

**ALTON TOWN COUNCIL  
OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 21<sup>st</sup> FEBRUARY 2018  
AT THE TOWN HALL AT 7:00PM**

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**Present:**                      **Councillor Graham Hill                      -    Chairman**  
   **Councillor Sharon Cullen**  
   **Councillor Pam Jones**  
   **Councillor James Voller**

**In attendance:**              **Mrs Leah Coney            -    Town Clerk**  
   **Mrs Pat Harris            -    Finance & Administration Manager**  
   **4 members of the press and public**

**313    Chairman's announcements**

The Chairman made the following standard announcements:

1. Reminded everyone present to switch off or silence their mobile phone.
2. Advised the hearing loop is in operation and devices should be switched to the "T" position.

**314    Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Mike Dicker & Derek Gardner.  
Councillor Bisi Eni-Olotu did not attend the meeting.

**315    Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

**316    Declarations of interest**

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

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

No requests were tabled.

**318    Questions and representations from Members of the Public**

1.     A member of the Amery Hill Residents Associations and the Wey Walk Working Group spoke on Agenda point 12.vii (Land at Will Hall Farm) urging the Town Council to consider acquiring the land in question which is currently owned by the developer. Three key arguments to support their views were:
  - (i) The land could ensure the Wey Walk has a start and an end under the ownership of the council

(ii) The land is to contain two lagoons which as part of the developers flood mitigation needs to be professionally managed given they will act as reservoirs to hold any overflow run off before integrated into the River Wey.

(iii) It is their belief that if the land was owned by the council, this would “protect” the town and could act as the start of the story and note the end.

In responding Councillor Graham Hill advised that no decision would be made tonight on the matter raised but felt these were very important points to keep in mind.

2. On another matter the same resident advised that he had attended a meeting with Thames Water in the company of Councillor Graham Hill regarding sewage issues which run down Old Odiham Road which comes up through the manhole covers and into the River Wey. Resident representatives provided Thames Water with documentary and photographic evidenced and in response Thames Water have promised investigations will be undertaken and have pledged to share the report produced and the proposed action they will take.

Councillor Graham Hill stated that it was important that this investigation takes place and action is taken in view of the large development under construction at Will Hall Farm given that the first residents will be moving into their new homes shortly.

3. A local resident, who had raised these matters at previous Open Spaces Committee meetings, wished to congratulate the town council on the path works that had been undertaken at Flood Meadows.

He enquired whether the Minutes of Open Spaces could be e-mailed to him, but was advised these are published on our website.

He asked whether there was likely to be anything done regarding establishing a footpath from the Lenten Street entrance around to Brandon Close. The Chairman advised that this is on the Agenda for later in the meeting and a copy of the Action Plan which was to be received by the Committee was provided to the resident.

He advised that the tree roots along the “avenue” as he referred to it by was causing issues with the footpath.

Disappointingly, despite his request for scalplings to be laid in the kissing gates at Greenfield Amenity Land, this had not been done. However in response, it was confirmed that this work had taken place at the beginning of October but due to heavy footfall this is work that needs to be repeated at the beginning of next autumn and during the winter but of course would be subject to prevailing weather conditions.

4. A local resident requested that the Town Council agree to her request for a commemorative bench to be placed at Windmill Hill, which would be paid for by her.

Secondly the question was asked if anything could be done regarding the Alton Lions bench at The Butts as due to the very wet ground conditions, its sits in a pool of water.

The Town Clerk advised that unfortunately this is a problem at a number of the council’s Open Spaces but is very much down to the wet winter and work is being undertaken to “slit” the ground around the benches to improve the drainage. Councillor Pam Jones stated that it would appear to be a consequence of a lot of use as the ground had become compacted due to

The number of people using the bench on The Butts.

**319 Grounds Team Report**

The Committee received a comprehensive report on the Grounds Team's activity since the last meeting and noted the level of detail provided.

**NOTED**

**320 Allotments Report**

The Committee received a report from the Administration Officer confirming that the annual rent notifications went out to all plot-holders in November 2017 who had until 31 January 2018 to either renew or relinquish their tenancies. As at the 9 February, 19 plots have been relinquished and 25 overdue letters sent out to plot-holders seeking their intentions to either pay by the 23 February or relinquish their tenancy. This figure had now increased to 22 plots having been relinquished.

The Allotment Sub Committee had met earlier today (on 21<sup>st</sup> February) and a verbal update given by the Chair, Councillor Sharon Cullen but as the Minutes had not yet been produced details of a number of recommendations will come before the next meeting of the Open Spaces Committee for it to consider.

The first inspection of the forthcoming season will be carried out in March by the Grounds Administration accompanied by the Allotments Administrator with site reps in attendance.

**NOTED**

**321 Sponsorship of Benches**

Members learned that the Chairman had received an approach from a resident to install a bench at Windmill Hill, designed in a similar style to the existing benches on the site. Members were requested to approve this request, the costs for which will be borne by the resident. The bench would be maintained by the Town Council and installed under supervision from the Grounds Team.

In response to the increased number of requests received at the Town Hall officers felt it appropriate to put together a simple document to explain the types of bench permitted on each site and the approximate cost of each bench which would be dependent upon location. Additionally details of the permitted wording of inscriptions and details of the maintenance of the bench would be included and a draft policy document was presented to the Committee for consideration. Members agreed that a policy was required and should be published on the council's website.

