

ALTON Town Council



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Town Clerk: Mrs Leah Coney

Town Hall
Market Square
Alton
Hampshire
GU34 1HD

22nd June 2022

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to a **meeting of the OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE** in the Town Hall, Market Square, Alton on **Wednesday 29th June 2022 at 7.00 pm** when the under mentioned business will be transacted.

Yours sincerely

LConey

Mrs Leah Coney
Town Clerk

To: Members of the Open Spaces Committee

Councillor Suzie Burns (Chair)
Councillor Graham Hill (Vice Chair)
Councillor Amanda Durley
Councillor Paul Crossley
Councillor Sharon Cullen
Councillor Lewis Jones
VACANCY

Copied to: All other Councillors for information

**ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE – 29th JUNE 2022**

AGENDA

- 1 Chairman's announcements
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Minutes of previous meeting held on 30th March 2022
- 4 Declarations of Interests
- 5 Requests for Dispensations:

Councillors are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest which they may have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached. Unless dispensation has been granted, you may not participate in any discussion of, or vote on any matter in which you have a pecuniary interest. You must withdraw from the room when the meeting discusses and votes on the matter.
- 6 Questions from members of the public.
- 7 Allotments Report
- 8 Grounds Team Report
- 9 Will Hall Meadow Management Plan and works programme
- 10 King's Pond Draft Management Plan
- 11 Anstey Park a) Replacement Rugby Posts
 b) Flood Lights upgrade Football Club
 c) Resurfacing works – play area.
- 12 Current Project
 - a. CCTV Public Gardens
 - b. Replacement Fencing at Barley Fields
- 13 Friends of the River Wey Report and Meeting Minutes

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL
OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE – 29th JUNE 2022

ITEM 6 PUBLIC SPEAKING – WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS FOR INFORMATION

- 1) *Jenny Hallett - The viewing platform and the path improvements have increased the use of the riverside at the Flood Meadows but unfortunately not everyone respects it as a wildlife sanctuary. There needs to be a board that educates users about how we can conserve the water quality, and the well-being of the wildlife of the River Wey.*

1 I have noticed families throwing whole loaves of unwanted bread from the viewing platform, and have seen scummy, oily, surface water trapped in eddies between the viewing platform and Alton town. This deterioration in surface water quality is new, and is obviously a result of the excessive feeding. I have recently noticed increased numbers of mallards waiting for feeding times and also have seen rats running along the bank, which will be a problem for nesting moorhens and coots.

2 Dog owners are using that particular path area to throw sticks for their dogs - when up by the Lenten Street bridge would be a more considerate choice. I watched a heron fly up in distress when a dog owner threw sticks towards it and was surprised that the owner found it to be funny when I pointed out what his dog had done. The young ducklings nearby were also disturbed.

I really value the beautiful wildlife of the River Wey in the Flood Meadows and feel that action should be taken to conserve this gem before it deteriorates further. We know that many people have no idea of what care of the environment means, so it's very important to educate and protect before damage is done.

I hope you will give your attention to this matter,

This has been referred to the Friends of the River Wey who are arranging to meet with the resident on site to look at this matter.

- 2) *Sabú Gudrich. Hello, I live across the Flood Meadows and I wanted to let you know I'm concerned about the heightened human impact, now that so many new people from the new development use the place. I sent a mail to the Alton society a while ago and in their answer they suggested I send it to the council as well, so here it is: "Just today I saw a mother with two children — certainly mindfully and carefully — catching water creatures with a net (and hopefully releasing them again?!). A father with two children had arrived on the newly built platform with lots of (crabbing?)-buckets and he had stuck a big rod in the water, around where the moorhens just had their young.... I am worried that people with an urban background might not have a feeling for the fact that the Flood Meadows are a wild space and not a playground, and that the wildlife is not there for their amusement. Could it be possible to improve the signage? E.g. around the newly built platform? My partner Xavi is the new project manager for the ACAN Whitedown project; he is a biologist and a good designer and has designed information signs before.... please let us know if his skills could be of help.*

As with 1) above, the Friends have been asked for a view on signage in this area.

- 3) *Mr I Saunders. I would appreciate a rational explanation as to why the town council has seen fit to post notices around the flood meadows in Alton, requiring dog owners to keep their pets on a lead. This has been done without any public consultation and discriminates against pet owners who by and large are considerate, responsible and law abiding citizens. I'll remind you that you are elected to serve members of the public and local residents and are not here to act in a completely autonomous dictatorial role. I am not a dog owner and therefore have no vested interest in the activities of this group of residents but believe your decision to act without just cause should be challenged. I require a full*

explanation of this apparent idiotic and random decision without the obvious citing of having to protect local wildlife which has been living comfortably within the flood meadows for years.

