

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 21ST JANUARY 2008

Present: Councillor Mrs B M Boatwright (Town Mayor); Councillor A E Green (Deputy Town Mayor); Councillors M Tilley (Chairman); P E Russell (Vice-Chairman); R R Andlesaria, P J Boatwright, Mrs J K Fairbairn, Mrs S B Littlechild, M Jones and M J P Mullany

In Attendance: Councillor Mrs S A Newton with Mr D Ashlee (Town Clerk) and Mrs K Winton (Head of Parks and Cemetery Services)

Apologies for Absence: Councillors B Ralley and Mrs A Stock

20 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12th November 2007 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

21 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

22 PLANS-SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meetings of Plans Sub-Committee held on 20th November 2007, 11th December 2007 and 8th January 2008 (see Appendix 'A') be received.

23 RECREATION GROUNDS, CEMETERY AND ALLOTMENTS

The report of the Head of Parks and Cemetery Services was received.

The Committee were pleased to note that the work to strengthen the window grills at Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground had been completed and that it would help to deter future vandalism on this building.

24 TENDER FOR ICE CREAM CONCESSION (Minute 178/2007)

Following the success of last year's ice cream concession for Grove House Gardens, Members considered the granting of a licence, by way of a tender process, for an ice cream concession for the Town Council's events and parks.

Suppliers would be invited to bid for a 3 year licence to supply ice cream and soft drinks at all relevant Town Council events and to operate ice cream vans in Grove House Gardens, Priory Gardens and Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground.

A licence would be granted to the applicant gaining the highest score on the tendering criteria and only if they met the terms and conditions of the licence application.

Tenders would be invited for a sum in excess of £3,000 per annum (£9,000 in total).

RESOLVED: i) that tenders be invited for an ice cream concession for Town Council events and parks

ii) that the Chairman, Town Clerk, Head of Finance and Support Services and Head of Events and Town Centre Services be authorised to approve and accept the most appropriate tender based on the approved evaluation criteria.

Action: Head of Events and Town Centre Services

25 TOWN CENTRE AND GARDENS

The report of the Head of Events and Town Centre Services was received.

Members of the Committee were concerned that the raised planters along the High Street were being used for smoking related litter and it was suggested that an alternative planting scheme such as low covering shrubs might help to stop this problem.

26 TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS

Members considered requests from Dunstable residents regarding traffic management improvements in the town.

RESOLVED: that the following comments be forwarded to Bedfordshire Highways in respect of Traffic Regulation Orders:

Ref/55515

Proposal : Request for Safety Assessment of Traffic Island o/s 252 Luton Road.

Observations : Accept and support a request and decision to be made quickly whilst the current work is being carried out.

Ref/

Proposal : Request for speed camera/speed restriction measures to be taken on the Whipnade, Road Dunstable.

Observations : Support request and would like to see the 30 mile an hour speed limit sign moved back a few yards.

Ref/

Proposal : Request for bollards at bibshall crescent.

Observations : Insufficient detail to be able to make a decision.

Action: Head of Events and Town Centre Services

27 GREEN FLAG AWARD

The Committee received information regarding the Green Flag Award Scheme, the national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales. The award began in 1996 as a means of recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the country.

It is becoming increasingly important for local authorities to demonstrate that they have strong and robust maintenance and management arrangements for public open space. The objective of securing Green Flag status for Grove House Gardens would help to develop the Council's approach to the management of its public open spaces and also demonstrate to others that the Council is able to deliver quality services

RESOLVED: i) that a recommendation be made to Finance and General Purposes Committee to approve a contribution of £5,250 be made available to enable an application for Green Flag status to be developed for Grove House Gardens. The £5,250 will be used as 25% match funding towards a budget of £21,000; £15,750 having already been secured by Officers of this Council via the Chalk Arc Initiative

ii) that the contribution be met from the earmarked reserves for General Projects.

Action: Head of Events and Town Centre Services

28 TENDERING FOR EXTERNAL CONTRACTS

The Town Clerk reported on approaches by third parties for the Council's consideration for undertaking grounds maintenance work on their behalf.

It was considered that the potential for the Council to take on additional work could be beneficial in the longer term as the Council was due to take on greater grounds maintenance responsibilities shortly anyway (at Frenchs Avenue and with the Cemetery extension). It was considered that securing additional maintenance responsibilities could help to offset the cost of these impending additional responsibilities.

The Council already absorbs many of the start up costs required for the purposes of contract tendering such as the depot space, manpower and equipment and could therefore position itself into a competitive situation in terms of any contract tendering exercises.

