

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

**Held on Monday 18 September 2017
at 6pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall**

Present

Councillor: Cllr C Holliday (Chairman)

Councillors: C Brown L M Price
H W Chirgwin C K Woodward
B J Churchill

Officers: Responsible Finance Officer Operations and Estates Officer
Communications Officer Democratic Services Officer
Asst. Operations and Estates Officer

Also present: 6 members of the public

C447 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for their absence were received from Cllrs Doughty, Enright and the Town Clerk.

C448 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Chirgwin, Churchill and Price declared an interest in agenda item 13c – minutes of the Public Transportation Working Party as they were members of the Group and Cllr Price was a Founder/Director of Witney Community Transport.

C449 MINUTES

a) **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2017 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

b) **MATTERS ARISING:**

Minute C354 – a member congratulated Officers on the Heritage Open Day.

Minute 357 – the Mayor thanked all those who attended the flag raising event for Merchant Navy Day and Cllr Churchill for purchasing the flag.

C450 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Committee adjourned in line with Standing Order 42 so that a member of the public Mrs Brenda Woods could address the Committee on Edible Gardens planting beds [Community Gardening Adjacent to the Highway agenda item].

The Committee reconvened following the address by the member of the public.

C451 **OPERATIONAL REPORT – PROGRESS ON IMPROVEMENTS AND REPAIRS SINCE LAST MEETING**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Operations and Estates Officer as circulated with the agenda. He added that the Range Road bus shelter was due for refurbishment. There had been some damage to others. A member asked if a press release could be done on this issue.

The Operations and Estates Officer asked if members would be happy for him to change the litter bins at the cemeteries from the planned litter/recycling bins to litter/composting bins. Members discussed this and asked for him to investigate 3 sections bins – for litter/recycling/compostable items.

Members discussed a resident's request to plant wildflowers around the perimeter of King George V Field. It was agreed that the Operations and Estates Officer should look at suitable locations for such planting. The same resident had asked for a reduction in the height of a tree adjacent to her property. As there was no reason under the Council's tree policy that it should be done, members declined the request. The resident had also asked for the height of the hedge around the Newland War Memorial to be reduced. The Committee was happy for this to be done as long as Officers checked with neighbours first.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the report be noted;
2. that the Operations and Estates Officer looks into recycling/litter/compost bins for the cemeteries;
3. that the resident's request for the reduction of the tree be denied;
4. that the Operations and Estates Officer assesses if there are suitable locations within King George V Field for wild flower planting;
5. that the Newland War Memorial be opened up by way of reduction of the height of the hedge as long as Officers confirm the neighbours are happy with this first.

C452 **COMMUNITY GARDENING ADJACENT TO HIGHWAY**

The Committee received and considered the report from the Council's Health and Safety consultant as circulated with the agenda.

Members had a lengthy discussion on this, especially in light of the public participation from Edible Gardens earlier in the meeting. It was noted that Officers had met with the grounds contractor manager responsible for Westminster who regularly attained a gold Britain In Bloom award. He had admired the edible planting but had felt that it was not in the right place and this area would be better suited to high impact floral planting.

The Operations and Estates Officer commented that he was very happy to work with Edible Gardens and had offered them other locations that would be more suited to their desire to work with children but these had been turned down. He also noted that it would be onerous on the volunteers to adhere to all the health and safety requirements.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the report of the Council's Health and Safety Consultant be noted;
2. that the Chair of the Community Services Committee, the Chair of the In Bloom Working Party and the Operations and Estates Officer work with Edible Gardens to try to find a solution to suit all.

C453 **COMMUNICATIONS AND EVENTS**

Members received and considered the reports of the Communications Officer as circulated with the agenda. She asked for any ideas for the forthcoming newsletter by 16 October 2017. Members suggested the new bus route, something on In Bloom and the launch of the Best Dressed House and shop window for Christmas Lights.