A response was provided by an officer of the council, as follows: to which further correspondence resulted, detailed below.

Thank you for your e-mail regarding the signage that has been erected at Flood Meadows which applies to the riverside path and the protection of wild fowl along the water's edge.

(ATC response) Your comments and disapproval of the signage are noted and I will ensure that they are included under public representations at the next meeting of the Open Spaces Committee which is scheduled for June. Whilst I further note that you do not want a response which references "to protect wildlife"; I am sorry to advise that this is precisely why signage has been erected having had to ask members of the grounds team to remove dead mallard ducks from site following what can only be viewed as an unprovoked attack on the wildlife in Flood Meadows. This is also bird nesting season and in the very near future, the area will become home to the eagerly awaiting new arrivals which give such pleasure and I am sure you will agree that the council's open spaces are to be enjoyed by everyone and if erecting signage causes offence then this is something that councillors will need to consider on balance when determining whether they wish to do so. However, at this time the decision to erect signage has been taken and approved signage is in situ.

(Further response from resident) Thank you for your prompt reply to my email asking for an explanation as to why the council has placed new signage around the flood meadows area in Alton.

I also acknowledge that you will present my comments and concerns to the Open Spaces Committee at the next scheduled meeting.

In anticipation of further discussions relating to this matter I would like to challenge several of the issues relating to the rationale behind this decision.

I accept it is distressing to hear that Mallards have been found dead and this is not something that I would see as acceptable. However, I would like to know where your committee obtained their evidence that this was caused by dogs and their irresponsible owners. Over the past 11 years my wife and I have walked through the flood meadows on hundreds of occasions and have never witnessed anything like this before. However, damage to wildlife like this could quite easily be caused by the natural hunting instincts of foxes, or even cats, both of whom are active at night and move by stealth, often striking in "unprovoked attacks" on birds and other wildlife I have seen foxes on numerous occasions both in our own garden and in areas adjoining the flood meadows by Amery Hill School. I totally support keeping dogs on leads next to the water course or in the river, as well as when on the Wey walk pathway, but simply don't accept that owners allowing their dogs to run free in the larger grass areas (which is where signs have been placed) would end with ducks being killed.

I pointed out in my first email that we are not dog owners ourselves and therefore have no vested interest in exercising our own pets on the flood meadows. However, I am concerned with what appears to be an ill-informed scattergun approach in dealing with this issue. I trust that your committee will in future, be able to present firm evidence that damage has been caused by dogs (as well as their irresponsible owners) before taking such draconian action against those residents who simply like to exercise their pets responsibly in an open public place

- 4) James Laver Client Manager - Implementation
Economy, Transport and Environment. Hampshire County Council

Following a recent site inspection, the new trees planted in Anstey Park as part of the Anstey Road/Lane junction scheme are doing well, however the hedge appears to have developed a series of gaps. The landscaping contractor will need to return to replant to fill the gaps, however replanting in the summer period runs a higher risk of further plant failure and will require more intensive watering, which is high cost and less sustainable. Replanting of any sections of hedge which require attention will take place next planting season, i.e. winter 2022/23.

Please be assured that HCC is aware of the matter and it will be resolved, and please accept our apologies for this having occurred.

- 5) Scott Goldie (resident). *Over the past few weeks, I have been really enjoying seeing the open spaces of Alton become natural, wild places full of interesting grasses and wildflowers. Then, to my horror, I saw that today several of them had been cut.*

I am an Alton resident, ex-primary school teacher and wildlife gardener. I am also a member of ACAN's Lobbying and Campaigning Group. I know that areas left to become more 'wild' (even if they are just a few feet of grass verge) will store more carbon and provide a habitat for more insects and creatures than bare strips of grass. Everybody must now be aware of the plight that insects face at the moment and understand that they need all the help that they can get. In addition, the soil will not retain as much water in areas that are cut short, meaning that plants there will struggle to thrive. A few years ago, Hampshire County Council declared a climate emergency so I cannot understand why these areas haven't been left.

I know that people fear change. I am sure that you have received letters of complaint about the 'messy' areas left uncut. Well, nature is messy. Everybody needs to be educated that these changes are for all of us; providing habitats for beneficial insects and giving us all places where we can appreciate nature, which is massively positive for our mental health. I know that eventually these areas need cut, but leaving them to August/September would have greater impact in so many ways.

