

**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD
ON MONDAY 16th JUNE 2008 at 7pm**

<u>PRESENT</u>	Councillor	Mrs. G. Collins P. Collins Mrs P. Desorgher P. Hirons D. Isham (Chairman) R. Lehmann G. Loftus A. Mahi H. Mordue (Mayor) Ms. R. Newell M. Smith Mrs. P. Stevens R. Stuchbury W. Whyte for the Town Clerk Mrs K. McElligott
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The Mayor took the chair for the start of the meeting.

558/2008 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Proposed by Cllr. Newell, seconded by Cllr. Desorgher, that Cllr. Isham be Chairman of the Environment & Property Committee;
Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. P. Collins, that Cllr. Smith be Chairman of the Environment & Property Committee;
Members voted by secret ballot and Cllr. Smith was declared elected.

Cllr. Mordue thanked Cllr. Isham for his contribution as Chairman over the past year.

Cllr. Smith took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

559/2008 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Proposed by Cllr. Newell, seconded by Cllr. Loftus, and **AGREED** that Cllr. Isham be Vice Chairman of the Environment & Property Committee.

560/208 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs. T. Bloomfield and M. Try, and Mr. T. Webster.

561/2008 DECLARATION OF INTEREST FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest for items on the agenda.

562/2008 RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members accepted the minutes of the last meeting held on 28th April 2008, which were ratified at the Council meeting held on 2nd June 2008, with the following notes:

- 542 (p1, last paragraph) a list of preferred contractors and consultants;
- 542 (p2, top line) the dog bin had been installed in Badgers Way; the Chairman would report to the Committee when it had been moved to its new location;
- 543e ...hedge work in a traditional manner in the extension;
Cllr. Stuchbury reported that he had looked at the hedge and estimated it would need two days work;
- 543.1 Cllr. Stevens said that she had provided a verbal report to the Town Clerk on the nature of the Picus test before the meeting;
- 551 Cllr. Stuchbury reported that he had been provided with a copy of the 2007 letter to Mr. Chambers by the Town Clerk, and asked that Mr. Chambers be sent a copy as he had never received the original.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

563/2008 RECEIVE ACTION REPORTS AND UPDATES ON ITEMS NOT ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA AS PER ATTACHED LIST

Members noted the action items on the list.

- 380 Path inspection: Cllr. Isham and Cllr. Desorgher would expedite this;
- 494 Chandos Park path: Cllr. Isham indicated that he had not received notification of the meeting. Cllr. Hirons apologised for not responding that he had a prior appointment and Cllr. Whyte felt that the meeting should have been rescheduled for a time when the Councillors were available. When the new meeting date is known, Members recommended that participating Councillors be notified by telephone rather than email;
- 438 Play area fence: The Chairman reported that this work was carried out Thursday 12th June;
- 433.2 New area, Cemetery: Members noted that Mr. Webster was not in the best of health at present;
- 477.1 Cemetery work: Work parties from Grendon Prison were also suggested for this type of task;
- 512 Play area reports: Checking staff use a layman's commonsense approach;
- 526 Chapel roof repair: PDR appointed;
- 527.2 Bowling Club tree: CGM appointed;
- 532 Ford Street: Members felt this should be actioned as soon as possible;
- 542 Dog Warden: There is only one warden for the whole Vale;
- 547 Annual Safety Report: Members felt this should be actioned urgently;
- 548 Enquiries that should be directed to other Authorities: a log will be incorporated into detailed timesheet scheme from 1st July;
- 554 SIDS device: cost c£3000 to purchase plus cost to move to different locations. BCC permission needed for sites.

Members pointed out that there would also be a training cost for the maintenance of the device. Initially the Road Safety Partnership should be contacted for help, and then BCC should be asked for permission for various sites (Western Avenue was suggested). Funding could be considered later in the financial year if it proved necessary.

564/2008 REPORT ON CEMETERY LODGE AND THE OPERATION OF BRACKLEY ROAD CEMETERY.

