

Kingsbridge Town Council

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARKS AND GREEN SPACES COMMITTEE HELD AT 9.30 a.m. ON FRIDAY 26 JUNE 2015 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, QUAY HOUSE

Present: Cllr Wayne Grills (Chairman)
Cllr Anne Balkwill
Marika Byrne (Café Decks)
David Dain (Kingsbridge In Bloom)
Cllr Sandy Gilbert
Cllr Ali Jennings
Cllr Chris Povey
Graham Price (Kingsbridge In Bloom)
Rosemary Speed (local resident)

In Attendance: Martin Johnson (Secretary)

15/01 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr Grills was elected as the Chairman of the Parks & Green Spaces Committee for mayoral year 2015/2016.

15/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Robin Griffin, Pat Janes (Kingsbridge Parks Bowling Club), Cllr Kate Lynn and Keith Rennells (SHDC Greenspace Projects Officer).

Public Open Forum

There were no statements from members of public.

15/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

15/04 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 6 February 2015 were approved as a correct record.

15/05 RECREATION GROUND

05.01 Assets/maintenance licence between South Hams District Council (SHDC) and Kingsbridge Town Council (KTC). SHDC had reported that the licence would be received shortly.

05.02 Condition of the pond. SHDC had completed inspections and lower cost works i.e. installation of new flap valve and non-return valve; to allow

excess water to drain from the pond without the need to operate the external penstock and to prevent tidal water backing up the system. It had also been proposed to re-establish a fountain (to aerate the pond water which would require a sump and submersible pump) and to re-line the whole pond (a major undertaking). Members considered that the pond was the only 'black mark' in the park and it required attention. Works for the above were likely to be expensive. It was **RECOMMENDED** to request SHDC to install a fountain and re-line the base of the pond.

05.03 Café business. The covered seating canopy was under construction. KTC had requested for the café toilet to become a pay-on-entry system (as per Quay toilets) and for revenue to be received by the café. The proposal had been supported by SHDC ward members. The current situation was that the café (in accordance with the lease agreement) was obliged to make the WC available to park users only during café opening hours. The WC was normally locked and a key was available from the café. KTC's request was being considered by SHDC and further feedback was awaited.

05.04 Bowling Club business. The signs at the entrance to the green had been revised to show new contact telephone numbers. The greenkeeper had reported that gravel from the boules pitch was being thrown on to the green causing damage to the mower and potential danger to the operator. The club requested for the boules surface to be changed from gravel (see agenda item 05.08).

05.05 Maintenance. Members commented on a dead area of grass adjacent to the pond caused by saline water ingress. Moreover, the putting green lawn needed to be cut shorter particularly around the holes. It was **RECOMMENDED** to request SHDC Grounds Maintenance to address a poor area of the lawn near the pond and to cut the putting green grass shorter.

05.06 Dog control. Members commented that some dog owners still allowed their dogs to run off leads in the park despite notices to the contrary. It was suggested that it was the community's responsibility to police itself and offenders should be approached and politely made aware of the Dog Order.

05.07 Park events for 2015. It was noted that Kingsbridge Playspaces Group intended to run an event in the park on Sunday 13 September.

05.08 Suggestions:

Arch over main entrance. Members agreed that an archway was not a priority.

Hire of bouncy castle. Members considered that the hire of a bouncy castle over the school summer holidays was not a priority. However, if a bouncy castle could be sourced at nil cost to KTC then it should be progressed.

Dog tie-ups. It was **RECOMMENDED** to request SHDC to fix eyebolts to the low red wall enclosing the children's play area to allow dogs to be tied up.

Public wi-fi. It was **RECOMMENDED** to support a suggestion to install public wi-fi conditional that it was cost neutral to KTC e.g. via advertising revenue.

Financial support for tennis coaching. Members received a request for funding (letter dated 1 June 2015) from Pat Parfitt (South Hams Parks Tennis) who provided tennis coaching in the park and was taking part in the Devon Active Communities project to increase participation in the sport. It was proposed to arrange a set of tournaments (juniors, youths and adults) to enhance court usage. It was **RECOMMENDED** to provide a grant of £120 to South Hams Parks Tennis to run summer tennis tournaments.