No-mow May is a step in the right direction - but it is not enough. If all the grassy areas (not just the ones labelled 'mini-meadows') were left uncut it would make a great deal more of a difference.

So please restrain from cutting any more. I am more than willing to support you in this and help you in any way I can (including explaining to people why we need to do this!)

- 6) Dear Councillors Joy, Kemp- Gee, Humby and Oppenheimer

The Countryside Service has made an Order to temporarily close part of Binsted Footpaths 3 and 57, Bramdean and Hinton Ampner Footpath 20a and 30, with Restricted Byway 33 and Bridleway 27, Farrington Footpath 4, and BOATS 22 and 24, Newton Valence BOAT 32 and Footpath 1, Four Marks Footpath 13 and BOAT 23, Farrington Footpath 18, Chawton Footpath 7, Alton Footpath 66, Worldham Footpaths 5, 21, 31, 43 and BOAT 40, Ropley Footpaths 31, 32 and 34, West Tisted Footpaths 5, 7b, Bridleways 4 and 6 with BOAT 27, to allow for works in connection with Esso Pipeline installation works.

Details can be viewed on the Council's website by following the link below:

[Public notice | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/public-notice)

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

- 7) *Jo Martin. No Mow May. Please contact me regarding above. I am a resident of Maple Close with a green behind and to the side. Whilst I embrace the value of this to wildlife surely small areas would suffice. The downside to residents is that the grass is now 2-3 feet high, it makes life for hayfever sufferers awful, it is really hard to pick up dog poo from such long grass and we are now nearly halfway through June and no sign of it being cut. When will this be done and are you just going to leave the grass to rot which will look truly awful or are you going to clear it up? Please respond and confirm your plans as unfortunately I suspect it has a lot to do with money saving rather than wildlife preservation! I look forward to your reply soon.*

This resident has already been redirected to EHDC as this falls under their remit. A number of calls and emails have been received about the lack of mowing and it has become quite a divisive issue. Details have been obtained from HCC on their mowing regime which in non-designation wilding areas is:

- visibility envelopes – typically at junctions and the insides of bends – at any time and as often as may be desired for road safety.
- Full-width verge cutting, once every two years or once every year, in autumn, starting in September.
- Swathe cutting – generally the first one metre adjacent to the carriageway edge – once per year, for completion by mid-summer.

It would be good to understand the EHDC regime as well to help with further enquiries.

Other items of correspondence for information.

Members are requested to note the following:

- 1) Following a review of the 8-week trial and an exchange of emails with the vendor, a further licence to occupy has been granted by officers to the pizza truck at Bartley Fields on a Wednesday evening.
- 2) The Clerk met with Kat Guenioui (who organises local litter picks) to agree a trial of #2minuteparkpick at the Butts, whereby a small number of litter bins will have litter pickers attached with an accompanying temporary sign to encourage people to undertake a quick litter pick in passing. Discussion was had over the potential theft of the items but it was felt that a trial in one location was worth having to see if it could generate interest.
- 3) The Town Clerk and the Finance and Administration Manager met with the Training Officer for Hampshire Search and Rescue who will be using Anstey Park for an exercise later this summer.
- 4) The Town Clerk and Finance and Administration Manager undertook a site visit at Holybourne Pond last week to review the fencing, following the submission to Councillor Hill from HVA of an indicative scheme to upgrade the area around the boundary of the pond. In advance of the next meeting officers will look at funding options for the scheme once ownership of the site has been resolved with a view to an item being tabled on the agenda.

ITEM 7 ALLOTMENTS REPORT REPORT BY THE ALLOTMENTS OFFICER

FOR INFORMATION

Allotment inspections commenced for the new season in April which showed a good start to the season. The inspection on 4 May resulted in 14 first stage letters (1 Boroverye, 2 Hawthorns, 8

Spitalfields, 1 Whitedown and 2 Wooteys) going out to plotholders asking them to improve their plot by the next inspection on 1 June.

During the inspection on 1 June there had been improvements to all but six of the plots and subsequently letters (second stage) were sent advising plotholders that their tenancies would be terminated if no improvement had been made by the next scheduled inspection, 6 July. This resulted in four tenancies being relinquished, offer letters have been sent to those on the top of the waiting list. As a consequence of the June inspection three first stage letters have been sent to plotholders, all on Spitalfields.

Inspections will continue monthly until the last one of the season, which will be in early September.

