

STAMFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 03 JUNE 2020 AT 6.00PM AT 'VIRTUAL' LOCATIONS USING VIDEO AND AUDIO LINK

PRESENT Councillor Ms M Couch (Town Mayor)
Councillor Mrs G Johnson (Chairman)
Councillor B Turner (Vice Chair)
Councillor J Dawson
Councillor Mrs S Sismore
Councillor D Dorson

ALSO PRESENT Councillor B Sandall
Town Clerk
Deputy Town Clerk
2 members of Media

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – None

26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Point 1)

Councillor M Exton had submitted his apologies; these were noted and accepted.

Councillor S Fenn was absent from the meeting.

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Point 2)

None

28. MINUTES (Agenda Point 3)

The Minutes of the Working Group Meeting held on Tuesday, 05 May 2020, had been circulated for the Committee to confirm that they represented a true record of the meeting.

Proposal 1- On the proposal of Councillor J Dawson, seconded by the Councillor B Turner, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Working Group Meeting notes were a true record of the meeting.

29. ALLOTMENTS (Agenda Point 4)

a. To receive update on the Water supply to Uffington New Site- It was confirmed that the water troughs and handwashing standpipe had been installed with the water mains feeding the troughs. Comments received from the tenants have been positive.

b. To receive update on removal of fly tipping – It was confirmed that the fly tipping which had been identified has now been removed by South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) at a cost of £600. Following discussion, the Chairman Councillor Johnson, stated that the material dumped, when examined, had originated at the allotment site and certain individuals are suspected. This matter is to be resolved at the next Town Council meeting with the recommendation to split the cost 50/50 with the allotment tenants of Uffington Road New Site in October 2020 when invoices are issued as a waste charge.

Proposal 2- On the proposal of Councillor Mrs G Johnson, seconded by the Councillor B Turner, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council approves the cost of £600, to remove

the fly tipping at Uffington Road New site, is split with said allotment tenants and added to their bill in October 2020 as a waste charge.

Proposal 3- On the proposal of Councillor B Turner, seconded by the Councillor J Dawson, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council accepts the cost of £600 for the clearance by SKDC of the fly tipping at Uffington Road New site.

- c. *To consider the concerns of the Queens Walk boundary wall issue* – It was reported that a resident who resides on Tinwell Road shares a boundary wall with Queens Walk allotments. It has been confirmed that the wall is not the responsibility of the Town Council. Following discussion, it was recommended that the first step should be to convene a meeting to ascertain the exact situation, as the areas of disagreement are significant. It was considered that the Chairman and Town Clerk meet with the resident to identify a strategy and possible way forward.

Proposal 4- On the proposal of Councillor Mrs G Johnson, seconded by the Councillor D Dorson, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council authorises Councillor Mrs Johnson and the Town Clerk to meet with the resident to ascertain the situation and to identify a strategy and possible way forward.

- d. *To receive feedback on any other issues*

- i. *Unauthorised Bonfires* - It was reported that there had been unauthorised bonfires being lit on allotment sites. It was reiterated that no bonfires are allowed during this national crisis period, nor anytime without valid permission, as stated in the rules and regulations. The offending tenants would be receiving warning letters.

30. CEMETERY (Agenda Point 5)

- a. *To receive feedback on potential funding sources for the repair of Cemetery boundary wall* - It was confirmed that the Council had received quotes to repair the ancient Cemetery boundary stone wall. Initially the repair was to be phased. However, the Committee considers it would be more cost effective to complete the entire project in a single phase. It was investigated as to whether the Council might apply for a loan from the Public Works Board. Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC) confirmed it couldn't support the application for these repairs and STC would need to identify the funds from Reserves. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Finance Committee had been consulted on this matter. Councillor Bob Sandall, Vice Chair of Finance, stated that due to the significant savings to be achieved, the reasoning behind undertaking this necessary work all at the same time is appreciated. He continued that the Reserves had been examined and by moving some finances from some Earmarked projects this initiative could be supported. The required sum of £30K could be achieved by viring £16K from some specific Earmarked projects, plus the already Earmarked funds of £10K, and also £5K in the current Amenities Budget for the Cemetery wall, would provide sufficient resources to meet the necessary nett cost for these urgent repairs.