The Town Clerk had provided a written report which had been circulated with the agenda.

a) Burials: 7 new interments plus 4 memorial requests; no problems to report. The Mayor outlined the revised checking system for receipt of grave-digging instructions agreed with the contractor.

b) Burial Records: Aylesbury Town Council had found some more burial forms files with their documentation

c) Cemetery maps: no Councillors had volunteered to enter details into the software package.

d) Cemetery Wall: the wall had been repaired during the week beginning 2nd June. The contractor had needed to replace two sections of railing instead of the one quoted for.

Proposed by Cllr. Isham, seconded by Cllr. Collins, and **AGREED** to pay the additional £155.

Cllr. Whyte again asked if the cost of repair was claimable on insurance.

TOWN CLERK TO RESPOND

e) Chapel Roof: only 2 of 5 companies approached to quote had done so. The order has been placed with PDR.

f) Horticultural Work: works to large cedar and beech overhanging the road have been carried out, the wood shredded and spread on the flower beds.

The Town Clerk also reported that several people had called into the office to comment favourably on the appearance of the cemetery.

Members discussed the appearance of some of the older graves, some of which had self-sown saplings growing in them, and also the new custom of leaving artefacts, often plastic, on graves. These blew about on windy days, leading to untidiness. The Clerk was asked to look into the possibility of trimming work to make the older graves neater, consulting the ICCM if necessary on the legal aspects. Concern was also expressed that the repairs and maintenance budget for the cemetery was not sufficient; the Chairman said that he would meet the Clerk to discuss budgets as soon as feasible.

ACTION CHAIRMAN/TOWN CLERK

565/2008 REPORTS ON CHANDOS PARK

565.1 Electricity supply, Bowls Club Pavilion

A copy of a letter sent by the Bowls Club to E-on had been circulated with the agenda. Members noted that the Club had the matter in hand.

565.2 Anti-social behaviour in the park

A complaint had been received from a Chandos Road resident about the noisy youths using foul language in the park. Cllr. Whyte also reported similar behaviour behind Fishers Field. Members discussed the matter, noting that it was difficult to balance encouraging the use of the park by young people against the curbing of offensive or intimidating behaviour. The Chairman would bring the problem up at the NAGS meeting; he would also phone the complainant and advise her that a written reply would be issued shortly.

ACTION THE CHAIRMAN/TOWN CLERK

565.3 (552) Transfer of open spaces meeting

The Town Clerk had circulated a written report with the agenda, indicating that the Town Council would not consider taking over the fence unless it was replaced; Chris Nicholls Walk and the adjacent river bank unless they were brought into good order first; the skatepark and Bridge Street Play Area (which are not part of the Heartlands) would not be considered by the Council without full details of maintenance, warranties and life expectancy of the ramps. The AVDC Officers would have to consult with their Members as they had stipulated that the transfer of the Heartlands depended on the Town Council acquiring the fence. The Clerk also asked for Members' opinion on taking over the park gates.

Members discussed the report, commenting that the previous repairs to the riverbank had not lasted and the bank was eroding again, and the pedestrian gate and fittings would need replacing to Members' satisfaction before considering acquisition of the gates. It was pointed out that the access road was private. The Chairman offered to inspect the condition of the gates and report to the next meeting.

ACTION THE CHAIRMAN

Members discussed acquisition in general and suggested that a written policy should be drawn up, to include a business plan. Any further meetings should include a Councillor, and all decisions should be made by the Full Council. Concern was expressed at the slow pace of adoption proceedings, with particular reference to Embleton Way playing field and pavilion.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Stevens, and **AGREED** that a further meeting should be sought, to include both Town and District Councillors, to discuss and settle matters relating to transfer of open spaces and other assets.

565.4 Felling of conifer

Members noted the information supplied by the Town Clerk. The work would be carried out at the appropriate time of year.

