

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Minutes

of the meeting of the Amenities Committee held at the Council Offices, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth at 20.00 hrs. on **Monday 12 October 2015**.

Those present

Cllr Angela Alder
Cllr Ruth Buckmaster
Cllr E Buckmaster

Cllr John Burmicz
Cllr Sotirios Adamopoulos
Cllr Tom Reeks

In attendance:

R Bowran - Town Clerk

Joanne Sargant – Projects Manager

A15/10 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Resolved: That Cllr Adamopoulos be Vice-Chairman of the Amenities Committee for the civic year 2015/16.
[prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr Burmicz]

A15/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Coysten – on holiday.

A15/12 PUBLIC FORUM

To receive representations from members of the public on matters within the remit of the Amenities Committee. There were none.

A15/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any Declarations of Interest by Members. There were none.

A15/14 MINUTES

Resolved: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 13 July 2015 (A01)
[prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr R Buckmaster]

Matters arising:

Question was asked what was being done about the rat infestation in London Road.

Clerk responded that rat poison had been put down and the infestation now appeared to have been cleared.

Question was asked why the paving had been dug up adjacent to the London Road planter.

Clerk responded that there had been a break in an electricity supply cable and the paving had been dug up to splice in a replacement section.

Question was asked why the light controlled pedestrian crossing in London Road had been taken out of use, causing danger to members of the public.

Clerk responded that the closure had been requested by the developers at the Eversley site to facilitate site access.

A15/15 ALLOTMENTS

To report on matters relating to Allotments

- Allotment Association
 - Continuing dialogue, especially important now that the overarching association has now fallen into abeyance.
 - **Resolved:** that the pricing for the season commencing 01 October 2016 shall be £4.00 per Rod plus a water charge calculated to recover the cost of supply to each site. [*prop Cllr R Buckmaster; secd Cllr Adamopoulos*]
- Water supplies
 - Water pipeline extension at Southbrook site is still to be completed,
- Bullfields
 - A number of evictions are proposed for tenants who are in breach of their tenancy agreements.
- Southbrook
 - There has been an incident of contamination of a number of plots by the overflow of human e=aste from an outlet on the site. Initial response from Thames Water was rapid; however it has taken seven weeks to obtain a detailed survey of the area. Compensation is being sought.
- Vantorts
 - Complaints about narrowed pathways which will be rectified over the winter season.
- Bellmead
 - Complaint from one tenant about being charged for water which was considered to be unwarranted, unwanted and unethical. After debate Members recalled that the water supply to Vantorts and Bellmead sites has been installed by general demand from the tenants and decided there was no reason why an individual exception for the water charge should be made.
- Waiting list
 - Some evictions planned and site clearance ready for new tenants to be taken on.

A15/16 CEMETERY

To report on matters relating to the Town Cemetery

- Inspections
 - Complaints about upkeep in section C. ERB holders appeared not to understand that maintenance is carried out in rotation throughout the cemetery.
- Maintenance
 - The hedge adjacent to the cemetery and the private access road had been cut back to the boundary at the request of residents. This has however invoked protests from a resident in Three Mile Pond Farm that it exposed the boundary wall.
 - Members agreed that prices may be sought for the construction of fencing on part of the cemetery boundary adjacent to section C.

- Price Structure.
 - The published price structure will be clarified but not price levels will not change for 2015/16.
 - By exception Members agreed for the sake of good order the cost of £70 for an ERB transfer should not be made when updating the council's records for old plots which will be found principally in sections A, B and C.
 - In response to a particular case Members confirmed that as a matter of policy concessionary price changes should not be made.

A15/17 OPEN SPACES & FOOTPATHS

To report on matters relating to Footpaths and Open Spaces.

- Bullfields
 - Inspection, litter clearance and maintenance continue under contract to SYPRC
- West Road
 - Inspection and maintenance continue.
- Other areas
 - Bell Street and London Road flower beds continue to impress.
- Town Green
 - No further progress.
 - Mention was made in the 2006 Town Appraisal that the site was suitable for public use!
- Footpaths
 - A reporting and progressing process is now in place.
- Rivers Heritage Orchard
 - Maintenance days continue although more volunteers are needed
 - Grass cutting in the Orchard and Meadow have been carried out
 - Apple Day is the next major event on the site.

A15/18 CIVIC AMENITIES

To report on matters relating to Civic Amenities

- Ranger activities
 - Working arrangements for the summer season ceased at the end of September.
- Farmers Market
 - Future developments are being considered as a replacement event, possible on Bullfields Park in the Spring of 2016.
- Facilities at The Manor
 - The chamber, in conjunction with a trench reconstruction in the garden, is being used for a World War 1 exhibition by the Herts at War team from September to the end of 2015.
- Floral Displays
 - Displays for summer 2015 have now been removed.
 - Displays for Winter 2015/16 are beyond the budget provision and will not take place.

- Public Conveniences
 - There has been little further development arising out of discussions with EHDC on the Bell Street proposition.
- Memorial Plaque request
 - The memorial plaque for Mike Grace on the bench at the car park exit has now been installed.

Meeting ended at 21:30