

**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON  
TUESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> April 2007**

<b><u>PRESENT</u></b>	Councillor	P. Collins (Mayor)
		<b>Mrs. P. Desorgher</b>
		<b>D. Isham</b>
		G. Loftus
		H. Mordue (Chairman)
		Mrs. P. Stevens
		R. Stuchbury
	Town Clerk	Mrs P. Heath

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Ms. R. Newell and Ms. H. Saul.

**392/2007 DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda

**393/2007 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Members accepted the minutes of the last meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2007, which were ratified at the Council meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2007.

**394/2007 ACTION REPORTS AND UPDATES ON ITEMS NOT ELSEWHERE ON  
THE AGENDA**

274.1 Cllr. Stuchbury is waiting for the river level to fall so that he can check the Allen Key requirements.

313.1 The Clerk had been able to get specific specifications for the installation of the RSJ from AVDC, BCC or Jacobs Babtie. Members discussed the lack of specifications to give to the contractor to ensure that the RSJ was installed safely and within the criteria already agreed by the Council to reduce the entrance to Bourton Park Car Park. Members also noted that the overhead bar had also been vandalised and required removing. It was **AGREED** that Cllr. Isham and Cllr. Stuchbury would provide the Clerk with suitable specifications for the installation of the RSJ.

**ACTION CLLR. STUCHBURY/CLLR. ISHAM**

332.1 The Clerk informed Members that a response had finally been received from Mr. Barker at AVDC Planning which stated the Town Council would have to apply for a "Change of Use" planning approval if the lodge is used for office accommodation.

## 395/2007      REPORT ON CEMETERY LODGE

### 395.1 Consider quotations for carpeting and flooring of the Cemetery Lodge

Cllr. Stevens informed the Members of the new quotations she had received for the flooring in Cemetery Lodge. Each company had been verbally asked to provide laminated flooring on the ground floor, carpeting on the stairs and bedrooms with vinyl in the bathroom.

The prices obtained ranged from £2530 to £4327.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Isham and **AGREED** to accept the quotation by Allied Carpets for £2530.

**ACTION TOWN CLERK**

### 395.2 Consider the rental of Cemetery Lodge and agree company to act as agents

The Clerk informed Members that she had contacted the VAT Local Authority Officer in respect of the situation should the Council rent the Lodge on a commercial basis. The VAT officer stated that if that was the case the Council would have to pay back the input VAT claimed on the refurbishment (approximately £14,000); the VAT officer had been asked to confirm this in writing and also state to what time limit this will apply. The Clerk informed Members that during the conversation with the VAT office it was mentioned that someone else from this authority had already contacted them on this issue which had confused the officer when first approached by the Clerk.

It was **AGREED** that with this information the future letting of the lodge would need further discussion, so was deferred until a written definitive response was received from the VAT Officer.

**ACTION TOWN CLERK**

## 396/2007      REPORTS ON THE OPERATION OF BRACKLEY ROAD CEMETERY

### 396.1 To receive details of problem with burial 02.03.07

The Town Clerk explained to Members the background and history of the problems arising out of the 2<sup>nd</sup> March burial, when the hole was not sufficient for the coffin. In response to questions the Clerk explained that the Funeral Director contracts the Council to provide the burial space, and the Council contracts the grave diggers to provide the hole. Following a discussion of the facts surrounding this funeral it was **AGREED** that Wyevalles not be paid for the grave digging.

### 396.2 Additional work required on Cemetery Maintenance

The Clerk asked permission to raise issues arising from her meeting with the new contractor; this was given by the Members present.

The hedge between the extension and the waste ground at the rear of the cemetery had not been cut for a few years and was in need of work to improve its appearance and health. Members agreed to obtain a quotation in the autumn to cut and lay the hedge.

The new contractors had undertaken a litter pick and bin emptying on the first day of the new contract; the rubbish collected indicated that the end of contract work had not been done and Members agreed this should be deducted from the invoice.

