

**HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Environment & Leisure Committee**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**14<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 7.00pm**

Present: Councillors: T McMahon Chairman  
E Cooper  
Y Farrell  
R Morgan  
A Slough  
S Thorne

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

Public: 1

Also present: Councillor: J Carroll

**11931 APOLOGIES**

None.

**11932 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None.

**11933 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**11934 MINUTES**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

**Resolved: To confirm the minutes of the Environment & Leisure Committee meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

**11935 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED THEREIN**

Allotments Working Group 5<sup>th</sup> October and 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

Members were advised the draft Tenancy Agreement as amended, minute number AWG21, was approved at the Environment and Leisure Committee meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

**11936 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT**

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

### **11937 BUDGET FOR 2022/23**

Members received the approved budget and explanation for 2022/23 for information.

It was highlighted that additional funds were provided for EMR play areas and pavilion renovations. Members may like to consider the strategic objectives for this funding.

The following projects were highlighted:

- Replacement of planting beds on the Village Green
- Decoration of Village Green pavilion – funding was provided which would enable either internal or external decoration to be completed. The Head of Grounds favoured internal redecoration. Members were requested to confirm.
- External decoration of Parkside Pavilion
- Enhanced support to HHP in accordance with JVA
- Painting of railings at Village Green and Tithe Farm play areas
- 2 x new benches for Parkside Recreation ground
- Renovation of Town Sign planting bed (wooden sleepers)
- Enhancement of Parkside family area

Members acknowledged that there were many projects to consider, with significant expenditure.

Members agreed to the internal decoration of the Village Green.

Members were advised that a safety audit had been completed on the play areas which had not flagged any issues on any of the sites. Members were advised the equipment was looking tired, however, remained functional.

Members were updated on planned work for the enhancement of Parkside family area, which included a pagoda, play equipment, 2 picnic benches, litter bins and some planting of trees.

Members were requested to consider the purchase of a new Side Arm Flail to replace the bulky and cumbersome Side Arm Flail that was currently being used by the Grounds Team. Members were advised that funding was available to from EMR 352.

**Resolved: To Purchase a Side Arm Flail using company 1 with funds from EMR 352.**

### **11938 TITHE FARM RECREATION GROUND SPORTS PROJECT UPDATE**

Members were advised that the application made to the land registry had been withdrawn, however, an application had been made for a 'good lease'. A planning application had been submitted and was due to be presented to the Development Management Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2022. The Pitch Tender had been awarded for £761,434, the tender included the car park extension and refurbishment at an additional cost of £106,512.

The pavilion open tender had been unsuccessful therefore a closed tender process had been advised which had resulted in 2 tender returns. A tender analysis had been completed and a tender was recommended.

Members were advised that Beds F A were a non-profit organisation and would take on the complete management of the site.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To appoint Company B as the contractor to deliver the Tithe Farm All Weather project pavilion and associated works;**
- 2. To support the operational site management being undertaken by the Bedfordshire Football Association and for a draft agreement to be developed for formal consideration;**
- 3. To request that Town Council consider and approve an application to the Public Works Loan Board for borrowing of £500,000.**

#### **11939 RECREATION LAND AND FACILITIES WITHIN BIDWELL WEST**

Members received an update on the recreation land and facilities within Bidwell West.

Concerns were raised regarding the limited information supplied on the standard of pitches. It was requested that further information be sought.

#### **11940 CHRISTMAS TREE**

Members received the Community Services Committee report which considered the siting of a living Christmas Tree.

It was suggested by Community Services Committee that the council seek to site the tree on The Green near to the pedestrian crossing on East End subject to suitable investigations taking place. Members were invited to discuss.

Members discussed options to give a re-planted tree the best chance of survival. It was advised that a smaller tree would stand a better chance of survival after re-planting.

Members discussed alternative festive lighting ideas for Houghton Regis.

**Resolved:** **To seek to site the Christmas tree, near to the pedestrian crossing on East End subject to suitable investigations taking place.**

#### **11941 VILLAGE GREEN ALTERATIONS**

Members were updated on the Welcome Back Fund. Members were advised that a variation on the initial request had been submitted and a response was awaited. Members were advised that Central Bedfordshire Council may refuse the funding for the moving of the fence as that would be considered permanent structural alteration.

Members were advised that grant money had been applied for the Plant a Tree for the Jubilee initiative, and Houghton Regis had been awarded £4,700 for 5 fruit trees and 20m of willow hedging.

**Resolved: To support the enhancements outlined to the Village Green provided the funding is confirmed.**

#### **11942 HIRE FEES FOR VILLAGE GREEN PAVILION AND MOORE CRESCENT PAVILION**

Members were advised that there had been an increase in the hiring of Moore Crescent Pavilion. It was suggested the restricted seasonal hirability of the pavilion was off putting for prospective hirers.

A recorded vote was requested on the proposed recommendation:

In favour: Cllrs: T McMahon, Y Farrell, S Thorne, E Cooper, Abby Slough.

Against: 0

Abstentions: Cllr: Ray Morgan

**Resolved: To approve the Environment & Leisure Schedule of Fees for 2022/23 for Village Green Pavilion and Moore Crescent Pavilion.**

#### **11943 FAIR & CIRCUS VISITS 2022**

Members confirmed that signage regarding parking had impacted the local area positively.

Members were advised that the following visits had been requested for 2022:

*Tom Smith Fair Visits*

11<sup>th</sup> May to 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022 – 13 days

Sept 5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> September 2022 – 8 days

*John Lawson Circus Visit*

10<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022 – 11 days

**Resolved: To approve the visits as requested.**

#### **11944 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 8.44pm**

**Dated this        day of**

**Chairman**

DRAFT