

Minutes
Amenities Committee
Democratic Services

Date 06/02/2024
Time 18:00 - 19:35
Location King's House, Council Chamber
Present Carla Barreto, Mike Brindle, David (Ieuan) Evans, Chris Harvey,
Terry Jermy (Chair), Mac MacDonald, Hazel McCambridge (Vice Chair),
and Stuart Terry.

Officers Alan Yorke (Acting Town Clerk),
Nick Thompson (Town Team Manager),
Karen Robinson (Committee Clerk).

Members of the public There were three members of the public in attendance.
the public

OPEN FORUM

- 1) Two members of the public asked for the support of the Council for a road safety campaign on London Road in Thetford where a coroner's report had recommended safety improvements are made. They also requested information regarding accidents in the last 20 years. The Chair of the Amenities Committee replied that it will be discussed further on Agenda Number 652/23 but added that the Council is attempting to reduce speeds within Thetford with the introduction of lower speed limits and the installation of the mobile Speed Awareness Monitor (SAMS2), which is moved every four weeks and collects data which is sent to Highways and the Police. He also informed the members of the public that Norfolk County Councillors receive data regarding accidents within their divisions.
- 2) A member of the public asked about the plans regarding Ramsey Close, as residents had been spoken to. The Chair of the Amenities Committee replied that it will be discussed further on Agenda Number 649/23, but the Council was clearing the site as a responsible landlord, regardless of any possible alternative use.

Councillor Chris Harvey left the meeting once the Open Forum had finished.

MINUTES

641/23 DECLARATIONS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None.

642/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

643/23 MINUTES AMENITIES COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on 9 January 2024 which were received by Council on 30 January 2024, are a true record and signed/initialled by the Committee Chairman.

644/23 TOWN TEAM MANAGER'S REPORT

The Committee discussed the report from the Town Team Manager, which was circulated prior to the meeting:

- Breckland Council has been notified about dog fouling issues, which has now been passed on to Environmental Health & the Dog Warden, and SERCO will attend and cleanse these areas in the meantime.

- Councillors reported that residents have provided positive feedback regarding the ongoing maintenance of Frederick's Wood.
- British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) to provide an update for the next Committee meeting.

Action Points:

- 1) Councillor Mac MacDonald to advise the Town Team on the locations of redundant signage requiring collection.
- 2) Town Team Manager to investigate correct naming of Frederick's Wood.
- 3) Town Team Manager to publicise the success of the clearing work that they had done on social media using before and after photos.
- 4) Town Team Manager to contact Thetford Men's Shed regarding the provision of bird, bat, and owl boxes.
- 5) Councillor Ieuan Evans to provide update on nests in Frederick's Wood.
- 6) Job adverts to be updated and distributed as soon as possible.

The report was noted.

645/23 VARIOUS CEMETERY RELATED MATTERS

The Committee discussed documents that were distributed prior to the meeting:

1. Burial Administrator's Report

- The Works Team are removing Christmas wreaths from the cemetery as stated in the Cemetery Policy.

The report was noted.

2. Cemetery Fees and Charges

The Committee discussed the recommendations from officers on the fees to charge for child burials on a document that was circulated prior to the meeting.

Councillor Stuart Terry proposed, and Councillor Hazel McCambridge seconded.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations set out in Annex A be approved.

646/23 PRELIMINARY FINANCIAL REPORT (AMENITIES)

The Committee discussed the preliminary Amenities Financial Report for the ten months ended 31 January 2024, which was circulated prior to the meeting:

- There is a net overspend against budget which is mainly attributable to playparks.
- Vehicle leasing – higher costs incurred due to the switch over of 'old' vehicles being returned and temporary ones being used.

The Financial Report was noted.

647/23 PRELIMINARY FINANCIAL REPORT (CEMETERY)

To receive and discuss preliminary Cemetery Financial Report for the ten months ended 31 January 2024, which was circulated prior to the meeting:

- Income is significantly down on budget due to a lower number of burials taking place and the ratio of non-parishioner to parishioner charges.
- Re-purchasing of unused graves will need to be further investigated.

The Financial Report was noted.

648/23 SMALL GRANTS

The Committee considered two Small Grant Applications that have been previously circulated to Committee Councillors:

Cloverfield Community Church – to purchase an external storage shed to accommodate a new boiler, which will enable existing groups to continue benefitting from the church.

Councillor Hazel McCambridge proposed, and Councillor Carla Barreto seconded.

G W Staniforth Bowling Club – to purchase a replacement mower to retain the club's reputation for maintenance of the bowling greens.

Councillor Stuart Terry proposed, and Councillor Mike Brindle seconded, subject to proof of spend being provided to the Council.

RESOLVED: That the two Small Grant Applications be approved.