There is a lot of bramble growth within the trees and hedges in the cemetery and over graves which had not been cleared despite the order being given to the previous contractors last year. The new contractor said that 3 days spent clearing and cleaning the area would cover the removal of these; Members **AGREED** to pay for 3 days work from the balance of 2006/2007 cemetery budget.

### 396.3 Friends of Brackley Road Cemetery

Members requested that the Chairman of the Friends of Brackley Road Cemetery be invited to make a presentation to the next meeting committee meeting on the visions and aspirations of the group, as a point of information for the Members. The Town Clerk advised Members that any volunteers working on the Town Council land must be organised with the Council controlling the work done, a risk assessment would need to be carried out on all aspects of the work and a health and safety policy agreed prior to start of any work to safeguard the Council as land owners.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK**

## 397/2007 REPORTS ON CHANDOS PARK

### 397.1 Receive notes on Meeting with Chandos Park Bowls Club and consider points raised

Copies of the notes were circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk informed Members that a letter had been received that day from the secretary of the Bowls Club; the Chairman read the letter to the Members. Concern was expressed that the Bowls Club had commissioned work on the green to a cost of £5000 without permission or knowledge of the Council.

Members discussed the notes and the letter. Members felt that the issues concerning the use of public money funding and use of Council facilities would need re-assessing to ensure best value for the people of Buckingham. Greater emphasis would need to be made on the promotion and access by any resident to the facilities in Buckingham; the Tennis Club were already working to provide more public access and community usage.

Members **AGREED** to investigate how other public greens are funded and maintained.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK**

### 397.2 To receive a report on Chandos Park Footpath and agree action to be taken

Members discussed the report and specification which had been circulated with the agenda. It was **AGREED** to go out for tender on the Vehicular Access option.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK**

### 397.3 To receive notification of cost of sprinkler system spring and winter commissioning and agree to authorise work

Members **AGREED** to commission the irrigation system at Chandos Park at a cost of £275 for the spring and autumn work.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK**

## 398/2007      **REPORTS ON BOURTON PARK**

398.1 To receive the response from Buckingham Cricket Club re chopped down trees  
Members noted the letter from Buckingham Cricket Club and asked that the photographs taken by a resident showing the damage be sent to the Club.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK**

## 399/2007      **COUNCIL OFFICES EXTENSION/COUNCIL CHAMBER ALTERATION**

399.1 To receive a report from the Town Clerk and Chairman on the move of the Council meeting room

The Clerk reported that the former AVDC office had been placed with an agent who had found a tenant; therefore this was no longer an option.

Chandos House, School Lane: this had now been let and was not an option.

The Property and Tenancy Manager at BCC has made an appointment to meet the Clerk and the Chairman on 18<sup>th</sup> April: a report will be made to the Full Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> May.

The Community Centre was hired on a Monday but Members asked that the Clerk establish if either Tuesday or Wednesday could be hired to the Town Council (the whole building would be required due to noise levels and confidentiality) and also to establish if the Small Hall could be hired 365 days of the year and the cost. It was pointed out to Members that the kitchen was accessed from the small hall and the narrow passage between the kitchen and the large hall would make it difficult to use.

Members were informed that a building in the Town may soon be coming up for sale. It is large enough to accommodate the Chamber and Offices; the Members would be kept informed.

The Chairman informed the Members of the budget figures provided by the Architect on the proposed extension; Members expressed concern at the actual figures appearing in the minutes and requested that figures remain a verbal report only due to the confidential aspect of the report.

Members discussed the layout of the proposed extension and the need to site the public toilets near to the car park. It was **AGREED** to write to the Community Centre Management Committee and ask if it wanted the storage shown on the plans or whether this area would be better used as public toilets; the Chairman would talk to the architect to see if this was a feasible option.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK/CHAIRMAN**

399.2 To receive a request from Planning Committee (5020.1 05.03.07)

This was deferred to the next meeting depending on the outcome of the above item

## 400/2007      **RECEIVE THE WEEKLY SAFETY REPORTS ON PLAY AREAS**

There were no items to report from the weekly safety checks.