Cllr Balkwill entered the Chamber

Review of boules playing surface. Members commented that the boules pitch was a great facility however, the surface was too loose and therefore kicked up too easily; ideally it should be coarse compacted sandy grit and enclosed by boarding on 3 sides: north, east and west. It was **RECOMMENDED** to gain a quotation to replace the playing surface of the boules pitch.

Pictorial sign for putting green. Members considered ways to better promote use of the putting green e.g. signage. It was noted that the current putting green flags sank into the holes and were barely visible from afar. It was **RECOMMENDED** to research the supply of taller putting green flags to provide greater visibility and to request SHDC to provide gateway signage for all park facilities.

Children's flower bed. Members noted a suggestion to build a flower bed earmarked for children adjacent to the Cottage; an estimate had been provided at circa £4.4k and external part-funding may be available. Members agreed that a further flower bed was not a priority and that parents/children should be signposted to the Community Garden.

05.09 Feedback:

Green Flag Award judging. Keith Rennells and Rob Sekula (SHDC officers), Graham Price (Kingsbridge In Bloom) and the Town Clerk had hosted Kevin Yates (Cannock Chase District Council) on 15 June for Green Flag judging. The park looked its absolute best thanks to the all-round efforts of SHDC Grounds Maintenance and local partners. The judge's decision was awaited.

Street lamp column promotional banners. Members sighted the 2 new banners to be erected on street lamp columns outside the park in Embankment Road.

Landscaping next to café and new planting. Members commented that the new landscaping and planting had been completed well.

Deferment of croquet lawn proposal. It was confirmed that a proposal to integrate croquet into the putting green had been deferred.

Boundary fence for storage/compost area. The new boundary fence had been completed alongside a temporary supply of compost bins. Members noted that plans had been drawn up to provide permanent composting and recycling bays made out of sleepers for use by SHDC Grounds Maintenance and Kingsbridge In Bloom which could also accommodate materials from further afield. It was **RECOMMENDED** to request SHDC to install the proposed composting and recycling bays.

Dog mosaics. The mosaics had been installed at either side of the park on entry.

Bench cleaning/oiling. All wooden Cavendish benches had been cleaned and coated with Danish Oil.

Public notices. The notice board section of the interpretation panel currently hosted the May/June park newsletter and a request for feedback "Love your park". Members agreed that the previous notice which identified the brick sculptures designed and built by students should be updated and re-posted.

Goalpost netting. The goalposts and netting were checked weekly by staff; new netting had been received in readiness for installation but it was anticipated that current nets may last for a few more months.

SHDC promotional flyers. The draft flyers had been supported by members and had now been produced by SHDC for the Kingsbridge Information Centre. Members suggested that they should be distributed to Quay House and other outlets as well.

05.10 Any other immediate business related to the above. Members requested for the putting green equipment to be put out every day to encourage greater use of the facility. Café Decks noted that people only played putting during weekends and holidays.

15/06 DUNCOMBE PARK

06.01 Dog control. The park was self-policing and members noted that dog walkers tended to keep their dogs on leads when school children were in the park.

06.02 Grit bin. Bins could be purchased circa £100 to £150 and installation would cost £35 on the steps leading off Belle Vue Road; SHDC had given approval. Members considered that given current financial constraints another option could be progressed. It was **RECOMMENDED** to place a bag of grit salt at the top of the steps when icy weather was forecast.

06.03 Feedback:

New planting. Members sighted photos of all the new planting. A Birch near the Fire Station was leaning heavily and another shrub had been damaged which had been reported to SHDC.

Central green space. Members commented that the grass cutting was much improved with the new mower available to SHDC. However, the central green was still lumpy in places 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 to scrape the top layer of grass/soil from a portion of the central green space and lay new top soil/turf.

New zip wire platform. Members commented that the new zip wire platform built by SHDC was a great improvement which allowed easier access for children.

Dog mosaics. The mosaics had been installed at entrances off Eastern Backway and Belle Vue Road.

06.04 Any other immediate business related to the above. All wooden Cavendish benches had been cleaned and coated with Danish Oil.

15/07 PUBLIC/GREEN SPACES

07.01 KTC budget FY 2015/16 for open space projects & green space improvements. Members noted a combined budget of £4.5k for the current financial year however, outgoings to date alongside known expenditure to FY end meant that effectively the budget had been spent. Moreover, allocated Reserves for parks and open spaces at circa £11.8k had probable commitments at circa £10k (installation of flood warning signs and cemetery terrace repairs). Revenue Reserves for children's play areas/Trim Trail refits now stood at circa £71k. It was **RECOMMENDED** to note the financial constraints for open space projects and green space improvements during the current financial year 2015/16.

