

OPEN SESSION: There were two members of the public present, interested in items on the agenda.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 4th October 2017 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr Andy Briers (Chairman)
Cllr Angela Wiseman (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Philip Day
Cllr Darren Loose
Cllr Gloria O'Reilly
Cllr Tim Ward

IN ATTENDANCE: Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk
Nicola Vodden, Meetings Administrator
Charlie Hardy, Student Advisor
Cllr Jeremy Heron

At the start of the meeting, the Chairman welcomed Charlie Hardy, Student Advisor to her first meeting.

OS/5709 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Town Clerk reported that apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Ring and Jade Eaton and Isaac Skirton, Student Advisors.

OS/5710 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared at this time.

OS/5711 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Meeting held on 6th September 2017, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

With the agreement of Members, agenda item 6. Tree Management Issues was brought forward for the benefit of the members of the public present.

OS/5712 TREE MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The Town Clerk indicated that there were two tree management issues which required a decision from Members, as outlined in his report (*Annex A*). Members were asked to consider whether they were satisfied that sufficiently exceptional circumstances existed for action to be taken, in each case. The Committee's approval was required as it would be inconsistent with the Council's general policy with regard to managing trees. Photographs of the trees in question were circulated at the meeting.

White Poplar tree at Forest Edge – The Town Clerk reported that Mr Tuddenham had asked for an appraisal of the tree due to a large number of wasps in the area of the tree and the impact this was having on his family and property. Two pest control experts and a tree

surgeon had visited the site and no wasps nest had been detected. The explanation given was that the wasps were present due to an infestation of insects, of which they were feeding on. The tree could not be sprayed, however there may be good arboricultural grounds to justify felling the tree, but this would have to be managed carefully and possibly in stages, to prevent de-stabilisation of the ground and further advice would need to be sought, if this was what was decided.

Mr Tuddenham addressed Members indicating the extent of the problem which had made his garden uninhabitable, windows had to be kept closed and there were safety issues for his family and visitors. He had been unable to take action as the tree is on Town Council land and he complained that the area was overgrown and the hedge and trees had not been managed. He described the tree, which is located directly at the bottom of his garden, as 'humming' and challenged the experts view, which was inconclusive, as he was sure there was a nest in the tree. He had been told that it was an unusual natural phenomenon which would pass in 2-3 days, however it had continued through the Summer. As the temperatures have reduced, naturally the numbers of wasps have now decreased also. He confirmed that he has not experienced this in previous years.

Members sympathised with Mr Tuddenham and proposed that the ground staff be instructed to prioritise the maintenance of the area, in order to establish the existence of any wasps nest, in the tree or burrowed in the ground. It was suggested that no action be taken in respect of the tree until the Spring/Summer and the Town Clerk be delegated authority to commission the removal of the tree, if the problem recurs.

Maple Sycamore, The Mount – Mrs Nixon addressed the Committee in respect of the tree which was on Town Council land, against the boundary fence of her property. Her tenants had complained to her on a number of occasions. The tree had been pollarded 3 years ago, but as it was a fast growing species, it had recovered and was again sizable. She would be within her rights to remove the branches over her property, however this was likely to de-stabilise the tree. The tree was too big for its location and was attracting people to climb it, creating a nuisance and litter.

The Town Clerk indicated that advice had been received in respect of the tree on the edge of the car parking area and that, for safety reasons, the overhanging branch would be removed, however if a decision was to be made in respect of the Maple Sycamore, it would be prudent to combine the works. Members were advised that every few years the maple would require pollarding, given its proximity to the boundary and the financial implications associated with this.

Cllr Heron indicated that the amenity value of the tree was good and that Members should consider pollarding rather than felling, but this had to be weighed up with the location of the tree and its suitability, in such close proximity to someone's garden. He suggested that if it was decided to fell the tree, that another tree be re-planted nearby.

Members agreed that the Town Clerk obtain advice in respect of the reduction and shaping of the tree close to the car parking area. They agreed to the removal of the tree next to the fence and the planting of a more suitable species in a more appropriate location.

RESOLVED: 1) That the hedge and surrounding area at Forest Edge be maintained by the groundstaff, as a priority, in order to establish the existence of any wasps nest; and
2) That, having regard to the exceptional inconvenience to the neighbour, the Town Clerk be delegated authority to commission the removal of the tree at Forest Edge in Spring/Summer 2018, should the problem with wasps recur;
3) That the works undertaken to the hornbeam at The Mount (*Annex A, para 2.3*), close to a house in Beatty Close, be noted.

