

## **Kingsbridge Town Council**

### **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARKS AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING AT 2.30 P.M. ON FRIDAY 29 JANUARY 2021**

**Present:** Cllr Graham Price (Chairman)  
Cllr Anne Balkwill  
Cllr Philip Cole  
David Dain (Duncombe Park representative)  
Cllr Martina Edmonds  
Verity Robinson (Kingsbridge Community Tennis)  
Rosemary Speed (local resident)

In Attendance: Martin Johnson (Secretary)

#### **20/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mike Jennings, Steve Mammatt, Peter Ralph and Lesley Healey (Kingsbridge Community Tennis).

#### **Public Open Forum**

There were no members of public present.

#### **20/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

#### **20/23 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Members received the minutes of the last meeting held on 30 October 2020 which were approved as a correct record.

#### **20/24 OPEN SPACE, SPORT & RECREATION PLAN 2018-2028**

The Kingsbridge OSSR plan, available on the Town Council's (KTC) website, had been updated prior to the meeting and earmarked to Committee Members. Projects completed to date had been highlighted and retained in order to identify a historical record of achievements throughout the life of the plan until 2028 e.g. refits of children's play areas at Duncombe Park and Montagu Road, the introduction of an access path to Britton's Field amenity space and tree surgery at Embankment Road Cemetery. Moreover, agreed new projects had been added e.g. Gymnastics Club requirement for new equipment and the current feasibility study for a community hub in the Recreation Ground. It was **RECOMMENDED** to adopt the Kingsbridge Open Space, Sport and Recreation Plan 2018-2028 revised 29 January 2021 and to note the next annual review in January 2022.

Updates were then noted on OSSR plan priorities agreed at the previous meeting:

- KTC had confirmed its ambition for any new seating alongside footways at the head of the estuary, and in the Town Square, to match new seating to be installed in Fore Street.
- Upgrades to children's play areas in Duncombe Park and the Recreation Ground were progressing and on-site meetings had been held in late 2020 with a play equipment supplier and South Hams District Council (SHDC) officers. Maintenance matters had been agreed with SHDC and quotations for improvements and the introduction of new play kit were inbound.
- KTC had liaised with a specialist company regarding improvements to the pond in the Recreation Ground who, in turn, would liaise with SHDC regarding drainage details and water ingress/egress.

## **20/25 DUNCOMBE PARK & RECREATION GROUND**

**25.1 Recreation Ground Bowling Club.** It was reported that the club was maintaining the green while taking stock of Covid-19 restrictions.

**25.2 Recreation Ground Café Decks.** Nil report.

### **25.3 Recreation Ground Community Tennis and the Pavilion in the Park project.**

The public consultation for a community hub in the park had commenced via its own website: <https://kingsbridgepip.co.uk/> with a deadline for responses via Survey Monkey of 28 February. Much feedback had already been received and the current headliner was a preference for a new building on the site of the current cottage/clubhouse. Due to Covid-19 a time extension had been provided to spend the Awards For All grant held.

No tennis had been played since Christmas due to the current Lockdown and no information had been received to date from the Lawn Tennis Association regarding future play.

**25.4 Proposed SHDC/KTC on-site meeting regarding maintenance matters.** Liaison had taken place and the meeting was likely to be scheduled for late February with SHDC's Operations manager. The meeting to discuss, amongst others, maintenance of the pond, composting facility and protection of trees and shrubs.

**25.5 Consideration of a Love Your Park event for 2021 given Covid-19.** Members noted the current Lockdown, government reports and feedback to date from other outdoor events planned for 2021. It was **RECOMMENDED** to cancel the Love Your Park event scheduled for August 2021 due to Covid-19 restrictions.

## **20/26 AMENITY SPACES/OPEN SPACES**

**26.1 Recent projects including Briton's Field picnic tables and bike racks.** The picnic tables had been refurbished in late 2020. Following further exploration, bike stands had been ordered for installation adjacent to Quay toilets, former Quay pub and the Town Square (the latter in lieu of an unsatisfactory bike rack in situ). They were anticipated to be in position by late February.

**26.2 Consideration of grass verge cutting during FY 2021/22 and potential re-wilding at selected locations.** Devon County Council (DCC) and KTC had agreed a further urban highway grass cutting agreement for the next financial year beginning 1 April which would be contracted to SHDC's operations team. KTC was tasked to cut visibility splays 4 times per annum at various locations in town but also cut non-visibility grass verges, which were the largest portion of the works, and the whole were cut 7 times per annum. KTC's adopted Climate and Nature Emergency Plan identified an action to introduce re-wilding of grass verges with mown edging and natural grass/wild areas within. Potentially wildflower seed could also be sown to introduce colour. The re-wilding to be promoted by KTC to local residents as an intentional action rather than the grass verges being forgotten! It was **RECOMMENDED** to review DCC mapping held to identify grass verges for re-wilding and to bring up at a meeting to be held with SHDC Operations manager (agenda item 25.4).

**26.3 Consideration of potential further weed spraying and/or vegetation clearance before FY end 31 March 2021.** The budget for the current financial year was £4,750 with circa £1,000 remaining. It was **RECOMMENDED** to prioritise a vegetation cut along the Cookworthy Road in February to open up footways as best possible and for remaining funds to be directed at weed spraying in March.

## **20/27 KINGSBRIDGE IN BLOOM**

Despite Covid-19, the town's floral displays would still be assessed in 2021 probably via an unannounced 'mystery visit' however, there would be no formal Royal Horticultural Society competitions. Flower baskets would be installed through the town either via Kingsbridge In Bloom (KIB) volunteers or a local nursery alongside some highlight displays. Effectively it would be business as usual with the KIB team working within the parameters of Covid-19 restrictions.

## **20/28 IMMEDIATE PARKS & OPEN SPACES MATTERS**

**28.1** Updates from the previous meeting were provided:

- Invitations for expressions of interest in The Promenade public art project would commence after KTC's Covid-19 town art project had completed so that they were not confused.
- Brick sculptures/seating in the Recreation Ground had been removed.
- Footways at the head of the estuary regularly had pools of standing water following heavy rain which made access difficult. The issue had been raised with SHDC and photos forwarded.

**28.2** It was confirmed that a grass verge at the mouth of Welle House Gardens was included in DCC's devolved schedule to KTC and should be cut 7 times per annum.

**28.3** Skateboarding England's latest design and development guidance for skateboarding reported wheeled sport space should be at least 30m from the boundary of local residential property. This was a minimum distance to be considered carefully. A project could be halted during the planning process, or even potentially removed after construction, if noise was considered to be a serious environmental health issue. Indeed, it was preferable to locate a skatepark 50-80m from housing and it was necessary to commission a formal acoustic survey to satisfy planning requirements. Therefore, for Kingsbridge it could mean

the need to review the current skatepark to ascertain if improvements could be made and/or the consideration of mitigation measures at other potential new locations within the town.

**28.4** SHDC's new Playing Pitch Strategy was progressing and KTC had submitted feedback, drawn from the Kingsbridge OSSR report, in December 2020. A draft was anticipated in Spring 2021.

**28.5** Cut vegetation appeared to have been dumped recently in the Eastern Backway which had been reported to SHDC. The matter was ongoing but anticipated to be resolved shortly.

**20/29            DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Friday 23 April 2021 at 2.30 p.m.

*The meeting closed at 3.55 p.m.*