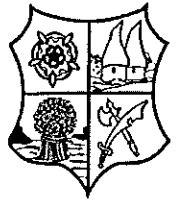


ALTON Town Council



Telephone (01420) 83986
www.alton.gov.uk
info@alton.gov.uk

Town Hall
Market Square
Alton
Hampshire
GU34 1HD

Town Clerk: Mrs Leah Coney

7th November 2018

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to a **meeting of the OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE** in the Town Hall, Market Square, Alton on **Wednesday 14th November 2018** when the under mentioned business will be transacted.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Leah Coney
Town Clerk

To: Members of the Open Spaces Committee

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|---------------|
| Councillor Graham Hill | - | Chairman |
| Councillor Pam Jones | - | Vice Chairman |
| Councillor Sharon Cullen | | |
| Councillor Bisi Kennard | | |
| Councillor Derek Gardner | | |
| Councillor James Voller | | |

Copied to: All other Councillors for information

**ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE –14th NOVEMBER 2018
AT THE TOWN HALL, MARKET SQUARE, ALTON**

AGENDA

- 1 Chairman's announcements
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Minutes of previous meeting held on 25th July 2018
- 4 Declarations of Interests & Requests for Dispensations
- 5 Questions from members of the public for any item not on the agenda.
- 6 Grounds Team Report
- 7 Allotments Report
- 8 Jubilee Skate Park
- 9 Update Reports
 - a. Will Hall Farm – Lower Field
 - b. Management Plans for Kings Pond & Flood Meadows
 - c. Jubilee Fields Replacement Pavilion.
 - d. Land at Treloar Heights and Treloar Hospital.
 - e. Wey Walk Signage (for decision)
- 10 To Receive Meeting Notes
 - a. Footpath Wardens
 - b. Walkers are Welcome

The next meeting of the Open Spaces Committee is scheduled for 27th February 2019

**ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 25th JULY 2018
AT JUBILEE SKATE PARK AT 4.00pm & KING'S POND AT 5pm**

Present: **Councillor Graham Hill** - **Chairman**
 Councillor Sharon Cullen
 Councillor Pam Jones
 Councillor Bisi Kennard

In attendance: **Mrs Leah Coney** - **Town Clerk**

4 members of the public (at Jubilee Fields)
4 members of the public (at King's Pond)

67 Chairman's announcements

The Chairman made the following standard announcements:

68 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors James Voller & Derek Gardner.

69 Declarations of interest

The Chairman reminded members of their obligation to disclose any pecuniary interest in items on the agenda. None were declared.

70 To consider any requests for Dispensation to allow councillors with pecuniary interests to speak and vote

No requests were tabled.

71 Questions and representations from Members of the Public

There were no specific questions raised as the public were invited to fully participate in the two subsequent agenda items.

72 Jubilee Skate Park

Councillors discussed with skate park users the merits and issues around the current skatepark. The primary concerns were around the issue of having metal surfacing which caused glare on occasion and at this time of year was very hot to skate on (or fall on!) It was felt that concrete was a better surface and whilst it takes longer to bed in as it can be quite shiny to start with in the longer term it presents less issues for skaters and riders and less maintenance challenges. There was discussion over utilising the slope of the bank better and installing sleepers to be used for seating.

Additionally, when the equipment was first installed many years ago, it was considered quite challenging whereas today it is not and therefore is not necessarily fit for purpose. It was pointed out that the skatepark at Anstey was designed for younger more inexperienced users and that the one at Jubilee should offer more difficulty and if the facilities were improved, it

would lend itself to having regular events and become more of a hub like the parks at Farnham and Bordon. One resident said that she felt it could have a wider appeal for the town and bring in footfall; at the moment she takes her son to the stake park in Bordon and goes to do her shopping in town before picking him up again.

It was suggested that councillors might like to look at the skatepark in Winchester and “Sol Jole” in Reading as well as Farnham and Reading to see some good examples of successful parks.

