

Minutes of a Meeting of the Amenities and Services Committee held on Tuesday 11th December 2018 at 10.00 in the Eckford Suite, Edinburgh House, New Street, Wem.

Present:-Councillor P Johnson (Chairman), Councillors, P Broomhall, M Meakin, G Nash, G Soul.

Mrs P O'Hagan (Town Clerk).

- 1 **Apologies** - To receive any apologies for absence.

Resolved:- to receive the following apologies for absence

Cllr Glover, Cllr Granger

- 2 **Declaration of pecuniary interests** – to receive declarations of interest.
Cllr Johnson and Cllr Meakin declared a pecuniary interest in item 9a as both are members of the Executive Committee of WSSA.

Cllr Nash attended the meeting at 10.05.

- 3 **Minutes** To approve as a correct record the minutes of a Meeting of this Committee held on 11th September 2018.

Resolved:- to approve the minutes of 11th September 2018 and they were duly signed as a true record.

- 4 **Progress Report on items raised at previous meeting**– for consideration

Resolved:- to note the report.

- 5 **Toilets**

a) Contract - to consider specification for Toilet Maintenance contract.

Resolved:- to approve the Toilet Maintenance Contract and to advertise the contract with a closing date of 28.2.19.

b) To receive an update on charging income.

The Clerk presented a verbal report on the income received from the public toilets. It was explained that the income was less than anticipated due to the period of time when the ladies coin box was out of action.

Resolved:- to note the report.

c) Recreation Ground Toilet Block

An inspection of the outside of the building took place with the Clerk, Committee Chairman and Groundsman and concerns were raised at the condition of the building which detracted from its surroundings. It was estimated that the cost of opening the toilets on a seasonal basis would be in the region of £8000 although this could be significantly more if the condition of the toilets required work prior to reopening. It was explained that no internal inspection was currently possible as the keys had been lost. Following a discussion it was acknowledged that although the Working Party had yet to meet a decision needs to be made about the block as there were concerns about the deterioration of the building.

Resolved:- to recommend that Shropshire Council be asked to consider advertising the building for sale.

6 Play Areas/Open Spaces

a) Wet Pour repairs – to consider quote received.

The quote of £5400 to repair 2 areas of wetpour in the recreation ground and 4 areas of wetpour in the Wheatfield's play area as identified in the ROSPA report was considered. The Clerk explained that she had only received 1 quote for the works which was from a contractor familiar with the play area who had carried out significant work in the past for the Town Council. A discussion took place on the need to carry out the repair as soon as practicable and that the recreation budget was already overspent.

Resolved:- to recommend the contract is awarded to Ray Parry and that the work is funded by viring £5400 from the Service Transformation Budget Code 4880.

b) Skate ramp repair – for update

The Clerk reported that she had contacted a number of contractors with regard to this repair but only received 1 quote of £960 for the repair. It was highlighted that this item had been flagged as High Risk on the ROSPA report.

Resolved:- to recommend the contract is awarded to Welch and Philips and that the work is funded by viring £960 from the Service Transformation Budget Code 4880.

c) Wheatfields Pond – to discuss concerns over water levels.

It was reported that the water levels in the pond had returned to a much higher level and that a stake had been placed in the pond to allow the water level fluctuation to be monitored.

Resolved:- to note the report.

7 Allotments

a) To consider report from recent allotment training.

