

The following representations had been received in writing with details published with the agenda papers

1. David Murdock providing his feedback and observations on Kings Pond having attended the Bio Blitz held in June of this year. **The Committee noted the content adding that many of the points raised were on the agenda for consideration this evening**
2. Mr. McGowen: the riding of e-scooters in public open spaces. **In response the Chair wished to advise that as this was the only complaint received, officers would continue to monitor the situation and report back to the Committee accordingly.**
3. Ms Ford: the locking of the Public Gardens. **The Committee would note the comments made and if there was an appetite from the public for a change to the locking hours for the Public Gardens this could be reviewed.**
4. Mr. Furnival commending the grass cutting regime at Kings Pond. **The Committee noted the representation.**
5. Barbara Tansey: thanking the council for erecting the awning in the Public Gardens which had proved very popular. **The Town Clerk had already confirmed that the awning will remain in situ until the end of September 2021.**
6. Two individual residents complaining about the number of rats at Kings Pond. **The question of rats at Kings Pond is to be addressed under Agenda item 7a (Minute reference 106.1 refers.**
7. A further representation from Mr. Furnival had been received late this afternoon which had been circulated to the Committee members, but was summarised by the Town Clerk as not all councillors had had an opportunity to read prior to the meeting. **The Committee wished to thank Mr. Furnival for his detailed observations but given the lateness of its arrival this afternoon, councillors had not had the opportunity to consider.**
8. Mr. Quincey asked when the tree works were to be undertaken at Kings Pond given that the path remains closed. **The Town Clerk confirmed 8th September as a commencement date, weather permitting.**
9. Mr Quincey enquired as to why as Kings Pond is owned by Alton Town Council that it does not undertake enforcement on the site in respect of dogs on leads. **The Chair referred Mr. Quincey to the Agenda for this evening's meeting relating to dogs on leads.**

105 Lions Bench

A request had been received from Sarah O'Donoghue that she further address the Committee on behalf of the Alton Lions Club in respect of the location approved that the bench to be located at Anstey Park towards Diggers (Minute reference 28 refers). Sarah wished the committee to reconsider placement at either the Assembly Rooms Law, The Butts or Flood Meadows as members were unable to identify a location at Anstey Park. A photograph of the bench measuring 3.3m was circulated to members. Given that it is a large bench with ornate large arms Members felt that none of the alternative locations were appropriate. It was agreed that a site meeting is to be undertaken at Anstey Park to revisit this option with officer and member representatives, the installer of the bench and members of the Lions to agree an exact location suggested to be in the vicinity of the Oak Tree near pitch 4 in Anstey Park.

NOTED

106 Current Projects

The Committee received updates on current projects underway:

106.1 Kings Pond

106.1.1 Rats

Members had received updates from the Town Clerk in response to the public concerns at the rat infestation at Kings Pond and further investigations carried out in order to establish a protocol for dealing with the growing concerns of the public and options available to try and control the number of rats at the site. A number of options were considered by the Committee with the deployment of traps and the temporary stopping of feeding by the public as preferred choice. This would be undertaken with pest control contractors and utilising the services of the EHDC Enforcement Team to assist on site with messaging and in an educational capacity to advise the public on the measures being taken and why. The impact of the measures to be reviewed at the next meeting.

On the proposal of Councillor Graham Hill, seconded by Councillor Ginny Boxall it was

RESOLVED to amend the recommendation before the Committee to include:

- 1. Erect signage advising the public that feeding of the wildfowl is temporarily prohibited**
- 2. Support the deployment of EHDC Enforcement/ Environmental Health patrols for a period of 8 weeks with educational leaflets being handed out which would be reviewed to effectiveness of the education programme.**
- 3. Approving the deployment of rat traps with immediate effect.**

All councillors voted in favour

On the proposal of Councillor Suzie Burns, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill it was

RESOLVED to :

- 1. Erect signage advising the public that feeding of the wildfowl is temporarily prohibited**
- 2. Support the deployment of EHDC Enforcement/ Environmental Health patrols for a period of 8 weeks with educational leaflets being handed out which would be reviewed to effectiveness of the education programme.**
- 3. Approving the deployment of rat traps with immediate effect.**

All councillors voted in favour

106.1.2 BioBlitz at King's Pond

In Members Bundles were the results of the BioBlitz observations undertaken at the June event at Kings Pond. A correction had been made to the number of swans recorded as there are only 3 and not 4 at the pond. There was no evidence of mink identified. Two experts had expressed concern at the "beyond control" number of Canada Geese at the site causing increased aggressive behaviours from the birds and a potential public health

risk. Members received a paper from English Heritage on the management of Canada Geese in parks and open spaces noting the issues around vegetation damage, excessive droppings and aggression resulting from increasing overpopulation.