**401/2007 TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL SAFETY REPORT ON PLAY EQUIPMENT AND AGREE ANY ACTION REQUIRED**

Members received the Annual Safety report carried out on the Town Council owned play areas. All items had been a low or medium risk. One area of concern was the climbing ropes at Bourton Park senior play area; the Clerk is to obtain costs for their replacement.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK**

**402/2007 RECEIVE ANY REPORT FROM BUCKINGHAM TOWN AUDIT AND ANY ACTION REQUIRED**

There had been no update on the audit pending a reorganisation following the Town Council elections. The Town Clerk explained about the audit carried out by the Community Plan Group 18 months ago which showed where bins were at that time; unfortunately it did not identify which type of bin was in each location. The audit had been cross referenced with the plan already held by the Town Council of the bins and those that were no longer in place were scheduled for replacement. The audit had identified areas of heavy littering and this had been used along with information received from residents to identify locations for new bins; these areas included Bourton Park, Chandos Park, Badgers Estate, the Skate Park and to the rear of Castle House. Other areas identified by the audit included Stratford Fields which is in the ownership of AVDC - this has had new bins put in by them; the Heartlands which was in the developers hands has now been passed to AVDC, who are reluctant for bins to be installed until the land is transferred to Buckingham Town Council; the land to the rear of the industrial park, much of which is in private ownership - AVDC and BCC have cleared the area under a litter order but it is not practical for the Town Council to put in bins. There are a couple of anomalies in the areas marked which were ignored as it is clear that these were marked in error. The few remaining repaired and new bins will be put out when time permits.

**403/2007 RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE COMMUNITY PLAN INITIATIVES**

Cllr. Collins reported that the work on the first phase was due to start on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2007.

**404/2007 RECEIVE REPORT ON THE WORK UNDER DEVOLVED SERVICES FROM BUCKS COUNTY COUNCIL**

The Clerk reported that the service was working well and appeared to be making a major difference in the Town. Members wished their thanks to the Caretaker Mr Jones to be recorded for all of his hard work. Members informed the Clerk of areas requiring attention they had noticed - this would be put into the system.

**405/2007 TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF THE COST FOR ROUNDABOUT MAINTENANCE AND AGREE SUM FOR REPLANTING FOLLOWING THE CHANGEOVER OF CONTRACTORS.**

Members were given details of the cost of maintaining the roundabouts which was higher than that charged by the previous contractor but there had already been a noticeable difference. Members **AGREED** to pay for the replanting on some of the roundabouts from the 2006/2007 budget up to £500.

**406/2007 TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT POSITION ON THE 2006/2007 BUDGET AND AGREE ANY REALIGNMENT FOR 2007/2008 BUDGET**

A copy of the current figures relating to the Environment and Property budget were circulated prior to the meeting. Members discussed the figures which were provisional year end.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Isham, and **RECOMMENDED** that in view of the termination of the agreement with the Community Centre for the payment for Public Toilets, that the budget code 4079 and 2007/2008 budget of £2600 be transferred to the E & P Committee for the facilitating the provision of public toilets in or near Cornwall's Meadow Car Park.

*The Clerk left the meeting to respond to an urgent phone call.*

**407/2007 CHAIRMANS ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

The following items were dealt with in the Clerks absence:

**407.1 AVDC Charge for contract management**

Members asked that the Clerk investigate the removal of contracts from AVDC and thereby the management tasks; the contracts relate to Chandos Park toilets.

**ACTION THE TOWN CLERK**

**407.2 Request to park in Chandos Park**

A letter had been received just prior to the meeting from the new tennis coach at Buckingham Tennis Club who asked for permission to park his vehicle in the park to enable him to load and unload his equipment. The Clerk advised that this could set a precedent and that there had been complaints in the past as parents have also parked adjacent to the tennis club. Also the right of access across the private road by Chandos Court was limited to contractors and disabled vehicles parking by the Bowls Club. Members gave permission for the tennis coach to park provided he secures the gate and no other vehicle is allowed in.

Meeting closed at **9.59 pm**

CHAIRMAN .....H. Mordue.....DATE .....14 May 2007.....