There are currently 75 people on the waiting list. With an increasing interest for people in growing their own food, the Town Clerk has requested the Allotment Sub committee look at potentially dividing larger plots when they become available to enable a quicker reduction in the waiting list and also lowering the likelihood of people struggling to manage their plots because of the size

ITEM 8 GROUNDS TEAM REPORT FOR INFORMATION REPORT BY FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION MANAGER

8.1 Grounds Team Personnel:

The grounds team is now at full strength and the introduction of two new Ranger positions within the team; this has allowed a re-arrangement of duties and responsibilities within the team which commenced with effect from Monday, 25th May. The Rangers team are responsible for the Flood Meadows and Will Hall Meadow sites which incorporates the Wey Walk as well as Kings Pond, Windmill Hill, Barley Fields and Northanger all of which have their own ecological requirements with three of the sites having their own Management Plans.

The grounds team continue to service the Council's open spaces to a very high standard

8.2 Vehicles & Machinery:

8.2.1 The mowing season is in full swing and all sites, including Will Hall Meadow have had cut and collect as required. All sites are under management review as prevailing weather conditions are conducive for fast growth. All machines are fully serviced.

8.2.2 The Amazone Flail Collector has been purchased and has now been added to the Council's asset register.

8.3 Projects:

8.3.1 Tree Works

Two contracts have been awarded for tree works across 9 of the council's open spaces. Planning applications have been submitted in respect of four sites namely The Butts, Public Gardens, St. Lawrence Churchyard and Flood Meadows as the sites are in Alton's Conservation Area and planning permission is required before works to any of the trees can take place at these locations. Works to the other five sites will be commencing shortly. The contract for Windmill Hill has been awarded to Andrew Murray and he commenced work on site on Tuesday, 31st May.

8.3.2 Flood Meadows

The site was the venue (along with St. Lawrence) for the very successful and well attended The Battle of Alton event staged at the beginning of May over two days. Whilst the grass was left long for the battlefield re-enactment, all areas have now been mown in line with the management plan for the site.



In view of several attacks – dogs on wildfowl and an incident of dog on dog, alongside the river, new signage has been erected requesting that dogs are kept under close control.



8.3.3 Kings Pond

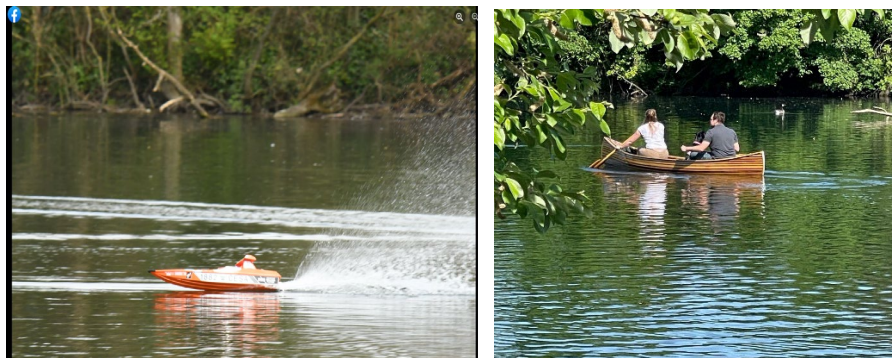
The surveillance monitoring of the weir continues in addition to the scheduled clearance which is undertaken three times a week. A “boom” has also been installed which hopefully will prevent the young wildfowl being washed downstream.



Three new noticeboards and new keep your dog under close control have been erected at Kings Pond. The notice boards have two panels; one for Alton Town Council notices and the other to allow The Friends of Kings Pond to post useful information together with details of their working party activities and when the next Sunday morning get together will be taking place.



The Byelaws for Kings Pond have been displayed on the noticeboards following a number of incidents recorded including the use of a jet ski on the pond and a couple (with a dog) in a boat plus as captured below remote-controlled boating.



The wild flower meadow has been sown and watering to establish is undertaken by the grounds team by utilising the bowser.

Measures to control the geese population at Kings Pond were undertaken in April under the guidance of the Council's environmental expert Dr. June Chatfield; 53 eggs were treated which were found in 8 nests; one of which had 12 eggs.

8.3.3 Public Gardens

Replacement metal fencing works have now been completed. In addition, two hundred "whips" have been planted at the Park House end of the gardens (protected whilst they establish by the erection of heras fencing). It is hoped that this course of action will dissuade the late-night intrusion into the gardens which is causing anti-social behaviour and damage. Disappointingly as advised in the last report, vandalism and anti-social behaviour continue to affect not only the Dementia Friendly Garden area but also the Bowls Club with regular incursions into their "green area" by youths climbing onto the roof of their clubhouse in order to gain entry. The Town Council has been in discussion with its CCTV contractor to investigate more persuasive means of discouraging entry into the gardens including additional cameras being erected.

