

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 14 JANUARY 2019

Present: Councillors John Kane (Town Mayor), Nigel Warren (Deputy Town Mayor), Lisa Bird (Vice-Chairman) (in the Chair), Sid Abbott, Philip Crawley, Peter Hollick, Gloria Martin, Gladys Sanders, Ann Sparrow and Johnson Tamara

In Attendance: David Ashlee (Town Clerk and Chief Executive), John Crawley (Head of Grounds and Environmental Services), Mary Dobbs (Cemetery Manager), Kelley Hallam (Office Administrator), James Slack (Sports and Leisure Facilities Manager) and Ian Swinnerton (Grounds Operations Manager)

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Liz Jones (Chairman) and Jeannette Freeman

Public: One

10 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of Grounds and Environmental Services Committee held on 12 November 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

11 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor	Interest	Agenda Item
Councillor Ann Sparrow	Non-Pecuniary interest – Member of Dunstable Croquet Club and Dunstable in Bloom	Items 5 & 7

12 PLANS-SUB COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meetings of Plans Sub-Committee held on 6 November, 27 November and 18 December 2018 be received.

13 BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2019/20

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 2019/20 and proposed fees and charges.

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 an increase of £12,284.

Members noted that the Council were still waiting on the outcome of a tender submitted to Central Bedfordshire College for contract work.

Cllr Sparrow requested that the record show that she will oppose the increase to the charges for the croquet hire at the meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee as the croquet lawn is not up to standard.

RESOLVED: that the Committee approve the draft Grounds and Environmental Services 2019/20 budget as presented, with no amendments or recommendations to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

14 CREASEY PARK COMMUNITY FOOTBALL CENTRE AND SPLASH PARK

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

Creasey Park had the largest attendance of the season with 236 spectators on Boxing Day when the two key partner clubs, AFC Dunstable and Dunstable Town FC, played each other.

The profiled income and expenditure report showed a deficit as at the end of November. Some of this was due to ATP block bookings being unexpectedly cancelled and an annual coffee machine rental payment paid in full rather than spread quarterly across the year.

The Toddler Group were still getting good numbers attending and had to turn people away at last week's meeting as they were at capacity.

The Committee received a set of graphs that showed the CO2 monthly usage, gas consumption and annual CO2 usage against annual income over the last 4 years. Councillor Abbott commended the Sports and Leisure Facilities Manager on reaching the energy usage targets.

Members were informed that the CBC vulnerable adult group had agreed to hire out the Splashside Café again this year, in the lead up to the Splash Park re-opening.

15 RECREATION GROUNDS, TOWN CENTRE GARDENS, CEMETERY AND ALLOTMENTS

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

a) Recreation Grounds

The Council had appointed Playground Supplies Ltd to design and install the new adventure play area at Bennett Memorial Recreation Ground. The works were scheduled to commence during week commencing 25 February.

Members of the panel who had chosen the playground supplier advised that, whilst they had hoped that the new play equipment could be wheelchair friendly, this type

of play area was not suitable for specific wheelchair friendly equipment. They therefore requested that the Committee agree, as a priority, to purchase specialist wheelchair equipment for one of the town's other play areas as soon as funds become available.

RESOLVED: that specialist play equipment for wheelchair users be purchased for one of the other play areas in the town when funds become available.

Members requested that an update on the security improvements works at various recreation sites throughout the town be given at the next meeting of this Committee.

Action: Grounds Operations Manager

b) Town Centre Area

The grounds team had replaced the oak sleepers along the Physic garden in Priory Gardens. A plastic membrane had been placed both under and on the inside of the sleepers to help keep the soil away from the wood and deter deterioration of the oak sleepers.

Dunstable in Bloom had organised a tree-planting event at Olma Road Recreation Ground during National Tree Week in November. Pupils from All Saints and Weatherfield Academies also attended to help plant the seven heritage fruit trees.

c) Town Ranger Service

The new Assistant Ranger started on 3 December and was settling in well. The Rangers were now fully responsible for the opening, closing and cleaning of Ashton Square toilets and were able to provide a full day service in the town centre every Saturday and also on Sunday mornings.

d) Dunstable Cemetery

Members received the burial figures for November 2018 to January 2019 along with the profiled income and expenditure figures as at the end of November 2018. There was a positive variance of £36,894.

Officers were preparing to submit an application to retain the Green Flag status for the cemetery.

The research on notable graves would soon be collated and sent to a designer to produce the interpretation panels.

e) Allotments

There were currently 47 people on the waiting list, which was comparable to figures reported to the Committee in November 2018. Members received the detail of the waiting list.

Annual rent invoices for 2019 had been sent out to all tenants. This process often resulted in tenants relinquishing their tenancies. Vacated plots would be re-let to those on the waiting list.

16 REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

CBC Development Management Committee:
No report received.