

MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON

MONDAY 21st SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 7.00pm – REMOTELY VIA ZOOM

Present:

- Cllr. Leaman (Chair)
- Cllr. Bristow (Vice-Chair)
- Cllr. Alecock
- Cllr. Bloodworth
- Cllr. Busuttil
- Cllr. Power
- Cllr. Roman
- Cllr. Shipp
- Cllr. Sulman

In attendance: Mr M Knight (Town Manager). One member of the public.

Before the meeting started the Chair stated that item 6.2 would be taken immediately after the public participation at item 4 in order to fully discuss any proposals or requests from the member of the public.

1. APOLOGIES AND ACCEPTANCE FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Littlechild.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

Cllr. Alecock – West Suffolk District Council.
Cllr. Shipp – West Suffolk District Council.

Signed:

Date:

3. TO RECEIVE APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16th MARCH 2020 FROM THOSE MEMBERS PRESENT AT THE MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes with one change to the attendees list. Proposed by Cllr. Busuttil and seconded by Cllr. Bowman. All in favour.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The member of the public gave a short presentation regarding the Healing Waters project which aims to introduce people of all ages to outdoor swimming and safety issues. This involves more than twelve volunteers and lifeguards and has attracted more than fifty participants since starting last year. Due to Covid-19 concerns the next projects will hopefully begin on May or June of 2021 and the River Lark has been identified as a perfect place to run a similar event in the town.

6.2 To consider a request from the Healing Waters Project

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders at 7.06pm in order to let the member of the public speak and respond to questions for this item. All in favour.

Cllr. Shipp asked if this would be a one-off event or something more regular. It was reported that the event was part of a five-year project which started in 2019 and three events were planned in 2021, with a possible one in Mildenhall on the 7th May or the 13th June.

Cllr. Shipp expressed concern that the fishing season would begin on the 16th June and so if any date was being considered he would prefer the 7th May.

Cllr. Busuttil asked about the risk assessment and safety aspects of the event. The member of the public assured the members present that all events were adequately risk assessed and staffed with appropriately trained outdoor lifeguards.

Cllr. Alecock asks how the volunteer process was advertised and what being a volunteer entailed. This was reported as being a process where volunteers spoke regarding their experiences in the project and the benefits they got from it.

Cllr. Power asked how the events were advertised, these were reported as being via social media and local swimming clubs, local council channels could also be explored.

Cllr. Busuttil asked about the exact location of the event and this was reported as being a site about 50 meters down from the bridge which is on Town Council land.

It was then **RESOLVED** to allow the Healing Waters Project to run an event in the River Lark and Jubilee Field on the 7th May 2021, subject to Covid-19 restrictions. Proposed by Cllr. Shipp, seconded by Cllr. Roman, all in favour.

Standing orders were reinstated at 7.16pm where the member of the public left the meeting.

5. TO CONFIRM AND RECOMMEND TO THE FULL TOWN COUNCIL THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THIS COMMITTEE

It was **AGREED** to recommend the document to the Full Town Council with the following alterations. To remove reference to St. Peters Church and to include oversight of the Outdoor Play equipment. Proposed by Cllr. Power, seconded by Cllr. Bristow, all in favour.

It was also **NOTED** that the Town Manager should check the ownership of the Parish Pump which was believed to be owned by West Suffolk Council but partly maintained by the Town Council.

6. GENERAL MATTERS (Amenities)

6.1 Update from Town Manager regarding Action Sheet

The Action Sheet was **NOTED**.

6.3 To consider the appointment of a Tree Contractor for the Council

Cllr. Shipp reported that he was attempting to contact the Head of Service at West Suffolk Council in this regard and had given a 7-day deadline for a response. This will expire on Friday 25th September 2020. Attempts will then be made to contact the Director in order to improve the service. If this was not forthcoming then the situation will then be reassessed.

Cllr. Bowman stated that she believed that the contract should be persevered with and attempts should be made to improve the service the Town Council receives.

Cllr. Sulman stated that since the change in management of the Town Council it might be a good time to reassess the Tree Management Plan and Policy and for it to possibly be taken back in house in the future.

