

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 27TH JUNE 2005 AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CORNWALL'S MEADOW, BUCKINGHAM AT 7PM

PRESENT

Councillors P. Collins (Mayor)
Mrs P. Desorgher
D.R. Isham
G. Loftus
H. Mordue (Chairman)
Ms. R. Newell
Mrs H. Saul
Mrs C. Strain-Clark
R. Stuchbury

Town Clerk: Ms. P. J. Heath

Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence

132/2005 Election of Chairman

Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Newell, and **AGREED** that Cllr. H. Mordue should continue as the Chairman of the Environment and Property Committee.

133/2005 Election of Vice Chairman

Proposed by Cllr. C. Strain-Clark, seconded by Cllr. Loftus, and **AGREED** that Cllr. P. Desorgher should continue as the Vice Chairman of the Environment and Property Committee.

134/2005 Declaration of interest for items on the agenda

There was no declaration of interest for items on the agenda.

135/2005 the minutes of the last meeting

Members received and accepted the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th May 2005, which were ratified on 13th June 2005.

136/2005 To receive Action reports and Updates

All items are dealt with on the agenda

137/2005 Report, if required, on Cemetery Lodge Refurbishment

The Clerk informed Members again of the position concerning the claiming back of VAT on this project; therefore all projected figures are considered gross of VAT. It will depend on the final use of the Cemetery Lodge whether VAT can be reclaimed, very broadly if the use is in line with our function as a town council we could reclaim the VAT but if it is for commercial use then we cannot reclaim the VAT. A letter

would need to be sent to Customs and Excise to seek clarification once the Council has agreed the future use of the Cemetery Lodge.

ACTION THE CLERK

The Clerk explained that the loan has been granted and would be available from 1st August 2005; interest rates would be agreed 2 days prior. The current application is for a fixed rate repayment whereby the loan and gross interest is split into equal instalments. Following conversations with the PWLB the Clerk suggested the EIP maybe a more cost effective method this is where the loan is split in equal instalments and interest calculated on the reducing balance. Both methods would have the interest rate fixed at the start of the loan.

It was **AGREED** to as the Finance and Administration Committee to discuss and agree the repayment method.

ACTION F & A COMMITTEE

138/2005 Reports on the operation of Brackley Road Cemetery

138.1 Quotations for additional horticultural work required in the Cemetery

The Clerk explained that a comprehensive specification of horticultural work to be carried out in the cemetery had been drawn up; this included work to be done immediately and work to be done over the winter period. The immediate work included the cutting of the shrubs at the entrance, tidying up the weed growth and replanting the beds, also the removal of self-sown trees in the graves. A quotation had been sought from our current contractors for the Cemetery and also from the contractors who maintain the park. As only one had been received it was agreed to defer to the next meeting.

138.2 Receipt of documentation re memorial testing from AVDC

Members noted that copies of the memorial testing reports for the extension had been received from AVDC.

138.3 New cemetery software

Members noted that the new software for Cemetery management had been delivered and installed. The Clerk reported there was a considerable amount of set up that would be required before the data could be entered. It was agreed that although this placed an increased workload on the Clerk, in order for consistency and accuracy the Clerk should set up the system and input the data rather than employ outside help. A demonstration of the software would be held on the evening of the meeting.

138.4 Update on proposal for car park at the cemetery (deferred from 9/05/05)

Members were given a brief history of the project, its purpose and the investigations to date. Members were concerned about the part exchange of the area to the west for the area to the east of the cemetery extension. Proposed by Cllr. Collins, seconded by Cllr. Saul, and **AGREED** to obtain costs for a full geographical survey of the Extension and both areas of land to ascertain the extent of usable burial ground. The Clerk was requested to write a holding letter to New College.

139/2005 Reports on Chandos Park

139.1 Quotation for additional tree works over and above the contract

Members received details of a quotation from our horticultural contractors for additional work to the trees over and above that required by the horticultural contract. Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Newell, and **AGREED** to accept the quotation of £1870 and instruct the contractor to proceed.

139.2 Opening and closing of Chandos Park Toilets

Members discussed the closing of Chandos Park toilets at night to prevent vandalism and antisocial behaviour that takes place in the area. It was agreed to ask the Bowls Club, who had volunteered, to lock up the toilets at dusk in the summer (about 10 pm) with the contractors opening them up when they clean in the morning. It was agreed that winter arrangements would be discussed at the next meeting.

ACTION THE CLERK

140/2005 To Receive and note the RoSPA safety report

Members received the RoSPA safety reports for Chandos Park, Bourton Park, and Ken Tagg Play Area, noting the comments concerning Chandos Park Play area, which was being repaired at the time of the inspection visit. The report indicated all play areas had low risk faults, namely the correct identification of equipment, and a few medium faults, which would be scheduled into maintenance programmes.