565.5 (544.2) Toilets – automatic locking

The Clerk had reported on the difficulties encountered in getting a quote for an appropriate lock. Members suggested contacting neighbouring Councils to find out who had supplied their systems. AVDC had supplied a quote in November 2007.

Proposed by Cllr. Stuchbury, seconded by Cllr. Collins, and **RECOMMENDED** that the Clerk actively seek other quotations; should none be received by the next Full Council then the AVDC quote would be accepted.

565.6 (544.1) Bowling green sprinkler system

Members asked who had reported the further deterioration which indicated that replacement rather than repair was now necessary, and noted that the current system would have to suffice until the closed season. The appointment of a consultant to draw up a brief and performance specification as a basis for quotations was recommended as the office did not have the necessary expertise. Several quotes should be sought. The cost should come from the contingency monies.

Members also noted that public access to the Bowling Green was not yet advertised or easily available, and they felt this should be urgently rectified.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

566/2008 REPORTS ON BOURTON PARK

566.1 (545.2) Car Park speed ramps

Members noted the costs listed in the Town Clerk's report, and discussed the lack of speed bump warning signs in Cornwall's Meadow with respect to whether signs were needed in this car park. Members agreed it was good practice, even if it was not a legal requirement.

Proposed by Cllr. Stevens, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **AGREED** that the speed bump as per the Clerk's report be installed, the cost being met from the amount earmarked for the previous RSJ scheme with the balance from 4601.

The question of whether there should be a liability sign of any sort in the car park also needed to be resolved.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

566.2 Toddler Play Area

Members agreed that the play areas must be fully available for the summer holidays and **AGREED** that, for speedy resolution, the Chairman and Town Clerk could agree the work on the basis of quotations received.

ACTION CHAIRMAN/TOWN CLERK

567/2008 TO RECEIVE THE WEEKLY MAINTENANCE REPORTS AND AGREE ACTION PROPOSED.

Members noted the Town Clerk's report of damage and remedial actions. Concern was expressed that matters noted for action in the Councillors' report produced earlier in the year had not yet been addressed. Members also felt that the park reports should cover all aspects of the parks, not just the play equipment.

568/2008 (548) TO RECEIVE THE BUCKINGHAM TOWN AUDIT

Copies of the latest Town Audit had been circulated to the Members prior to the meeting. Members were informed that the Partnership took care of contacting the 'others' landowners as they had access to that information.

Cllr. Hirons volunteered to take on the audit of the Cornwalls Meadow – Meadow Row area of the audit. The Clerk would supply the necessary background information.

Members agreed that reporting need not be restricted to Councillor's designated areas, and that all Councillors should be able to report faults wherever they were.

BTC Responsibilities:

8. Tree on N. side of War Memorial. Members felt that judicious trimming of the overhanging branches was a Health and Safety issue, particularly with regard to the visually disabled, and that properly conducted work was preferable to inadvertent damage by vehicles.

Cllr. Newell, in her capacity as Tree Warden, would look at the tree and report.

ACTION CLLR. NEWELL

569/2008 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE PARKS POLICY GROUP

Cllr. Whyte had supplied an update to the Policy for circulation at the meeting. The following comments were added:-

a) F8 – Review playground provisions and identify new requirements (main 2008 project) – AVDC's playgrounds would also be looked at;

b) M5 – Park Wardens/Friends of. Cllr. Newell commented that the Friends of Maids Moreton Avenue/Holloway Spinney and Railway Walk organizations had proved very successful;

d) E2 & E3 – Park usage and events - liaise with the Events Committee;

4. Project Leader: Cllr. Mrs. Collins volunteered to take this role. Cllr. Newell would continue to liaise with BTCV;

5. Playground project. Provision for younger teenagers, eg an adventure playground should be included;

6. AVDC had secured funding for leisure facilities which seemed to be earmarked for Aylesbury alone. It was felt that a proportion should be spent in the rest of the Vale.

The dumping of rubble between London Road Bridge and Ford Street (from both sides of the river) was noted. Cllr. Stevens had supplied photographs to the Clerk.

