

## DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HIGHWAYS, PARKS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GROVE HOUSE, HIGH STREET NORTH, DUNSTABLE

ON MONDAY 19TH MARCH 2007

Present: Councillor Mrs B M Boatwright (Deputy Town Mayor), Councillors P J Boatwright (Chairman), P E Russell (Vice-Chairman), Councillors R R Anklesaria, Mrs J K Fairbairn, A E Green, M Jones, Mrs S B Littlechild, B Ralley, Mrs A Stock and T A W Stock

In Attendance: Councillor M Tilley with Mr R Walden (Town Clerk) and Mr D Ashlee (Town Clerk designate)

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Mrs C M Gresham (Town Mayor)

#### **96 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **97 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 29th January 2007 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **98 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

A representative of a family whose daughter had been recently interred at the cemetery spoke in favour of the proposed variation of the Council's policy concerning the pre-purchase of Exclusive Rights of Burial as set out at Minute 168/2006.

A resident of Canesworde Road expressed concern at the slow progress in providing new bus shelters and repairing damaged ones and expressed concern at the lack of an adequate bus service from the Downside Estate to town centre facilities in the early part of the day. She also presented a petition supporting the continuance of the current Service No. 31. Members agreed to seek information from Bedfordshire County Council on the current level of subsidy for the service from Downside to enable further consideration to be given to the matter at the next meeting. It was noted that Arriva the Shires had agreed to give this Council 60 days notice of any proposal to amend the Service 31 and the contents of the petition were noted for consideration should such a proposal materialise in the future.

#### **99 PLANS-SUB COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meetings of Plans Sub-Committee held on 30th January and 19th February 2007 (see Appendix 'A') be received.

#### **100 DUNSTABLE CEMETERY**

The Committee received a report of the Administration and Finance Manager on the current work programme within the cemetery. Members reviewed the operation of the recently introduced policy of no longer permitting the pre-purchase of Exclusive Rights of Burial prior to an interment and also considered options for restricting vehicular access.

Members were delighted to note that a postal survey of residents using cemetery facilities during the previous 12 months had produced a satisfaction rating of 100% compared with 93.5% the previous year.

**RESOLVED:** i) that the policy of not permitting the pre-purchase of Exclusive Rights of Burial plots be clarified by permitting the purchase of Rights to a second plot at the time of an interment in the first plot

ii) that proposals for the introduction of automatic barrier equipment be not pursued at the present time but a further letter be sent to all key holders to the vehicle gates to the cemetery asking them to close the gates behind them and the impact of such letter be reviewed by the Cemetery Best Value Review team who be authorised to consider any other appropriate action.

## **101 ALLOTMENTS**

The Administration and Finance Manager reported on the recent annual survey of allotment tenants which indicated that the level of satisfaction with the service had reduced in the past year from 92.2% to 91.7%. The reason for the reduction appeared to be continuing concerns at unauthorised access and vandalism at the Meadway allotments occasioned through the condition of the boundary fence with Quarry Walk. This fence was the responsibility of Paradigm Housing Association and Officers had met with representatives of the Association who had undertaken to secure improvements.

## **102 TOWN CENTRE GARDENS**

The Committee received a report of the Culture and Regeneration Manager on recent activities undertaken within the town centre areas and Grove House and Priory House gardens. Members commented favourably upon the excellent appearance of the gardens particularly the impact of the new landscaping scheme within Grove House Gardens.

## **103 RECREATION GROUNDS**

The Committee received a report of the Performance and Environment Manager on recent activities within the various recreation grounds.

**RESOLVED:** i) that the request of Dunstable BMX Club for a National Competition at the track in Peppercorn Park on 10th June be approved

ii) that, following a request from the Chiltern Youth League, the football pitch at Downs Road Recreation Ground be converted from a senior to a junior pitch for the autumn playing season

iii) that consideration be given at the time of the preparation of next year's budget of a phased programme for essential and desirable replacement/repairs of boundary fencing within the various recreation grounds.

## **104 BEDFORDSHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION**

At the time of the grant of the lease of the Peter Newton Pavilion to the Bedfordshire Football Association (BFA) the Council had confirmed that it was prepared to work in partnership with BFA to provide a new all-weather floodlit sports area on the site of the former tennis courts at this ground.

BFA had now advised that they wished to take this project forward and had obtained substantial funding grants from the Football Association and the UEFA Jubilee Fund. The Association was also contributing £50,000 of its own funds to the project leaving a current shortfall of approximately £30,000.

**RESOLVED:** i) that the proposal be approved

ii) that, subject to the grant of any necessary planning permission, the Town Clerk be authorised to negotiate an Agreement for lease with the Bedfordshire Football Association, enabling it to construct the new all-weather pitch and on completion to grant it a lease of the site for a period coterminous with its lease of the Peter Newton Pavilion. The freehold of the asset will remain the property of the Town Council although BFA may hire out the facilities when it is not required for its own coaching sessions and in so doing will give priority to applications from teams and clubs based in Dunstable

iii) that consideration be given to a possible capital contribution towards the project from monies currently held under a S106 planning agreement for improvements to this recreation ground.

#### **105 MAJOR TRANSPORTATION SCHEMES**

The Committee noted the contents of a progress report to the Joint Planning and Transportation Committee on the present position with regard to major transportation schemes affecting Dunstable.

#### **106 BLOWS DOWN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Management Committee held on 11th October 2006 and its Chairman, Councillor Fairbairn, reported on the proceedings of its more recent meeting.

#### **107 TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER. CAPRON ROAD**

Under the new procedure for considering requests for additional waiting/parking restrictions, the County Council had referred to this Committee a request from the Capron Court Sheltered Housing scheme for the provision of a designated disabled persons parking bay in Capron Road.

**RESOLVED:** that the proposal be supported.