The report from the recent allotment training was considered and it was

Resolved:- to recommend the following

- **The need for developers to provide land for additional allotments must be included in the Town Council's comments relating to the Local Plan Review and Place Plan.**
- **That from 1.4.19 the Town Council pass on responsibility for the maintenance of the informal slabbed paths between allotments to the tenant immediately to the right of their plot and the area of the path must not be cultivated.**
- **That the Town Council charge a £5 admin fee to all tenants regardless of plot size.**
- **That from 1.4.19 all new entrants onto the allotment waiting list are charged a non returnable £5 deposit.**
- **Delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk in relation to setting rents for plots that are rented to new tenants in a poor condition.**
- **That the Town Council improves communication with ploholders by sending out an annual newsletter.**

- That subject to Town Council agreement an amended tenancy agreement for all tenants is adopted and in place by 1.4.19.
- That the Town Council adopts the following minimum cultivation standards
- All plots must be cultivated in a way that does not interfere with the enjoyment of neighbouring tenants throughout the growing season, Plot holders are expected to maintain the cultivation standards over 25% of the plot within three months of the start of the tenancy and 75% by the end of the first year and on all subsequent years unless the council agrees otherwise.
- Removal of weed seed-heads before the seed has set.
- Control of pernicious weeds, such as those that spread through the extension of roots, (eg. Couch grass and ground elder) or by generating new plants from growing tips in contact with the soil (eg. Brambles).
- Removal of long grass or detritus that is likely to harbour pests.
- Keeping paths free of hazards to allow free and unimpeded access and to ensure grass paths are trimmed.
- Removal of waste, noxious or hazardous materials.

If there are personal issues preventing tenants from maintaining these standards it is the responsibility of the allotment holder (or their representative) to inform the council as soon as possible so that this can be taken into consideration.

8 Love Lane Cemetery

a) To agree date for removal of Christmas Wreaths

Resolved:- that all wreaths to be removed by Saturday 10th February 2019.

b) To discuss extension of the cemetery.

The Chairman reported that on a recent site visit with the Groundsman and Town Clerk they had discussed the extension of the existing cemetery. It was felt that due to the demand for allotment plots it was not prudent to extend the cemetery for at least two more years (although this may have to be brought forward if there was an increase in the number of burials). A discussion took place on use of the area to be extended into and suggestions were made that instead of using the space purely for coffin interments space could be allocated for the interment of cremated remains and a children's section. All Councillors considered that it was important to have a professional design drawn up for when the time came to extend the cemetery.

Resolved:- that the Clerk would contact firms to request a price for designing the layout of the extended area.

9 2019-20 Budget

a) Wem Sports and Social Association

To consider the financial request received from the Executive Committee for 2019-20 Cllr Johnson and Cllr Meakin took no part in discussions. The Clerk presented the budget that had been agreed by Wem Sports and Social Association's Executive Committee at its meeting on 5.12.18 and outlined the work of the Association over the past year. She reported that the Committee had requested a reduction of £2000 from last year to £18,000.

Resolved:- to recommend that the request for a budget contribution of £18000 from the 2019-20 Town Council budget be approved.

b) To consider the draft 2019-20 expenditure budget for the following assets and services

The Clerk explained that overall the expenditure budget for the Town Council's assets would need to be increased by £5796 as there was a need to carry out some repairs and renewals on the play areas and in the cemetery. She explained that the streetlighting budget could be reduced and that the reduction from the energy savings could be used to reinvest in the play areas rather than being returned to reserves as previously agreed.

It was reported that the recreation budget needed to increase as little investment had taken place on any of the play areas in recent years and there was also a need to build up a reserve to allow ageing play equipment to be replaced. In 2019 it was planned that the See Saw on the Recreation Ground would be replaced and this could be funded from a combination of the Developers Reserve Fund and the Neighbourhood Fund, however the cost of the safety surface would need to be budgeted for. The Cemetery fence was also in need of replacement and funds had been allocated in the budget to replace the wooden fencing with metal railings which would last longer and be more in keeping with the setting.