Users also pointed out that there are some issue with the skatepark at Anstey Park as some of the concrete needs remedial work where some cracks have appeared in the surfacing

Those attending the meeting said they would be happy to assist in inputting to a task and finish working group to progress this.

Councillors then discussed how to proceed. It was suggested that a task and finish working group be created from interested parties to consider design and layout, invite suppliers to quote and then through a public consultation chose the preferred design to submit to open spaces at the next meeting. Developers’ contributions and CIL monies were identified as being available for this project but potential contractors would also be asked to look at funding options.

On the proposal of Councillor Jones seconded by Councillor Hill it was

RESOLVED to

Approve in principle to progress the replacement of the skatepark at Jubilee and the improvement of the skatepark at Anstey Park in accordance with the timeline detailed above, using a task and finish working group to report back to Open Spaces at the next meeting.

73 Kings Pond Management Plan

The Town Clerk highlighted to Councillors a number of items on the colour coded maintenance programme for consideration during a walk of the site.

Residents strongly complained at the installation of the safety rail at the first feeding station, stating it was out of keeping and wrecked the view over the water. The Town Clerk explained that it was installed over the winter as a safety measure due to the erosion of the tarmac at the water’s edge to ensure people did not get too close. It was felt that wooden railings would be a false economy as they would rot out easily. It was pointed out that people can get to the water’s edge at a number of other locations without rails; the Clerk noted that as this one is tarmacked dedicated feeding station and on a slope, the Council is effectively inviting the public to use this area for feeding the birds so it should be safe.

Members asked the Clerk to look at adding a 90degree return rail at the end of the fence to stop people going around the barrier to access the water whether it could be painted to help tone down the visual impact. In addition and in accordance with the management plan, to infill the eroded area with chalk and woodchip to make good as well as undertaking a repair to the tarmac on the main path where there was some minor erosion and look to see if an additional soakaway might be installed to stop further erosion of the tarmac path.

Members suggested that the signage advising people in respect of feeding the ducks have white infill painting on the lettering to make the advice stand out better. They also wished to install two cycle “hoops” by the main car park.

The committee then moved around the pond to the far “car park” by the bridge alongside the embankment. The management plan asked for consideration of what should be done with this area which has informally started to be used for parking. Members felt it was not suitable as a car park given the sight line issues on exiting back onto the road and directed the Clerk to close this area off with bollards, including one drop down bollard for access by the Grounds Staff. In addition they requested the removal of the bollard which had been hit by a vehicle and the clearance of the drain by the entrance signage. It was recommended that a bicycle “hoop” be placed in this location along with a new litter bin.

Moving along the path running beside the embankment Members agreed that this path should be the priority path for resurfacing up to and including the feeding station on this side. It was also noted that a small amount of additional infilling was required by the water’s edge at this feeding station.

Members then completed their site walk heading back around towards the main car park.

There being no other items raised, the meeting finished at 6.02 p.m.

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL

OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE – 14th NOVEMBER 2018

GROUND'S TEAM REPORT FOR INFORMATION PREPARED BY THE FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION MANAGER

The Grounds Team have, since it last reported on 26th April undergone many changes including operating under its summer working regime following the clocks going forward in March.

1. Sports:

The Rugby Club and Alton Town Council have spent a substantial amount of money and a lot of time undertaking the agreed renovation and remedial works on the rugby pitches and rugby training area; financed by a combination of successful grant funding from the Rugby Club as well as from the clubs finances together with Alton Town Council grounds maintenance budget. The result of this investment is yet to be realised being year 1 of a 3 year strategy to improve drainage. Phase 2 of 2 for this year was completed in September.

The weather will always be a factor and play its part in cancellation of games, but apart from the first weekend of the season, fingers remain cross that at the time of writing we have not lost games due to ground conditions.

1.1 Football & Rugby

1. Football fixtures resumed for the 2018/19 season at both Jubilee and Anstey Park the weekend of 22nd/23rd September; a week later than usual but was due to the extension of the cricket season by one week.

Anstey Park continues to host both football and rugby and it is pleasing to report that extensive use of the Diggers area is being made by both sports.