- 4) That advice be obtained in respect of the reduction and shaping of the tree overhanging the car parking area at The Mount and that the works to the tree and hedge be carried out; and
- 5) That the maple sycamore next to the fence be removed, with a more suitable species being re-planted, in a more appropriate location.

ACTION C Wilkins

**OS/5713
THE PLACE**

Members received the Youth Co-Ordinator's monthly report (*Annex B*).

A Councillor indicated his disappointment to the Town Clerk, in respect of the quality of reporting on The Place, which did not accord with Councillors expectations, in that there was no information in respect of usage and percentages of occupancy, nor any financial information detailing income from bookings and revenue of the Café, to show returns on investment. It also did not include any proposals to increase occupancy and revenue streams in the future.

It was noted that the Youth Co-Ordinator was sick and the Town Clerk would check on the arrangements in place to continue operation of The Place, in her absence.

RESOLVED: That the Youth Co-Ordinator's report be noted.

ACTION C Wilkins

**OS/5714
PROJECT OVERSIGHT AND PLANNING**

The Town Clerk gave an overview of the two reporting documents that had been introduced to help update Members on progress of current projects and to assist in putting forward new projects (*Annex C*).

2017-18 Project Progress Report

1) Training - £1,810 has been incorporated into this year's budget, in addition to the recurring training budget and £195 had been spent to date. There were further invoices to be paid and training needs would be reviewed as part of the appraisal process, but it was thought unlikely that the amount allocated would be required. The Town Clerk anticipated that he would be seeking approval to vire some of the funding to health and safety compliance, which would involve some form of coaching or formal training for staff.

2) CCTV – improved CCTV had been installed at the cemetery and it was hoped that this would discourage fly-tipping, which involves significant expense.

3) Play equipment replacement – this is in the Deputy Town Clerk's work programme . A review is to be undertaken and some wooden equipment is showing signs of age, so may need replacing soon.

4) War Memorial repairs – works to be completed for centenary of armistice. The Town Clerk is waiting on information and specifications of what is required and will then obtain accurate costings and investigate the availability of grants. As the memorial is now listed, any changes to be made will require consent.

5) Lighting at Carvers – the Town Clerk reported that the contractor had been engaged and works were due to commence at the end of October, with a completion date in November. Funding had been secured from developers contributions to cover associated professional fees and an allowance for contingencies.

New Projects Planner

The Town Clerk indicated that the document had been drawn up on the basis of notes from his predecessor and was intended to prompt debate on projects to be included in the 2018/19 budget process. It would be updated as more information becomes available.

A1 Market Place – The Town Clerk indicated that the project would cost in the region of £12,000, however it was not clear how this would be funded and if funds were available from elsewhere.

A2 Long Lane – The Town Clerk reported that the Working Party's proposals had been put to the football club and he was waiting to hear back from representatives. Once there was a clear joint vision, the next stage would be to commission a feasibility study to identify options. The Council may need to fund this or funds may be sourced from elsewhere, possibly from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

A3 Cemetery – A detailed report would come before the Committee next month with proposals for improvements to the boundary wall and options for a columbarium. This would involve significant capital investment , but provide an additional income stream.

A4 Play facilities - removed, as various ideas for additional play facilities had been floated but nothing specific nor timeframe had been decided. This was not considered a priority at this time.

Members wished the remaining listed projects to be retained and considered for future budgets, save for B3 Fitness trail at Carvers. This was to be given more of a priority and to be included in the project bids for the 2018-19 budget. This project is to be broadened to include improvements, such as installation of a fitness track, a running track and the creation of parking at Carvers.

There was a detailed discussion in respect of the tennis courts and whether this should remain a project. This would be a major project and there were many difficulties to overcome including:- the courts not being fit for purpose, small number of courts, no parking, problematic booking process, contract in place for school use, gaining a return on the significant investment. Benefits in making the improvements were also identified and it was agreed that this should remain on the list for consideration in the future.

RESOLVED: That the 2017-18 Project Progress Report and New Projects Planner be updated accordingly and presented at the next meeting.

