

STAMFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 02 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 6.00PM AT 'VIRTUAL' LOCATIONS USING VIDEO AND AUDIO LINK (Occasional Interruptions may have occurred during this meeting)

PRESENT Councillor D Dorson (Vice Chair)
Councillor M Exton
Councillor J Dawson
Councillor B Griffin
Councillor Mrs S Sismore
Councillor Mrs E Hooper

ALSO PRESENT Town Clerk
Deputy Town Clerk
Councillor S Carroll (Arrived 18.25)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None

417. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Point 1)

Councillor W Turner (Town Mayor) & Councillor Mrs G Johnson (Chairman) offered their apologies, and these were accepted.

Proposal 1 – On the proposal of Councillor J Dawson, seconded by Councillor Mrs E Hooper, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council accepts the apologies from Councillor W Turner and Councillor Mrs G Johnson.

418. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Point 2)

Councillor D Dorson declared a Personal Interest in respect of Item 5Ci Proposal 6, Item 9 & 10 proposal 10 as they relate to matters of personnel.

419. MINUTES (Agenda Point 3)

The Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 05 January 2021, had been confirmed as a true record of the meeting at the Town Council meeting of 26 January 2021 and would be signed by the Chairman of Amenities at the earliest opportunity.

420. ALLOTMENTS (Agenda Point 4)

a. Update on action points relating to the Allotments

- i. Update on allotment vacancies** - It was reported that there are currently 65 people on the waiting list with 14 vacant plots. 24 are being prepared for letting and 4 tenants are on notice period. Three new tenants have been signed up in 2021.
- ii. Update regarding the clearance of allotments** - It was confirmed that the clearance of the rubbish on Uffington Road allotments is now complete. Once the weather is suitable, the ploughing and preparation of the plots will commence.
- iii. Update regarding the asbestos removal** - It was confirmed that 13 plot holders have notified that there is asbestos on their plots and contact has been made with the appropriate authorised firms in respect of quotes for its removal.

b. Any correspondence received.

- i. Committee to receive and consider request for return of deposit** - It was reported that a termination request had been received for plot PR31. It was noted that the deposit should be returned as the plot had been left in good order.

Proposal 1- On the proposal of Councillor B Griffin, seconded by the Councillor Mrs S Sismore, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council approves the return of the deposit of £50.00 to the tenant of PR31.

ii. **Committee to receive and consider any correspondence received.** - None

c. **Any other Allotment business items for consideration.** - None

421. **CEMETERY (Agenda Point 5)**

a. **Update on action points relating to the Cemetery.**

- i. **Update regarding the Cemetery Office and Cemetery Toilet Repairs** - It was confirmed that the hatch has been installed and the toilet door handle repaired, but the lock mechanism remains outstanding.
- ii. **Update regarding the Cemetery trees on boundary** – It was reported that the Purchase Order (PO) had been issued and the work will commence on 17th & 18th of March 2021.
- iii. **Tree Survey for all Amenity area** – It was reported that the PO had been issued and the scheduled date for the work to commence is awaited.
- iv. **To consider quotes for the renewing tap & tap boxes** – It was reported that a quote had been received for the replacement of taps of the same style and specification installed at the allotments, with a water jug storage box. Unfortunately, all other suppliers had declined to submit quotes due to staffing issues resulting from Covid constraints. Debate ensued and it was agreed that the quote for the replacement taps at a cost of £3,460.00 plus VAT is approved.

Proposal 2- On the proposal of Councillor J Dawson, seconded by the Councillor Mrs S Sismore, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council approves the quote for the replacement taps at a cost of £3,460.00 plus VAT.

Following the resolution, it was noted the contractor selected was R Harrison & Co

- v. **To consider reordering gravel for car parks and drives-** It was reported that the gravel paths at the Cemetery are now lacking the appropriate depth of gravel coverage, creating a slip hazard. Quotes had been obtained for graveling the areas. Following discussions and consideration of the quotes presented, it was considered that Quote 1 was the most cost effective and the consensus was to accept it at a cost of £1,284 plus VAT for 20 tons of gravel and 2 men on site to spread the gravel as required.

Proposal 3- On the proposal of Councillor J Dawson, seconded by the Councillor Mrs S Sismore, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council approves the quote at a cost of £1,284 plus VAT for 20 tons of gravel and 2 men on site to spread the gravel as required.

Following the resolution, it was noted the contractor selected was R Harrison & Co.

b. **Any correspondence received.**

- i. **Update on Graves not complying with the Rules and Regulations** – It was confirmed that correspondence had been received from the grant holder for plot X95 suggesting the Council should compensate said grant holder in respect of removing the chippings and surround installed in breach of Cemetery rules and regulations. Discussions followed and it was agreed that no compensation would be forthcoming, and all communications would continue through the Council's solicitor. It was further considered that the Council may seek compensation from the grant holder for any continuing, related costs incurred by the Council.

Proposal 4- On the proposal of Councillor Mrs S Sismore, seconded by the Councillor Mrs E Hooper it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council approved that no compensation would be forthcoming, and all communications would continue through the Council's solicitor. The

Council may seek compensation from the grant holder for any continued costs incurred by the council.

