

GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the General Services Committee held at 6.30pm on Tuesday, 05 June 2018 in the Town Hall, Banbury.

Present: Councillor Clarke (Chairman)
Councillors: Banfield, Cherry, Colegrave, Dhesi, J Donaldson, Harrison, Kilsby, Mephram and Richards.

Alternate Members: Councillors Mallon (for Councillor Ilott)

Officers: Mark Recchia (Town Clerk)
Mark Hassall (Deputy Town Clerk & RFO)
Mike Hall (Recreation & Amenities Manager)

GS.4/18 Apologies for Absence
Councillors

GS.5/18 Declarations of Interest
Councillors Kilsby and Richards both declared personal interests through current or past involvement with the Banbury Shed project, in respect of discussion about future use of the community garden buildings in People's Park (Minute GS.8/18 below), and remained in the meeting during the discussion and voting thereon.

GS.6/18 Minutes of the last Meeting

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meetings held on 27 March 2018 and 8 May 2018 be approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

GS.7/18 Income & Expenditure Report
The Deputy Town Clerk & RFO updated Members on the report comparing year-to-date income and expenditure with the projected annual budget to 22 May 2018.

General Services savings are due to timing, principally

- ◆ Timing of repositioning of disabled ramp at Southam Rd Cemetery (£3k), building rental income forgone £9k.
- ◆ Potential claim for water costs associated with Bowls Club building Peoples Park (£6k), earmarked reserve expenditure St Marys wall repairs (£6k), timing of Oxford Rd & People Park planting schemes (£6k), reduced costs associated with play equipment repairs (£8k), increased expenditure on earmarked expenditure replacing Spiceball Park bins and benches (£14k),.
- ◆ Timing of receipt for gas connection across Spiceball Park (£75k),
- ◆ Retention of funds associated with capital works (£19k),

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and note the Income and Expenditure report.

GS.8/18 Parks and Open Spaces Report
The Committee considered a report on the condition of the parks, recreation grounds and open spaces in Banbury, including comments and complaints received, and on the work of the Park Ranger Service.

The number of queries, comments and complaints received was 28 (compared to 28 over the similar period in 2017) and although there were the same

number of complaints as last year the variety was different and included requests for grit and litter bins, dangerous cycling through Spiceball Park, graffiti sprayed on Easington Recreation Ground pavilion and a flooding ditch. The number of complaints etc. on areas covered by the grounds maintenance contract was down on previous years.

The intervening period from the last report to this had been very mixed weather, with the icy chill in March to blazing sunshine. The icy period kept the Rangers very busy with salting and gritting and especially keeping the snow wardens supplied and grit bins full. Some of the late snow and ice issues were still outstanding with a number of grit bins left to fill.

Other matters covered in the report were:

- ◆ an update from BBOWT regarding their “Wild Banbury” project works.
- ◆ a report on the various the Capital Projects currently underway.
- ◆ an update on and seeking approval for ringfencing of the funding received from gas connection across the park for utility and other improvement works in Spiceball Park.
- ◆ an update on and seeking approval for further refurbishment of the Southam Road Cemetery depot, subject to funding being identified.
- ◆ the future use for the Community Garden Buildings in People’s Park.
- ◆ development options for land at Spital Farm.
- ◆ approval for the purchase of 2 Tommy statues to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the ending of the First World War.
- ◆ an update on the position of land adoptions currently being explored for transfer to Banbury Town Council; and
- ◆ notification of imminent major tree work to be undertaken in Grimsbury.

With regard to the future use of buildings within the Community Garden, following relocation of the Park Ranger Service and GM contractors into the new Cemetery Depot, the Chairman explained that in recent public surveys a café and toilet facility had appeared high on the list of facilities the public would like to see in the Park. It would however require further work on a business case and feasibility assessment to take this idea forward. A member also commented that, whilst acknowledging the public support for a café/toilet facility, there was also potential for further community re-use of the buildings, such as by the Banbury Shed project, which was looking for new premises, if this was deemed not feasible.

IT WAS RESOLVED:

- (1) To receive the report and note the condition of the parks, recreation grounds and open spaces in Banbury and the work of the Park Ranger Service;
- (2) To note the update from BBOWT regarding the Wild Banbury project;
- (3) To note the progress on the Capital Projects, including the lowest tenders submitted.
- (4) To approve the proposals for the refurbishment of the Southam Road Cemetery depot (set out at paragraph 10 of the report), subject to the funding being identified;

- (5) That the option of reuse of the Community Garden buildings in People's Park, once vacated by the Park Ranger service, as a café and toilet facility for park users be further investigated and details reported back to the Committee;
- (6) To follow the recommendations when identified from the Cherwell DC Playing Fields report for the development of the acquired land at Spital Farm;
- (7) To approve in principle the purchase of 2 Tommy statues to commemorate the 100th anniversary for the ending of the First World War, subject to funding being identified;
- (8) To note the position of possible land transfers to Banbury Town Council;
- (9) That any funds received from the gas connection across Spiceball Park over and above those required to bring utilities into the park be earmarked for other improvements within Spiceball Park, including the installation of the new seats and litter bins;
- (10) To note the future tree work identified for Hamilton Close.

The Meeting ended at 8.00pm.