The gazebo and bunting have been erected in time for the *All-Things Outdoor* market being held in the Gardens. Sadly, again due to anti-social behaviour and youths throwing bricks at each other and climbing all over it, damage has been sustained to the gazebo.

Dogs on Leads signage has been installed on all the gated entrances to the Public Gardens.

A new bench has been installed by the Dementia Friendly volunteers and collaborative working between the volunteers and the grounds team has seen phased improvements to the Cooperage long beds taking shape.

Improvements to the access from Westbrook Road has been completed following concerns as to the uneven surface and the difficulties faced with wheelchair and mobility scooters.



8.3.4 Greenfields Amenity Land – Northanger

The cattle are now grazing at Northanger and the grazier has also undertaken all of the required repairs to the fencing to ensure their safety. The grass humps in the play area are being regularly mowed to ensure their availability for use.

8.3.5 Will Hall Meadow

The first cut and collect of the season is currently under way at Will Hall Meadow with risings currently retained on site although enquiries are continuing to have these removed from site by our contracted green waste carrier. The Public Consultation on the Draft Management Plan for the site closed on 29th April and all comments have been submitted to the contractor Aquamaintain for inclusion (if not already contained therein) in the draft document which will go before the Open Spaces Committee at this meeting.

8.3.6 Windmill Hill including preparation of the Queens Green Canopy

Tree works identified in the Tree Survey undertaken in November of last year for the site are due to be carried out on Tuesday, 31st May.

The Queens Green Canopy project continues to be moved forward and ground clearance preparation continues. Whilst the fruit orchard will not be planted up until the autumn of this year the ground works to remove stumps and to remove any other trees which require work will be undertaken during the summer and early autumn period. As reported at the last meeting the planting of 70 fruit trees and bushes to form a Community Orchard will take place together with the erection of two interpretation panels and the placement of a seat within the area. One of the two interpretation panels to be installed will show the tree/bush together with the sponsor and the second panel will provide background to the species planted together with the background for the Queens Green Canopy.

The Tree works as specified to be carried out in the Tree Survey undertaken towards the end of 2021 have commenced. In addition, replacement of the 3 log benches which overlook The Hangers will take place once all tree works have been completed. The existing logs which have deteriorated somewhat will be left on site amongst the longer grass to allow for insect and invertebrate activity.

8.3.7 Jubilee Playing Fields – Hybrid Cricket Wicket

The installation of the 4 Hybrid Cricket Wickets using the combine Green/Straw Yarn took place on, 14th March to wickets 3, 4 6/7 and 9 pitch square and is already proving to be a success with both home and opposition teams so far this season with high scores being attributed to the playing surface.

Alton Cricket Club have provided markings for the wickets – these are given by both the umpires and opposing team captain and reflect the playing surface and how the wicket has “played”. It is very early days but Jubilee won Ground of the Year last year with an average mark of 32/40 and although the scoring matrix has changed for this season slightly the average mark currently is Umpires 36/40 and Captains 34/50.

Hampshire have played 1 game so far at Jubilee in May (June’s game cancelled due to wet conditions) but there are 2 games booked for July (1x 1 day and 1 x 2-day games) with a further game in August. However, based on feedback from Hampshire, there remains an appetite to host future games at Jubilee, but a cautious approach was adopted this year with the Hybrid wicket.

Already the reduction in maintenance costs are becoming evident as can be seen by the use of loam being some 90% less and time to repair the wicket after use has also been significantly cut.

8.3.8 St Lawrence Church – Paths

A contractor has been appointed to undertake the path works at St. Lawrence but the work has been delayed whilst we await a Faculty from the Diocese to undertake the works. This will somewhat be hindered as we need to carry out the tree works before the path works can be done. Planning permission has been granted for the tree works to be done and we await the successful contractor to advise date of when the work can be done following which arrangements will be put in place for the path works as soon as the Faculty is through.

8.4 Pitch Provision:

8.4.1 Football & Rugby

The agreed 5 year planned maintenance work to the rugby areas at Anstey Park enters its final year with the first of the two scheduled works for this year undertaken early May with quadraplay spiking taking place (as the ground was too hard for verti-draining) following up by the spreading of two hundred tonnes of sand. This five-year programme has paid dividends for the playing surface with only a couple of games having to be called off due to ground conditions. The collaboration between Alton Town Council and Alton Rugby Club will see the final works being undertaken in September. Further discussions will take place to agree the future maintenance regime.

