

## **RECREATIONAL FACILITIES WORKING GROUP MEETING - 22 MARCH 2024**

At the remote meeting of the Recreational Facilities Working Group held by video conference on Wednesday 22 March 2024, the following Councillors were present:-

Cllr. J Leggett – Chairperson

Cllr. M A Booth - Cllr. W F Couzens  
Cllr. D Coleman - Cllr. J H Mallen

In attendance

Mr G Ranaweera - Town Clerk and Responsible  
Financial Officer

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### **24/012. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. S D Booth and M G Callam.

### **24/013. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 2 FEBRUARY 2024**

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2024 were approved subject to the following amendment

**Insert** Cllr. W F Couzens as present

### **24/014. MATTERS ARISING**

- (1) White House Farm 2023/1943 - Observations from the RFWG Planning meeting held 12 November 2023

The Town Clerk reported that Chris Raine had received the comments submitted by Council and spoken to Persimmon Homes about play equipment, specifically the size of the MUGA. With regard to the provision of unsuitable equipment and poor state of groundworks Mr Raine appeared uncommitted advising he would see what he could do.

It was agreed to invite a representative from Persimmon Homes to an extraordinary meeting of full Council to specifically talk about provision of play equipment at White House Farm development; subject to full council approval.

### **24/015. PLANTING OF TREES - CANNERBY LANE**

Further to Minute 24/008, the Town Clerk said he was in receipt of a map from Richard Pearson however, he had not as yet received a list of suitable trees for planting on the green at Cannerby Lane.

## **24/016. VIKING CENTRE**

Cllr. W F Couzens reported that:

The hoist/lift had been removed from the Viking Centre and scrapped.

The cellar beer ramp is letting in water. Developers intend to build a course of bricks around the external access point and seal it with a solid roof. The veranda will be built over the top of this structure.

A soak away has been discovered to the rear of the building. It has been sealed with concrete and the extension will be built over the top.

As the car park was found to be quite solid it will be skimmed, holes filled and tarmacked.

The Town Clerk mentioned the steel framework was being ordered. When erected Council can celebrate this milestone by signing the steel work which will also create a photo opportunity.

Cllr. Couzens added that paint colours still required agreement. The Architect had conceded that some colours were a little too dark and he would provide Councillors with an improved diagram of colours and their location.

## **24/017. BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL BEESTON PARK DEVELOPMENT**

Cllr. J Leggett said the meeting to be held at the beginning of March involving the Town Council had still not taken place.

The Town Clerk advised that Cllr. M A Booth, who had attended a meeting with developers, had commented that he was pleasantly disposed towards the developer not least because they aimed to put infrastructure in place before selling the properties. The Town Clerk presumed this included the open spaces as it would make the area more attractive to house buyers.

Cllr. W F Couzens referred to the request from Rackheath Community Council on collaborative working. He suggested Chris Raine invite other councils to the Beeston Park conference calls.

It was noted the Town Clerk had made his annual contact with Bidwells regarding purchase of land to the south of Salhouse Road. The owners have reiterated the land is not for sale.

Cllr. M A Booth joined the meeting advising he had no further updates on the Beeston Park development. However, whilst at the business awards he had spoken to the developer suggesting the sooner a presentation took place with the town council the better. Developers are planning a presentation with all councils involved and keen to move forward.

## **24/018. SUMMER FETE - 2024**

The Town Clerk confirmed the following bookings for the summer fete:

- Foolhardy Circus
- Dinosaurs and Dragons with a new theme of dinosaurs, fossils and palaeontology
- Creation Station including activities for older children
- Fire Engine (Albeit on call)
- Balloon modeller
- Music Artists (Band - Lizzie and the List, Solo - Rob Holmes and Duet Foreign Locals)

Applications from stallholders and caterers are being steadily received.

Cllr. W F Couzens to enquire if Broadland District Council's Help Hub caravan and Tots2teens are able to attend.

Cllr. J H Mallen questioned if organisations such as the Scouts, Girl Guides and Air cadets had been approached for volunteers.

The Clerk responded that the Air Cadets had confirmed their attendance he just had to clarify numbers.

It was suggested SYEP could assist with general duties and dismantling of the fete given they will be on-site with Zorbs and skate board ramps.

## **24/019. BIODIVERSITY**

Cllr. J Leggett reported on her attendance at a biodiversity training session where Sprowston was mentioned on number of occasions. However, the trainer was not familiar with Norfolk and she did not feel it was particularly good training.

Cllr. D Coleman said she would like someone with expertise to advise the Council on how to improve their biodiversity. She had lots of ideas however, did not know if they were practical such as creating access points in the cemetery boundary for hedgehogs, hedgehog houses, reducing use of leaf blowers particularly under or near hedgerows and installing bat boxes.

Cllr. W F Couzens wondered if the conservation volunteers who had worked in the Millenium woodland could be engaged to give Council more advice.

Cllr. J Leggett referred to previous discussions about having friends of Harrisons Woodland which could be extended to Cottage Plantation.

Cllr. W F Couzens agreed this could be a natural extension as Sprowston Litter Pickers mostly worked in Harrisions Woodland and Cottage Plantation.

## **24/019. BIODIVERSITY (CONTINUED)**

The Town Clerk believed there was scope for the conservation volunteers to be involved and there were lots of places particularly around the perimeter of the cemetery extension suitable for improving biodiversity and increasing wildlife.

With regard to the biodiversity audit, Cllr. Coleman had sent details of an experienced person in this field who had completed a biodiversity audit for Spixworth Parish Council to the Town Clerk. Her details had been added to his list which included Norfolk Wildlife Services, Landpro Wildlife and Clabon Ecology.

Cllr. J Leggett suggested using the Neighbourhood Plan consultation to gauge resident's views on biodiversity.

Town Clerk to contact and confirm each company's service offering.

Cllr. J Leggett queried if Council will use the model biodiversity policy until it adopted its own.

Town Clerk referred to Council's resolution is to take the model biodiversity policy under advisement.

Mrs J Leggett enquired if there would be a stall specialising in biodiversity at the summer fete.

Town Clerk to ask Norfolk Wildlife Trust if they can provide a stall and sound them out about a biodiversity audit.

Cllr. D Coleman mentioned Nick Sanderson at the Broads Authority who works with young people on biodiversity. He has also worked with Clare Lincoln (SYEP) and in local schools.

## **24/020. FORWARD PLAN**

Areas identified for the RFWG's forward plan were included in the minutes of the previous meeting. The Town Clerk invited councillors to add to this list however he felt the group was dealing with all the subjects raised at their regular meetings.

It was agreed the skate park be added to the list.

Cllr. J Leggett asked if there were any ear marked funds for provision of the skate park.

The Town Clerk advised there was approximately £80,000 remaining from the Blue Boar Lane development and several hundred thousand from the White House Farm development incorporating Harrisons Woodland.

Cllr. W F Couzens questioned if there would be sufficient money left over for provision of changing rooms.

## **24/020. FORWARD PLAN (CONTINUED)**

The Town Clerk felt there might be sufficient funds for a reasonable set of changing rooms depending on location and no complications being found i.e. not on the mains sewers etc.

Cllr. J H Mallen asked if there was any update on when Council will be able to adopt the land at the White House Farm development and in what format.

The Town Clerk replied all that is known is what the area should look like when it is handed over i.e. car park surfacing, number of spaces, type of play equipment for the play area of the skate park and landscaping.

We do not know what and when Persimmon will deliver. Speaking to Broadland District Council officer Jamie Henry he thinks Harrisons Woodland will transfer to Council in 2025. This is part of all the S106 works which includes White House Farm and subsequently the skate park.

Cllr. J Leggett suggested if Council knew the size of land being transferred for the skate park, planning work could start in preparation for design, quotations and construction.

Town Clerk to ask Chris Reine for the dimensions of the space, as built, for the skate park

## **24/021. AOB**

Cllr. D Coleman:

- Requested the rewilding of verges program be promoted at every opportunity.

The Town Clerk explained he did not want to promote the scheme just yet because he did not have the capacity to prepare the agreements and get them signed off by the County Council as it might deter residents.

- Enquired if groundsman could trim the Diamond Field to encourage the orchids to grow.
- Advised the football nets had become overgrown with grass at the Diamond Field.

Town Clerk to organise for their removal as SYEP no longer requires them.

Cllr. J Leggett asked if the Diamond Field should be on the RFWG work programme to which the Town Clerk agreed it should be.

Cllr. J H Mallen:

**24/021. AOB (CONTINUED)**

- Enquired if the holes at Barkers Lane open space had been filled in

The Town Clerk confirmed the groundsmen had completed this work; the holes were likely to have been created by dogs digging.

- Noted there was a strong correlation between the RFWG and Neighbourhood Plan groups and wondered when the first meeting was to be held.

Town Clerk to arrange as soon as possible.

**24/022. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 25 April 2024, 4.00pm

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