



Yeovil Town Council

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The Meeting **Grounds and General Maintenance Committee**

The Time... **7.00pm**

The Date... **Monday 12 September 2016**

The Place... **Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil**

If you need this information in large print, Braille, audio or another language, please ring 01935 382424



Amanda Card
Town Clerk

07 September 2016

Please contact Sally Freemantle at the Town House for more information about this meeting

Grounds and General Maintenance Committee

To all Members of the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee:

Manny Roper (Chairman)

David Byrne

Philip Chandler

Joe Conway

Kaysar Hussain

Evie Potts-Jones

Wes Read

David Recardo (Ex-Officio)

Darren Shutler (Ex-Officio) (Vice Chairman)

Alan Smith

Vacancy (co-opted – non voting) (substitute – vacancy)

Equality Act 2010

The *general* public sector equality duty places an obligation on a wide range of public bodies (including town and parish councils) in the exercise of their functions to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The protected characteristics are:

Age	Race
Disability	Religion or Belief
Gender Reassignment	Sex
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Sexual Orientation
Pregnancy and Maternity	

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Members of the public exercising their right to speak during the time allocated for Public Comment who do not wish to be recorded or filmed, need to inform the Chairman who will instruct those taking a recording or filming to cease doing so while they speak.

PUBLIC COMMENT (15 Minutes)

A G E N D A

9/99. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO CONSIDER THE REASONS GIVEN

Council to receive apologies for absence and consider the reasons given. *LGA 1972 s85(1)*

9/100. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e). (NB this does not preclude any later declarations).

9/101. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings held on 11 July 2016.

9/102. PLAY AREA UPDATE REPORT

To consider a report by the Senior Play and Youth Facilities Officer (SSDC) attached at page 3 to 4.

9/103. KINGSTON VIEW PARK & PLAY AREA

To consider a verbal report by the Senior Play and Youth Facilities Officer (SSDC).

9/104. OPEN SPACES UPDATE REPORT

To consider a report by the Principal Horticultural Officer (SSDC) (to follow).

9/105. ALLOTMENT MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

To consider the Maintenance Schedule attached at page (circulated separately).

9/106. HOSEPIPES ON ALLOTMENTS

To consider the report by the Town Clerk attached at page 5.

9/107. ALLOTMENT RENT REVIEW

To consider the report by the Deputy Town Clerk attached at page 6 to 7.

9/108. FINANCIAL STATEMENT – JUNE/JULY 2016

To consider the Financial Statement for the period 1 June to 31 July 2016 attached at pages 8 to 13.

PUBLIC COMMENT (15 Minutes)

9/102. PLAY AREA UPDATE REPORT

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to update members of the Grounds and General Committee on the progress of Play Area and Youth Facilities work carried out on their behalf.

Recommendation(s)

Members note the report

Report

Play Area Repairs

To ensure the Town Council's play areas remain in a good condition for the general public to use, both responsive and planned maintenance is continually carried out by the Play & Youth Facilities Team.

The responsive repair work is usually carried out as soon as the fault is identified by the Play & Youth Facilities Ranger or within a few days and includes tasks such as cleaning up broken glass, tightening loose nuts and bolts and removing, replacing or immobilising damaged equipment.

In addition to clearing up broken glass from play areas this summer our ranger has carried out repairs to the fencing at St Johns Road & Howard Road Play Areas.

Planned Maintenance

The planned maintenance to play areas falls into three broad categories which are:

- Painting
- Impact Absorbing Surfacing
- Replacement Parts

In 2016/17 the following planned maintenance is being actioned:

Painting

Location	Planned Work	Current Status
Yew Tree Park & Milford Adventure Park	Painting skate ramps and youth shelters	Complete
Howard Road Play Area	Painting Play Equipment and Street Furniture	Order placed
Westfield Park	Painting all play equipment, street furniture and youth shelter	On hold
Turners Barn Lane Play Area	Painting Play Equipment and Street Furniture	On hold

Impact Absorbing Surfaces

Location	Planned Work	Current Status
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Yew Tree Park	Top up with 15 tons of play sand	Complete
Yew Tree Park	Install MATTA surfacing under high swing and basket swing	Complete
Kingston View Park	Install MATTA surfacing under toddler and junior swings	Quote Received
St Johns Road Play Area	Install MATTA surfacing under junior swing	Quote Received
Milford Adventure Park	Install MATTA surfacing under basket swing	Quote Received

Replacement Parts

Location	Planned Work	Current Status
Howard Road Park	Replace play panel parts	Work started
Howard Road Park	Swing Chains & Seats	Not yet started
Preston Park	Replace panel on multi-unit	Complete
Kingston View	Replace climbing frame platform decks	Parts in stock awaiting fitting
Milford Adventure Park	Replace nylon bushes on Rope End Swinger	Not yet started
Westfield Rec	Replace Flat Seat Swing wearing parts	Parts in stock awaiting fitting
Westland Road Park	Replace platform deck on climbing frame	Not yet started
Monksdale	Replace nylon bushes on Basket Swing	Complete

The maintenance work above forms our outline plan, however, depending on events through the year and budget availability there is the possibility that adjustments to the plan will occasionally need to be made.