Anstey Park – bookings being taken for both rugby and football with a total of 3 rugby pitches available and 2 football pitches which are dedicated to the respective sports. Rugby Pitches 3 and 4 are multi use and can either be used for junior touch rugby or U7 and U9 football. All pitches are marked out ready for use and multi pitches designated for marking as determined by booking requirements.

2. The grounds team also undertook initial marking out of a football pitch for Shalden Parish Council on a contract basis.

1.2 Cricket

1. Cricket wickets have now been “put to bed” for the winter – all on time and in line with established maintenance routines.

2. Side screens to be checked and maintenance carried out as required in collaboration with the Cricket Club.
3. Preliminary reports coming from Hampshire is that Jubilee has retained its Gold Standard but this is subject to formal confirmation due in November.

1.3 Community Courts Facility at Anstey Park

1. The refurbished community courts were successfully opened on time and were well received by the community; however there were delays to the fixtures and fittings in terms of the shelter.
2. Disappointingly anti-social behaviour led to the shelters being severely damaged within one week of installation and have been removed and the courts were locked off for a period of one week following broken bottles being thrown across the courts and specialist cleaning being required.
3. The courts remain available with flood lights every day of the week (until 10pm) when the flood lights turn off
4. Remedial repair work has been carried out to the concrete skate park.

2. Maintenance of Open Spaces

2.1 Tree & Hedge Cutting Works

- Contractor engaged to undertake hedge cutting with the autumn works agreed in September at Jubilee, Anstey, Holybourne and Greenfields Amenity Land, Kings Pond and Hawthorns Allotments.
- Tree works continue to be undertaken in accordance with current tree surveys.

2.2 Hard Standings and Paths & Fencing

- Jubilee - Re-instatement of chestnut fencing required alongside the skate park as area is exposed to the adjacent roadside remains outstanding and the grounds team are currently looking to schedule this work within the next month. This work will be a requirement for the proposed new skate park.
- Flood Meadows –further path edging will recommence in the autumn/winter period as part of the grounds team’s winter regime.
- Kings Pond –work planned to be undertaken which includes path refurbishment along the railway line side of the pond and removing the parking area at Lower Turk Street in line with the Kings Pond Management Plan.

2.3 Fertilizer – application of other ground conditioning

Contractor engaged for application of fertilizer and weed control at Anstey Park and Jubilee which took place at end of September.

2.4 Autumn/Winter Grounds Works

- The cutting of the council’s open spaces continues due to the exceptionally mild autumn. The last cut of The Butts took place the week of 29th October and Kings Pond and Flood Meadows also having their last cut of the year.
- Windmill Hill paths have been cut and hopefully will not require a re-cut until next April. The re-instatement of the ground following the completion of the pipe laying scheme has taken place although access to all areas will remain restricted by the

post and rail fencing remaining in situ for the time being. The council continues to be in discussion with the Dalcour contractor as to timing for the removal of fencing.

2.5 Pavilions and Compounds

Anstey Park:

- the Park & Stride path along the eastern edge of The Drive at Anstey Park has been completed and is regularly used by local school children (as was its aim).
- all repairs to Finnimore have been completed following burst pipe damage sustained earlier in the year.

Jubilee Playing Fields: Charles Read & Harry Baker

- Internal and external refurbishment work completed on the Charles Read by grounds team. External wood treatment only has been undertaken at the Harry Baker; however repairs to guttering and roof identified have not yet been undertaken.

Public Gardens

- Please refer to projects re Parterre Garden and Miss Belles fountain

3. Play Areas:

Three levels of inspection are undertaken comprising of a visual weekly inspection by grounds team, trained to carry out task. This is underpinned by independent contractor who inspects each site and produces monthly report to the Grounds Administration who acts upon recommendations. Six monthly independent inspection is also carried out by Allianz.

3.1 Public Gardens

Due to the cost prohibitive quote received to replace the surrounding wooden fencing with powder coated metal – repairs to the wooden fencing will continue to be undertaken.

