

**REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE OF BUNTINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL
HELD REMOTELY VIA ZOOM ON 4TH MARCH 2021 AT 7.00PM.**

Membership: Councillors Mrs T. Bonner (Committee Chairman), S. Bull (Deputy Committee Chairman), M.Furness, B. Lemay, D. Wallace, G. Waite (Town Mayor) & S.Bowman (Deputy Town Mayor).

Present: Cllrs B. Lemay, D. Wallace, M.Furness, S.Bull, Mrs T.Bonner and G.Waite.

Officer in attendance J. Jones (Town Clerk) A. Georgiou (Admin Officer)

Also Present: 2 members of the Public.

280. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies from Councillor Bowman.

281. TO RECEIVE MEMBER'S DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

S.Bull - Norfolk Road Playing Field.

282. TO RECEIVE A REPORT AND UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN.

The Chairman stated that she had nothing to report.

283. TO APPROVE AS A TRUE RECORD AND AUTHORISE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 4TH FEBRUARY 2021.

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That the minutes are a true record and the Chairman was authorised to sign them.

284. NORFOLK ROAD - TO DISCUSS ISSUES RELATING TO PAVILION, SKATE RAMPS AND ALL OTHER ISSUES RELATING TO NORFOLK ROAD PLAYING FIELD.

Councillor Waite reported that there were lots of suggestions from the S106 Working Party. The Cricket Club has sent some information about replacing the cricket nets. The existing nets are in a bad condition and a new set of roll out nets is needed. If this is agreed from S106 contributions, it could take some time and won't be available before the cricket season starts.

The Clerk explained that the only way the Council could fund the nets at this time is to agree a new Homes Bonus grant which may or may not be reimbursed via S106 monies. This would have to be a recommendation to Full Council and it has to be understood that it may not be possible to fund with S106.

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

RECOMMENDED

That a grant of £ 8450+ VAT is made to the Cricket Club for a fold away double net system from New Homes Bonus with a view to recouping the funds from S106 monies if possible.

1 member of the public left the meeting.

Councillor Bull stated that he was delighted to see the playground open.

285. SWCC - TO DISCUSS ISSUES RELATING TO THE SETH WARD COMMUNITY CENTRE GROUNDS, PITCHES AND PLAYGROUNDS.

Councillor Wallace referred to a damaged bench on the land between the centre and the playground. It was agreed to remove this bench.

The Clerk was asked to chase up the contractor for the start date for pitch maintenance.

Alex referred to quotes received for the reinstatement of the grass mound in the playgrounds.

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

RESOLVED

That the quotation in the sum of £562 plus VAT to supply and lay grass matting on the mound is accepted.

The Clerk referred to the vandalised trampoline in the playground. Alex has contacted Kompan to make the repairs. It was noted that the equipment must be taped off to prevent use until the repairs are undertaken.

286. HARE STREET ROAD PLAYING FIELD - TO DISCUSS ISSUES RELATING TO FIELD, PLAYGROUND AND WILDLIFE AREA.

Councillor Lemay reported that Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust have agreed to look at the wildlife area and make recommendations.

287. LAYSTON COURT GARDENS - TO DISCUSS ANY ISSUES RELATING TO LAYSTON COURT GARDENS.

It was noted that there is graffiti on the gazebo. This has been a problem around the town recently and the Police have been asked to attempt to identify the perpetrators. Councillor Wallace reported that he and the Clerk had visited the gardens to look at the compost area clearance. It had been agreed with the contractor that there was far too much compost to clear and it would be best to clear one area and leave the compost piled around the perimeter. It had been further agreed that residents and allotment holders would be invited to help themselves to compost, an initial day for this would be Sunday. When the area had been tidied as much as possible we would need to look at building bays to manage the composting.

288. BOVIS AMENITY LAND - TO DISCUSS ISSUES RELATING TO THE BOVIS AMENITY LAND.

Noted that the tree work has now been undertaken and completed.

289. FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR GARDEN MAINTENANCE - TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE EMPLOYMENT OF GARDENER/HANDYMAN.

Councillor Wallace stated that we should seriously look at employing someone, he felt that the draft job description was a little optimistic and we have to concentrate on the core functions.

Councillor Waite stated that the list he had compiled was what somebody could do.

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

RECOMENDED

That this Council employs a Gardener/Handyman

290. TO HIGHLIGHT ISSUES OF CONCERN AROUND THE TOWN INCLUDING MAINTENANCE OF COUNCIL OWNED NOTICEBOARDS AROUND THE TOWN.

Councillor Wallace reported that the noticeboards are in need of attention. It was agreed that this is something the new handyman could undertake during the winter months.

The Chairman referred to a post and rail fence that has been installed in Aspenden and asked why this could not be done on Chapel End. There had originally been a fence there which had rotted away over the years.

291. REPORT ON CHURCHYARD AND NEW CEMETERY.

Councillor Waite reported that plot numbers had been delivered that day and the gaps through to the churchyard had been created. The fly tipping had been cleared on The Causeway but it had been suggested that a CCTV camera is installed in the area, signs would have to be displayed for this.

292. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM MEMBERS OF THE RIVER RIB RESTORATION GROUP.

Councillor Lemay reported that everyone would have received a copy of the draft Five Rivers report. Sara Perry from HMWT is back at work and working on the draft plan, she has given the report to the Environment Agency for comment. These comments will be incorporated when we go for permission. The final design plan will be available at the end of March. Discussions have started with land owners. A meeting has been held with FORQ who have made it clear that all they do is raise awareness and that FORQ's name is not to be used on this project.

Councillor Waite reported Derek Guy and David Edwards are both still on board. All of the water companies have funds, it had been mentioned that Dandara would be interested in seeing the plan for their part of the river, they have a landscape plan which doesn't include the river bed. We are also looking at the Co-op for funds.

293. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE S106 OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES WORKING PARTY.

Councillor Wallace reported that Councillor Bowman is chairing this group. We are at the stage where we need to move forward, one of the holdups is the contingency for a 3G/4G facility in the town. Freman College are already going down this route with the Football Foundation. The facility will be available for community use but the project has been held up. The group have tried to be as inclusive as possible and quotes have been obtained to re-vamp the Tennis Courts at Freman College, which would also accommodate Netball. We are looking at outdoor gyms, a running track, a BMX pump track and the Committee has already discussed the cricket nets. A number of sites are under consideration and we have met with a contractor who is of the opinion that a facility with other facilities nearby is better than something isolated. One of things that has only just arisen is the area next to the car park at Norfolk Road which could be a prime site but arrangements would have to be made for the annual fair. There are short, medium and long term aspects of the project and it's hoped to have a report for Committee soon for recommendation to Council.

Councillor Waite added that he has spoken with the S106 Officer at EHDC. She is very enthusiastic and agreed that we can send her a spreadsheet with projects and costings and she will help with completion of the application form.

Councillor Waite further reported that we have written to the owner of a section of land adjacent to the A10 to ascertain whether it is available for purchase, should the need arise.

294. TO INVITE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE MEETING.

The member of the public indicated that she had been interested to listen to the discussion on the S106 Working Party.

Meeting closed 8.46pm.

Next scheduled meeting of the Amenities Committee Thursday 1st April 2021 via Zoom. 7pm.