

Kingsbridge Town Council

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARKS AND GREEN SPACES COMMITTEE HELD AT 9.30 a.m. ON FRIDAY 30 OCTOBER 2015 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, QUAY HOUSE

Present: Cllr Wayne Grills (Chairman)
Cllr Anne Balkwill
Marika Byrne (Café Decks)
Cllr Sandy Gilbert
Cllr Robin Griffin
Pat Janes (Kingsbridge Park Bowling Club)
Cllr Ali Jennings
Cllr Kate Lynn
Graham Price (Kingsbridge In Bloom)
Rosemary Speed (local resident)

In Attendance: Prof Greg Watts (University of Bradford)
Martin Johnson (Secretary)

15/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Tom Coulthard and David Dain (Kingsbridge In Bloom).

Public Open Forum

Professor Greg Watts presented his suggestion for a Kingsbridge Tranquillity Trail and members considered a draft leaflet. Studies had shown that spaces rated as tranquil were more likely to produce higher levels of relaxation and less anxiety and should be encouraged to improve well-being and health. The notion of tranquillity trails was to link valued green spaces by using where possible relatively quiet streets with vegetation in view within the townscape. The route took in the Quay, Kiln, Western Backway, Community Garden, Kings Arms Passage, Duncombe Park, Eastern Backway, Ebrington Street, Recreation Ground and The Promenade. Members made several suggestions and supported the proposal to be progressed.

15/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

15/13 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 26 June 2015 were approved as a correct record.

15/14 PROPOSALS TO AMEND COMMITTEE BUSINESS

14.1 Expansion of current Committee business to include further open space/public realm matters e.g. public footpaths, rights of way, pavements and highways matters. Members agreed that in addition to parks/green spaces other closely related open spaces/public realm matters were also worthy of scrutiny/consideration.

14.2 Amendment of the name of the Committee to the “Parks and Open Spaces Committee”. Members agreed.

14.3 To receive and consider amendments to the Committee’s Terms of Reference. Members agreed that minor amendments would be required.

It was **RECOMMENDED** to expand current committee business to include open space/public realm matters, to amend the name to the “Parks and Open Spaces Committee” and to amend committee Terms of Reference to reflect such changes.

15/15 SHDC/KTC LICENCE – PARKS & OPEN SPACES

Members were in receipt of the Schedule to the Licence between South Hams District Council (SHDC) and the Town Council (KTC) which identified the ownership, funding, installation, maintenance and daily management of various structures, equipment, planting etc. throughout the town. Some minor amendments were required however, the Licence was intended to be a ‘working document’ which could be added to over time. It was **RECOMMENDED** to note the SHDC/KTC Licence for Parks and Open Spaces.

15/16 RECREATION GROUND

16.1 Feedback: requests to SHDC for pond and recycling improvements. Members had identified that the only ‘black marks’ in the park were the pond and recycling facilities. It was **RECOMMENDED** to request SHDC ward members to progress:

- the installation of a fountain and re-lining of the pond, and
- a permanent recycling/composting facility.

16.2 Café Decks. Marika Byrne reported that the canopy over the café decking, Embankment Road street light banners, SHDC promotional leaflets and taller putting green flags had all improved the visibility of the park and footfall. The café was likely to extend its season and possible year round opening. Park events including an ice rink and young buskers event may be worked up. Members discussed park facilities and it was then **RECOMMENDED** to:

- re-visit waymarking/directions to the park using footprint ground marking (or similar to be worked up) along the Quayside footpath, and
- to request SHDC to install signage at the tennis courts identifying that skateboarding was not allowed.

16.3 Bowling Club. Pat Janes reported that there had been vandalism to fencing and a smashed window. Young people enjoyed walking along the tall hedge around the green. SHDC and the club would meet shortly to discuss building repairs.

16.4 Maintenance matters. All satisfactory. Barriers around the children's play area had been removed that week following maintenance.

16.5 K4 proposals – recommended S106 developer contribution.

Members received SHDC Assets' consultation response for planning application 28/1560/15/O (housing development at allocated site K4) on land close to the park. In particular, it identified that the footpath through the park from Derby Road to Embankment Road should be relied upon as the footpath and cycleway (dismounted) from the site into town, that the northern access point at Derby Road should be improved, and low-level bollard lighting should be provided along the route. SHDC had recommended no objection subject to S106 clauses to secure funding for improvements to:

- open space and play equipment in the park,
- Kingsbridge Rugby Club, and
- improvements and maintenance of the existing path through the park.

Cllrs Grills and Lynn would attend a S106/Open Space, Sport & Recreation Plan meeting at SHDC the following week.

16.6 Any other immediate business related to the Recreation Ground e.g. lights for tennis courts. It was noted that the tennis courts had been resurfaced recently at considerable expense however, the lighting columns around the courts had not been used for several years. It was suggested that lighting would enhance the facility to be actioned via a meter/timer with tokens purchased from the café (to take cash out of the equation and provide security). It was **RECOMMENDED** to request SHDC to reintroduce lighting at the tennis courts.