3.2 Jubilee Skate Park

Please refer to separate report.

3.3 Northanger

The BMX bike “mounds” have been strimmed to allow use of the area for the purpose for which it was designed.

3.4 Barley Fields

New play area installation been very well received, and due to the dry summer there have been no water logging issues at this site. The play area is well used and proving a very popular addition to the area.

4. Projects:

4.1 Windmill Hill – South East Water project

Pipe laying work has been completed and land re-instatement has taken place. Fencing remains in place. Officers remain in dialogue with the contractors and there are no issues.

4.2 Parterre Garden & Miss Belles Fountain

All completed and officially opened in June with a small ceremony officiated by the Mayor. Friends and family of those remembered with the planting of a rose were invited to attend.

5. Maintenance – Vehicles & Machinery:

5.1 All 3 vehicles (2 pick-ups and small van) are now on a programmed maintenance regime and serviced in accordance with manufacturers recommendations. Daily logs are completed by driver of vehicles in accordance with internal processes and defects raised with Grounds administrator as soon as identified.

5.2 Machinery currently awaiting being booked in for winter servicing to ensure they are ready for the summer cutting season due to the extended grass cutting season. Smaller pieces of equipment such as push mowers, blowers and strimmer's have been renewed as invariably it is non-financially economical to repair.

6. Grounds Team Personnel:

There have been a number of personnel changes within the team. The Grounds Manager resigned in July to take up a new grounds opportunity and in August we saw one of our longer serving members of the team take early retirement. This allowed one of our former apprentices being employed as a permanent member of the grounds team predominately being based in the Public Gardens.

The grounds team continue to operate under the direction of the Finance & Administration Manager with regular weekly meetings undertaken with the two Senior Groundsmen and the Grounds Administrator.

The committee is invited to note this report.

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE – 14th NOVEMBER 2018

ITEM 7: ALLOTMENTS UPDATE

FOR INFORMATION

1. With the transition of responsibilities from within the Town Hall team; following the last inspections undertaken at the end of the growing season (October) a number of termination letters have been issued. The current position is detailed in the accompanying Supplementary Papers
2. Renewal letters are due to start being sent out week commencing 5th November and the letters will confirm that payment for renewing must be received by 31st December 2018. There will be no reminders issued and the Allotment Association have been asked to assist the process by displaying notices to this effect to act as a reminder to plot holders. By doing this it will allow ATC to have an up to date view of the number of plots that can be offered which will include those as listed on the attached and any whereby tenants are relinquishing and not renewing. We can then ensure that in January offer letters are issued to those on the waiting list.

However, between now and the end of the year, the Town Council will be writing out to all those on the waiting list to gauge whether they still wish to remain on the list and advise that there will be a number of plots becoming available in January 2019. By doing this it should alleviate the problems of plots being offered and no response which has caused a number of frustrations this year and a breakdown of communications.

We will also be asking all tenants to provide us with e-mail contact details if they have them as this method of communication is far more effective and less time consuming and costly than post.

3. Tenants not wishing to renew will be advised that they are to clear their plots of everything they wish to retain prior to 1st January as, from that date the Grounds Team will be clearing everything and making plots ready for new tenants.

ITEM 8: JUBILEE SKATEPARK

FOR INFORMATION

This item was reported fully to Full Council on 17th October with comprehensive details presented on the response to the Invitation to Tender issued, the evaluation process undertaken, references taken up and the recommendation put forward by officers. Full council resolved to approve the appointment of a contractor to design and install the new Skate Park at Jubilee, subject to the securing of funding and/or any required planning permissions (Minute 128 refers).

A meeting then took place with the contractor and the Skate Park Steering Group on the 29th October to undertake design and layout work, receive an update on funding applications made by the group and to look at the scheduling of public consultation. It is anticipated that there will be drop in session to consult young people at Alton College later this month to consider the proposed layout and seek feedback and comments on any other aspects of the project. There will also be a stall at the Yuletide weekend to attract further comments and encourage people to complete a short on-line survey with their views. It is anticipated that the Steering Group will then reconvene in January to finalise the design in light of the feedback received.