The draft Events Diary was circulated at the meeting and the Communications Officer asked for any other events that may need including. There followed a debate about whether the Council should run a Heritage Open Day next year due to the burden falling mainly on Officers, who would already be pressed working on 1918 commemorations. It was agreed to leave it in the diary for the time being. Following on from this year's event, the Town Council had been offered the wooden bier on permanent loan from Brize Norton Church. Members all agreed to accept this offer.

Members noted a funding request for £1,000 from Witney Dementia Alliance Action. It was agreed that the group should apply through the Council's formal grants process.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the reports be noted;
2. that the offer of the wooden bier from Brize Norton Church on permanent loan be accepted;
3. that Witney Dementia Action Alliance applies for a loan via the Council's normal grants process.

C454 **THIRD PARTY/LARGE EVENTS**

The Committee **RESOLVED** to move this agenda item up the agenda in line with Standing Order 14(a)viii as Cllr Woodward needed to leave the meeting at 7.30pm.

a) REVIEW OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF HIRE FOR EVENTS

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk with examples of other T&Cs obtained from other Town Council's as circulated prior to the meeting. A discussion followed.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the report be noted;
2. that Officers draft the terms and conditions of hire for events and take it to the next Estates Management Committee meeting for review.

b) FEEDBACK FROM 2017 EVENTS

The Committee received and considered feedback from 2017 events.

RECOMMENDED: that the feedback be noted.

c) VERBAL UPDATE ON THIRD PARTY EVENTS FROM WORKING PARTY MEETINGS FROM CLLR DORWARD, WOODWARD AND PRICE

Cllr Dorward was not present at the meeting and Cllrs Woodward and Price had nothing to report.

RECOMMENDED: that in the absence of Councillor Dorward no verbal update was forthcoming.

d) REQUEST FOR 2018 EVENTS

The Assistant Operations and Estates Officer had been informed that afternoon that LibFest would not take place in 2018 due to the shutdown of The Leys for annual grounds maintenance. The event organisers wanted it to take place in June.

There was concern amongst members that LibFest may not understand that they would not be able to hold the event in June going forward due to the maintenance of the pitches taking place as agreed by Council. A request was made that the Town Clerk telephones the group as a matter of urgency the following day to explain this.

RECOMMENDED: that the update on LibFest be noted and that the Town Clerk telephone the group as a matter of urgency the following day to explain that events could no longer take place in June on The Leys due to grounds maintenance.

Cllr Woodward left the meeting at 7.50pm.

C455 BLUE PLAQUE HERITAGE TRAIL

The Committee received the report of the administrator as circulated with the agenda.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that the report be noted;
2. that a collaborative approach with the museum and historical society on promoting the heritage plaques already in the town be agreed;
3. that the scheme is referred to the newly re-instated Town Centre Forum for possible sponsorship.

C456 **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

RESOLVED: that standing order 48 (a) be suspended to allow the meeting to continue past two hours.

C457 **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Committee received and considered the report of the RFO as circulated with the agenda.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted.

C458 **LAUNCH OF CITIZEN OF THE YEAR 2018**

The Committee received and considered a report from the Communications Officer as circulated with the agenda.

RECOMMENDED: that the report be noted.

C459 **BUS SHELTER ART PROJECT**

RECOMMENDED: that due to the absence of the Town Clerk and Cllr Enright no verbal update was available .

C460 **MINUTES OF WORKING PARTIES**

a) Christmas Lights Working Party – 4 September 2017

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the working party as circulated with the agenda.

RECOMMENDED: that the minutes be noted and all recommendations contained therein be agreed.

b) In Bloom Working Party – 6 September 2017

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the working party as circulated with the agenda.

RECOMMENDED: that the minutes be note and all recommendations contained therein be agreed.

c) Public Transportation Working Party – 12 September 2017

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the working party as circulated with the agenda.

RECOMMENDED: that the minutes be noted and all recommendations contained therein be agreed.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Chairman