



AMENITIES & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting for the Members of the Amenities & Leisure Committee held remotely on Wednesday, 30th June 2021 which commenced at 7.45pm.

Present

Chair – Councillor A Newton

Councillors: A Bassett, G Bhangra, N Brock, M Eastwell, A Long, T Maher, S Matthews and K Yabsley.

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

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Ireland.

17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

18. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no questions from the public.

19. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26th May 2021 were agreed as a true record and their signature by the Chair was recommended (Minutes 1–15).

20. CORONAVIRUS - UPDATE

20.1 Community Centres

Members noted that occupancy rates remained low and were likely to decrease over the summer period. They were pleased to note that the post of Bookings Administration Officer was now being advertised, with an expectation the post should be filled by September.

21. CULVER LANE ALLOTMENTS

The Deputy Town Clerk gave a verbal report to Members, noting an inspection had been completed on the 29th June resulting in only three letters being sent out. One plot had been surrendered following the May inspection, this had since been rotavated and would shortly be offered to someone on the waiting list. The Deputy Town Clerk informed councillors of an issue with an earth pile that had been deposited on ETC land by a neighbour as a result of building work, and confirmed she had arranged to meet an officer from WBC on site on 1st July to investigate the options available to the Town Council.

Councillor Eastwell noted that the next inspection by the allotment award inspection team was scheduled for Wednesday 7th July.

22. MEADOW PARK

22.1 Replacement Swings Project

It was noted that a preferred supplier had been identified and that an order would shortly be submitted with installation scheduled for this summer. The Town Clerk reported that, in line with the aims of the Town Council's climate emergency action plan, the new safety surfacing would be composed primarily of recycled material.

23. GREEN FAIR

Members noted that, after consultation with stall holders, officers and some councillors, a decision had been made not to hold the Green Fair this year. The Town Clerk reported that she was suggesting that perhaps some smaller scale, green-themed events or activities could be organised this year in place of the Green Fair, and to this end she had met with an experienced environmental volunteer to discuss the possibilities. The idea was to hold a series of events or activities in Earley in the months leading up to COP26, some of which could be linked to the national initiative, the "Great Big Green Week" on 18th – 26th September 2021. Members were keen to support the suggestion and discussed potential events and locations. Consideration was given to nominating a Councillor to take part in the planning of the initiative and to assist with publicising the events. Councillor T Maher volunteered for the role and was duly appointed. The members of the committee discussed the financing of the events and it was

RECOMMENDED that the Policy and Resources Committee be asked to approve that £4,000 from the environmental budget be allocated for this project.

24. TREE REGISTER

Councillor T Maher updated Members on his discussion with the Wokingham District Veteran Tree Association with regards establishing a tree register for Earley. Members discussed setting up a Working Party and considered its scope and aim. It was agreed that Councillor T Maher would create draft terms of reference for circulation. Councillors A Long and S Matthews to join the Working Party, and councillors discussed other potential members. It was noted by the Senior Park Ranger that the WDVTA database, whilst of a very high quality, was now somewhat dated, but would serve as a good foundation on which to build. Consideration was given to approaching the WDVTA to provide training on this issue.

25. YOUTH ANGLING PROJECT

The Committee noted that the Youth Angling Project at Maiden Erlegh Nature Reserve would take place one day a week over a period of six weeks during the summer holidays, and that both Reading FC Community Trust and Earley Town Council would be publicising the event.

26. LAKESIDE

Members noted that the Deputy Town Clerk had informed the resident of the suggestions made at the previous Amenities and Leisure Committee meeting in relation to his proposal for the planting of trees and had offered a letter of support from the Council should it be requested. The resident had subsequently approached Wokingham Borough Council with his proposal and the Deputy Town Clerk had provided the letter of support.

27. TREE REPLACEMENT – MILTON ROAD

It was noted that the agreement with Wokingham Borough Council, that it would survey, plant and maintain the replacement trees in Milton Road, would cover the three trees that had been lost and would be carried out within the Town Council’s agreed budget.

Members discussed the standard of maintenance by WBC of other trees in the area as some were of the opinion that it was not to a particularly high standard. The Deputy Town Clerk was asked to follow up these concerns with officers at WBC. It was noted that residents and councillors could also report such issues directly to WBC using the online reporting function to which they could attach a photograph of any specific issue.

28. DRY WEATHER PLAN CONSULTATION

Members considered South East Water’s public consultation on its draft Dry Weather Plan but, owing to the geographical area covered by the consultation, considered it inappropriate to make a formal response.

29. PUBLICATIONS

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

Involve Community Services	E-newsletter – 11 th June 2021
MERA	Executive Committee Meeting – 10 th June 2021

30. PRESS RELEASES

A press release was requested on the cancellation of the Green Fair. It was also agreed that a press release be prepared for the installation of the replacement swings at Meadow Park, to be published when the installation has been completed.

31. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting was declared closed by the Chair at 8.47 pm.

.....
Chair, Amenities & Leisure Committee