Members were informed of a vandalism incident in Chandos Park where chunks of safety surface had been ripped up and thrown; the contractor had been instructed to repair the area. Concern was raised as to the suitability of the surface; Members appreciated that it may not be the best but would look at the surfacing when undertaking a refurbishment of the play area in the future.

141/2005 Reports on Bourton Park

141.1 Quotation for additional tree works over and above the contract

Members discussed the quotation and the additional work they felt was needed to improve the park. It was agreed to look at planting ground cover around the roses to reduce weeds and provide additional colour. The Members were concerned about the state of the toddlers' play area and felt that should the trees be crown lifted and cut back from the play area, letting in more light, the alga problem would be controllable.

Following a detailed discussion it was proposed to go out for tender for new toddler play area equipment and to cut back the overhanging trees. The tenders and drawings would be discussed at the next meeting and a decision made.

ACTION THE CLERK

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Newell, and **AGREED** to accept the quotation of £4800 and instruct the contractor to proceed.

Members discussed the de-silting and clearance of the tributary in the park; this has to be done in phases. It was agreed to obtain information and advice for the next meeting.

ACTION THE CLERK

142/2005 Reports on Ken Tagg Play Area

There are no reports for action on Ken Tagg Play area.

143/2005 Reports on Verney Close

Members asked that Cllr. David Polhill be given the full details and asked to chase this with the County Council Legal Department.

ACTION THE CLERK

144/2005 Reports on Buckingham Town Audit

An updated Town Audit would be circulated at the next meeting; Members were informed that this was a standing item on the Buckingham Partnership Agenda.

145/2005 recommendation from the Events Committee to look at signage in the Town

It was **AGREED** to add signage to the Town Audit. Members commented on the lack of signs indicating the direction of the Public Toilets, it was agreed to highlight this point to AVDC.

Bourton Park signs were in need of replacing, Members asked that the original artwork be obtained from AVDC.

ACTION THE CLERK

146/2005 letter received from Mr Farmer re Millennium Trees.

Members noted the letter from Mr Farmer, the brief history of the trees was told to the Members; also details of responses given to Mr Farmer. Members **AGREED** the Clerk should write again to Mr Farmer repeating the earlier responses with a copy to David Peevers.

147/2005 To note the Cleaner Neighbourhood Act 2005 and possible increase in powers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)

Members were given details of the Cleaner Neighbourhood Act and the possible implications for the Town Council. Members were interested in the possible increase in powers but noted the equal increase in responsibility in that the Council would be responsible for prosecutions. It was **AGREED** to note the provisions and wait until the guidelines were issued before formally debating the Act.

148/2005 provision of a bus shelter at Stratford Road

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Newell, and **RECOMMENDED** that the Council should install a bus shelter on Stratford Road, funded from the monies carried over from 2004/2005.

149/2005 (131.3) Bourton Road Allotment to confirm the 12 year lease and receive notification of amendments.

Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Newell, and **AGREED** to accept the amendment to the 12 year lease being the rewording of clause 7 and the new clause 8. Copy of the agreement is attached to the minutes.

150/2005 review budget 2005/2006

Members reviewed the current budget and the additional amounts agreed from the 2004/2005 budget. The new toddler play area would be the priority spend. It was also agreed to look at the additional land purchase at the Cemetery. The Members agreed to look at the purchase of vehicle for the Council's Caretaker to use such as a quad bike and trailer.

151/2005 Chairman's Items for Information

151.1 RIVERBANK

The Chairman reported on a meeting he had had with a company who provide natural solutions to bank erosion such as in Chandos Park. The area owned by the Town Council needs little work but Chris Nichols walk, which is owned by the District Council, is eroding fast. It was agreed to remind the District Council that the bank is eroding.

ACTION THE CLERK

Members expressed concern about the silting up of the river and noting that it was the riparian owner's responsibility to keep their section of the river clear. A section of the river by Stratford Fields had suffered from partial collapse and bad silting causing problems for the river flow. It was agreed the Clerk should write to AVDC and ask them to clear their section. Members felt that owners of property abutting the Town Council land should all be made aware of their responsibilities as riparian owners.

It was **AGREED** the Clerk should write to all the landowners who own property on the river in Buckingham reminding them of their responsibilities.

ACTION THE CLERK

151.2 UNPAID INVOICES AVDC

Members were informed of the correspondence between the Town Clerk and AVDC in respect of the maintenance invoices outstanding from 2004/2005. The Contractors have informed AVDC that the work had been done, and AVDC had suggested a reduction of £1700.00 on the outstanding invoices of £39,000.00. It was agreed that the Clerk and The Chairman would again try to arrange a face-to-face meeting with officers from AVDC to discuss the problem.

The following item will be heard under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960 which excludes members of the Public due to the confidential and financial nature of the business to be discussed

152/2005 proposed extension of the Council Offices

In the absence of Cllr Lewis who had agreed to assist with this item, it was deferred to the next meeting.

CHAIRMANH Mordue..... DATE1st August 2005.....