

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment and Property Committee** of Buckingham Town Council held on **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2012** in the Council Chamber, Cornwall's Meadow, Buckingham at 7:00pm.

**Present:** Cllr. T. Bloomfield  
 Cllr. H. Cadd  
 Cllr. P. Collins  
 Cllr. J. Harvey  
 Cllr. P. Hirons  
 Cllr. D. Isham Vice-Chairman  
 Cllr. A. Mahi  
 Cllr. M. Smith Chairman  
 Cllr. R. Stuchbury

**In attendance:** Mr. L. Phillips Green Spaces Manager  
 Mrs. K. McElligott

The tour of Bourton Park was postponed due to the weather.

**201/12 Apologies for Absence**

**RESOLVED** to receive and accept apologies from Cllrs. R. Newell (Mayor), Mrs. L. O'Donoghue and W. Whyte.

**202/12 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**203/12 Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to receive the minutes of the Environment and Property Committee meeting held on Monday 28th May 2012 and approved at Full Council on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

**204/12 Action Reports**

204.1 (66/10) Response from TfB re land at the Bristle Hill/Castle St. corner  
 Members felt that the reply was not definitive and agreed to apply to the Land registry for a copy of their entry. **ACTION GREENSPACES MANAGER**  
 204.2 (211/11) Circular Walk Path: since the wet weather, the cracks had closed somewhat; a watching brief would be maintained.

**205/12 Budgets**

205.1 Roundabout contacts were in the process of being re-negotiated in order to ensure coverage of the ground maintenance costs. Liaison with BCC to find out their roundabout sponsorship fees was advocated to ensure BTC's were appropriately pitched. All the roundabouts currently had sponsors and there was a short waiting list.  
 205.2 203/4063 – it was confirmed that these figures covered the end of the previous van lease and the start of the new one.  
 205.3 256/4053 – Members discussed whether to pay to end the contract for Grenville garage, which is used to store the quad and trailer. The manager at College Farm had been unwilling to take the responsibility of garaging the vehicles in a temporary building. It was agreed that the GSM should look into the costs of

terminating the contract early and seek new, cheaper, secure accommodation.

**ACTION GREENSPACES MANAGER**

**206/12 Bourton Park**

206.1 (77/12; 839/09) Management Plan including a Pond Management Plan

Members were impressed by the thoroughness of the document.

Due to printing problems, it was not clear which bollards were to be retained: the GSM explained that only the ones at the Burleigh Piece entrance were to be kept but all the others served no useful purpose and would be removed.

*Cllr. Collins arrived*

It was agreed that a timeframe for the various projects should be set up to facilitate budgeting.

Cllr. Stuchbury reminded the Committee that TC&E had set aside money from the Youth Budget for the express purpose of updating the Trim Trail; if not used in the forthcoming year it would need to be ring-fenced.

Basketball Court/MUGA. Members asked for information on the age of the court and when the boards were last replaced.

Picnic Benches: these were in a bad state and one had had to be removed altogether due to rottenness. Members discussed whether these could be made up by staff, using railway sleepers. The GSM said that the Council did not have suitable tools at present for such work. It was agreed to purchase benches to be made up by staff, and if these were correctly maintained they should last some time. A suggestion of benches made of aluminium square-section was turned down as not amenable to the rural aspect of the park.

Litter bins: AVDC are also replacing their bins; it was suggested that a combined purchase might result in a lower price. It was agreed that the dog bin AV555 be moved to a more prominent position.

Fencing: the main fence being retained is that round the bonfire paddock; other fences would be retained as hedge cores but allowed to degrade as the hedging grew. Members discussed responsibility for the safety fence by the Mill weir, thinking that it might be an EA matter. The EA would be contacted; if necessary a contribution to the cost could be offered.

Cycle racks: single racks near to groups of picnic tables or the playgrounds were suggested.

Otter & bird sculptures: Members were in favour of artworks suitable to a park setting and advocated contacting the Arts Council to see if there was any kind of scheme to provide these.

The GSM was reviewing the Horticultural Contract for use in 2013; it was suggested that working with the same contractors as AVDC appointed might lead to a lower tender price.

Boat launching stage: a suggestion was made that the bank could be strengthened and hardstanding provided to enable dinghies or canoes to be taken in and out of the river.

**ACTION GREEN SPACES MANAGER**

206.2 (86/12) Verbal update on the Play Area designs

The schools had been consulted and Russell Play's design selected.