New rugby posts are shortly to be ordered for Pitch 1 and 2 as we await Alton Rugby Club to provide the specification required. The purchases were agreed as part of the budget setting programme for the council.

Touch rugby will be continuing for 7 weeks (starting the first week of June) but the football season finished at Easter and will recommence in September.

8.4.2 Cricket

8.4.2.1 The cricket season began at Jubilee the start of May with the grounds team currently busy preparing the wickets and outfield on a weekly basis. The hybrid wicket installation works to four of the cricket wickets is already proving to be a success with both Alton Cricket Club as well as visiting opposition both being complimentary regarding the playing surface.

County games are also being played at Jubilee this season hosting Hampshire Under 15 Girls on Tuesday, 31st May and Hampshire U18 games in July against both Kent and Surrey. The England Disability Squad will be taking part in a 3 x T20 tournament against Hampshire and Sussex at the end of July. More games are currently under consideration during the season.

8.4.3 MUGA Facility at Anstey Park and Skate Park at Jubilee

8.4.3.1 The MUGA continues to be a very popular venue and continues to be extensively utilised by people of all ages. Maintenance works are due to be carried out the third week of June as defects have been picked up in the monthly routine playground inspections. The tennis court nets are up and are only taken down when outdoor netball training is taking place on the Wednesday evening and Sunday mornings and then they are put back out the following morning.

8.4.3.3 The Skate Park at Jubilee has continued to thrive and its popularity sees no abating. There is a third party “Jam” event being organised for August which no doubt will attract a wide audience as well as participants from both local and the further afield. The floodlights have been turned off now for the summer.

8.5. Maintenance of Open Spaces

8.5.1 Tree & Hedge Cutting Works

There was some damage sustained to trees following the high winds in May and all works required have been attended to both at Kings Pond and Anstey Park. As previously mentioned, a contract has been issued for all tree works required as specified in the Tree Surveys undertaken in November/December of last year and a start date is awaited to be confirmed apart from Windmill Hill which has been subject to a separate contract and the work for this site is starting on 31st May. Other in-house works will be carried out by the Grounds Team over the course of the next 12/18 months as specified in the Tree Surveys.

8.5.2 Grass Cutting

Grass cutting across all sites and areas for which Alton Town Council is responsible are on their scheduled rotas. Alton Town Council did not take part in the No Mow May initiative as it adheres to its Management Plans for its informal open spaces which already have a limited cutting regime in selected areas.

8.5.3 Hard Standings and Paths & Fencing

- Repairs to The Drive at Anstey Park and the entrance to Kings Pond were successfully undertaken earlier this year.
- The knee rails at Barley Fields car park continue to suffer damage from cars either backing into them or driving into in forward gear. In order to determine remedy of the problem we have asked the Ward Councillors to canvass the residents of Barley Fields for their views.

8.5.4 Fertilizer and Weed Control

- The Council's Contractor undertook fertilizer and weed control spraying at Jubilee during early May in accordance with the Council's planned maintenance schedule.

8.5.5 Pavilions - Anstey Park & Jubilee

- The Charles Read pavilion suffered storm damage on 18th February and temporary repairs to the felt roof had been undertaken in house, however our insurers have now accepted the claim and a contractor quote has been accepted and we are awaiting a date for the works to be undertaken.

8.6 Play Areas:

All play areas continue to be regularly inspected by the council's independent contractor on a monthly basis with no major defects being identified. These regular inspections compliment the grounds team undertaking weekly recorded inspections. Remedial works are required to the skatepark ramp at Anstey Park and a contractor has been appointed who will be starting on site on Monday 27th June, subject to the weather conditions as the repairs cannot be undertaken in wet conditions.

An Invitation to Tender was issued for wetpour/surfacing works at Anstey Park on 6th May (as identified in the latest report which requires attention). This is an item for decision later in the agenda.

Replacement parts for the cableway at Anstey Park have been ordered and will be fitted as soon as received.

A swing seat in the Public Gardens has also had to be replaced following damage sustained, which is believed to be older children overloading the swing which is designed for the younger children.

Erosion of soil in heavy wear areas have been undertaken at Barley Fields at the end of the slide (matting lifted and levelled up) and in the gateways (woodchip has been laid). The goals in the Holybourne play area require more extensive works and options are being investigated as to a better solution. The nets have been removed as they are in such a bad state of repair and were not considered safe to be left in situ.