ACTION C Wilkins

OS/5715

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR TOWN IMPROVEMENTS

The Committee considered the report from the Town Clerk (*Annex D*) in respect of town improvements and the recommendation made by the Planning, Town and Environment Committees (and approved by Full Council on 26th July, *P/5421 and C/6026 refer*) for all projects falling under the category of town improvements to be spearheaded by special meetings of that Committee.

The Town Clerk requested Members consider whether the Market Place Improvement Working Party (MPIWP) should report to this Committee and, if so, request the Council rescind its decision.

Whilst Cllr Ward's view was that the MPIWP should report directly to Full Council, to prevent delays and duplicate discussions, the other Members agreed that the Working Party should report to a Committee. The Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee was viewed as the best able to devote time to the important issues to be debated and that to avoid replication of debate at Full Council meetings, non-committee Members be invited to attend meetings to put forward their view on matters included on the agenda.

It was RECOMMENDED:-

- 1) That the decision by the Council to approve the recommendation from the Planning, Town and Environment Committee (*minute ref. P/5421*) be rescinded;
- 2) That the Market Place Improvement Working Party be renamed the Town Centre Working Party;
- 3) That the remit of the Town Centre Working Party (formerly Market Place Improvement Working Party) be extended to include all proposed improvements to infrastructure or other elements of the built environment within the town centre (meaning here the area bounded by the A31, the B3347 Mansfield Road, Bickerley Gardens, Bickerley Road and Bickerley Mill Stream) whether such improvements are to be achieved by the repair, refurbishment or replacement of existing features or the provision of new features and (b) that oversight of the Town Centre Working Party remain with this Committee; and
- 4) That the Chairman of the Planning, Town and Environment Committee and the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee be invited to attend meetings of the Town Centre Working Party.

ACTION C Wilkins

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

Note: The text in the Action Boxes above does not form part of these minutes.

RECEIVED
25th October 2017

APPROVED
1st November 2017

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Tree management issues

1. Introduction and reason why report required

- 1.1 Some issues have arisen upon which it is necessary either for actions taken to be reported to members or for decisions to be made by members.

2. Background information, options, impact assessment and risks

- 2.1 The council's general policy about managing the many trees for which it is responsible includes the following elements:
 - 2.1.1 Routine maintenance (not involving working at height) is undertaken by its grounds maintenance staff with the planning and prioritisation of work being determined by the grounds foreman;
 - 2.1.2 Where urgent action is required to abate a hazard or serious nuisance, staff may arrange for this to be done by a tree surgeon (selected using normal procurement regulations and processes);
 - 2.1.3 Staff may also arrange less urgent work to trees which are dead, diseased or dangerous in the same manner provided there are sufficient funds in the relevant budget.

As with any policy, it is always open to members to approve actions inconsistent with these principles if they are satisfied that sufficiently exceptional circumstances apply (indeed, members have a duty to consider such departures where a case for these is made).

- 2.2 In August this year the office received a report from a resident of Wren Close that a white poplar growing on Forest Edge Public Open Space was infested with wasps that were straying into his garden and rendering it unusable. Advice has been sought from two pest controllers (one independent the other employed by the district council), a tree surgeon and a tree officer with the National Park Authority. The advice was that there is no nest evident in the vicinity; rather, the wasps are attracted by a substance exuded by small insects infesting the tree; a natural phenomenon expected to be temporary. No measures to address this were recommended or even suggested as possible. Since the infestation is expected to be temporary and may not recur, it was not considered to be sufficient grounds for felling the tree. However, since the poplar is entangled with a small tree nearby and is not of a species suitable for growing in proximity to buildings, there is a case (on purely arboricultural grounds) for pollarding or removing it altogether. (A photograph will be shown at the meeting)
- 2.3 In September this year concerns were raised about a hornbeam growing over the boundary of The Mount Public Open Space with branches very close to a house in Beatty Close. The grounds foreman and the town clerk inspected the tree and agreed it posed an immediate threat of causing physical damage to the house for which the Town Council might then bear liability. Arrangements were made with a local tree surgeon for it to be pruned back at a cost of £300 plus VAT.
- 2.4 Also in September this year concerns were raised about a maple and hedgerow also growing over the boundary of The Mount Public Open Space, this time affecting a house in The Mount (and another larger tree nearby). In this case, however, there appeared to be no immediate threat and therefore no grounds for classifying either as "dangerous", even though the maple is growing very close to the boundary. The maple was pollarded quite severely only three years ago but is already becoming entangled again with the larger tree nearby (a photograph

A

will be shown at the meeting). The owner of the adjoining house has offered to pay for it to be felled. Felling it would be significantly cheaper than pollarding it every few years. The larger tree nearby is growing over cars parked on the adjacent road; it would be sensible to prune it while there is a tree surgeon on site.