1 Will Hall Farm – Lower Field (Information)

Further to the report to this Committee in February 2018, dialogue has remained open with Redrow homes in respect of the future use and management of the lower field at the Will Hall Farm development. As previously reported, as per the Reserved Matters, Redrow have to undertake all works as detailed in the landscaping scheme which they have confirmed they will do. It was also noted that there is no commuted sum stipulated in the S106 agreement for future maintenance of the land. It was agreed by Members that the management of the area including the SUDS required a high level of knowledge of flood management; a skill not currently held within the council.

Redrow, through continued dialogue with the Committee Chairman Councillor Hill, subsequently approached the Town Council with a proposal that the Town Council be gifted an area commencing 8m to the south of the River Wey up to the boundary with the road. The offer was made on the basis that this area will have a comparatively “lighter touch” maintenance regime and will not hold any responsibility for the river or the drainage and SUDS on site. This would enable the Council to control the path which would be the commencement of the Wey Walk, which could then be dedicated as a right of way and create a new piece of public open space for the town.

A site meeting was held on Wednesday 7th November with the Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman in attendance. The meeting party looked at the landscaping plans, the trees within the proposed area, access to the site and how the Wey Walk could tie in with a pedestrian refuge at the junction with Lenten Street; given the low lying nature of the corner of the site there was also discussion over whether board walks may be a more viable solution than a bound gravel pathway.

Costings for maintenance are being calculated and it is anticipated that a formal proposal to adopt the land will be presented to Full Council at the next meeting.

2 Management Plans for Kings Pond & Flood Meadows (Information)

A Steering Group Meeting was held on the 15th October. Enclosed in Supplementary Bundles is the updated Action plan to which was considered at the meeting. The major item of note is that the main path at King’s Pond will be resurfaced early summer next year (the self-binding gravel has to be laid in more than 20 degrees!) and it is hoped to undertake resurfacing works of the subsidiary paths at Flood Meadows at the same time.

3 Jubilee Fields Replacement Pavilion (Information)

This project is currently awaiting the release of funds from the Will Hall Farm development before proceeding. It is anticipated at this stage than the commencement of the project by way of securing planning and any additional required funding will take place following the completion of works to the skate park during 2019.

4 Land at Treloar Heights and Treloar Hospital. (Information)

In respect of the small areas of open space at Treloar Heights the land transfer with Persimmon is proceeding through the Town Council’s appointed solicitor. It has recently been confirmed that the roads on the estate have now been formally adopted by Hampshire County Council and it is anticipated that completion of the transfer of the open space to the Town Council will be concluded at the end of next month.

There has been no further discussion as yet with Crest Nicolson in respect of the public open space at the former Treloar Hospital site but any proposals coming forward in due course will be considered by this committee and Full Council.

5 Wey Walk Signage (for decision)

Further to the financial contribution given to the Wey Walk in 2017 by Councillor Glynis Watts, this money was earmarked in reserves until required. Quotes have now been obtained for to sign the whole of the route with the exception of the stretch of path through the brewery site.

Please note: As a temporary measure EHDC have erected temporary signs on the public highway which divert people around the site; we are aware that one of these has been misplaced and needs moving (by King's Pond)

The signage which includes the Wey Walk Logo is included in Councillors Supplementary bundles and Members are requested to approve the release of funds for the double and single finger posts, way markers and stickers. Three companies were approached for signage, two responded and the most competitive, was priced as follows:

20 Double finger posts @ £ 243.12 each

2 Single finger posts @ £173.04 each

10 Way markers @ £ 92.38 each

This totals £6,128.86. A notional £50 is also requested for any areas which require discs rather than markers due to constraints in positioning.

The remaining monies from Councillor Watts will be held in reserves for use at a later date for surfacing, information leaflets and interpretation panels.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to approve the purchase of the signage for the Wey Walk drawing down £6,178.86 of the £15,000 granted by Councillor Glynis Watts.