07.02 Non-park amenity spaces:

Britton's Field. Kingsbridge In Bloom reported that swathes had been cut in the grass to access the picnic tables to give the area a 'meadow' feel. The tables had been cleaned and coated with Danish Oil.

Rack Park. SHDC had installed a bollard on the access path to stop vehicles accessing the amenity space.

Wallingford Road. Cllr Coulthard had reported that local children used the area for informal play e.g. den building. Local residents used the edge of the green to park their vehicles. Members commented that overall the amenity space was probably the poor cousin when placed alongside others in town

however, Duncombe Park facilities were close by. It was **RECOMMENDED** to propose nil current upgrades for Wallingford Road amenity space.

Church Street. Members commented that some of the animals were brightly painted and others were not. The Town Clerk would supply paint to local residents.

Other children's play spaces. SHDC Dog Warden had reported dog faeces at Homelands and Montagu Road and she had posted up appropriate signage.

Tree Trail. Members commented that the Katsura in Embankment Road was still not flourishing and may have to be replaced in due course with a different 'K' tree. Along the Quay Car Park footway some tree branches were low which interfered with walkers and a tree stump needed to be ground out. It was **RECOMMENDED** to make SHDC aware of current tree matters adjacent to the Quayside footpaths.

07.03 Kingsbridge In Bloom 2015. It was reported that KIB's mentor judge would visit on 25 June and the project was on target for regional judging on 10 July.

07.04 Grass verge cutting and non-glyphosate highway weed spraying. DCC's funding had reduced from £1,113 to £481 for 4 cuts per annum of visibility splays only however, KTC had committed to 6 cuts of all areas previously cut. KTC had resolved to stop using glyphosate based weed killers for its 2 sprays per annum of the main routes in town. It was **RECOMMENDED** to call-in the policy to stop using glyphosate with a view to reversing the resolution at the full council meeting on 14 July.

07.05 Suggestions:

Fixed table tennis table. Members noted that the Trim Trail working group had suggested the installation of a table which was supported by members. It was **RECOMMENDED** to gain quotations for the supply and installation of a fixed table tennis table in Quay House grounds.

07.06 Feedback:

Finger post in Quay Car Park. SHDC had repaired and repainted the finger post.

Additional finger arm for finger post at Fore Street Car Park. Members sighted the new finger arm. Fixings for the current finger arms had rusted through and it was likely that some further works would have to be completed to dismantle/refit alongside spot re-painting.

Quayside miniature railway. It was reported that the planning application may be considered at SHDC's Development Management Committee due to objections received principally regarding Health & Safety concerns.

Town Square bollards. SHDC Property Service had repainted the bollards.

07.07 Any other immediate business related to the above. Cllr Jeeninga had reported that the landowner of a large wall at the bottom of Highfield Drive may be willing for a mosaic or suchlike to be installed. Rosemary Speed was willing to investigate.

Cllr Povey left the Chamber

15/08 HERITAGE TRAIL

Members received preliminary reports from Rosemary Speed which suggested mosaics to depict various people, places or activities throughout the history of Kingsbridge. Members noted that the Heritage Trail would be a major 'whole community' project which would require much input from a range of sources/local groups.

15/09 TRIM TRAIL

Members noted the excellent 'official guide for its enjoyment and use' produced by Cllr Gilbert. Members noted that Cllr Gilbert would be promoting the new Trim Trail to other groups e.g. WI and proposed that councillors used it together as a team bonding exercise. A Play Area Agreement had been signed between SHDC and KTC in relation to inspection and insurance for the exercise equipment in Quay House grounds; the agreement included regular inspections plus an annual engineering report provided by SHDC's own insurer Allianz.

The Allianz inspection dated 24 April 2015 was received by members for the Quay House grounds equipment. No category A defects had been reported however, some category B observations had been made relating to grass growth and lack of signage. However, SHDC's parks ranger had also made comments which were supported by members regarding potential trip hazards close by. It was **RECOMMENDED** to review/improve the manhole cover for the Christmas tree and to remove the timber edging on the access path to the Bandstand.

15/10 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Friday 30 October 2015 at 9.30 a.m.

The meeting closed at 11.55 a.m.