8.7 Town Centre Wide:

8.7.1 Planting:

As part of the Alton in Bloom planting for the summer, Miss Belles (Butts Road), The Jane Austen planter, the wooden barrels and cycle planters have all been planted up with perennials in readiness of summer blooming which have been

infilled with annuals to provide the splash of colour in time for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations at the beginning of June.

Window Boxes at The Town Hall and Assembly Rooms and hanging baskets were planted up in red, white and blue.

The Jubilee round beds in the Public Gardens together with the long bed have all been planted up ready with summer bedding planting.

It is disappointing to note that anti-social behaviour seems to be becoming a regular occurrence in the High Street with people engaging in uprooting the annuals that have been planted in the Crown Hill railing boxes and throwing them at each other. Several incidents have been captured on the council's CCTV and will be referred to the police.

8.7.2 SLR's

The new deployment rota for the speed recording devices as approved commencing on 9th March. The grounds team move the devices on a two weekly cycle as per the agreed rota schedule.

8.8 Litter Bins, Cycle Hoops & Wey Walk Signage

The grounds team are continuing with the replacement of old and rusty bins across the council's sites including Anstey Park and the Public Gardens.

New cycle hoops are being installed across the Council's open spaces from the second week of June – the locations for which have been agreed with Cycle Alton.



A further walk through of the Wey Walk signage (from the station to the end of Will Hall Meadow via Kings Pond and Flood Meadows) has been undertaken with the Friends of the River Wey to check location, direction and completeness of signage and only four items remain outstanding and these will be attended to upon receipt of the necessary items to complete the project.

- Station Forecourt – no action as the project is to commence imminently.
- Bakers Arms – sticky back sign to go on wall
- Back of sign at Waterside Court – sticky back sign
- Missing bracket (sign with grounds team) – need to hire in the affixing apparatus.

ITEM 9 WILL HALL MEADOW MANAGEMENT PLAN AND WORKS PROGRAMME

FOR DECISION

Enclosed in Members bundles is the final version of the proposed management plan for Will Hall Meadow following public consultation. The consultation responses are also enclosed.

The plan is now therefore presented to this committee for formal adoption.

As can be seen on the works programme, there are a number of elements which Members are now requested to approve taking forward. These are:

- a) Upgrading the access to Brick Kiln Lane / stopping up the access to Basingstoke Road. A contractor will be appointed to undertake this work late summer/early autumn, following a procurement process.
- b) Creating a conservation wetland area with a willow “fedge” (living fence/hedge) This will be undertaken by the rangers in the next planting season.
- c) Path works including the installation of a boardwalk for the low lying. This will be put for public tender due to the value of the works. Given that contractors will not hold prices at the moment with material costs and available so volatile, it is proposed to put the path and boardwalk works out to tender in February next year, so it can go through Full Council in April and the work completed May/June.

All costs for all works to be met from the Will Hall Meadow commuted sum.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to:

- 1) Approve the final version of the Management Plan
- 2) Give delegated authority to the Town Clerk to issue the contractor for the reconfiguration of the access at Brick Kiln Lane/ Basingstoke Road, following a procurement process in line with Financial Regulations, so long as the contract value does not exceed the committee limit.
- 3) approve the drafting and issuing in February 2023 of an invitation to tender for the path works detailed above.

ITEM 10 KING’S POND MANAGEMENT PLAN

FOR INFORMATION

Following a meeting with the Chair and Secretary of the Friends of King’s Pond on Wednesday 22nd June it was agreed with the Committee Chair and Vice Chair to defer approval of the draft plan prior to public consultation. As detailed in the notes from the meeting (enclosed) the Friends requested that there be an evidence base adduced to demonstrate why taking the pond off line was the preferred option, including an expansion of the appendices. Secondly, to give more detail of the other options for managing the pond going forward and also to introduce the issue of the volume of wildfowl on site and how this may be addressed.

It was agreed to meet with the Friends in advance of the next Open Spaces meeting to review again once these additions had been made.

