

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES, LAND AND PROPERTIES
COMMITTEE, HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2nd NOVEMBER 2016 AT THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, KINGS HOUSE, THETFORD STARTING AT 2.00 P.M

Present:

The Mayor, Councillor T J Jermy

Councillors

Mrs S J Armes (Vice Chairman)

C R P Burnett

D M Crawford

Mrs J Hollis

J Newton

M P Brindle

Mrs B J Canham (Chairman)

C Harvey

R G Kybird

M S Robinson

Officers in attendance:

Roz Barnett

Chris Crimmen

Amenities Land and Property Officer

Committee Secretary

Minutes

392/16 DECLARATIONS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY/NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS
None.

393/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
None received.

394/16 MINUTES
The minutes of the Committee's meeting held on the 5th of October 2016, received by Council on 25th October 2016 were confirmed as a true record and signed/initialled by the Committee Chairman.

395/16 ACTION POINTS
The chairperson gave an update on last month's action points:

- The meeting to discuss the land management contract was held on the 17th of October in attendance were Councillor B Canham and M Brindle and the ALP Officer. Councillor M Robinson resigned from the committee before the meeting.
- Five architects have been asked to quote for plans and a specification for the Castle Park and Cage Lane toilets refurbishment.
- Redcastle play area will be started in January.
- Councillor Kybird provided contact details for the factory at two mile bottom and the ALP Officer has arranged a visit to discuss access arrangements to two mile bottom.
- The play park site visits took place on the 20th of October 2016.
- ALP officer has produced health and safety guidance which is on the agenda for discussion.
- A draft volunteer job description for Ramsey Close volunteers has been circulated if councillors wish to make comments.
- ALP officer discussed the charging policy for open spaces with Councillor T Jermy. The revised fees are on the agenda for consideration.
- Councillor Hollis met with the ALP officer to discuss the hanging basket tender.
- All the applicants have accepted the medium grants awards.

ALP PRIORITIES & ALP OFFICER OBJECTIVES

The ALP Officer had prepared a list of suggested Amenities Land and Property priorities and objectives for discussion.

1.	Ensuring Town Council sites/premises, staff, councillors and the general public are safe by ensuring health and safety is managed and monitored across the council.	Set up work completed by December 2016. Monitoring and review by officers and committees ongoing through year.
2.	Improvements to play parks 3 year programme. Consultation and improvement programme developed for 2017 - 2019 to focus on improving existing parks and consideration of a major new riverside play park and the possibility of an outdoor gym.	Redcastle play park completed March 2017. Zip wire removed on health and safety grounds Nov 2016. A refresh all the other parks completed by the end of April 2017. Harriet Martineau major refurbishment by the end of March 2019
3.	Management of open spaces for conservation and community access.	Castle Motte steps and clearing/fencing of Ford Meadow & Barnham Cross Common complete by end of March 2017. Preparation of land management contract 2017-2019
4.	Develop a plan for ensuring that all our signage floral displays and street furniture are well maintained and present a corporate image. Consultation and improvements to town space areas/ toilets/ Market Place/King'sSquare/ Button Island/Spring Walk/Riverside 2017-19	Agree plan for maintenance programme ready to start implementation April 2017. Toilets out to tender February 2017.

Councillors noted that the first three objectives were very practical and that they would be a challenging work programme within the timescales. Councillors also made some corrections to the proposed dates. The observation was made that Objective 4 would be a thinking planning forward objective.

RESOLVED: The Committee adopted the four priorities and objectives listed above for the next six months.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The ALP Officer had prepared a guidance paper on the Health and Safety responsibilities of the ALP Committee (See Appendix A). Councillors made some amendments on the dates in the paper and agreed to work to the guidance.

RESOLVED: The Health & Safety responsibilities and committee structure guidance in Appendix A was adopted by the Committee.