Members considered options for controlling numbers including egg oiling under DEFRA Licence, relocation of some of the geese population, again under Licence (translocation) or undertaking culling of the wildlife population.

Members felt that culling would only be considered as a last resort. Population numbers would continue to be monitored through the winter as a number of the birds are migratory in nature, to see how many remain on site. With the temporary ban on feeding this may also encourage additional numbers to migrate or relocate.

On the proposal of Councillor Ginny Boxall, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill it was

RESOLVED to

- 1. Approve egg oiling (under DEFRA licence) in the Spring of 2022.**
- 2. Explore translocation of the geese population**
- 3. Culling of the numbers would be considered only as a last resort measure should other measures not be effective.**

All councillors voted in favour

106.1.3 Remedial Path Works

The remedial path works undertaken had been completed.

NOTED

106.1.4 Environment Agency

The Town Clerk confirmed the initial meeting with the Environment Agency had been undertaken, but she was still awaiting a response on the question of remote monitoring of the water level. The Committee requested that the Town Clerk follow this up with the Agency to ensure an update for the next meeting of this committee had been received.

NOTED

106.1.5 Grass Cutting

Members were requested to review the grass cutting regime in place for Kings Pond. On the proposal of Councillor Suzie Burns, seconded by Councillor Ginny Boxall it was

RESOLVED to

Confirm that the current grass cutting regime for Kings Pond is to remain in place but with the addition for 2022 that areas around the benches and the boundary paths are mown during the season. A cut and collect will take place in September 2021 and 2022.

All councillors voted in favour

106.1.6 Dogs on Leads

Members were requested to review a modification be made to the PSPO by EHDC to include all dogs to be on a lead and/or under close control at all times/during the bird nesting season at Kings Pond. On the proposal of Councillor Suzie Burns, seconded by Councillor Sharon Cullen it was

**RESOLVED to
Request a modification to the PSPO by EHDC to state that
all dogs must be kept on a lead at Kings Pond and/or under
close control at all time.**

All councillors voted in favour

106.1.7 Trees at Kings Pond

Members at the last meeting of the Open Spaces Committee Resolved to undertake some works around the island (Area A) but to defer a decision on Areas B & C (Minute reference 29.2.4 refers) whilst expert views were sought as to whether the trees in these areas should be removed or remain in situ for biodiversity for both wildlife and fish. The response from the Environment Agency recommended leaving in situ until such time as any tree detached itself from the bank.

On the proposal of Councillor Suzie Burns, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill it was

**RESOLVED that the trees in Areas B and C are to remain
in situ and that no further works in these areas is required
at this time.**

All councillors voted in favour

106.2 Holybourne Pond

An update was provided on a meeting which had taken place between Councillor Graham Hill, John Rapley from the Holybourne Association and tree surveyor, Ben Abbatt on 6th August and the Tree Survey Report is awaited.

NOTED

106.3 Dementia Friendly Space – Public Gardens

Members were provided with an update on the Dementia Friendly Space project in the Public Gardens. Local MP Damien Hinds will be officially opening the Dementia Friendly Space on Saturday, 4th September at 1.30 p.m.

The Committee wished to commend the NCS Youth Project team for the exceptional work and assistance provided by them in painting the benches and refurbishing the sensory garden planters.

NOTED

106.4 Will Hall Farm Lower Field

An update from the Town Clerk had been included in Members bundles who had undertaken a site walk in July with representatives from Redrow Homes, Councillor Burns and Charles Kaye (Amery Hill Residents Association). Handover of the site is due imminently once remedials have been completed.

NOTED

107 Grounds Team Report

The Grounds Team Report was tabled.

NOTED

108 Allotments Report

The Allotments Report was tabled.

NOTED

109 The Butts Interpretation Panel

The Committee received a report for the installation of an informative interpretation panel on The Butts similar in design to that installed for the tank trap at the other end of The Butts.

On the proposal of Councillor Ginny Boxall, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill it was

RESOLVED to

Approve the installation of an interpretation panel at the Butts to inform people of the history of this piece of common land, the Fair Charter upon it and other interesting information. The Interpretation Panel to be installed adjacent to the seat at the Butts Bridge end of the site.

