

**ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of a Meeting of the Amenities Committee held at 7.30pm on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at Manor House, Lime Kiln, Royal Wootton Bassett.

PRESENT: Councillors: Robert Anstee, David Bowler, Mary Champion, Janet Georgiou, Rebecca Hearne, Susan Hughes, Mike Leighfield

Also in Attendance: Councillors: Paul Heaphy, Nic Hughes, Caroline Redmond and Steve Walls

Officers in Attendance: Johnathan Bourne, Town Clerk, Michelle Temple, Administrative Services Manager, John Macindoe, Grounds Maintenance Team Leader

The Chair, Councillor Susan Hughes welcomed new Councillor Caroline Redmond to the meeting.

**Question Time**

Mr Chris Morgan, Highmead, Woodshaw, Royal Wootton Bassett, began by articulating his opposition to the erection of a Youth Shelter at Otter Way Play Park. There has been a history of antisocial behaviour and intimidation of young children by their “elder” age range. He reported intimidation of residents by blocking of footpaths. Mr Morgan then gave some history of the Council starting the park in 1993/1994 which is now surrounded by housing. On hearing about the Youth Shelter proposal many residents signed a petition, attended a meeting hosted by Councillor Sue Hughes. Residents believe this type of equipment will make the situation worse.

Craig Nicholson, Longleaze, Royal Wootton Bassett has only recently been made aware of the petition. Mr Nicholson is a dog walker and has attended the park with his son who feels intimidated and scared. Groups of 15 – 20

youths, ages ranging from 15 years to 20 years gather at this park taking soft drugs, drinking alcohol, use of bad language, pulling trees apart, sleeping in tents and playing music. There are no police or PCSO attendance. Motorcycles are driving around the Poetsfield Park which the PCSO's do not Stop.

Councillor Sue Hughes thanked residents and advised them that there will be no installation of the Youth Pod at this time, a decision will be made in January 2018.

#### **14. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mike Farrow.

#### **15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with sections 10 and 12 of Wiltshire Council's Members Code of Conduct, as adopted by Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council at a meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

RESOLVED to note that no Declarations of Interest were received.

#### **16. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman updated members in respect of the following: -

- a) Discussions with Wiltshire Council Highways in respect of the possible adoption, for maintenance purposes, of the roundabout in Bincknoll Lane under a Section 96 License.

Following a safety audit undertaken by the Council's own Safety Officer, this matter has been referred back to Wiltshire Council from whom we wait to hear.

- b) Ongoing discussions with residents in the area of Otter Way following the Committee's decision in June 2017 to confirm installation of a picnic shelter in the park.

Following the meeting with residents the Chair advised that she wishes to delay this installation and bring more information back to the January 2018 meeting of the Committee.

- c) Condition of the storm water drain running from Marsh Farm into Jubilee Lake and a meeting held with the Council's drainage engineer on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2017.

A second camera investigation has been commissioned in order to compare with the issues identified in the first survey six months ago.

- d) Progress to design a scheme of repairs for the damaged culvert at Richards Close.

A Topographical report has been requested, report to a future meeting of Amenities.

- e) Lake Erosion Project – following the site meeting with Peter Brett Associates on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2017, progress to put the agreed works out to tender in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Tenders are now awaited, although at the time of the meeting, 18 packs had been issued.
- f) The Chairman gave thanks to Councillors Mike Farrow, Rebecca Hearne and Janet Georgiou for their contributions to the Town Guide.
- g) Marlowe Way Bus Shelters – one has been replaced and the other reinstalled.

## **17. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

RESOLVED to confirm and sign minutes of meetings of the Amenities Committee held on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2017 [A/2/2016/17], copies previously circulated.

## **18. LITTER REPORT**

- a) To receive a copy of the latest Litter Report, copy previously circulated.

RESOLVED the report be noted.

- b) The Chairman of the Area Board, Wiltshire Councillor Allison Bucknell, has forwarded a request on behalf of the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust in respect of their 'Drop The Rubbish Attitude' campaign, run in conjunction with schools. Campaign information pack, copy previously circulated.

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Mary Champion to the judging panel.

## **19. BOROUGHFIELDS PUBLIC TOILETS**

To receive a report from Gillian Welsman-Clarke to update members on the public toilet project in Boroughfields Shopping Centre, copy previously circulated.

RESOLVED to commend everyone involved, especially Gill Welsman-Clarke who led the project from start to finish.

## **20. BLAIN TREE**

Royal Wootton Bassett's Twin Town of Blain in France have donated a Ginkgo Biloba tree to the town. The Twinning Association have suggested that the tree be planted on Marlowe Way, in the vicinity of the Stone Poppy.