The ALP Officer asked councillors to consider the risk assessments for Market Place, Spring Walk and the Riverside. There followed a discussion and councillor R Kybird, who is the Committees H&S representative, felt it would be useful for him, to visit all the areas with the ALP officer and go through the categories in detail and report back to the committee on the final risk assessments.

398/16

PLAY AREAS

The ALP Officer reported that she had provisionally booked an opening date for the new play park with the Redcastle Residents Association for the 18th March 2017 and councillors were asked to note the date.

The ALP Officer reported that councillors, the works foremen, and the play park inspector had visited the Thetford play parks on the 20th of October and produced a refresh report for each of the parks. It was noted that Guildford Way would be removed because of the health and safety implications of the ROSPA report.

Councillors supported the motion that all the parks be refreshed to bring them up to a reasonable standard. Councillors authorised the ALP officer to seek quotes for the individual parks and to bring back a plan with the financial costs to the January meeting. Councillor C Burnett proposed the motion and this was seconded by Councillor R Kybird and agreed:

RECOMMENDATION: Thetford Town Council to refresh all the play parks with the exception of Guildford Way over the next three years using money from the commuted sum from Breckland District Council.

399/16

OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT

The ALP Officer asked the committee to consider the adoption of open space policy with the revised charges. She explained that the purpose of the proposed fees was not to be money making, at the potential impact of deterring charitable and community events, but to ensure the Council recovers reasonable administration costs for re-investment in parks and open spaces. After a brief discussion the councillors agreed the new charges.

RESOLVED: The schedule of fees and charges for Open Space Management listed in Appendix B were adopted by the Committee.

Castle Motte Update

The ALP Officer reported that the scheduled monument consent and planning application had been submitted. The Castle Motte steps consultation has gone live and the ALP Officer shared copies of letters and a summary of the responses received so far. The closing date for the consultation is the 20th of November. The Town Council had received 27 responses on the Town Council Facebook page. This broke down into 17 in favour, 6 actively against and 4 neutral questions/comments.

Councillors welcomed the comments from the public and asked the ALP Officer to take into account any practical ideas made and respond to any questions asked. It was suggested that the ALP Officer make the planning department aware of the consultation undertaken by the Town Council.

The appointed independent contractor will be managing the project and the work will be supervised by David Robinson, NCC Historic Environment Officer, and Neil Featherstone the land management agent.

Land management

Councillors Mrs B Canham and M Brindle met with the ALP officer on the 17th October 2016 to discuss the land management contract and consider the land management legal duties of the Town Council. There followed a discussion and the committee agreed the next steps going forward were:

- ALP Officer to carry out further research on other agencies and individuals who may be able to support our land management work.
- ALP Officer to produce a paper to outline how the Council will address the issues raised in the report for the January 2017 meeting.
- The ALP Officer to produce a draft tender/quote document for the land management contract for consideration at the January 2017 meeting.

Open Space Requests

- The ALP Officer confirmed the arrangements for Fireworks Event on Sunday 6th November 2016.
- The ALP Officer explained that Stuart Wright had made a request to place a notice board on the wall at the Riverside between Argos and the Cornish pasty café and two finger signposts one near the Carnegie and the other placed between St Nicholas and Minster Gate. The committee agreed to the proposal and delegated the exact location to Councillor Wright and the ALP Officer in consultation with Breckland/County Councils.
- The ALP Officer had a request from the Bulldog Football Club for a container on Barnham Cross football pitch. It was suggested that the best location for the container would be on the former site of the pavilion and therefore permission would need to be sought from Breckland District Council. The only funding available would have to come from the small grants fund. It was also suggested Jo Pearson be contacted to provide advice on containers.
- The ALP Officer had a request from the Circus Fantasia for the use of Melford Common 18th-26th of February 2017. It was pointed out that the ground at Melford Common was usually soft in February and perhaps Barnham Cross Common would be a better venue. The ALP Officer will put this option to the circus.
- Another request has been received from Potterhouse Church for King's Square. The ALP Officer was asked to explain the concerns to the organiser and negotiate appropriate use. Councillors agreed that the ALP officer would draft a usage policy for the town centre in the New Year.
- Councillors discussed the removal of chippings at Barnham Cross Common. It was suggested that they be left at the Barnham Cross car park and the Charles Burrell centre. It was also recommended that the council seek a commercial outlet for the chippings. Councillors also asked the ALP officer to arrange log seating and log barriers to be made from felled trees. The ALP officer was also alerted to the fact some of the fencing has created tight corners which could be dangerous to livestock.