ITEM 11 ANSTEY PARK

FOR DECISION

a) Replacement Rugby Posts

As approved by Full Council in February 2022 it was indicatively agreed to allocate £8,000 of CIL funds secured in 2021/22 and already held by ATC, towards two sets of replacement rugby goal posts at Anstey Park as the existing ones are reaching end of life and have been repaired on a number of occasions. (They are fibreglass flat poles which

were installed 20 years ago!) The quotation from the preferred supplier is included in Members bundles. This company previously undertook the installation of the posts out on Diggers a couple of years ago and there were no issues with the workmanship. Pricing has increased slightly since we obtained the indicative prices for budget workshop but the additional £600 can be met from the current council operating budget for Anstey Park. Pricing for the posts themselves has been tested in the marketplace to ensure they are competitive (not many companies undertake the installation) There is a 6 week lead in time, so if the order is placed this week the work can be undertaken in advance of next season. The rugby club have confirmed that they are happy with the specification.

b) Flood Lights upgrade Football Club

The Council has been approached by Alton Football Club in respect of new flood lighting for the 3G pitch. This is being fully funded by a grant secured through the Football Association and there is no financial implication for the Town Council, who, in their capacity as landowner, are asked to agree to the installation of the new lights. The Council will then be asked to sign the grant acceptance letter with the FA to enable to grant to be released and the order placed by the Council. The procurement process itself has been undertaken by the Football Club in adherence to the rules of the grant giving process.

c) Resurfacing works play area.

As approved by Full Council in February 2022 it was indicatively agreed to allocate £19,600 CIL funds secured in 2021/22 and already held by ATC to meet the cost of resurfacing in the play area at Anstey Park (at year end there was £30,607 balance to fund this project and the rugby goal posts with a small surplus remaining thereafter) A tender process has been carried out for this work and five companies have returned bids (enclosed in bundle). This would ordinarily go forward to Full Council for approval; however, companies are currently not able to hold their prices for more than, in some cases, 30 days and as such, to avoid additional charges, officers would like to the committee to approve a preferred contractor for this work, based upon the prices submitted in order to proceed. This will then be ratified by Full Council at the end of July and subject to a final, fixed price quote being received.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to approve:

- a) The purchase of replacement rugby posts for Anstey Park, using £8,000 CIL and £600 ATC operating funds.
- b) Landowner consent and agreement to be a signatory on the grant acceptance form issued by the Football Association for the grant for replacement lights at the 3G pitch to be arranged by Alton Football Club at no cost to ATC.
- c) Approval of Company B to carry out the works to resurface the play area at Anstey Park, subject to final fixed price being received, using CIL funds to the value of up to £19,600 to cover the cost of the works. A further contingency allowance to accommodate minor adjustments in material prices to be taken from ATC operating budget if required (up to 10%). To be ratified by Full Council.

ITEM 12 CURRENT PROJECTS

FOR DECISION

- a. **CCTV Public Gardens** Following the installation of the upgraded CCTV package last year, the project came in £5,696 under budget and in discussion with the contractor we determined to review after the first year to see if any further improvements were required. As a result, and in discussion with the local Police, it is recommended to Council that the current contract is extended to permit the installation of a further camera system in the Public Gardens to cover the area near the Bowls Club, which is

currently not in range and also in the Town Centre to cover Turk Street. Costs are, £4,200 for the Public Gardens and £950 for Turk Street plus £520 to cover electrical works in both locations (the detailed quotation including images is included in Members bundles)

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to approve the purchase of additional cameras at a cost of £5,670 taken from the monies accrued from the CCTV project last year (allocated under cost codes CCTV and Public Gardens)

- b. Replacement Fencing at Barley Fields.** The knee rail installed around the car park at Barley Fields has been damaged a number of times and has now collapsed in numerous areas. It is important to keep this area secured to prevent unauthorised incursions. Initial consultation with the residents association indicated that a like for like replacement is preferred. Officers therefore wish to proceed with securing a contractor to undertake this work, requesting delegated authority to obtain quotations in accordance with ATC procurement rules / Financial regulations, so long as the price does not exceed the committee limit. Funds to come from the Barley Fields allocated reserve.

RECOMMENDATION: Members are requested to approve the purchase of additional knee rails for the car park perimeter of Barley Fields from the allocated reserve, delegating to officers to appoint a contractor following a procurement process in accordance with Financial Regulations.

ITEM 13 FRIENDS OF THE RIVER WEY REPORT

FOR INFORMATION

A report is tabled for the committee from the most recent meeting of the group. The Chair of the Friends Group will be present at the meeting to answer any questions.

In respect of the tree felling which now has permission from the Tree Officer at East Hampshire District Council, this work will be carried out by the contractor approved by Full Council at the April Meeting and is scheduled for October this year. A public engagement session will be advertised and held on site in September for any interested Members of the public to discuss the felling with the Rangers. There is no condition on the permission notices for replanting on this site and most of the trees will not be stump ground, due to cost, so at this time it is proposed that no immediate replanting takes place but this can be considered as part of the management plan review.