- 2.5 The current policy reflects members' concerns that trees make a valuable contribution to local amenity and should be kept unless compelling reasons dictate their removal. Both the capacity of the grounds maintenance team to undertake routine maintenance and funds for specialist tree surgery are also limited resources which should be expended only where the need is clear and greatest. The committee should consider carefully these sound reasons for the current policy and only authorise departures from it in circumstances that are judged on reasonable grounds to be genuinely exceptional.

3. Issues for decision and any recommendations

- 3.1 *Whether to authorise the removal of the infested poplar from Forest Edge Public Open Space (RECOMMENDATION: Having regard to the exceptional inconvenience to the neighbour, fell the poplar).***
- 3.2 *To note the works undertaken to the hornbeam at The Mount***
- 3.3 *Whether to authorise works to the maple, hedge and tree (RECOMMENDATION: Having regard to the likely cost of pollarding the maple every few years given its proximity to the boundary, fell it provided the neighbour bears the cost, trim the hedgerow and prune the larger tree).***

For further information, contact:

Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk
Direct Dial: 01425 484720
Email: chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk

Tree at Forest Edge



26/09/2017



Trees at The Mount

Youth Co-Ordinator's Report Jenny Critchlow

This report is not as detailed as usual due to The Place being closed for the first week in September after a very busy summer, staff taking annual leave and a bereavement.

1. Youth workers have been actively supporting young people listening to their concerns and anticipations about starting college and the major transitions for them from school to the next stage in their lives.
2. Everyone of the young people who regularly access The Place and were in year 11 at school have secured employment an apprenticeship or a place at college as far as we know.
3. Only one young person is receiving education at home as they have been permanently excluded from school. This is testament to the excellent holistic support that Ringwood School give their students. Hopefully the collaborative work which has been piloted during the last academic year and the summer will be able to be built on during the coming year.

We have had a number of groups using The Place during the month these are as follows -

1. Home educators group every Tuesday afternoon which is very well attended and they have story time, music and other peer support activities enabling the young people to socialise and share learning.
2. The New Forest ASD (Autism spectrum disorder) support group met on the 13th September and meet monthly at The Place. This is a self supporting group with no funding who meet to share experience and offer reassurance to each other and practical help.
3. Hampshire Parent Carers Network met on the 27th September - this group supports parents with additional needs children and young people.

The breastfeeding support group who regularly met on a Monday afternoon are working with Barnardo's and a local health visitor to establish a support group with the emphasis on encouraging and supporting younger parents.

We had a very successful project with NFDC during the summer with their 'let's get active' programme and through this we have been given a brand new table tennis table which has been very warmly received by young people. This table is from the 'ping' initiative.

The Place has been offering sessions for young people on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. This has been possible due to the flexibility and dedication of our two newest members of staff Jo and Gareth as Maddi was on leave and has started doing her masters degree in social work at Bournemouth University and I have been on leave.

B

The Cafe has been quiet since the start of the new term with minimal takings but when there are groups using the building then The Place is lively and there is a good atmosphere and the groups buy drinks and cakes.

The youth work staff had a meeting on Tuesday 26th September and we planned work up until half term which is the last full week of October. We will be opening for young people on a Tuesday and Wednesday from 4:30 until 9:00pm and on a Friday from 6:30 until 10:30pm. On a Wednesday we will have three members of staff from 7:30 until 9:00pm in order to offer sexual health and relationships support. We are able to offer this as now we have three staff who have completed the HCC sexual health training. This is hopefully the start of being able to offer a broader service to young people.



