



AMENITIES & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Amenities & Leisure Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, Reading on Wednesday, 6th November 2019 which commenced at 7.45pm.

Present

Chair – Councillor A Newton

Councillors A Bassett, G Bhangra, N Brock, D Hare, D Ireland, A Long, S Matthews and K Yabsley.

In attendance: Jo Friend (Town Clerk), Stewart Walton (Facilities Manager), Grahame Hawker (Senior Park Ranger), Ashley Prior (Park Ranger), Jess Friend (Senior Operations Support Officer) and Councillor C Jones.

The first twenty minutes of the meeting were set aside for members of the public to pose questions to the Council. There were no members of the public present.

43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Eastwell and D Ireland.

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

45. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2019 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

46. ESTIMATES

46.1 Cemetery Extension

The Facilities Manager provided an update on the cemetery extension project noting that the Tier 2 Assessment and the Environment Agency Review had been completed and no particular issues had been raised. The advice of the Cemetery Development Service is for the Town Council to proceed in applying for planning consent. The cemetery extension should provide burial space for approximately a further twenty years. The Facilities Manager requested that the Committee consider making an increased provision for the cemetery extension project, which is estimated to cost up to £100k. The Town Clerk confirmed that Wokingham Borough Council had been approached and asked if any CIL monies would be available for this project but the answer was a negative. After consideration the Committee agreed to recommend that £70k be allocated in the Draft Capital Budget for the cemetery extension project. This would be in addition to the £25k already ear marked for this purpose.

46.2 Maiden Place Community Centre – Air Conditioning

The Facilities Manager requested that the current year's air conditioning upgrade budget be used to install a self-contained unit in the Function Room and the upgrade works to the existing system in the Main Hall be budgeted for in the 2020/21 financial year.

46.3 Recommendations for the 2020/21 Draft Capital Budget

The Facilities Manager provided an update on the progress of project and improvement works budgeted for in the 2019/20 financial year and projects to be carried forward to the 2020/21 financial year. After discussion and consideration, it was

RECOMMENDED that provision be made in the 2020/21 Draft Capital Budget for the following:

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| Maiden Place Community Centre | - Upgrade of existing air conditioning system. |
| Silverdale | - Refurbishment of flat roof
- Replacement of exterior cladding
- Upgrade of lighting/ceilings |
| Maiden Erlegh Lake Nature Reserve | - Pathway improvements (rolling programme) |
| Sol Joel Park | - Earmark reserves toward upper floor (£25k) |
| Laurel Park Pavilion | - Mains water-fed shower/toilet |
| Cemetery | - Cemetery extension (£70k) |
| Environmental Improvements | - Environmental improvement works including wildflower beds and meadows (£10k) |

47. **FEES & CHARGES REVIEW**

47.1 Hall Hire Charges

RECOMMENDED that the hall hire fees be increased by 3%, rounded up to the nearest 50p.

47.2 Mays Lane Cemetery Charges

The Committee requested that cost comparisons with other burial authorities be provided before they make their recommendation.

47.3 Allotment Fees

Members were reminded that allotment rental was paid annually at the beginning of the calendar year, therefore any amendments would not apply until January 2021. Councillors

RECOMMENDED that the annual rental be increased by 3%, rounded up to the nearest 50p per annum.

47.4 Fishing Permit Fees

RECOMMENDED that the fishing permit fees be increased by 3%, rounded up to the nearest 50p.

47.5 Sports Charges

47.5.1 Football Fees

The Senior Operations Support Officer reported that there had been irregularities in the past in the way adult Saturday and Sunday league teams had been invoiced and the way the rules regarding block bookings and so on had been applied. The Officer recommended that the schedule of fees be amended to remove the category “Adult Pitch block bookings of 5 or more teams” and that references to “block booking of 10 or more games” be amended to read “regular booking”. All adult teams using Sol Joel as their home ground for the football season would be invoiced at this rate.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that a 3% increase, rounded up to the nearest 50p, be applied but it was noted that due to the restructuring of fee categories, special consideration needed to be given to ensuring any increases remained fair.

47.5.2 Cricket Fees

RECOMMENDED that cricket pitch hire fees be increased by 3%, rounded up to the nearest 50p.

48. **CULVER LANE ALLOTMENTS**

48.1 Best Kept Allotments

The Members of the Working Party had conducted their visits to the allotments and had decided on the winners of the Best Allotment and Most Improved Allotment Competition 2019.

Councillors noted that the winners would be invited to the Mayor’s Christmas Reception on 3rd December 2019.

The winners were as follows: Best Allotment – Plot 12
Most Improved Allotment – Plot 31

49. **DOG WASTE BAGS**

The Town Clerk reported on the annual cost to the Town Council of providing the free dog waste bags currently available from the Help Shop. Councillors considered the matter and agreed that whilst the provision of these probably had a positive impact on the local environment, there was concern that they should be provided only to residents of Earley. Councillors requested that the Help Shop record the postcode of all residents requesting dog bags in order to gauge the number of residents using this free service.

50. **RECYCLING AND WOODCHIP BINS**

50.1 Recycling Bins

The Facilities Manager advised that one recycling bin is to be installed at Maiden Place. The Town Council are waiting on site surveys on other potential locations.

50.2 Woodchip Bins

There were no updates to report on the installation of woodchip bins.

51. WBC FLY-TIPPING INITIATIVE

Councillors considered the Countryside Watch Initiative being introduced by Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) aimed at reducing the impact of fly-tipping in the Borough. Councillors identified Hornbeam Drive as an area to be highlighted to the Initiative and suggested that members of the Earley Adopt A Street Initiative (EASI) would be best placed to identify and monitor fly-tipping hotspots within Earley. The Town Clerk agreed to forward EASI's contact details to WBC.

52. CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

The Chair advised that a number of local schools had been invited to take part in carol singing at Asda during the early evening on 2nd, 3rd and 4th December. Positive responses had so far been received from four schools. The Chair encouraged Councillors to join her and the Christmas Working Group at Asda on these dates.

53. PUBLICATIONS

The Committee noted that the following items had been received and were available for viewing in the Council Chamber.

Maiden Erlegh Residents Association:	Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 th October 2019.
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54. PRESS RELEASES

No press releases were requested.

55. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was agreed that the remaining items on the Agenda be taken under Part II.

PART II

56. CENTREPOINT HIRER

57. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 9.48pm.