All councillors voted in favour

110 Vendors on Open Spaces

Following the successful trial of a vendor operating in the Public Gardens over the summer and ad hoc at Anstey Park over the last 18 months, Members agreed that with the addition of Jubilee Playing Fields an Invitation to Tender being issued to secure a trader at these locations for the following 12 months. The evaluation of submissions to be made at the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting scheduled for 13th October 2021. Members wished to include that tenderers should provide photographic evidence of their proposal which should be aesthetically pleasing, that it would be only one unit per site, with drinks and cold snacks only at the Public Gardens and hot and cold drinks and snacks at Anstey Park and Jubilee Fields and that they made best efforts to provide a low carbon facility. As part of the evaluation process, previous experience of trading in a public open space would be a consideration.

On the proposal of Councillor Ginny Boxall, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill it was

RESOLVED to

Approve the publication of an Invitation to Tender to trade in the Public Gardens, Anstey Park and Jubilee Playing Fields for the following 12 months. The evaluation to be undertaken by the Policy & Resources Committee at their next scheduled meeting to be held on 13th October 2021.

All councillors voted in favour

111 Friends of Kings Pond and Friends of the River Wey Terms of Reference and Next Steps

On the proposal of Councillor Suzie Burns, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill it was

RESOLVED to

- 1. Approve the Terms of Reference as appended to the Minutes of this meeting.**
- 2. The appointment of: Councillor Gideon Cristofoli to the Friends of Kings Pond and Councillor Pam Jones to the Friends of the River Wey.**
- 3. The offer of a workshop for the newly formed Friends of Kings Pond to be extended which is to take place before the end of October 2021.**

All councillors voted in favour

112 Friends Groups Storage Facilities

Members were requested to consider much needed secure storage facilities for the Friends groups of both Kings Pond and Flood Meadows

On the proposal of Councillor Suzie Burns, seconded by Councillor Graham Hill it was

RESOLVED to

Approve the purchase of a secure metal storage facility for both Kings Pond and Flood Meadows Friends Groups up to a total of £2,500 to include the purchase of additional tools if funds permitted.

All councillors voted in favour

113 Kings Pond and Flood Meadows Management Plan Review

On the proposal of Councillor Graham Hill, seconded by Councillor Ginny Boxall it was

RESOLVED to

Approve the creation of an Invitation to Tender for the review of the Kings Pond and Flood Meadows Management Plans ready for commissioning in 2022.

All councillors voted in favour

114 Permanent Closure of Through Road Anstey Park

With the near completion of the installation of traffic lights at the junction of Anstey Lane with Anstey Road, members were requested to consider the installation of a permanent closure of the through road at Anstey Park to avoid it becoming a “rat run” for those wishing to avoid the traffic lights queues at peak times and the potential increased road safety concerns of users of the park including school children (park and stride). On the proposal of Councillor Suzie Burns, seconded by Councillor Sharon Cullen it was

**RESOLVED to
Approve the installation of planters to replace the barriers currently in place at Anstey Park to provide a semi-permanent closure of the through road at Anstey Park**

All councillors voted in favour

115 Resurfacing of Anstey Park Entrance

Further to the Town Clerk’s discussions with James Laver at Hampshire County Council it has been proposed that the on-site contractors could be undertaken pothole and tarmac remedial works at the southern access from Anstey Road to Anstey Park for a cost of £6,500. On the proposal of Councillor Sharon Cullen, seconded by Councillor Ginny Boxall it was

**RESOLVED to
Approve the carriageway and pothole repairs to the Anstey Road entrance to the path at a cost of up to £6,500 to be taken from the maintenance budget for Anstey Park**

All councillors voted in favour

116 Windmill Hill Memorial Toposcope

The sister of the late Robert Athis had approached the council seeking permission to install a memorial Toposcope in remembrance of her late brother who was a well-known member of Alton’s walking community and the creator of the Six Hills of Alton walk. The Toposcope to be designed and custom made by local company Kemp and Stevens and will be provided at no cost to the Town Council.

On the proposal of Councillor Suzie Burns, seconded by Councillor Ginny Boxall it was

**RESOLVED to
Approve the installation of the Toposcope at Windmill Hill adjacent to the Six Hills of Alton Interpretation Panel.**

All councillors voted in favour

36 To receive Meeting Notes

The Meeting Notes were received as tabled without amendment:

Friends of Kings Pond – Sunday 25th July 2021 volunteer Group – Councillor Gideon Cristofoli

Walk Alton Minutes – 9th June 2021

NOTED

The meeting closed at 9.02 p.m.

DRAFT