- ii. **Committee to receive and consider any correspondence received** - It was reported that correspondence had been received from a resident regarding conditions at Cemetery. It was noted that the Town Clerk had acknowledged the resident's communication. The points of concern raised by the resident were considered by the Committee. It was the consensus of the Committee that a further response should be submitted thanking the resident for her communication and informing her that the Committee is already aware of the maintenance issues raised and have matters in hand; however due to Covid constraints some plans had been delayed. The Council routinely assesses applications for memorials and makes the appropriate decision. No doors will be fitted to the holding bays.

Proposal 5- On the proposal of Councillor D Dorson, seconded by Councillor Mrs S Sismore, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council approves the response above – viz: the Committee is already aware of the maintenance issues raised and have matters in hand however due to the Covid constraints some plans have been delayed; the Council routinely assesses applications for memorials and makes the appropriate decision. No doors will be fitted to the holding bays. The response will be circulated to the committee.

c. Any other Cemetery business items for consideration

- i. **Committee to approve memorial requests and style of memorials permitted in the lawn Cemetery** – It was reported that 3 memorial requests had been received which were of traditional style. Discussions followed and the suggestion was that the Deputy Town Clerk is permitted to approve memorial requests which are deemed in keeping with Cemetery regulations. A flyer should be created and presented at the next Committee meeting giving guidelines on memorials to grant holders regarding the acceptable styles in the cemetery. Any bespoke memorials outside of these guidelines should be presented to the Committee for consideration.

Proposal 6- On the proposal of Councillor M Exton, seconded by the Councillor J Dawson, it was agreed with 1 abstention and **RESOLVED** the Council approves the Deputy Town Clerk is permitted to approve memorial requests which are deemed in keeping with Cemetery regulations. A flyer should be created and presented at the next Amenities' Committee meeting, giving guidelines on memorials to grant holders on the acceptable styles in the cemetery. Any bespoke memorials outside of these guidelines should be presented to the committee for consideration.

On examining the request for the three memorial requests the consensus was that they were acceptable.

Proposal 7- On the proposal of Councillor D Dorson, seconded by the Councillor B Griffin, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council approves the three memorial requests received for Cemetery plots X221, X256 and W1168.

422. RECREATION GROUND & MEADOWS (Agenda Point 6)

a. Update on action points relating to the Recreation Ground & Meadows

- i. **Update on Recreation Ground play equipment repairs** - It was reported that quotes were being obtained for the works identified in the ROSPA report.
- ii. **Update on request to plant 2 Grey Poplars on the Meadows** - It was reported that confirmation has been given to the individual concerned and quotes are being obtained. They have been advised to plant in spring when the Meadows are less subject to flooding.

b. Any correspondence received. - None.

c. Any other Recreation Ground & Meadows business items for consideration

- i. **Skatepark** – It was reported that there had been a query by SKDC’s Environmental Health Officer regarding the access of the skatepark due to youths congregating in the area. The Officer was informed of the issues being experienced and that the situation had been also reported to the Police.

423. **To consider draft Terms of Reference of Amenities Committee-** The Committee had been circulated with the draft Terms of Reference for the Amenities Committee. On assessment it was considered that no changes were necessary.

Proposal 8- On the proposal of Councillor J Dawson, seconded by the Councillor Mrs E Hooper it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the the draft Terms of Reference of Amenities Committee go to the meeting on the 18 February 2020 for the consideration, and acceptance by the Council.

424. **TO RESOLVE TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION (Agenda Point 8)**

The Chairman Councillor D Dorson asked the Committee whether they wished to go into Closed Session to discuss Personnel matters relating to employees.

Proposal 9 - On the proposal of Councillor D Dorson, seconded by the Councillor Mrs S Sismore, it was agreed by majority, with 1 abstention and 1 against, and **RESOLVED** the Committee acts in accordance with Sec.1(2) of the Public Bodies Act 1960 (Admissions to Meetings Act 1960) that as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted relating to personnel, to exclude all members of public, press and non-Committee members. Any resolutions made within the Closed Session will be made public.

Councillors S Carroll and Councillor M Exton disagreed with the resolution to exclude non-Committee members.

The Town Clerk confirmed the correct procedure when confidential matters such as Personnel matters are being discussed in Closed Session; this being that only appointed members of that Committee are permitted to attend during said Closed Session. Any Councillor who may have issues in respect of any resolutions agreed during the Closed Session will have the opportunity to air their concerns at the subsequent Town Council meeting.

Councillor Exton wished this objection to be recorded in the minutes.

The public and non-committee members left the meeting.

6.55pm - The meeting proceeded into Closed Session

7.20pm - The meeting proceeded into Open Session

During the discussion in Closed Session, it was resolved that the standard of performance of the Amenities Operatives was failing to meet the Council’s expectations and was deteriorating. It was noted that the Council’s Grievance procedure is in progress and a further Disciplinary Hearing will be held on 5th February 2020.

Verbal assaults on members of Staff is a serious matter and this will be deferred to the Finance and Personnel Committee for examination for a course of action to be recommended.

425. **QUESTIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS (Agenda Point 9)** - None

7.20pm - Councillors M Exton & B Griffin left the meeting.

426. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING: (Agenda Point 10)** – Tuesday, 02 March 2021 at 6pm

Chairman
(The meeting closed at 7.20pm.)