Item No.	Name	Recent developments	Resource use				Finish in 2017-18?	Notes
			Finance			Staff time		
			Budget	Spent to date	Predicted out-turn			
Projects with budgetary implications (bids included in 2017-18 budget)								
1	Training		£1,810	£195	£1,000	Significant	Unlikely	Training needs will be assessed at annual reviews and a realistic revenue budget determined
2	Installation of improved CCTV @ Ringwood Cemetery	Project completed	£1,000	£990	990	Moderate	Finished	The improvements are installed and working.
Projects with budgetary implications (not included in 2017-18 budget but added since)								
3	Play equipment replacement							To be funded from earmarked reserves
4	War Memorial repairs	Requirement under review for preparation of specification of works.		£0	£?	Moderate	Possible	To be funded from reserves (£1,500) and grants (balance) – latter yet to be secured.
Projects with no budgetary implications								
5	Lighting at Carvers	Preferred tender selected at committee awaits full council approval.				Moderate	Probable	To be funded from developer contributions held by NFDC





Item No.	Name	Brief description & notes (define scope and quality requirements)	Resource requirements						Priority (specify target completion date)
			Finance			Time and attention			
			RTC recurring cost	RTC non-recurring cost	Other source	Members	Staff	Others	
Projects with budgetary implications (for possible inclusion as bids in 2018-19 budget)									
A1	Market Place and Churchyard	Human Sun Dial repair, new benches and cycle stands, new footpath, etc.	£0	£?	£?	Significant	Significant	Significant	
A2	Long Lane Sports Fields	Improvements to football and other sports facilities	£?	£?	£?	Significant	Significant	Significant	
A3	Cemetery improvements	Repairs and improvements to walls and paths possibly including a columbarium	£0	£?	£0	Minimal	Significant	None	
A4	Play facilities	Additional play facilities (e.g. splash park)	£?	£?	£?	?	?	None	
Projects with budgetary implications (for possible inclusion as bids in later budgets)									
B1	Land adjoining Poulner Pits		£0	£?	£?				
B2	Tennis at Carvers Rec	Improvements	£0	£?	£?				
B3	Fitness trail at Carvers Rec	Installation	£0	£?	£?				
B4	Riverside Walk		£0	£?	£0				
B5	Footpath extension at The Bickerley		£0	£?	£?				
B6	Brockey Sands	Volunteer-led environmental improvement?	£0	£?	£?				
B7	Green Sheds at Carvers	Replace facility	£?	£?	£0				
Projects with no budgetary implications									
	None								



Responsibilities for town improvements

1. Introduction and reason why report required

- 1.1 At its meeting on 26th July the Town Council approved (minute ref. C/6026) the recommendations of the Planning, Town and Environment Committee agreed at its meeting on 7th July, including specifically that contained in minute ref. P/5421 to the effect that “all projects falling under the category of ‘Town Improvements’ be spearheaded by special meetings of the Planning, Town and Environment Committee”.
- 1.2 It now appears that wording of the recommendation in question did not reflect the intention of members and if allowed to stand would seriously reduce and/or interfere with the work of this committee.

2. Background information, options, impact assessment and risks

- 2.1 No decision of the Council can be rescinded within six months other than by complying with Standing Order 44. A recommendation from this committee that Council rescind that decision and approve a revised proposal more closely in accord with members’ intentions would meet that requirement.
- 2.2 The original proposal was aimed at enabling the Market Place Improvement Working Party to take a more holistic view of suggested improvements to the built environment of the town centre by suitably expanding its remit. However, the resolution as worded has the effect of making the Planning, Town and Environment Committee (and by implication therefore not this committee) responsible for “spearheading” all improvements anywhere in the town.

3. Issues for decision and any recommendations

- 3.1 ***Whether to recommend that the council decision to approve the recommendation from the Planning, Town and Environment Committee (minute ref. P/5421) be rescinded (RECOMMENDATION: Recommend rescission).***
- 3.2 ***Whether to resolve (a) that the remit of the Market Place Improvement Working Party be extended to include all proposed improvements to infrastructure or other elements of the built environment within the town centre (meaning here the area bounded by the A31, the B3347 Mansfield Road, Bickerley Gardens, Bickerley Road and Bickerley Mill Stream) whether such improvements are to be achieved by the repair, refurbishment or replacement of existing features or the provision of new features and (b) that oversight of the Market Place Working Party be transferred from this committee to the Planning Town and Environment Committee (RECOMMENDATION: Resolve as suggested).***

For further information, contact:

Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk
Direct Dial: 01425 484720
Email: chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk