

MINUTES of a meeting of the OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE held at 7.45pm on Wednesday 18 October 2017 in the Council Offices, 72 Chapel Hill, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex

PRESENT: Cllr J Hudson (Vice Chairman in the Chair), Cllrs M Caton, J Kavanagh, F Richards

ATTENDING: Cllr J O'Brien
Mrs R Clifford (Clerk)
Mr T Lloyd (Assistant to the Clerk)
1 member of the public

In the absence of Cllr Dunn, Cllr Hudson chaired the meeting.

233 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs S Dunn (Chairman), C Dean , R Rands and V Trundle

234 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - none

235 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2017

The minutes were approved at the Full Council meeting on Wednesday 20 September.

236 MATTERS ARISING

(184) Essex Highways have cut back some trees in High Lane but there are still street lights which have trees restricting the light emitted. (191) further investigation had established that the fence to the rear of properties in Brook Road was in place prior to the Parish Council being given the land at Windmill Fields and therefore the Council had no liability with regard to the fence.

237 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - nothing to report

238 TO WELCOME GARETH BROAD -GARDENING CONTRACTOR

Gareth reported positive feedback from residents.

Hanging Baskets

- Brackets on the Recreation Ground need to be higher
- the baskets need some cleaning and maintenance
- baskets should go up earlier next year and possibly get a mid season feed
- there are issues with watering the baskets at the top end of the memorial gardens
- the red geraniums had worked reasonably well but it would be nice to have additional colours next year.

Other Issues

- Some of the plants at Blythwood Gardens had grown too high and had been replanted in the Memorial Gardens

- The planting at Blythwood Gardens would improve if overhanging trees could be cut back to allow more light.
- It was agreed to explore ways of getting more Autumn colour in the Memorial Gardens for the WW1 Centenary events in 2018.
- Tubs at the windmill had been disappointing. Ideally the containers should be replaced. The possibility of sponsorship should be explored along with sourcing additional concrete troughs.

Gareth agreed to come up with proposals for winter planning and next summer and submit these in time for the next meeting.

239 TREE MATTERS

- The lime tree on the Rec has been cut back
- A second opinion is being sought from UDC in relation to a Maple Tree on the Rec with possible terminal rot
- The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council had no responsibility for the trees adjacent to Brook Road and Millside.

240 LITTER

The Clerk reported that UDC had agreed to install some kind of screening in Lower Street car park for the litter bags. Options for screening litter bags at the cemetery are being explored. UDC are dealing with the oil barrels dumped in The Lower Street car park

241 CONSIDERATION OF BASKETBALL PRACTICE HOOP AT BENTFIELD PLAY AREA

The Assistant to the Clerk outlined the results of the consultation process. The Survey Monkey results showed 65% of the 40 respondents favoured the proposal. There had been some objections from residents around the Rec. Comments from the committee Chairman were read to the meeting. There was a consensus that no additional equipment should be installed on the Rec for the time being but after discussion Cllr Caton proposed the following:

RESOLUTION: The Assistant to the Clerk be given the go-ahead to apply for funding for a basketball practice area at the Bentfield Play Area.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Richards and passed unanimously. In addition it was agreed to undertake consultation with a view to placing a similar hoop close to the Urban Square at Foresthall Park. If the general view was favourable, an application for funding from the FHP S.106 Community Fund should be made.

242 FOOTPATHS

The report from Mr Stiles was considered by members. The Clerk agreed to contact County Cllr Gooding about the Elsenham Road footpath issues.

243 MAINTENANCE OF MOUNTFITCHET GREEN

There was a consensus that the hedges at Mountfitchet Green were unsightly and served no useful safety purpose. After discussion Cllr Caton proposed the following:

RESOLUTION: That UDC be requested to remove the hedge and replace with a 1 metre high picket fence, similar to that around the play area, with spring-loaded gates at access points.

The proposal was seconded by Cllr Richards and passed unanimously.

244 CEMETERY - INTERMENTS AND MEMORIALS

The Clerk reported the interments of Bryan Tyrrell, Hilda Hitchings, Reginald Farmer and Cyril Reed and approval of a memorial for Keith Childs.

245 FORESTHALL PARK-ADOPTION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

The Clerk will be meeting with solicitors on 1 November to discuss the responses from developers. We have a quote for grass cutting and are awaiting quotes for putting all open spaces in good order prior to our take over which would be paid for by developers and another quote for the ongoing maintenance.

246 STANSTED IN BLOOM

GWB Horticulture have agreed to sponsor the event and Gareth will be added to the judging panel.

247 BIRCHANGER WOOD

Cllr Hudson reported that he had attended the Open Morning along with Cllrs Sell and Wallace-Jarvis and they met the Mayor of Bishop's Stortford.

Meeting closed 9.00 pm