If the community room was built at the same time the cost would rise to £1.8m. Members were advised that the design had allowed for phase one to be completed with the option of phase two completion at a later date.

Members were advised that a breakdown of tender costs would be fed back to the committee at a future meeting, however, were requested to consider that the cost of materials could vary significantly if phase two was left for a number of years.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To support the pavilion layout**
- 2. To confirm required signatories for the Football Foundation application process are the Town Clerk and the Chair of the Environment & Leisure Committee.**

#### **11654 HOUGHTON REGIS CEMETERY**

Members were requested to give consideration to the following:

1. Update on the Garden of Remembrance
2. Pre purchase of vaults within the Garden of Remembrance
3. Direct burial bookings
4. Availability of earthen ashes plots

Members were advised that feedback from the community regarding the Garden of Remembrance had been very positive. Requests from residents to reserve plot within the Garden of Remembrance had been received. Members were requested to give this consideration.

Members were advised that there had been an increase in uptake of direct burial bookings, which has had impacted on staff time. Memorial arrangements also took up a large amount of staff time.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To amend the Cemetery Regulations to enable the pre purchase of vaults within the Garden of Remembrance**
- 2. To amend the Cemetery Fees to include a charge for memorial arrangements of £100**

#### **11655 ALLOTMENTS**

Members were requested to consider:

1. Site layout plan for the Bellway site:
2. Establishment of a Working Group to consider all matters relating to the provision and management of allotments

Members queried the location of the proposed allotments and shade from nearby buildings.

Members were advised that improvements had been made to the original plans.

Members agreed to establish an Allotment Working Group.

An amendment to the recommendation 1 was proposed to read: To approve the site layout as detailed on Drawing Ref: SK01/18122020 B subject to the commitments made by Bellway in their email dated 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

*The officer recommendation read: To approve the site layout as detailed on Drawing Ref: SK01/18122020 B*

Proposed by: Cllr Morgan seconded by: Cllr Farrell

All in favour.

Accordingly, this became the substantive motion.

An amendment to the recommendation 3, terms of reference, was proposed to read:  
Terms of Reference

- The Allotment Working Group shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.
- The Allotment Working Group shall consist of up to five Councillors. The quorum shall be half of its members (three)

Proposed by: Cllr Morgan seconded by: Cllr Farrell

All in favour.

Accordingly, this became the substantive motion.

- Resolved:**
- 1. To approve the site layout as detailed on Drawing Ref: SK01/18122020 B subject to the commitments made by Bellway in their email dated 8th April 2021.**
  - 2. To confirm that HRTC is willing to accept the transfer of this site in due course subject to due legal process**
  - 3. To establish an Allotment Working Group as follows:**
    - Functions**
      - To consider all matters relating to the provision and management of allotments in Houghton Regis including:**
        - **New site specification**
        - **Allotment associations**
        - **Allotment tenancies**
        - **Management**
        - **Fees and charges**
    - Terms of Reference**
      - **The Allotment Working Group shall function and operate in accordance with the Council's approved Standing Orders.**
      - **The Allotment Working Group shall consist of up to five Councillors. The quorum shall be half of its members (three)**

## **11656 MACHINERY RENEWALS PROGRAMME**

Members received the anticipated machinery renewals programme for 2021/22.

Members were updated on the sale of an obsolete piece of machinery.

**Resolved: To support the Machinery Renewals Programme for 2021/22.**

#### **11657 HOUGHTON HALL PARK**

*As the Chair of the Committee, Cllr McMahon, had declared an interest in this item, the Committee agreed for Cllr Morgan to chair this agenda item.*

Members were advised that 2 initiatives had arisen recently in relation to the operational management of the Park. The first was the planting of an oak tree to commemorate Robert Brandreth on the Cedar Lawn and the second was the possibility of creating an orchard on the Cedar Lawn. There had been some uncertainty as to the decision-making process around these projects. This report was provided to clarify the situation.

The management of Houghton Hall Park fell under the Joint Venture Agreement between Central Bedfordshire Council and Houghton Regis Town Council. Members received a copy of the JVA. Members were specifically referred to section 7.

The recent initiatives referred to above would fall under the Management Advisory Group. The Town Council had input into the MAG through its nominated representatives.

It was also understood that the Houghton Regis Heritage Society had a view on these proposals. This group had representation on the MAG and accordingly could comment on projects and initiatives through this forum.

Members received this report for information.

A member of the public asked what was the historical and heritage merit for an orchard on the Cedar Lawn? There were no indicators that as a heritage area there was ever an orchard on the Cedar Lawn, as such wished to object to the planting of an orchard on the Cedar Lawn.

Members were advised that the Oak tree had been planted under the JVA to commemorate Robert Brandreth. It was suggested that queries related to the orchard be referred to the MAG as this would be a management decision.

It was suggested that Houghton Hall Park and the Heritage Society meet with Houghton Regis Town Council to discuss further.

Members agreed for this item to be deferred to discussion at the next Environment and Leisure meeting.

#### **11658 USE OF VILLAGE GREEN**

Members were advised that a request to use the Village Green had been received from Full House Theatre to enable them to run their Hullabaloo Event. Basic details were as follows:

Event - Houghton Regis Hullabaloo

Organiser – Full House Theatre

Date - 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Time - performances were likely to be scheduled to take place at 11:30am and 2pm

A more detailed event application was attached. In support of the application the applicant had also provided the following:

- Event management plan
- Risk assessments
- Covid Risk Assessment
- Public Liability Certificate

**Resolved: To approve the use of the Village Green for the Houghton Regis Hullabaloo event on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021.**

#### **11659 VISION UPDATE**

Members received an extract from the approved Vision 2020/2024 as it related to the work of this committee.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.45pm**

**Dated this 20<sup>th</sup> day of September 2021.**

**Chairman**