15/17 DUNCOMBE PARK

17.1 Feedback: request to SHDC for central green space rejuvenation.

Members identified that a 'black mark' in the park was the condition of the central green space contained by the circular footpath. This was lumpy and a large area close to the entrance from Duncombe Street Car Park had lots of stones on the surface which were assessed as a hazard. It was **RECOMMENDED** to request SHDC ward members to progress scraping off the top layer of grass/soil and relay with new top soil/grass.

17.2 Maintenance matters. All satisfactory.

17.3 Any other immediate business related to Duncombe Park. Public benches had been cleaned/oiled in April however, a deep clean was probably required in spring to get rid of algae.

15/18 OPEN SPACES

18.1 Footpaths and highways. To highlight the requirement to expand committee business (agenda item 15/14) Cllrs Fishman & Grills and the Town Clerk had conducted a recent walkabout with Adam Keay, DCC Highways Officer which had identified 24 action points which included amongst others: overgrown trees and shrubs, obscured signage, pot holes, grass verge cutting, obscured street lights, overgrown footways and dirty bus shelters.

18.2 Amenity spaces: Wallingford Road, Rack Park, Church Street, other children's play spaces and Tree Trail.

- SHDC had been requested to install either bollards or a fence to stop vehicles parking in Wallingford Road amenity space.
- The Regal Club had been supplied with paint to refresh the wooden animals at Church Street amenity space.
- Dog faeces issues in other children's play areas had improved.

18.3 Grass verge cutting and highways weed spraying. It was noted that DCC devolved grass verge cutting to KTC on licence and funding had been reduced (from £1,113 to £481) to cover cuts of visibility splays only. KTC had historically supplemented the required 4 grass verge cuts per annum to 6 cuts. The 6 cuts had already been completed during the current financial year; a further cut was likely to be required before end March 2016. Members agreed that 8 cuts were required for financial year 2016/17.

DCC highways weed spraying programme had ceased across the county. Members received photos of weed growth in residential areas around town and acknowledged that Kingsbridge In Bloom had made a huge effort to clear weeds during summer 2015. KTC's budget for spraying was £300 for 2 sprays per annum on main town routes however, £373.80 had been spent on one spray due to higher costs of non-glyphosate spray (decision later reversed). Members considered that careful spraying before 0900 with glyphosate-based weed killer via a registered contractor would not be harmful. Members agreed that 2 weed sprays, with scope for spraying in some residential roads, were required for financial year 2016/17.

18.4 Town Square trees. SHDC had been requested to consider pollarding the deciduous London Planes which could affect CCTV images when in full-leaf and one tree encroached on the canopy outside the Creeks End. However, it was recognised that they provided much amenity value.

18.5 Kingsbridge In Bloom update. Graham Price thanked the Parks Committee and KTC for their support throughout 2015.

18.6 Any other immediate business related to Open Spaces.

- A dead tree was reported along the Cookworthy Road which had possibly been planted by Hi-Line quid pro quo felling/topping of trees which interfered with power cables. A further dead tree hanging over the road had been identified to DCC.

- It was **RECOMMENDED** to request DCC to cut vegetation encroaching on to the zebra crossing on West Alvington Hill as it represented a safety defect.

15/19 HERITAGE TRAIL

Next Working Group meeting would be held on 3 November.

15/20 TRIM TRAIL

Caloo had carried out an inspection and repairs on 7/8 October however, the cycle at Duncombe Park had a recurring defect and the company would visit again to conduct a permanent repair. Trip hazards identified in Quay House grounds had been sorted.

15/21 BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2016/17

Members considered a report on potential matters/equipment/projects which required an expenditure budget. It was **RECOMMENDED** for the Finance Committee to consider making budget allocations for:

- **Grass verge cutting.** At £2,000 (as agenda item 18.3 above).
- **Highway weed spraying.** At £750 (as agenda item 18.3 above).
- **Public wi-fi in parks.** To be worked up.
- **Boules pitch resurfacing.** At £250.
- **Pictorial sign or feather flag for putting green.** At £250.
- **Outdoor table tennis table.** At £3,000 (members received an estimate for a high quality table and concrete pad).
- **Plymouth Road bus shelter cleaning.** At £250 (members received an estimate of costs for bi-annual clean of both shelters).
- **Northville Park footpath clearance.** Not supported.
- **Public footpath no.2 West Alvington Hill clearance.** Not supported (DCC Public Rights of Way cut once per annum supplemented by West Alvington Parish Council).
- **Goalposts.** At £325 (single goalpost required for Duncombe Park plus one spare; new netting already held).
- **Footpath waymarking to Recreation Ground.** To be worked up (as agenda item 16.2 above).
- **Painting over/cleaning graffiti in Western Backway, cutting back vegetation invading stream north of Duncombe Street, and cleaning/oiling public benches particularly Duncombe Park.** To be worked up as community resilience/self-help projects.

15/22 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Friday 29 January 2015 at 9.30 a.m.

The meeting closed at 12.03 p.m.