The consensus of the Amenities Committee was to adjust its budget over the next 3 years, to cover the £16K loaned from the Earmarked Reserves for the urgent restoration work to the Cemetery's boundary wall and to accept the quote of £29,750 plus VAT from MW Edwards to complete all the agreed repair work to the Cemetery wall.

Proposal 5 - On the proposal of Councillor B Turner, seconded by Councillor Mrs S Sismore, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council approves that the Amenities Committee adjusts its budget over the next 3 years, to cover the amount loaned from the Earmarked Reserves for the repair works to the Cemetery boundary wall, and accepts the quote of £29750 plus VAT from MW Edwards to complete the required repair works to the Cemetery wall.

- b. To consider the provision of technology to provide virtual services at Cemetery Chapel* – Councillor D Dorson reported that currently many families are unable to attend funerals due to the current lockdown. It was observed that the technology necessary to facilitate virtual funeral services is already available in crematoria and some churches. It was further stated that funeral directors would embrace the availability of such technology. At present the Cemetery Chapel does not have such capabilities and the infrastructure would need to be installed. Following discussion, there were concerns that this would be a questionable additional cost on the Amenities Budget, however there was support for this initiative which could recoup the costs. Councillor D Dorson offered to undertake the necessary investigations in respect of the cost for the infrastructure, equipment and software and present it to the Finance Committee.

Proposal 6 - On the proposal of Councillor D Dorson, seconded by the Councillor Mrs S Sismore, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council approves Councillor D Dorson to undertake the necessary investigations and present a report to the Finance Committee on the cost for the potential provision of infrastructure, equipment and software to facilitate virtual funeral services in the Cemetery Chapel.

- c. Authority to permit interment of Cremated Remains* – The Town Clerk reported that at a previous Amenities Committee meeting it was agreed that the unpurchased children’s burial plot T118, may be purchased to allow the cremated remains of the parents to be buried in velvet bags in the plot. It was confirmed that the plot would be purchased at the children’s burial plot rate subject to the interments being at the adult cremated remains fee. It was noted that this has been authorised under the Town Clerk’s Delegated Powers granted at the Annual Town Council Meeting of 07 May 2020.
- d. Report on Lodge boiler maintenance issue* - It was reported that the lodge boiler had a leak and the approved contractor will be undertaking the repairs and carrying out the routine survey tomorrow (04/06/20).
- e. To receive feedback on any other issues* – It was confirmed that an inspection of the Cemetery had been carried out by the Town Clerk and site was in good order. It was further confirmed the contractors are continuing with the ground maintenance works during the present lockdown and observing the required social distancing.

31. RECREATION GROUND & MEADOWS (Agenda Point 6)

- a. To consider Government guidance following update of 25 May 2020* – The Town Clerk had circulated the current Government guidance to the Amenities Committee to consider the future management of amenity areas during the current easing of lockdown measures. Several enquiries had been received from residents as to when the facilities on the Recreation Ground would be opened. It was confirmed that the areas of the Recreation Ground need to be reviewed.
- b. To confirm the management of the Amenity area in accordance with Government guidance -*
city
- i. Skatepark* – It was reported that the police had advised that this fa should be closed as the social distancing wasn’t being followed. Police tape had been installed but was removed by skatepark users. Gates were locked and consequently the fencing has now been damaged to access the facility. It was advised that signs should erected stating that social distancing must be followed and only 10 people at one time should be using the facility. Councillor Dorson was in receipt of a request to open the Skatepark. He appreciated that at present the Town Council is working under Government guidance and recognised the damage caused by the users. He considered that whilst the displaying of signs is important, safety should be paramount. Skateboarding by nature is a sport where the users on occasion have a tumble

and contact with the surfaces. It would be difficult to maintain sanitisation of the surfaces of the Skatepark, which are concrete and metal. The current frustration of users and their parents is understood but sadly the facility should remain closed. Where damage does occur, it will unfortunately result in added costs for the local taxpayer. It was confirmed that Skateboard England has advised that large skateparks, such the one in Stamford, social distancing must be observed and should be limited to a maximum of 3-10 users.

