



AMENITIES & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Amenities & Leisure Committee held remotely on Wednesday, 13th January 2021 which commenced at 7.45pm.

Present

Chair – Councillor A Newton

Councillors: A Bassett, G Bhangra, N Brock, M Eastwell, D Hare, D Ireland, A Long, S Matthews and K Yabsley.

In attendance: J Friend (Town Clerk), E Carroll (Deputy Town Clerk), G Hawker (Senior Park Ranger), R Fryer (Democratic Services Officer), and Councillor C Jones.

52. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

53. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

54. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public present.

It was **AGREED** to bring forward Item 10. Tree Replacement – Milton Road

55. TREE REPLACEMENT – MILTON ROAD

With permission from the Chair, Councillor Jones introduced a request for the Council to consider replacing two trees in Milton Road as Wokingham Borough Council had indicated it did not have the budget to do so. A discussion followed and consideration was given as to a range of issues including, why the trees had died; possible cost implications of removing roots; formal permissions and ongoing maintenance agreements. The Senior Park Ranger was consulted on planting issues.

It was **RESOLVED** that Earley Town Council would arrange for the replacement of the two dead trees in Milton Road, on condition that the total cost would be less than £2,000 and that Wokingham Borough Council would agree to be responsible for future maintenance.

56. PARTICIPATION IN COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Chair reminded Members of the Standing Orders in relation to non-members' participation in committee meetings, and requested that attendees use the 'thumbs up' or 'chat' facility when agreeing with another speaker.

57. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4th November 2020 were approved as a true record and their signature by the Chair authorised (Minutes 33–51). Councillor Matthews noted that the Earley in Bloom working group had not yet met.

58. CORONAVIRUS - UPDATE

Councillors noted that, in accordance with the current National Lockdown restrictions, the Town Council's community centres were closed to hirers, except for registered pre-schools. It was also noted that outdoor spaces remained accessible for the purpose of personal exercise only. The Town Clerk reported that due to high attendance at playgrounds, the borough's Covid marshals would now be patrolling ETC parks at weekends, and that the situation was being monitored in collaboration with Wokingham Borough Council. The changes in guidance on fishing, and associated signage, were discussed. Members also noted that the Helpshop at the Council offices remained closed to visitors in person due to lockdown restrictions.

59. CULVER LANE ALLOTMENTS

The Committee noted that officers intended to resume allotment inspections by the end of January and Councillor Bassett reported on her recent communication with the Allotment Association.

60. MAIDEN ERLEGH LAKE & NATURE RESERVE

60.1 Flooding Issues

Councillors noted that Wokingham Borough Council had removed a tree and carried out other remedial work to the culvert. They were pleased to hear that the Park Rangers would continue to monitor the situation and would report any issues.

60.2 Memorial Bench

Members noted that the request for a memorial bench had been dealt with and that the family involved were pleased with the outcome: a memorial tree had been planted, and a plaque had been placed on an existing bench.

61. LOCAL WALKS PROJECT

The Committee received an update from Councillor Long and Councillor Ireland regarding the Local Walks Project. Members were pleased to note the high levels of community engagement and wished to thank Councillors Long and Ireland, Mary Bather and her team, the Town Clerk and officers, and David Bell for their work in successfully launching this project. It was **AGREED** that a letter would be sent to Mary Bather to thank her and the volunteers from the local Loddon Valley Ramblers Association for their efforts.

Councillor Jones left the meeting

62. TOWN COUNCIL YOUTH OUTREACH WORK

It was noted that the outreach work had been temporarily suspended due to National Lockdown restrictions.

63. JOINT HEALTH & WELLBEING STRATEGY

Members noted the request to contribute to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Berkshire West (Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham). Councillors were of the opinion that the survey did not lend itself to a Town Council response, both due to the format of the survey and because some questions went beyond the remit of a Town Council. The Town Clerk to provide feedback to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Berkshire West and councillors will complete the survey as individuals.

64. PUBLICATIONS

The Committee noted that the following items had been received and were available for viewing from the Council Offices:

Involve	E-Bulletin newsletter – 11 th & 18 th December 2020
CCB	Action for All E-Bulletin – December 2020
Fields in Trust	Electronic Newsletter – Winter 2020
MERA	Executive Committee Meeting – 10 th December 2020
Me2 Club	Electronic Newsletter – Christmas 2020

65. PRESS RELEASES

No press releases were requested.

66. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 8.45 pm.

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Chair, Amenities & Leisure Committee