**207/12 Chandos Park**

A request had been received for more bins in the park.

A letter would be sent to the enquirer saying that the park bins were being replaced in the near future following the creation of the Chandos Park Management Plan, and the request had been noted.

Cllr. Hirons reported that a lamp-post on London Road on which a litterbin had been fixed had been truncated and the bin had therefore disappeared. It was agreed that the return of the bin be requested and the general unsightliness of the many lamp-post stumps furnished with striped tape in the town complained about.

**ACTION GREEN SPACES MANAGER**

**208/12 Cemetery**

208.1 (77/12; 983/09) To receive costing for a Gravedigger course

Members agreed that, if the gravedigger agreed to go on the course, a document should be signed against the eventuality of his leaving the Council's employment within the next 5 years to recoup the costs of the course pro rata. Board and subsistence costs would be met according to the schedule applicable for Councillors and staff.

For any matters needing resolution before the next meeting, and the sourcing of the budget, Members agreed that the Chairman and GSM be delegated to make the decisions.

**ACTION CHAIRMAN/GREEN SPACES MANAGER**

208.2 (79/12) verbal update on the paths

The excavations and base layer would be started on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July and a contractor would lay the tarmac.

208.3 (80/12) To receive costings and agree a contractor for the removal of trees recommended by Cunningham Lindsay

**RECOMMENDATION AGREED**

208.4 (81/12) To receive and agree wording for the plaque for the IW tree in the Garden of Remembrance: *In commemoration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee June 2012. From the Inner Wheel Club of Buckingham.*

Members agreed the wording but suggested that the second sentence be in a smaller face.

**ACTION GREEN SPACES MANAGER**

**209/12 Sports Facilities Survey**

The report from the Town Clerk was discussed; Members noted that neither the Tennis nor the Bowls Clubs had mentioned they leased their premises from the Town Council. However it was a good evidence-based survey and identified the shortfall in facilities. It might be possible to overlap requirements by pitch-sharing.

**RECOMMENDATION AGREED**

**210/12 Buckingham Canal Society**

To receive for information the 2011 Annual Report

Members expressed concern that the application for planning permission referred to had not been seen by this Council though the stretch designated for re-watering was in the parish. *[Note: The application had been registered as being in Leckhampstead parish and permission granted in May]*

**211/12 Buckingham Community Wildlife Project**

Cllr. Newell had sent word that there had been no BCWP meeting since the last meeting of the Committee. BCWP would be placed on alternate agendas in future to match the pattern of meetings.

**212/12 Green Buckingham Group-** Minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2012. Noted. The next meeting of the group was scheduled for the following week.

**213/12 News releases**  
It was agreed to publicise the Bourton Park Management Plan.

**214/12 Chairman’s Announcements**

214.1 The assistant groundsman had given notice and would leave in August. The post would be advertised as soon as possible. Members agreed that he would be hard to replace and regretted his leaving.

214.2 (82/12) Removal of Bridge Street play area and installation of new play area on the Heartlands.

An email received from Joe Houston that day had listed the reasons for moving the play area, and attached an article to be placed in the Newsletter.

Members reiterated their opposition to removing the Bridge Street play area – it was convenient and visible – and pointed out that the land use was subject to a covenant restricting it to leisure use. Furthermore the public access to the former swimming pool (effectively the skate park area) was protected by a byelaw, so bollarding the roadway would contravene this. It was not clear what AVDC intended for the play area following the removal of the equipment.

Further information would be sought and a meeting could then be arranged with appropriate officers. The meeting would be minuted and the minutes brought back to the Committee with the additional information.

Members debated whether the Town Council’s Newsletter should be the vehicle for public notification and soliciting of comments for an AVDC scheme, pointing out that AVDC had a publication of its own that went to all households. Cllr. Harvey (Chairman, Communications Strategy Group) noted that the Newsletter was for Town Council matters, and issues affecting Buckingham that the Town Council had an interest in. It was suggested that a flyer could be inserted into the next Newsletter if AVDC paid for its printing and insertion. The matter could be discussed at the meeting of the Communications Strategy Group scheduled for Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> July. No decision could be made under this agenda heading, but the minutes would be brought to the Full Council and agreement reached then.

**ACTION COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY GROUP**

**215/12 Date of Next Meeting.**

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2012; the Chairman noted that he would not be able to attend.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm

Chairman..... Date.....