It was then **AGREED** that Cllr. Shipp should be given enough time to allow representatives from West Suffolk Council to respond to his contact and for the situation to be reassessed after a response has been forthcoming. If not response has been forthcoming by the next meeting of this committee or the Full Town Council then the

matter to be placed on the agenda for discussion at this point. Proposed by Cllr. Power, seconded by Cllr. Bristow, all in favour.

6.4 To receive and consider an update on the Speed Awareness Cameras

It was reported that Cllr. Shipp and the Town Manager had recently identified and photographed the three locations for the six posts to be installed, and these will be submitted to Suffolk County Council to assess suitability.

Cllr. Sulman asked whether these were the sites which had already been deemed suitable by the County Council and Cllr. Shipp reported on the changing requirements of the department overseeing the works, but that the sites had stayed largely the same.

It was then **AGREED** to receive a further report when the sites had been confirmed by the County Council and approval was needed for the payment of posts.

6.5 To receive an update regarding the Kingsway Closed Cemetery

Cllr. Sulman requested that the DDA compliance survey be conducted to assess the extent of the work which may be needed to make the area accessible to all. He further reported that should this matter be delegated to the Strategic Objective 2 working group that he would be interested in filling the empty set on this group with a specific interest in this item.

Cllr. Bristow voiced concerns that extensive work in this area would be very expensive.

Cllr. Sulman agreed that the total cost would be unknown as the total amount of work would be unknown also.

Cllr. Shipp agreed that this would be a long-term ambition to make the area DDA compliant and a safe natural environment. But that work needed to be done to established what exactly the purpose for our involvement as a Town Council would be and that the Strategic Objective 2 working group would be a good place for this.

Cllr. Roman stated that the area was of tremendous historic importance to the town but that any works would be expensive.

It was then **RESOLVED** to delegate the matter to the Strategic Objective 2 working group which will work on the detail of this project and report back with any recommendations. Proposed by Cllr. Power, seconded by Cllr. Alecock, all in favour.

6.6 To receive an update regarding allotment management

Cllr. Shipp declared an interest in this item as an allotment holder.

The report previously circulated by the Town Manager was discussed and it was **AGREED** that the management process was progressing well and should continue. Thanks were extended to the Town Manager for all his work in this regards.

6.7 To consider a request for a memorial bench by the river

The letter from the member of the public who wished to install a memorial bench for a family member on the river was discussed. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the request. Proposed by Cllr. Shipp, seconded by Cllr, Alecock, all in favour.

7. GENERAL MATTERS (Operations)

7.1 To consider a report on the oven in the Jubilee Centre

It was asked whether or not the Jubilee Centre advertised the use of the kitchen for use when hiring and it was confirmed that it was. It was also reported by the Town Manager than only one group a year used the oven, and that no groups were currently using it due to the Covid-19 situatuion. However, the Jubilee Centre could very well be used as an emergency centre in the future.

Cllr. Shipp proposed that three quotes be submitted to this committee in the November meeting for consideration. Seconded by Cllr. Busutil, all in favour and was so **RESOLVED**.

7.2 To receive a report on Council inspections

The report was received and it was **AGREED** to continue with the schedule of inspections with the addition of the outdoor play equipment and noticeboards when purchased. The Town Manager to also enquire into the ownership and maintenance responsibility of the Parish Pump and Market Cross.

7.3 To receive the Asset Management Action Plan

The report was **NOTED** with no comment at this stage.

7.4 To set the costs for the following Council run services

It was **RESOLVED** to freeze all hire charges for the 2021/2 financial year with the exception of subsequent visits from fairs and circuses which would be increased by £8.50 per visit to £250. Also that the half rate of the Lark Road Allotmnets be reduced to £20 from £25.50. All other rates to remain the same. Proposed by Cllr Sulman, seconded by Cllr. Alecock, all in favour.

7.5 To give consideration for the implementation of a Community and Commercial Rate for hire fees

It was **RESOLVED** not to consider a community rate at this time, and that any local group who were experiencing financial difficulties due to Covid-19 to be directed to Cllrs. Alecock, Neal and Shipp in their role as District Councillors who may be able to grant some of their Locality Budget for this purpose.

8. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

None.

9. TO SET THE DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

This was set for Monday 16th November 2020 at 7pm. Although this may be changed in order to facilitate the budget setting process.

The meeting then closed at 8.02pm.