The Committee's views were sought.

RESOLVED to:

- a) accept the gift from the community of Blain

- b) form a working party to investigate various locations. The working party to comprise of the Chairman, Councillors Rob Anstee, Janet Georgiou and Mary Champion to report back to the November meeting with recommendations.

## **21. BARBECUE POLICY**

It has been brought to the attention of the Town Council that people are using the Jacqui Woolford Memorial Park as an area in which to hold barbecues. At present, there is no policy on using the open spaces in the town for this purpose.

The Committee's views were sought.

RESOLVED to:

- a) create a policy to assist in the management of this issue
- b) establish a working party comprising of the Chairman, Councillors Mary Champion and David Bowler, to draft a suitable policy and report back with recommendations

## **22. PLAY AREA MAINTENANCE**

The Council has budgeted £4,500 for play area maintenance in 2017-2018. The Amenities Committee has responsibility for the budget, together with its other responsibilities.

Annual maintenance checks of all the Town Council's Play Areas are undertaken by ROSPA, the leading organisation for the prevention of accidents in the UK. ROSPA allocates each piece of play equipment a score, ranging from 1 to 21, which equates to the level of risk associated with the item. All items of play equipment contain a certain level of risk, even when they are newly manufactured and in perfect condition.

ROSPA guidance explains that items which score between 1 and 3 are considered to be very low risk. Scores between 4 and 7 are low risk, and would only need to be monitored for any deterioration with no

immediate action recommended. ROSPA advise that the appropriate action for any medium risk items, classed as between 8 to 12, is to address individual issues as far as resources allow. Items considered to be high risk, between 13 and 20, require urgent action. If an item were to be assessed at level 21, unacceptably high risk, the ROSPA Inspector would immediately recommend closure of the item of play equipment.

In addition to the annual ROSPA safety inspection, Council Ground Staff inspect all items of play equipment a minimum of twice per week in a recorded inspection. All ground staff are members of the Register of Playground Inspectors International Ltd and are ROSPA trained.

The Chairman has asked Officers to explore the possibility of sourcing maintenance on all items of equipment identified within the ROSPA inspection reports. 42 of the items were classed as low risk, and 6 as medium. One item of equipment was scored at 13, falling just inside the high category.

The Council normally only replace or repair items when they are progressed as high risk in the weekly inspection, however on this occasion three quotes were sought for the replacement and repair work. One of the three companies pulled out of providing a quote, therefore the remaining prices are: -

Company A – £13,705.42

Company B - £23,800.52

The immediate discrepancy between the prices above has resulted from Company A not providing prices for a number of items which Company B has quoted for. To obtain a like-for-like comparison, the items not covered by Company A were stripped out of the quotation provided by Company B. This resulted in £13,680 dropping out of the quotation from Company B, leaving the total at £10,120.52. This represents a saving of £3,584.90 over Company A across like-for-like quotations.

In addition to the above, Council staff have an in-house repair list as with 21 items, of which 13 are complete, 8 are outstanding and expected to be completed by mid September.

The Committee was asked to consider whether to recommend a change in the play equipment maintenance policy, and if so to identify a budget for this purpose.

The Chairman advised that there has been extensive work undertaken in respect of this issue over the summer. It is understood that there is now increasing pressure on the maintenance budgets as the opportunity utilise S106 funding to modernise play areas diminishes.

Looking at the ROSPA criteria the Chair asked the Committee to consider moving away from 13, as the point where action should be taken and in the first instance improving this to 10. When using this and adding some more immediate concerns identified by the ground staff the cost would be £8642 to include refurbishing the play bark areas at approximately £3600.

It was noted that approximately £2750 of the additional funding could be found from the Town Guide budget leaving a deficit of approximately £1400 which was considered to be within the margin of acceptability for the Amenities budget overall.

RESOLVED to accept the proposal and approve acceptance of the quotation in the amount of £8642.

## **23. GOAL POSTS – OTTER WAY**

Request from Councillor Mike Farrow asking the Committee to consider the relocation of the goal posts to prevent hooliganism against residents.

The Committee's instructions were sought.

RESOLVED to defer consideration of this item in the absence of Councillor Mike Farrow.

## **24. COMMUNICATIONS**

The Committee was asked to consider whether it would like any Press Releases or other Communications issued in respect of the Committee Agenda items.

RESOLVED to put out a Press Release on:

- Jubilee Lake will look different after the works; the changes will help preserve the lake.
- ‘Drop The Rubbish Attitude’ campaign

## **25. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

The Committee was asked that members of the public and press be requested to leave the meeting to allow discussion of the establishment, property and finance matters as it is considered the publicity would be prejudicial by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.