400/16

HANGING BASKETS

Councillor Hollis presented the draft tender document for the hanging baskets and showed councillors pictures of preferred hanging basket flowers. Councillors suggested a change in the closing date and to ask for a 1 & 3 year contract price.

401/16

XMAS LIGHTS

The ALP Officer explained that this year there had been a lot of extra work seeking permissions from landlords to attach lights to the buildings. This was done at the request of the electrical contractor. The Council has also had to get lamp posts safety tested, permissions to hang lights over the streets and permits for the contractor to work on highways in the town.

402/16

BINS AND BENCHES APPLICATIONS

The ALP Officer asked the councillors to note that we have been given permission to place a grit bin at the top of Tithing Close but we will have to fill it.

- 403/16 GRANTS REQUEST
Councillors were informed one grant has been made to Pop Up Enterprises for a youth project. Three other applications have been made but the ALP officer is awaiting additional requested paperwork.
- 404/16 UPDATE ON POLICE COMMUNITY SAFETY OFFICER
The ALP Officer tabled a report provided by the police. Some Councillors were disappointed at the lack of detailed information on the impact of the PCSO in the town. The ALP Officer said that this was probably her fault in the briefing that she gave to the police. Councillors welcomed the fact that the police have decided to fully fund the post without asking for a contribution from the town council. The ALP officer explained that the police have taken this measure as they believe that the dedicated PCSO post in the town centre has made a positive difference.
- 405/16 CONSIDER BUDGET REDUCTIONS
The Chairman and ALP officer asked Councillors to consider the budget saving of £16,622 for 2017/18 budget. They recommended that the easiest reductions to the budget would be £2,000 from street furniture, £2,000 from hanging baskets, £8,000 from youth and £3,000 from medium grants. Councillors came up with alternative proposals and after a discussion it was agreed to £8,000 of justifiable reductions in the committee budget. The ALP Committee believe that if they are required to make any further cuts a major reduction would have to made to the grants/youth programme or Christmas lights or hanging baskets. Councillor R Kybird proposed the motion; this was seconded by Councillor T Jermy and agreed.
RECOMMENDATION: The ALP Committee suggested a budget reduction of £8,000 for 2017/18 as follows:
- **Reduce Medium Grants nominal code 7714 to £10,000**
 - **Reduce Youth Projects nominal code 7781 to £10,000**
 - **Reduce Hanging Baskets nominal code 7736 to £10,000**
 - **Reduce Street furniture/Grit Bins nominal code 7730 to £4,000.**
- 406/16 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS
None.
- 407/16 CORRESPONDENCE
The ALP Officer asked councillors to note correspondence (Appendix C). The chairman asked councillors to be aware that the Town Council has raised the issue of illegal entry of vehicles to King Street with NCC and asked them to enforce the restriction. The request for the removal of trees from the common at Nunnery Drive was discussed and agreed as it was being externally funded and that the previous ALP officer had given assurances that they would be removed.
- 408/16 PRESS RELEASES
None.

