

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GROUNDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
COMMITTEE**

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

ON MONDAY 15 JANUARY 2018

Present: Councillors Gloria Martin (Town Mayor), John Kane (Deputy Town Mayor), Liz Jones (Chairman), Sid Abbott (Vice-Chairman), Lisa Bird, Jeannette Freeman, Peter Hollick, Ann Sparrow and Nigel Warren

In Attendance: Councillor Pat Staples; David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), John Crawley (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services), Kelley Hallam (Office Administrator) and James Slack (Sports and Leisure Facilities Manager)

Apologies: None

Public: Three

14 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 13 November 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

15 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

16 PLANS-SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meetings of Plans Sub-Committee held on 14 November, 5 December 2017 and 2 January 2018 be received.

17 PRESENTATION FROM HOUGHTON REGIS DEVELOPMENT CONSORTIUM

The Committee received a presentation from representatives of the Houghton Regis Development Consortium giving an update on the Houghton Regis North Site 1 (HRN1) development and the Site Wide Masterplan.

The committee were reminded that the development would be a mix of uses including 5,150 homes, 3 primary schools, 1 high school and 1.25 million sqm of industrial space. The industrial space had already been bought by Lidl who planned to have it in use by 2020 and would create 1,000 jobs.

Public consultation on the HRN1 Site Wide Masterplan would be happening over the next couple of months after which it would be submitted to CBC's Planning Department.

Members gave their views and asked a number of questions regarding HRN1. Two members were formally invited to attend one of the official consultation dates to represent the Town Council.

18 BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Committee considered the comprehensive report of the Town Clerk and Chief Executive which provided detailed proposals for the Grounds and Environmental Services budget for 2018/19 and proposed fees and charges.

Part of the budget included a proposal to change staffing arrangements for CPCFC and the Splashside Café. Currently both facilities predominately used a workforce of casual staff but this arrangement had been problematic last summer and it was thought that now was the right time to establish permanent posts/hours.

The Committee received a summary of changes to savings, increased income targets and growth and it was noted that excluding staff costs the overall budget for Grounds and Environmental Services proposed a decrease of £4,825.

RESOLVED: i) that the Committee approve the draft Grounds and Environmental Services 2018/19 budget as presented, with no amendments or recommendations to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

ii) that the Committee recommend to the Finance and General Purposes Committee the establishment of permanent staffing posts at Creasey Park Community Football Centre and the Splashside Café as set out in the accompanying report.

19 PRIORY GARDENS MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services presented a comprehensive report that sought approval for the adoption of the 6-year action plan for Priory Gardens to support the application for Green Flag Status.

Priory Gardens first achieved Green Flag status in 2011 supported by a 5-year management plan. A new management plan was now required to support the application for continued Green Flag status, which must be in place before the Green Flag judging due later this year.

Members received the detailed action plan that was set out according to the Green Flag criteria and considered the objectives, actions and aspirations contained within it.

RESOLVED: that the 6-year action plan for Priory Gardens be adopted.

20 TOWN RANGER SERVICES UPDATE

The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services presented a comprehensive report that updated Members on the work of the Town Ranger and Town Centre Ranger services.

The Committee were updated on the wide range of services that the Rangers had provided as well as details on partnership working and community projects they had engaged with.

The Ranger Services had been well received by local residents and businesses and the decision to provide a dedicated town centre resource had had a very positive impact on the appearance of the town centre.

21 CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE

The Sports and Leisure Facilities Manager presented a detailed report on recent operations at the Centre including pitch and function hire and marketing.

Due to the bad weather in December, matches had to be cancelled on both the main and youth pitches for several days and the centre also closed. This would have a detrimental effect on income figures for December.

CBC had approved a list of equipment that fell under lifecycle replacement and had therefore agreed to fund £3,513 of new equipment that was their responsibility to replace.

The Committee received the profiled income and expenditure report as at the end of November 2017.

Members were informed that CBC's Adult Social Care department were hiring the Splashside Café once a week to open as a café to the general public. The café would be staffed by adults with learning disabilities with the aim of providing them with a range of vocational skills and to feel part of the local community.

Members raised concerns regarding the car park at Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground. It was felt that this was being abused by staff at the local doctor's surgery and school and complaints had been received by the public. It was requested that this be looked at by officers and deterrents be put in place before the re-opening of the Splash Park.

22 RECREATION GROUNDS, TOWN CENTRE GARDENS, CEMETERY AND ALLOTMENTS

The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services presented a detailed information report covering all areas of the Council's grounds maintenance responsibilities.

a) Recreation Grounds

The electricity supply to the lighting at Grove Skate Park was cut off during the demolition work of the Leisure Centre redevelopment. Officers had been working closely with CBC officers to reconnect the supply. The matter had not been straight forward but were advising that the matter was to be rectified within the coming months.

Central Bedfordshire Council had secured £184,000 Section 106 Community Facilities contribution from the Central Bedfordshire College housing development and had asked the Town Council to identify a suitable community project that met the Section 106 criteria. Officers suggested the creation of an adventure style play area

at Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground. CBC officers had welcomed the suggestion. Members were asked their views and to consider whether the Town Council should apply for the funding.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council apply for the £184,000 Section 106 contribution to create an adventure style play area at Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground.

b) Town Centre Area

The Friends of Priory House and Gardens would be launching a crowd funding campaign within the next couple of months to raise funds for the Dunstable War Memorial refurbishment.

c) Town Ranger Service

The Town Ranger activity had been discussed in full in an earlier report.

d) Dunstable Cemetery

Members received the burial figures for December 2017 and January 2018 to date along with the profiled income and expenditure figures as at the end of November 2017.

e) Allotments

There were currently 36 people on the waiting list which was comparable to figures reported to the Committee in November 2017. Members received the detail of the waiting list.

23 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

CBC Development Management Committee:
Councillor Jones had nothing to report.