A Risk Assessment for the river bordering the parks was needed, and an assessment of accessibility for all ages and abilities.

Proposed by Cllr. Whyte, seconded by Cllr. Stevens, and **AGREED** that the Policy update be accepted.

570/2008 TO RECEIVE REPORT ON THE WORK UNDER DEVOLVED SERVICES FROM BUCKS COUNTY COUNCIL

Members noted the written report on the work undertaken under Devolved Services supplied by the Town Clerk.

Cllrs. Lehmann and Newell left during the following item.

571/2008 LITTER IN THE TOWN CENTRE

A letter had been received suggesting additional bins in the Town Centre sponsored by the takeaway food outlets.

Members commented that some of AVDC's town centre bins required replacing – they were leaking and staining the stone slabs. Should additional bins be deemed necessary they would have to be strategically placed or removable for the Charter Fair, and they should match the existing bins even if the emptying became the responsibility of the adjacent food outlet.

572/2008 MEETING RE CN&E ACT

Members agreed that a meeting should be arranged: Cllrs. Hiron, Newell, Smith, Stevens, Stuchbury and Whyte would supply the Clerk with 3 or 4 possible dates – a daytime, lunchtime if possible, meeting time being preferred. Cllr. Stuchbury would ask Cllr. Newell to cover for him if he was not available, so that the River Rinse could be discussed.

ACTION NAMED COUNCILLORS

573/2008 FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

Cllrs. Bloomfield and Isham were thanked for carrying out the assessment. Members discussed some of the points raised:

5. Portable electrical appliance (PAT) testing: Cllr. Isham said these had been done. It was suggested that, in future, PAT testing might be done in conjunction with the testing carried out at the Old Gaol.
14. Fire exits: There could be a problem evacuating the Chamber during a full meeting.

Cllr. Whyte also noted inadequate separation between the Community Centre and the Office. This would be rectified when the extension was completed. He also noted that an old version of the form had been used. The Clerk should be able to obtain a copy of the current form.

49 Regular reviewing. In accordance with statutory requirements a procedure should be drawn up for regular review of the Fire Risks.

Members felt that while the FRA for the office was a matter for F&A, similar assessments for other Council properties – Cemetery Lodge & Chapels, Bowls Club Pavilion – were this Committee's remit.

An update would be provided for the next meetings of each Committee.

**F&A AGENDA 7TH JULY 2008
E&P AGENDA 4TH AUGUST 2008**

Cllr. Loftus left the meeting

574/2008 LIAISON TO ENSURE SERVICE DELIVERY

Cllr. Isham felt this was no longer applicable to himself and recommended that the new Chairman make appropriate arrangements with the Town Clerk.

ACTION CHAIRMAN/TOWN CLERK

575/2008 RECOVERY OF SHOPPING TROLLEYS

Members of the Planning Committee had expressed concern that Waitrose trolleys were not lockable or needing a deposit and had asked the Committee to consider a recovery fee for those dumped in the river or parks.

Proposed by Cllr. Mahi, seconded by Cllr. Stuchbury, and **RECOMMENDED** that this Council charge £25 per trolley for recovery and that both Tesco and Waitrose be advised of this.

576/2008 TO RECEIVE REPORT ON THE CURRENT BUDGETS

Members noted that Mr. Gadd had not yet met the Town Clerk to reconcile the Community Plan accounts, and asked that this be expedited.

The Town Clerk was asked to also review the sources of grant funding.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

577/2008 CHAIRMAN'S ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

577.1 Otter Holt, Bourton Park

BTCV had requested permission to install an otter holt near the small footbridge at the river end of the Willow Walk, using branches from one of the willows.

Members agreed subject to information about who was to maintain the holt structure.

577.2 Seat on London Road

Members had been led to understand that this had been installed and enquired why this did not appear to be the case.

ACTION TOWN CLERK

Meeting closed at 10.02 pm

CHAIRMAN DATE