On the proposal of Councillor Pam Jones seconded by Councillor James Voller it was

**RESOLVED to**

- 1. Agree to the installation of a memorial bench on Windmill Hill**
- 2. Adopt the Policy as presented for Memorial Benches on council owned land and be available on the council's website**

**322 Donation of Funds from Friends of Kings Pond & Ashdell Residents' Association**

The Committee welcomed the donation from the Friends of Kings Pond & Ashdell Resident's Association in the sum of £308 towards the cost of installation of a new litter bin for Kings Pond and asked officers to convey their thanks to the organisations. They agreed that the location for the bin should be at the primary feeding station which is popular with families.

On the proposal of Councillor Sharon Cullen seconded by Councillor Voller it was

**RESOLVED to**  
**Approve the purchase of a Litter Bin at Kings Pond**

**323 Football Goals for Holybourne Play Area**

Following a meeting of the Holybourne Village Association a request was made to the Town Council for the installation of goal posts at the Holybourne Play Area for the purpose of providing a "kick about" area with goals. The Committee agreed to the request and sought confirmation that the goals purchased should be FA compliant. Councillor James Voller, Holybourne Ward councillor confirmed that there was no requirement to consult further with HVA and that the goals should be ordered. Members further noted that District Councillor Glynis Watts had agreed to fund the purchase of the goals from her District Council grant funding pot.

On the proposal of Councillor James Voller seconded by Councillor Pam Jones it was

**RESOLVED to**  
Approve expenditure in the sum of £495 + VAT for the purpose of two mini (U7 – U10) FA compliant goals for the play area at Holybourne as requested by Holybourne Village Association and seek reimbursement from District Councillor Glynis Watts as agreed.

**324 Update Reports**

Members received the following update reports:

**(i) Public Spaces Protection Orders**

The Senior Animal Welfare Officer at East Hampshire District Council had provided an update as follows:

*"At the moment there is no confirmed consultation process method as it is still a work in progress. As well as the Community Forum's, all forty Town and Parish Councils within East Hampshire, the County Council, South Downs National Park and EHDC itself need to be consulted too in respect of appropriate PSPO's for their land holdings. As soon as a decision has been made in respect of the format of the consultation process I will update you."*

**(ii) Path for Park and Stride at Anstey Park**

The final plan has been prepared and tender issued at the end of January. A planning application for tree work in a Conservation Area has also been submitted. It is anticipated that the work is likely to be carried out in early May. Tony Cailes is project lead for this initiative.

**(iii) Netball Courts at Anstey Park**

Contractors have been appointed with work due to commence on site on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April with completion (weather permitting) around the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of May. The planning application for

the replacement floodlights is due to be determined by EHDC on or before 29<sup>th</sup> March. The works will be project managed by Hampshire County Council and grant applications remain on-going to offset the additional costs currently being met by the Town Council through CIL. The Town Clerk confirmed that a basket-ball hoop would also feature on the reverse of the netball court wall.

**(iv) Land at Lord Mayor Treloar Hospital**

Following a closed session item at the last Policy and Resources Committee Meeting, Persimmon Homes have responded to correspondence sent by the Town Clerk stating that they would speak to the other parties but would however anticipate that they will be happy to proceed with a transfer of the public open space land on the former Lord mayor Treloar Hospital site (including the existing play area) to Alton Town Council. On that basis they will organise the tree survey (requested by the Clerk) and the footpath repairs noted.

**(v) Play Area at Barley Fields**

Members received a verbal update advising that there were a number of snagging issues to be resolved before a post installation certificate could be issued and until resolved the play area will remain fenced off. The ground has also suffered as a result of recent heavy rain and will need a few weeks to recover before the site is open for the public to use.

**(vi) Wey Walk**

Members received the meeting notes from the Wey Walk Working Group Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2018. The Town Clerk is to arrange with Louise Parker to go through the relevant items arising and to walk the route to confirm signage requirements. A copy of the proposed Wey Walk logo had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. Resurfacing of existing paths would be undertaken with self-binding gravel. The Committee also heard that highways are progressing, over the next few months, a new pedestrian crossing on New Odiham Road.

**(vii) Land at Will Hall Farm**

Following a meeting with Redrow Homes last month the Town Clerk produced her report advising it would not be appropriate to take on the lower field at this time or at least until it has been planted up and managed for a period of time. As per the Reserved Matters, Redrow have to undertake the landscaping scheme which they have confirmed they will do and then it will be maintained by their management company for the first two years before a long term management company is put in place. The Town Clerk further advised that there is no commuted sum stipulated in the S106 agreement and even if Redrow were offering the land to the Town Council, which at present they are not, an appropriate commuted sum would need to be paid to make it cost-neutral for the Town Council. Councillor Pam Jones in acknowledging the representation made during the public session stated that she was delighted "we have had the conversation" with Redrow, with the Chairman adding that a good argument had been put forward this evening but that management of such an area including the SUDS required a high level of knowledge of flood management; a skill not currently held within the council; but dialogue on this issue will remain open.

**NOTED**

**325 Kings Pond and Flood Meadows Management Plans**

Included in Members bundles was a colour coded version of the maintenance programme for both sites. The costed works for year one have been approved by the Town Council in the

budget for 2018/19 and therefore works will commence in the spring once the programme has been timetabled with the Grounds Team.

**NOTED**

The meeting finished at 8.15 pm.

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