Resolved:- to recommend approval of the following expenditure budgets for 2019-2020

NET EXPENDITURE	Budget	Proposals	Comments
	2018/19	2019/20	
PUBLIC LIGHTING			
Loan Charges(PWLB)	£4,666	£4,522	
Energy	£11,000	£7,000	reduced due to LED
Mtce	£7,000	£7,000	
Upgrading of Ltg	£10,000	£10,000	Continue column replacement programme
Total	£32,666	£28,522	£4144 reduction
BURIAL GROUNDS			
LOVE LANE			
Rates	£70	£80	
Mtce,	£2,000	£3,500	allocation to replace fence with metal railings
Bin emptying, skip hire, water	£2,000	£2,000	
Contribution to Whitchurch Rd	£1,700	£1,700	
Extension	£0	0	
Total	£5,770	£7,280	£1510 increase
ALLOTMENTS			
Water by meter	£350	£360	
Repairs & Maintenance	£500	£550	
Total	£850	£910	
RECREATION			
WSSA	£20,000	£18,000	£6000 is placed in machinery fund

Play Equip.	£200	£3,600	Build up play equipment reserve. Replace see saw on rec funded using £2400 from Developers Contribution fund and Neighbourhood fund)
Repairs & Materials	£2,000	£5,000	wet pour repairs
Tree Works	£1,000	£1,500	increase due to overspend in previous years.
Inspections	£500	£600	Addition of Wilmot Meadow
Recreation (Litter)	£700	£850	Wilmot Meadow Dog Bin
Total	£24,400	£29,550	£5150 increase
<u>PUBLIC TOILETS</u>			
Toilet Cleaning	£9450	£9,700	new contract 2019-2022
Repairs	£2000	£2,500	doors require painting
Utilities	£1000	£1,200	
Msc	£1100	£1,100	
Total	£13,550	£14,500	increase of £950
<u>BUS SHELTERS</u>			
Cleaning	£780	£800	
repairs and maintenance	£220	£220	
Total	£1000	£1020	
<u>MISC</u>			
Floral Planters	£3500	£3,750	Watering of Gardening Club troughs
CCTV Scheme	£3000	£5,000	£2000 for replacement of Town Hall CCTV Camera
Total	£6,500	£8,750	Increase of £2250
Total Asset Expenditure Budget	£84,736	£90,532	Increase of £5,796

– to discuss any other maintenance projects for inclusion in 2019-20 budget. These were discussed as part of the budget discussions.

c) Fees and Charges – to review allotment fees and cemetery charges.

Allotment Rents

It was reported that the allotment fees for 2019-20 had already been agreed as part of the 2018-19 budget and that as the allotment tenancy was to be changed there would be no need to give 12 months' notice of any rent rises so that rent increases can be considered annually.

Resolved:- to note

Cemetery Fees

Resolved:- to recommend that cemetery fees are not increased

<i>Plot Purchase and Interment Fees</i>	2019-20
A child under the age of 1 month at death	£20
A child under the age of 12 at death	£60
Purchase of plot for persons exceeding 12 years at death	£600
Interment Fee (for each interment over 12 years of age)	£275
Interment of ashes in existing grave	£150
<i>Memorial Fee for the erection of a Headstone</i>	
To a height not exceeding 3 feet	£300
In excess of 3 feet but not exceeding 3ft 6inches high	£800
Additional Inscription	£30
Transfer of Exclusive Right of Burial	£30
<i>Renewal of Exclusive Right of Burial prior to expiration</i>	
For a period not exceeding 25 years from the date of expiration of existing rights	Half plot purchase fee at time of renewal

10 Streetlights

a) Column replacement programme for consideration
The report submitted by E.on was considered and it was

Resolved:- to recommend that the following concrete columns on Drawwell Walk be replaced 85, 86 and 107

Cllr Soul left the meeting at 11.15

b) To consider quote for erecting streetlight on Drawwell Walk (copy to follow)
No quote was submitted in time for the meeting so it was agreed to defer this item .

11 Floral Display – to consider letter received.

It was reported that all metal planters would be repainted over winter.

12 Date and time of next meeting – to note time and date of next meeting

Resolved:- to note that the next meeting would take place on 12th March 2019 at 10.00

Meeting ended 11.30

Chairman.....