

**DUNSTABLE TOWN COUNCIL**

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

**HELD ON MONDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2021**

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

Apologies: Councillors Alan Cornhill and Gladys Sanders

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

Public: None

**171. MINUTES**

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

**172. SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no specific declarations of interest.

**173. PLANS-SUB COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meetings of Plans Sub-Committee held on 14 September, 5 and 26 October be received.

**174. 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. It was reported that, both ATPs were in high demand and block bookings from September had ensured high use for each month and higher purchase volume than expected. September's income was an improvement by 9% on 2019/20 and the first two weeks in October achieved an average improvement of 31%.

Operationally, the Brewers Hill Road additional car park was still being used as an NHS Covid Testing Centre and would be in place until the end of March 2022. The parking problems that would be caused by the lack of additional car parking spaces would be mitigated by Central Bedfordshire Council supplying marshals to assist in parking operations, and CPCFC users had access to the CBC Watling House car park adjacent to the Fire Station.

In relation to Bennett's Splash and the Splashside Café, it had been de-commissioned for the winter. The Splash Park budget forecast was for a year end deficit of £8,987. On behalf of the Committee the Chairman thanked James Slack and his staff for their work since the lock down.

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

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

**a) Dunstable Cemetery**

Members noted that 312 burials had taken place in the lawn section of the cemetery extension since February 2016. Members asked questions about the hedge trimming of Cemetery Lane, capacity issues for the existing cemetery and the future provision of a new site for a cemetery. Members were advised that land for future burial provision was currently being investigated. The Committee welcomed the news that the Cemetery had retained its Green Flag status for the fourth year.

**b) Allotments**

Members were advised that the waiting list continued to grow; there were 361 people on the waiting list; 228 were residents and 133 non-residents.

**c) Recreation Grounds**

It was reported that the grass cutting season had ended and some hedge cutting was still going ahead. The grounds staff regularly overmarked and prepared football pitches for play. Since the last report, there had been no acts of vandalism to play equipment. The Council had received provisional approval from the Woodland Trust for the planting of trees at Mentmore Recreation Ground. Officers had also received a positive response on the application submitted to CBC's Tree Grant Fund.

Members raised the following issues:

- An identified need to provide play equipment in play areas that addressed the play needs of toddler and very young children
- A problem with the maintenance of the safety surfaces at Frenches Avenue Play Area
- The need to encourage the creation of wildflower meadows and tree planting on verges
- The use of herbicides for weed control, noting that weeds on some sites are already treated with hot water and steam and suggesting that officers explore the possibility of reducing the use of herbicides further, ahead of any future ban, as part of the Environment and Sustainability working group initiatives.

**d) Town Centre Area**

The floral displays throughout the town had been removed following a good summer display. Members commented on the displays noting that they improved the look of the town. It was further noted that the Council was now maintaining town centre flowerbeds and large planters installed during Phase1 of the High Street improvement works. The Committee welcomed the news that the Council had retained its Green Flag status for both Priory and Grove House Gardens and Priory Gardens had also retained its Green Heritage status.

The thanks of the Committee were to be passed on to the grounds maintenance staff.

**e) Dunstable in Bloom**

It was reported that Dunstable in Bloom had entered 3 projects into the RHS Britain in Bloom Community Awards and the Incredible Edible project in Katherine Drive was assessed by the RHS judges to be 'Outstanding' in the Nourishing Your Community Award category. The projects at Weatherfield Academy and the sustainable planting in the High Street had received Certificates of Achievement. The Parks and Green Space Development Officer had been working with the In Bloom volunteers to refresh the planters and baskets provided to high street shops this summer with winter and flowering plants. Members also noted the work that the Council was supporting at the The Square Methodist Church to improve and relandscape the gardens.

**f) Town Ranger Service**

The Rangers continued to provide a reactive and responsive service across the town.

**176. REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS**

CBC Development Management Committee:  
Members had no updates.

**The meeting closed at 19 40**