

YEOVIL TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the **GROUND AND GENERAL MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Town House, 19 Union Street, Yeovil on **Monday 4 March 2013**

(7:00pm – 8.50pm)

Present:

Alan Smith – Chairman
Martin Bailey
David Dollard
John Hann
Kaysar Hussain
Andrew Kendall
Wes Read
Manny Roper

Also Present:

Alan Tawse – Town Clerk
Chris Cooper – Street Scene Services Manager (SSDC)
James Divall – Community Health and Wellbeing Project Manager (SSDC)
Rob Parr – Senior Play and Youth Facilities Officer (SSDC)

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from members of the public.

8/156 MINUTES

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 January 2013, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8/157 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Peter Brock and Clive Davis.

8/158 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

8/159 CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items of correspondence.

8/160 **OUTDOOR GYM INITIATIVE – MILFORD PARK**

The Committee considered the report of the Community Health and Wellbeing Project Manger (agenda item 5 refers).

Reference was made, at the meeting, to the health benefits that would be provided free of charge to the public by the proposed initiative and the improved access that would be created across the Park by the related footpath project.

During the ensuing discussion, Members discussed the merits of the proposals. Whilst it was accepted that the initiative would deliver health benefits to the local community, it was emphasised that the equipment would need to be of a robust design and construction to ensure that it was resistant to acts of vandalism.

Attention was also drawn to the advantages of providing lighting along the proposed footpath, which would enable both the footpath and the proposed gym facilities to be used during the darker months of the year.

Whilst the funding for the proposed footpath would potentially be covered by existing funding, the cost of supplying and installing the outdoor gym equipment, which would be in the region of £20,000 to £30,000, had yet to be sourced. However, given the suggested location of the initiative and the clear health benefits, the Community Health and Wellbeing Project Manager felt that a number of external agencies and organisations would be interested in making a contribution towards the costs involved.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted;
- (2) that the further progression of the project be supported; and
- (3) that the Committee be kept informed of developments.

8/161 **PLAY AREA AUDIT**

The Committee considered the report of the Senior Play and Youth Facilities Officer (agenda item 6 refers).

Photographs of upgrades that had been carried out at a number of Town Council managed play areas in recent years were displayed at the meeting and the Senior Play and Youth Facilities Officer drew attention to the high standard and variety of play facilities that were provided.

He then explained how the play area audit had been conducted and referred to the various assessments that had been undertaken as part of the process.

Using the audit information and Officers' knowledge of play areas, a proposed schedule play area improvements for the next five years had been drawn up and was set out in the report.

During the ensuing discussion, Members expressed their support for the approach taken by the Town Council to match - fund agreed improvements to the play areas managed by the Town Council on a rolling programme basis.

Whilst the funding for the proposed play area improvements had yet to be identified, the Committee expressed their support for the work being undertaken in the suggested priority order.

On a related matter, the Senior Play and Youth Facilities Officer confirmed that a specific Section 106 allocation of £15,000 towards the improvement of the play area at Monks Dale would be used to fund the provision of a toddlers' climbing frame and various related infrastructure projects.

The Town Clerk indicated that, in line with the previous decision, the matter would be reported to the next meeting of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee which would be asked to consider how the Town Council's contribution towards the proposed improvements could be met.

RESOLVED

(1) that the matter be noted; and

(2) that the Senior Play and Youth Facilities Officer be requested to explore options for how matching contributions from the District Council towards the five year proposed capital investment plan could be funded and his findings be reported back to the Committee for further consideration along with the views of the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee on how the Town Council's share could be funded.

8/162 **PLAY AREAS**

The Senior Play and Youth Facilities Officer indicated that play area inspections and repairs had continued to be undertaken and that a new set of swings designed for older children had been installed at the Monks Dale play area thanks to contribution of £5,463 from the Yeovil Recreation Charity.

RESOLVED

that the matter be noted.

8/163 **PRESTON PARK PLAY AREA**

The Senior Play and Youth Facilities Officer displayed a revised plan of the proposed upgrade of the Preston Park play area, which had been agreed at a recent meeting of the Steering Group that was overseeing the project.

He indicated that, following a consultation exercise, a decision had been made to require persons exercising dogs within the Park to keep them on a lead – which had facilitated funding which would otherwise need to be spent on providing fencing to be used for play equipment instead.

Quotations had now been sought and would be bought back to the Steering Group and reported to the Grounds and General Maintenance Committee to enable the project to proceed.

During the ensuing discussion, Members expressed their support for the proposed design and the planned control measures in the park. It was pointed out that it was not a designated dog exercise area and that requiring dogs to be kept on a lead was a fair and reasonable arrangement.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted; and
- (2) that the proposed design and the above outlined dog access and control measures be supported.

8/164 **OPEN SPACES – REPRESENTATIVES’ REPORTS**

The Town Clerk indicated that the Landscape Officer had recently circulated a schedule of proposed meeting and inspection dates to the four representatives who had been appointed by the Committee to carry out inspections in their respected Wards, and that these representatives would have an opportunity to report on the outcome of these meetings/ inspections of future meetings of the Committee.

RESOLVED

that the matter be noted.

8/165 **REQUEST FOR DOG LITTER BIN**

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Town Clerk (agenda item 10 refers).

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the nature of the problem that had given rise to the request and it was suggested that further discussions take place with the Street Scene Services Manager about the best way of resolving the situation.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the matter be noted;
- (2) that the nature of the problem be drawn to the attention of the Street Scene Services Manager and he be requested to contact the complainant to identify an effective way of remedying the situation;
- (3) that should it be necessary to provide an additional dog waste bin in the area, consideration to be given to the possible of reallocating an existing bin from an appropriate area; and
- (4) that should this not be possible and there is sufficient capacity to collect from an additional bin, approval be given to the purchase of a new bin and the costs involved be met from the suggested sources.

8/166 **ALLOTMENT TENANT WORKING GROUP MEETING MINUTES**

The Committee considered the minutes of the Working Group meeting held on 11 February 2013.

The Town Clerk indicated that arrangements had been made for monthly reports on plot availability and waiting lists for each allotment site to be circulated to all tenant representatives.

RESOLVED

that the matter be noted.

8/167 **FINANCIAL STATEMENT – DECEMBER 2012/ JANUARY 2013**

The Committee considered the Financial Statement for the period 1 December 2012 to 31 January 2013 (agenda item 12 refers).

RESOLVED

that the Financial Statement be noted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from members of the public.

Chairman

AT/LJ
11/3/13