- ii. **Children's play area** – It was reported that the virus survives longer on metal surfaces and the emphasis on hygiene is of the upmost importance. Parents should be advised to sanitise their hands and that of their children after use of any apparatus, as the Council doesn't have the resources or staffing to maintain a regular cleansing programme of all the pieces of apparatus and facilities within the Recreation Ground. It was confirmed that recent Local Government Guidance states that children's play areas and public conveniences should not open until the Government Alert Level 2 has been reached.
- iii. **Toilets**- It was reported that there is no legislation obligating the Town Council to provide public conveniences. The Council doesn't have the resources or staffing to maintain a constant cleansing programme of the toilets to the level required by Government guidance. The Town Clerk recommended that the Skatepark and children's play area are opened, with the toilets remaining locked.

Proposal 7- On the proposal of Councillor J Dawson, seconded by the Councillor Ms M Couch, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council approves the Skatepark, the children's play area and Recreation Ground toilets **remain locked** as the Council cannot adhere to the required Government guidance.

- c. **To confirm installation of the new information board on Meadows** – It was confirmed that the new information board has been installed on the Meadows and photos had been circulated to the Council.
- d. **To receive the feedback on the litter issue on the Meadows** – It was reported that there has been serious concerns raised over litter, drinking and drug issues recently occurring on the Meadows. The area is litter-picked with all bins being emptied by volunteer and STC operatives twice a day. A substantial volume of litter was pizza boxes from the London Inn. Following dialogue with the District Council and the Police, both have committed to ramping up their patrols to monitor the drug issues, social distancing and litter concerns. Following discussions, it was agreed the Town Clerk sends a letter the London Inn enquiring whether they could put measures in place to mitigate the unacceptable litter problem on the Meadows caused by their patrons. Both the District Enforcement Officer and the Police have provided assurance that they will increase their patrols and spot check the hot spots in the Town.

Proposal 8- On the proposal of Councillor Ms M Couch, seconded by the Councillor Mrs S Sismore, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council authorises the Town Clerk to send a letter the London Inn enquiring whether they could put measures in place to mitigate the litter problem on the Meadows caused by their patrons.

- e. **To receive feedback on any other issues**
 - i. **Retail Kiosk on the Meadows**- It was reported that requests had been received regarding permission for mobile retail kiosks to operate on the Meadows. It had been advised that the Council's policy is to refuse such outlets on the Meadows, except when there are programmed events. Following discussions, it was the consensus to refuse the requests for mobile kiosks on the Meadows.

Proposal 9- On the proposal of Councillor J Dawson, seconded by the Councillor Mrs S Sismore, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council refuses the request for mobile kiosks on the Meadows except when linked with a programmed event.

- ii. **Grass Tennis Courts** - It was reported that a request has been received regarding reinstallation of the 3rd net on the grass tennis courts. Following discussions, it was the consensus that only 2 grass tennis courts are made available to ensure that social distancing may be upheld.

Proposal 10- On the proposal of Councillor D Dorson, seconded by the Councillor J Dawson, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council approves that only 2 grass tennis courts are made available to ensure that social distancing may be upheld.

- iii. **Yoga on the Meadows-** It was reported that Yoga on the Meadows has requested to restart their classes on the Meadows. The classes would be restricted to 5 participants to ensure the requirement of 2 metres social distancing. Following discussions, it was agreed that Yoga on the Meadows could resume subject to compliance with Government guideline and the Council's hire requirements.

Proposal 11- On the proposal of Councillor Mrs S Sismore, seconded by the Councillor B Turner, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** the Council approves the resumption of Yoga on the Meadows subject to compliance with Government guideline and the Council's hire requirements.

- iv. **Tree Works** - It was reported that tree works had commenced on the Meadows to remove the diseased and self-set trees which were causing overcrowding on the Meadows. Once the work is complete phase two of the revegetation and stabilisation of the riverbanks on either side of the Meadows may begin. The Committee will be kept fully informed of the programme of developments.

It was reported that Councillor Bisnauthsing has sent images relating to some self-set trees, which a resident on Station Road wished removed. It was confirmed that all the self-sets the Committee wished removed had been accomplished. However, there were some suckers still to be removed. It was agreed the Town Clerk should inform Councillor Bisnauthsing that the Amenities Committee has the management of the Meadows in hand and will continue to resolve the tree management and the banks accordingly.

32. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: (Agenda Point 7) – Wednesday, 01 July 2020 at 6pm

Chairman
(The meeting closed at 7.10pm.)