Only tendering exercises relating to the provision of publicly accessible open space such as schools land, other local authority amenity land or land around main shopping areas such as ASDA or the White Lion Retail Park would be pursued. The council would not undertake work on behalf of private individuals or involving non-publicly accessible land.

RECOMMENDED: i) that the Council approves in principle support for officers to submit tenders for the maintenance of open space within Dunstable.

ii) that the merits of each contract to be considered on an individual basis at the appropriate time.

Action: Town Clerk

29 SECTION 106 EXPENDITURE PROPOSALS

Members received an update on the current position regarding the Town Council's receipt of Section 106 funding for parks and open spaces. Direction was sought from the Committee regarding spending proposals to be presented to South Bedfordshire District Council for final approval.

RESOLVED: i) that the options for expenditure of S106 funding be agreed as set out below:

Related development	Section 106 finance available	Section 106 restriction on contribution	Proposed scheme	Comments
Hartwell Ford, Skimpot Road	£60,000 (Held by DTC)	<i>“to provide new or to improve existing open space facilities in the vicinity of the application site”</i>	1. £30,000 - Peter Newton for new play area, new pathways and signage 2. £30,000 for Luton Road Rec for new play, pathways and signage	Play area age group and scheme to be developed but could include a mix of ages incl. youth shelters. Additional funding could be applied for through the green Spaces Strategy
SCA site, Southfields Road	£160,000 (£110,000 held by DTC, £50 still held by SBDC)	<i>“to provide and/or improve open space and play area space in the vicinity of the application site”</i>	2. £110,000 play equipment for Bennett Memorial Ground 3. £50,000 play equipment for Downside Recreation Ground	Final schemes to be agreed. Downside equipment to be situated around the Community Centre
30-38 Luton Road	£50,000 (Held by SBDC)	<i>“for the provision and improvement of recreational community open space and public art facilities at or in the vicinity of the application site”</i>	1. £28,000 contribution to the refurbishment of Luton Road pavilion	£22,000 has already been spent by SBDC for the provision of public art. Additional funding for the refurbishment will be required
Dunstable College and associated housing	£200,000 (development not yet started)	£120,000 <i>“for the provision, replacement, upgrading and maintenance of recreational facilities in the vicinity of the application site”</i> £80,000 <i>“for the provision, replacement, upgrading and maintenance of facilities at Grove House Gardens play area”</i>	1. £120,000 for the refurbishment of the Bennetts Recreation Ground Pavilion 2. £80,000 to complete and renew play equipment at Grove House Gardens	This development is at outline planning permission stage and as a result has not yet received formal approval
French's Gate	£40,000 (Held by DTC)	The £40,000 is the residual amount left from a larger £170,000 contribution to community facilities that has already been spent.	1. £40,000 contribution towards landscaping and play equipment for the French's Avenue public open space This will be supplemented by a further £65,000 to be made available from the new Trico Section 106 agreement	The Council is expecting to assume responsibility for the open space in spring later this year
		TOTAL	£565,000	

ii) that the Chairman and Town Clerk be authorised to negotiate final approval for preferred schemes with South Bedfordshire District Council.

Action: Town Clerk

30 DEVELOPMENT OF LAND AT PEPPERCORN PARK AND FRENCHS AVENUE

Members received an updated report on the developments regarding proposals to redevelop land in and around Peppercorn Park and were asked to seek approval for officers to continue to develop proposals further.

RESOLVED: that officers continue to develop proposals for the development of land in and around Peppercorn Park in line with the details set out below.

The current proposal for the development of the scheme is to create an enclosed “football hub” configured on land currently occupied by Brewers Hill School playing fields, Peppercorn Park and Dunstable Town Football Club. The detail of the proposal is listed below:

- To build a third generation all weather football pitch with associated flood lighting.
- To build a new dual use community building and changing facilities serving both the existing grass flood light pitch and all weather pitch.
- To create two adult grass pitches.
- To create two junior football pitches, of which one is likely to be an all weather surface allowing netball, junior hockey and other activities (a Multi Use Games Area –MUGA).
- To create two grass pitches for mini soccer under 9’s and 7’s respectively.
- The retention and reallocation of the BMX track.
- Upgrading of the spectator stand at Creasey Park.
- The creation of high standard open space land along French’s Avenue

Action: Town Clerk

31 DRAFT BUDGET 2008/2009

The Committee considered the draft budget for 2008/2009 and the proposed scale of fees and charges.

RESOLVED: that the draft budget be approved and forwarded to Finance and General Purposes Committee, with a recommendation to amend the croquet pitch hire charge from £9.50 per hour to £3.00 per hour (minimum 3 hour booking).

Action: Town Clerk