Chairman

ACTION POINTS	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
To carry out further research on other agencies and individuals who may be able to work on land management issues,	ALP Officer	January 2017
To produce a paper with the Town Clerk and nominated Councillors to outline how the Council will address the issues raised in this Land Management Report	ALP Officer	January 2017
To find a hard standing near Barnham Cross Common for container to be used as a changing room.	ALP Officer	January 2017
To request a detailed report of work carried out by the PSCO	ALP Officer	January 2017
DBS checks for Ramsey Close volunteers	ALP Officer	Ongoing.
Review of grant awarding policy and process	ALP Committee	January meeting.
To work up the way forward to formulate a Youth Council.	Councillors Mrs J Hollis and Mrs B Canham	January 2017

Appendix A

Health & Safety Responsibilities Amenities Land & Property Committee Guidance

Key Responsibilities	Actions	Completion date
Works Team	Review Works Team Health and Safety annually with external consultant	August 2016 Next due date Aug 2017
Common Areas	ALP Committee to review each site risk assessments at least once a year for sites:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two Mile Bottom 2. Riverside, lady gentle meadow and spring walk 3. Melford common 4. Barnham Cross Common 5. Fredrick's wood 6. Ford Meadow 7. Miscellaneous small sites 	Completed by Jan 2017 Next due date Jan 2018
Toilets	ALP Committee to review each site risk assessments at least once a year for Cage Lane Toilets, Castle Park and Bus Station	Completed by Jan 2017. Next due date Jan 2018
Town Centre Sites	ALP Committee to review each site risk assessments at least once a year for <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pizza/Kebab shop 2. Clippers 3. Wetherspools 4. Sandwich shop 5. Market place & King's Square 	Completed by Dec 2016
Street Furniture	Agree and monitor a programme of street furniture maintenance	In place April 2017
Play parks	ALP Committee to review each site risk assessments at least once a year for <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bergamont 2. Redcastle 3. Elm Rd 4. Fairfields 5. Guildford Way 6. Martineau Close 7. Pine Close 8. Ramsey Close 9. Skate Park 10. Castle Park 	Completed January 2017
Xmas Lights & Trees, Grass Cutting contracts	To monitor contracts for Xmas lights, hanging baskets, tree surveying, tree maintenance and grass cutting	Review health and safety compliance on contracts once a year.

Committee Structure

- Each Committee to agree specific health & safety responsibilities and actions.
- Each committee to nominate a health & safety spokesperson to liaise with

Amenities Land & Property Officer. (Councillor Kybird agreed to take on this role (5/10/2016).

- Health and Safety to be an item on every committee agenda.
- Amenities Land & Property Committee to report annually on all completed health and safety and risk assessments to full council in September of each year.

Appendix B Open space charges		
Open Spaces	Charity, schools , voluntary Groups & local non-profit organisations	Commercial Events
Sites	Donation	Charge (£)
Commons	Suggested Donation £20 small activities £50 larger activities	£275 + VAT £300 Deposit
King's Square Small performance area	Suggested Donation £20 small activities £50 larger activities	£150 + VAT £200 Deposit
King's Square Large performance area	Suggested Donation £20 small activities £50 larger activities	£150+ VAT £200 Deposit
Market Place	Suggested Donation £20 small activities £50 larger activities	£150 + VAT £200 Deposit
Castle Park	Suggested Donation £20 small activities £50 larger activities	£150+ VAT £300 Deposit
Barnham Common Playing Field	Suggested Donation £20 small activities £50 larger activities	£275 + VAT £300 Deposit

Appendix C Correspondence			
1.	07.10.16	Thetford Bulldogs request for help from the Council to have a container placed on the common for the football club.	Sent to chair for information and placed on November agenda
2.	18.10.16	2 residents complaining about traffic in King's Street	ALP officer reported incident to the County Council.
3.	28.1.16	Thank you letter from Thetford Community Association	Noted in Correspondence

4.	31.12.16	Resident asking for trees to be removed at the back of nunnery drive.	ALP Officer visited site
5.	1.11.16	Resident asking for trees to be removed at the back of nunnery drive.	ALP Officer visited site
6.	Oct/Nov	6 residents responded to Castle Consultation	Circulated to councillors
7.	31.10. 16	Resident complaint about the council's decision not to remove the posts on Melford Common	Noted in Correspondence. ALP Officer will draft response.
8.	October	3 cheques for donations towards the Xmas lights	Noted in Correspondence. ALP officer will send thank you letters.