

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 11 JANUARY 2021

Present: Councillors Peter Hollick (Town Mayor), Gloria Martin (Deputy Town Mayor), Liz Jones (Chairman), Lisa Bird (Vice-Chairman), Matthew Brennan, Greg George, Pamela Ghent, Kenson Gurney, and Johnson Tamara

In Attendance: Councillor Gladys Sanders with David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), John Crawley (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services), Mary Dobbs (Cemetery Manager), Ian Reed (Democratic Services Manager) and Ian Swinnerton (Grounds Operations Manager) and James Slack (Sports and Leisure Facilities Manager)

Apology: Councillor Alan Corkhill

Public: None

10. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 9 November 2020 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman at the earliest opportunity.

11. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

12. PLANS-SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meetings of Plans Sub-Committee held on 24 November and 15 December 2020 be received.

13. CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE AND SPLASH PARK UPDATE

The Sports and Leisure Facilities Manager presented the report that had been circulated to the Committee before Christmas. The continuing Covid-19 lockdown had resulted in a severe loss of trading. The Town Council would be making a claim through Central Bedfordshire Council to Sports England for losses due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

The additional ATP was very popular and with most times already booked had been launched. However, normal operations had had to cease although some income had been taken by a local school hiring it for hockey. Also, the grass pitches had closed down.

The Brewers Hill Road car park had been commissioned to act as a Covid-19 Track and Trace Centre.

It was further reported that during the lockdown a revised CCTV system would be installed increasing camera provision from 11 to 23.

In reply to Members questions it was emphasised that it was important, in the circumstances, to reduce expenditure at the centre and staff were being furloughed and freezers and refrigerators were being switched off.

It was also understood that the two main clubs using the centre were in a position where they would be able to continue playing once the lockdown was over.

14. CEMETERY, ALLOTMENTS, RECREATION GROUNDS, TOWN CENTRE GARDENS AND RANGER SERVICE INFORMATION AND UPDATE REPORT

The Cemetery Manager and Grounds Operations Manager presented a detailed information report covering all areas of the Council's grounds maintenance responsibilities.

a) Dunstable Cemetery

Members received the burial figures for November to December 2020 along with the profiled income and expenditure figures as at the end of November 2020. These indicated a positive variance of £19,597.

b) Allotments

Members were advised that the waiting list was growing significantly; there were 278 people on the waiting list.

c) Recreation Grounds

Since the last report there had been no incidents of vandalism to play equipment. The new electric van was performing well since its delivery in November 2020.

d) Town Centre Area

All the autumn and spring bedding plants had been planted including 2,000 flowering bulbs. The contract for the supply of bedding plants (2021-23) was tendered during December. Only one tender was received from the existing supplier. Following an assessment of unit costs the order had been placed for the 2021 supply of plants.

e) Dunstable in Bloom

Dunstable was to represent the Anglia region in the 2020 Britain in Bloom that would now take place in 2022. The Committee was informed Dunstable in Bloom was meeting regularly on a monthly basis.

Members were further advised that the new post of Parks and Green Space Development Officer had been appointed and would commence work on 8 February 2021. One of the post holder's tasks would be to liaise with Dunstable in Bloom on future tree planting and report to Members on tree planting on Council land.

f) **Town Ranger Service**

The Rangers would be emptying litter and dog bins.

Members commented on the role of Covid-19 Marshals operating in the Town provided by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC). The Town Clerk and Chief Executive advised the meeting that CBC had not updated him on the role of the Marshals. Members would receive an update when he had received any new information.

15. **BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2021/22**

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive presented the Budget Proposals for 2021/22. He explained that this had not changed significantly since the draft budget had been presented to Members and if the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee budget, as presented in the report, was adopted, it could be accommodated within the anticipated 0.5% per cent increase in council tax the Council would be requesting in the 2021/22 Precept request.

RECOMMENDED: The Committee recommend the draft Grounds and Environmental Services budget as presented with no amendments or further recommendations to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

16. **REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

CBC Development Management Committee:

Councillor Liz Jones reported that Councillor Sid Abbott would be representing the Town Council about the former Linpac site. Members recognised the work undertaken by Councillor John Gurney and felt this was an example where the town councillors could work together across political boundaries for the benefit of residents.

The meeting closed at 19.42.