The Committee noted that the Acting Town Clerk had purchased a re-useable cheque to be used for Small Grant and other presentations.

649/23 PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON RAMSEY CLOSE PLAY AREA

The Committee considered whether there is a need to conduct a public consultation on the proposed change of use of Ramsey Close from a play area to an allotment site:

- Consultation letter to be delivered to all homes on the Norwich Road Estate.
- Drop-in session for residents to be held at the Church on The Way, to include Ward Councillors, the Chair of the Allotments Committee, plus the Chair of the Amenities Committee.

Councillor Ieuan Evans proposed, and Councillor Mac MacDonald seconded.

RESOLVED: That the Council undertakes a public consultation on the proposed change of use of Ramsey Close.

650/23 INVOLVEMENT IN THE “GREAT BRITISH SPRING CLEAN CAMPAIGN” (THE CAMPAIGN)

The Committee discussed whether and in what manner the Council should support the Campaign:

- It was agreed that the Town Team Manager contact Thetford River Group, the BTO and other local groups and businesses requesting assistance, and to suggest known hot-spots and sites requiring attention.

Councillor Terry Jermy proposed, and Councillor Hazel McCambridge seconded.

Following the discussion, Councillor Mike Brindle left the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Council and its volunteers assist with the campaign.

651/23 THE COUNCIL'S FLORAL DISPLAYS FOR 2024

The Committee discussed a document that was circulated prior to the meeting regarding the Council's Floral Displays for 2024:

- It was agreed that the Town Team Manager investigates the use of native species where possible and appropriate.
- It was also agreed that officers are tasked with:

- 1) Establishing cultivation agreements with Breckland Council for the areas identified in the report.
- 2) Creating the first Pocket Park on Fulmerston Road.
- 3) Recruitment of Thetford in Bloom volunteers.

Councillor Terry Jermy proposed, and Councillor Stuart Terry seconded.

Following the discussion, Councillor Mac MacDonald left the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the extent and location of the floral displays in the town be approved.

652/23 SUPPORT FOR CROSSING ON LONDON ROAD

The Committee reviewed the letter that was tabled at the January 2024 Full Town Council meeting and was delegated to this Committee to suggest amendments:

- Removal of the word Zebra.
- Attach a copy of the Coroner’s Report.
- Reference other methods of speed reduction that have been implemented in Thetford and let by Thetford Town Council
- Invite Highways representatives to a meeting.

Councillor Carla Barreto proposed, and Councillor Mac MacDonald seconded.

RESOLVED: The updated letter to Norfolk Highways be approved.

Action Point: Letter to Norfolk Highways to be updated as per the Committees resolution set out above.

653/23 HEALTH & SAFETY MATTERS

None.

654/23 CORRESPONDENCE

None.

655/23 ACTION POINTS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Committee reviewed the action points carried forward from previous meetings: The following are carried forward to the March 2024 meeting: -

MINUTE REFERENCE	ACTION PLAN	PROPOSED DATE
60/23	Letter to be written to Environment Agency (EA) to reduce frequency of groundwater monitoring.	In progress. Contact now made with Environment Agency and past groundwater monitoring reports have now been submitted to the EA. The EA are currently updating their files. To be completed by 31st December 2023.

332/23	Town Team Manager to contact NCC and Thetford Academy regarding the refurbishment of the underpass at Croxton Road.	In Progress and continually communicating with NCC.
338/23	Officers to investigate any other options identified in the discussions relating to the renewal of the Council's fleet.	Still in progress.
427/23	Schedule a review of the Cemetery Rules.	To be completed by 30 th June 2024.
495/23	The Chair of the Amenities Committee to write to Norfolk County Council to request that planned future maintenance be brought forward.	In progress.
495/23	The Chair of the Amenities Committee to write to Historic England regarding consent to prepare for next season at the Castle Mound and Ramparts.	In progress.
496/23	Town Team Manager to liaise with Councillor Hazel McCambridge and Ian Woodward to develop a Wildflower Meadow Action Plan, to include enhanced litter picking and monitoring.	Will be done before 1 st March 2024.

The action points were noted.

656/23 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Committee discussed any consultation or media release required.

Action Points:

- Councillor Hazel McCambridge to contact Cloverfield Community Church regarding a cheque presentation.
- Councillor Stuart Terry to contact G W Staniforth Bowling Club regarding a cheque presentation.

657/23 COMMITTEE OFFICERS UPDATE

The Committee received an update from the Committee Officers since the agenda for this meeting was issued:

- Water Transfer Licence update.
- Castle Park Historic England – Secretary of State consent now obtained.
- Barnham Common – Natural England – had to stop and start.
- Breckland Council – had agreed to enforce signage (fly tipping and dog fouling) for that we put up on and paid for on our land.

The update was noted.

Chairman