

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD AT
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KING'S HOUSE THETFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 8th SEPTEMBER 2021, STARTING AT 2.00 PM.

Present:

The Mayor, Councillor M P Brindle

Councillors:

C Barreto, C Harvey, D J Hodgkinson (Vice chair),
J James, T J Jermy (Chair), K Parker, B Tullett.

Officers:

Alan Yorke Deputy Town Clerk Nick Thompson Works Manager
Chris Crimmen Committee Secretary

MINUTES

264/21	<u>DECLARATIONS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS</u> None.
265/21	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> None.
266/21	<u>MINUTES</u> RESOLVED: The minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on 7th July 2021, which were received by Council on 30th July 2021 as a true record and signed/initialled by the Committee Chairman.
267/21	<u>ACTION POINTS & UPDATES</u> All action points from the last meeting are covered in the following minutes.
268 /21	<u>HEALTH & SAFETY</u> None.
269/21	<u>STREETSCENE REPORT</u> The Works Manager asked Councillors to receive and note the attached written Street Scene report. There followed a discussion on the benches and bins and Councillors noted the report. (see Appendix A).
270/21	<u>FINANCIAL UPDATE</u> To receive the Amenities Financial Report for the five months ended on 31 August 2021. Decision Required: To note the financial report. Lead: Deputy Town Clerk.
271/21	<u>REVISED BUDGET FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2022</u> To review the revised budget for the year ending 31 March 2022 and to identify any additional virements and use of Committee specific reserves. Decision Required: To identify and approve spending against Committee specific reserves for noting by the Finance Committee. Lead: Deputy Town Clerk.
272/21	<u>SMALL GRANTS</u> The Deputy Town Clerk asked Councillors to discuss following two applications received and previously circulated to Committee members. After a discussion Councillor J James proposed and Councillor C Harvey seconded the following two applications. RESOLVED: That Thetford Town Council award a small grant of £300 to Keystone.

	RESOLVED: That Thetford Town Council award a small grant of £300 to Chapter 15.		
273/21	<p><u>NUNS BRIDGES CONSULTATION</u> To review a supplementary consultation carried out in January/February 2021 on proposed hedge planning around Nun's Bridges. The consultation asked the public three questions (see attached responses). Decision Required: Which options to choose for questions 1,2 and 3. Leads: Officers and Chairman.</p>		
274/21	<p><u>PUBLIC MOWING CONSULTATION</u> To review and discuss the results of the public consultation for mowing regimes for open spaces around Thetford which received 250 responses. The Chair asked Councillors to decide and make recommendations on the mowing regimes to be implemented in future years. After a discussion Councillor J James proposed and Councillor M Brindle: RESOLVED: That the Amenities Committee approve the mowing regime as outlined in the schedule below</p>		
	<u>Area</u>	<u>Consultation Result</u>	<u>Council Decision</u>
	School Plain	Option C - reduced mowing frequency to once or twice a year at this site, leaving a path along the diagonal edge	Approved.
	Melford Common	Option D - reduced mowing frequency from every 2-3 weeks to every 4-6 weeks over both the upper and lower parts of Melford Common.	Leave Melford Common mowing regime as it is.
	Lady Gentle Meadow	Option C - reduced mowing frequency to once or twice a year at this site, leaving a path around the site.	Approved.
	Nuns Bridges	Option C - reduced mowing frequency to once or twice a year on some parts of this site, leaving other areas cut as at present.	Leave Nun's Bridges mowing regime as it is.
	Nunnery Drive	Option C – leave as it is at reduced mowing frequency to once or twice a year over most of this site.	Leave Nunnery Drive mowing regime as it is.
	St Barnabas Close to Bury Road	Option C - reduced mowing frequency to once or twice a year over most of this site.	Approved.
	Barnham Cross Old Playing Fields	That the Council seeks quotes for mowing a maze through the meadow (Option D) and adopts Option C (half of the site nearest the houses to be mown every 4-6 weeks, half to be mown once or twice a year) if this proves unaffordable	Approved.
275/21	<p><u>GRANT APPLICATION TO THE BRECKLAND COUNCIL GREEN GRANTS FUND</u> The Chair asked Councillors to discuss and agree the scope of a Thetford Town Council grant application to the Breckland Council Green Grants Fund of £100,000. Councillor S Wright had been asked to work up an expression of interest on the Lady Gentle Meadow. This would include renewing the fencing, gates, hedges</p>		

	and adding Education Boards in this area. This was agreed and will be discussed at the next meeting.
276/21	<u>ANNUAL FRONT GARDEN COMPETITION</u> The Chair asked Councillors to discuss and agree the scope of the annual front garden competition. The working group had produced a report (see Appendix B) and Councillors endorsed the report. The committee will find a sponsor to take this competition forward.
277/21	<u>ISSUING OF LITTER PICKS TO LOCAL RESIDENTS</u> The Chair asked Councillors to discuss and agree the basis of issuing litter pick equipment to local residents' groups (including organisations versus individuals, maximum number that can be issued, and the maximum loan period). It was not known if the Countryside Officer had issue guidance notes. This will be discussed again next month when more details will be available.
278/21	<u>CORRESPONDENCE</u> To note and discuss correspondence received. Decision Required: None. Lead: Officers.
279/21	<u>COMMITTEE OFFICERS UPDATE</u> None.
280/21	<u>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</u> It was agreed to issue a press release on the Mowing Regime and the parking on Mill Lane.

Chairman.

APPENDA A
ITEM 269/21 STREETSCENE REPORT
Street scene Report to Amenities Committee
8th September 2021

Benches

The new picnic table has now been installed near to Nuns Bridges, and this has replaced the rotten bench previously situated there.