Financial Implications

The budget for Play Areas in 2016/17 totals £14,500 and to date £7,320.16 has been invoiced on repairs. Therefore the budget remaining is 7,189.84.

*(Robert Parr, Senior Play and Youth Facilities Officer (SSDC)-
rob.parr@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462413)*

9/106. HOSEPIPES ON ALLOTMENTS

In May 2015, Yeovil Town Council were issued with contravention reports by Wessex Water, informing the Council that the use of hosepipes by tenants on allotments connected to the mains water supply breaches the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulation 1999. Any contravention of this regulation could result in sanctions not only for the individual involved but also for the Town Council as land owner.

These regulations play an important role in protecting public drinking water supply and of particular concern is the contamination by backflow where pollutants might be drawn into the local drinking water supply. Allotments are regarded as particular high risk and represent a serious potential health hazard, because of the likely presence of animal faeces and associated pathogens. The Grounds and General Maintenance Committee on 15th June 2016 agreed that the standpipe taps needed to be modified so that hosepipes cannot be attached to them in order to meet the requirements of the Regulation.

A letter has been written to Wessex Water for clarification and whether there is a feasible solution. Wessex Water still uphold that if the regulations are contravened, it would still be user and owner who are liable to prosecution and that still there is no mechanical device suitable to the backflow protection to mitigate against the risk. No solution has been provided to fully protect Yeovil Town Council against the risks associated with the use of hosepipes.

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED**:

- 1) To note the report and the risks associated with the use of hosepipes;
- 2) To note that the use of hosepipes continues to be disallowed on allotments.

(Amanda Card, Town Clerk – 01935 382424)

Introduction

The Council has agreed to review the allotment rents on an annual basis - the last allotment rent review was therefore carried out in 2015 when it was agreed that an increase of 4p be made to the 2014/15 annual rent charge of 30p/sq metre. All tenants were given twelve months' notice of the increased charge of 34p/sq metre, which takes effect from 1 January 2017. At that point, the average annual rent of an allotment plot will be £48.62, which equates to 93.5p per week.

Last year, the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee concurred with the view of the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee, who felt that such an increase was necessary to ensure the level of subsidy was reduced. This view was echoed by the Town Council who approved the proposal and further agreed that, as a matter of policy and having regard to the individual benefit of allotment plots to individual tenants, the Town Council seeks to recover an increasing proportion of the net cost of providing allotments from the tenants, thereby reducing the level of subsidy by council taxpayers. It was felt that taking such an approach was sustainable and was justified given the personal benefits that allotment tenants derived from their individual plots; the wider implications of subsidising the costs of providing allotments, and the ongoing help and support that the Town Council gave to the management, maintenance and improvement of these facilities.

Process

To assist with the annual budget-setting process, the Council has agreed, as a matter of policy, that the views of the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee on the annual review of allotment rents by the Town Council, be submitted to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee for consideration as part of that process. Any decision to amend these charges will need to be taken by the Town Council.

Water Charges

In 2014 it was agreed the mains water charges be recharged to each allotment site and collected from tenants on an annual basis. This approach has been successfully taken by a number of other local authorities. Not only is this approach more equitable - as the tenants on each site pay for the mains water that they have actually used - but it encourages tenants to adopt alternative more environmentally-friendly ways of collecting and recycling rainwater thereby reducing their dependency on mains water and saving money. Furthermore, it is in line with the Council's values of raising awareness of environmental issues, improving the quality of the environment and encouraging an environmentally friendly ethos.

The total cost of mains water for each site is divided by the number of plots – with consideration being given to the size of each plot. The tenants of those plots below 125 sq metres (standard half-plot) pay 50% of the charge to tenants of larger plots. Arrangements have been made for water meter readings to be taken towards the end of the summer growing season to ensure that the costs could be calculated and included in the invoices that are sent out in October each year.

It is suggested that this system of re-charging of the mains water on the allotment sites continues, to allow any rent increase to have a positive impact on the reduction of the subsidy of allotment rents made by local council tax payers.

Summary

To re-cap and put matters into perspective, the average annual rent of an allotment plot for 2017 will be £48.62 which equates to 93.5p per week.

- a) An increase of 1p in the above rate of 34p per square metre would result in an additional annual charge of £1.43, which equates to an extra 3p per week - making a new yearly total of £50.05 - equivalent to 96.3p per week.
- b) To reduce the subsidy for proposed allotment-related expenditure further an increase of 4p in the above rate of 34p per square metre is suggested, which would result in an additional annual charge of £5.72, which equates to an extra 11p per week - making a new yearly total of £54.34 – £1.05 per week.

Proposal (a) would generate additional income of £444, and proposal (b) would generate additional income of £1,776, which would, in line with Council policy, help to achieve a more equitable balance between the cost of allotments to individual tenants and local council tax payers by reducing the level of subsidy.

The Budget Setting Workshop will discuss the increase suggested by the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee and the matter will then be reported to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee and the Town Council, along with the views formed at the Budget Setting Workshop, as part of the budget process.

Recommendation

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to consider proposing one of the above suggested increases in allotment rent to the Budget Setting Workshop – recommendation will then be made to the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee and the Town Council.

(Sally Freemantle, Deputy Town Clerk – 01935 382424)