

DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL

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

HELD ON MONDAY 14 JUNE 2021

Present: Councillors Gloria Martin (Town Mayor), Liz Jones (Deputy Town Mayor), Lisa Bird (Chairman), Greg George (Vice-Chairman), Matt Brennan, Pam Ghent, and Johnson Tamara

Apologies: Gladys Sanders and Philip Crawley

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

Public: None

93 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 8 March 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

94 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no specific declarations of interest.

95 PLANS-SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meetings of Plans Sub-Committee held on 16 and 30 March, 20 April, 11 May and 1 June 2021 be received.

**96 CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE AND BENNETT'S SPLASH
PARK UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee considered a report that covered the performance of the Creasey Park Community Football Centre and Bennett's Splash Park. In relation to the artificial pitches it was noted that since 29 March the pitches had been fully open and the bookings were doing well. The new ATP2 was awaiting international Hockey Federation accreditation. The addition of hockey provided an opportunity for increased daytime usage and would be marketed to schools and colleges. The main pitch was closed for summer reinstatement and would open again on Saturday 17 July. In line with Football Association guidance the youth football season had been extended to end of June.

Up to 17 May the Centre followed Government and FA restrictions with no spectators attending which badly affected secondary spend opportunities. In the coming year the bar and catering income target was challenging. In the first 6 weeks of the year bar and catering income was 66% down on the same period last year.

It was noted that young persons had gained access to both ATP pitches causing damage to perimeter fences.

In relation to Bennett's Splash it was planned to open the facility on 21 June and it was proposed to extend the season by a week and close on Sunday 12 September.

97 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 noted that the cemetery had retained silver status for the Charter for the Bereaved again in 2021 for the seventh consecutive year. The Committee also noted that new shrub and herbaceous borders had been planted in the cemetery on two of the roundabouts.

Action - the Cemetery ground staffed be thanked for undertaking the work to such a high standard.

b) Allotments

Members were advised that the waiting list was growing significantly; there were 340 people on the waiting list. The Committee received information on how plots were inspected and what action was taken when plot holders received notice to cultivate letters.

c) Recreation Grounds

Since the last report, there had been two incidents of vandalism to play equipment. One at Mentmore Recreation Ground, where the litter bin had been pulled out of the ground and the other was at Brewers Hill Recreation Ground where wet pour safer surfacing had been damaged. The Committee received information on the use of the remote-control mower that was used on high banks in the BMX track area. The machine was also good for cutting areas of long grass at the end of the season.

The winter and spring bedding plants had been removed to allow for the preparation of the beds for the summer plants. It was also noted that the fencing at Luton Road Recreation Ground at the rear of properties on Liscomb Road had been completed.

d) Town Centre Area

A discussion took place about anti-social behaviour in the skateboard park and whether signage would address the problem. Also, some of the floral displays had been changed with traditional wire hanging baskets being trialled at Priory House, Grove House and Middle Row.

e) Dunstable in Bloom

Dunstable was entering 3 of the categories in the Britain in Bloom Virtual Community Awards. There were also 13 projects and initiatives being entered in all the categories of the Anglia in Bloom virtual competition. The Committee was informed Dunstable in Bloom was meeting regularly, on a monthly basis.

Members were advised that the Parks and Green Space Development Officer is liaising with Dunstable in Bloom on a number of projects and initiatives.

f) Town Ranger Service

The Rangers had completed the jet washing of paved areas in the Town Centre. The cleaning of litter bins and repairs to benches had recently been carried out.

98 PURCHASE OF REPLACEMENT TRACTOR

Members received a report detailing the proposed replacement of a grounds maintenance tractor. The tractor was severely vandalised in March 2021 and had been written off by the insurers loss adjuster, as it was beyond economical repair. The insurers had offered a verbal settlement figure of £6,500. The Committee noted the balance of funding available within the vehicle reserve to fund the proposed replacement.

RESOLVED: that the Committee recommends to Finance and General Purposes Committee the release of up to £34,000 from the earmarked vehicle reserve to purchase a new replacement tractor as detailed in this report.

99 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

CBC Development Management Committee:
Members had no updates.

The meeting closed at 19.57