Before



After

The Bench was installed at Blaydon Bridge, but unfortunately after around a week of instalment the bench had its bolts cut off and tampered with. The Town Team received a

Report of the incident and removed it promptly. We now plan to re visit and install a thick concrete pad and security bolts to prevent further problems

Bins (Town Team manager)

These requests from the last meeting have now been completed by the Town Team.

- Salisbury Way: New concrete base & litter bin, with a 'dog mess allowed' sticker installed.
(This replaced the broken dog wate bin previously situated there)



Before



After

- Melford Common (Norfolk Road): New concrete base & litter bin, with a 'dog mess allowed' sticker installed. (This replaced the broken dog wate bin previously situated there)

The burnt-out bin on Abbey water meadows has now been replaced, with a 'dog mess allowed' sticker installed.

(The area was cleared of the melted plastic one)



[Text Wrapping Break]

- Bin to the back of Monks gate replaced. This replaced a corroded litter bin that had the door hanging off.





We have also recently had several Bins set on Fire around the Town and these was the old plastic type.

They have now been replaced with the standard Derby metal bin

- Thomas Payne Statue Area



- Top of White Hart Street (Breckland Council Paid for the re installation and bin)



- The burnt-out bin on Abbey water meadows has now been replaced, with a 'dog mess allowed' sticker installed.



The cast iron open top bin has now been removed and a new bin base has been installed ready for a new bin to go in. The Bin will be in during the week commencing 06/09/2021.



A request for a Dog waste bin to be put in on Barnham Cross Common has gone to Breckland Council/Serco, and we are now awaiting a response for approval. This was recently requested to encourage dog walkers to use the bin rather than the nearby fence posts.



A new bin has been installed for Breckland Council at the pathway between Station Road and Ben Culey. This has replaced an ongoing issue with the base and bin being vandalised. **Breckland Paid for the installation and bin**

The bollard has been re set after a recent report came through for the nuns' bridges car park.

Play areas

There have been challenges with the playparks due to a backlog in getting our contractor on site and procuring replacement equipment when required. In order to keep the playparks

open, we have taken the decision to remove unsafe equipment and keep the playpark open rather than close the playpark when one item or part of one item is unsafe.

We are going to prepare a refurbishment plan for the playparks to ensure that playpark equipment is renewed when required. This will be informed by the annual ROSPA inspection.

APPENDIX B

ITEM 276/21: ANNUAL FRONT GARDEN COMPETITION

THETFORD GARDENING AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS

Introduction

Thetford Town Council is reintroducing its popular annual Best Kept Garden competition, recognising those residents that go above and beyond, keeping their front gardens neat, tidy, and presentable. As well as recognising residents' efforts, the annual awards will also note and commend local businesses for their floral displays which contribute to improved civic pride. For the first time, continuing its commitment to the environment and conservation, the Council will be introducing an environmental aspect to the awards, with new categories recognising local environmental projects and community volunteers.

Aims

- To promote and improve civic pride across Thetford
- To encourage gardening across the ages from children at pre-school to residents in the towns nursing homes, encouraging community participation
- To raise awareness of environmental issues, biodiversity, and sustainability
- To support Thetford Town Council's entry to Anglia In Bloom

Award Categories

Best Front Garden Award

Best Business Floral Display

Environmental Champion Of The Year

Environmental Project Of The Year

Best Front Garden Award

The Best Front Garden award is open to any garden within the parish of Thetford which is on public view from the road/pavement, and anything can be nominated from window boxes to large, landscaped gardens. So, whether you have a collection of window boxes, a container garden, or a large front garden – the judges will be looking for how you have made the best use of the space available. Gardens will be judged on their tidiness, flowers used, contribution to the environment and general innovation. Residents are encouraged to take a photo of their favourite Thetford garden and enter it into the competition by emailing the picture to the Council using the dedicated email address for the competition. Self-nomination is acceptable, and you can enter more than one garden.

Best Commercial Property Display

Businesses across Thetford are encouraged to join in with the awards and make their shop frontage or general premises area as colourful as they can. Judges will be looking for those businesses that have made the best use of the space available so whether you're in a small shop, or a large factory unit then this is the category for you. If you spot a business that has made an extra effort with their floral display or are keeping their grounds tidy, then please nominate them.

Environmental Champion Of The Year

Thetford is lucky to have so many residents that go above and beyond when it comes to keeping the town tidy or supporting our local environment. This award aims to recognise those individuals that really champion our local environment, whether that is through regular litter picking, gardening in a neighbour's garden or community site or supporting local projects that help our local environment. If you know someone that you think fits this category, nominate them by emailing Thetford Town Council and tell us why you think they are deserving of this recognition.

Environment Project Of The Year

Do you know of a project that has really helped to tidy up Thetford or something that really supports our environment? If so, let us know! Nominate your favourite project or organisation and let us know why you think it should be recognised as the community project of the year.

Competition Dates

The competition will be open from 1st May each year through to the 30th June. Judges will visit nominated sites and review entries during July and the awards ceremony will take place in August. All shortlisted entries will be invited to the awards ceremony which will take place in King's House gardens.

Prizes

1st Prize in each category will receive a £50 voucher
Second place in each category will receive a £30 voucher
Third runner up in each category will received a £20 voucher
Total prize money cost - £400

All shortlisted entries will be invited to the awards ceremony and refreshments will be provided. Separate sponsors will be found for each category as well as the overall sponsor who will contribute to the competition costs and refreshments at the awards event. Each entry will receive a letter from the Town Council commending their gardening efforts / contribution and finalists will receive a certificate.

Judging Panel

The judging panel will consist of the following;
Mayor of Thetford
Representative from the BTO
Representative from the Thetford Garden and Allotment Club
Chair of Thetford Town Council Amenities Committee
Representative from the main sponsor