



FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 1st AUGUST 2023 AT 7:45 PM AT THE RUFUS CENTRE

Present:

Cllr Thompson (Chairman)
Cllr Toinko
Cllr Wilsmore
Cllr Connell
Cllr Snape
Cllr Gleave
Cllr Badham

Stacie Lockey – Acting Town Clerk
Susan Eldred – Community Services Manager
Zoe Putwain – Community Services Officer
Sue Quinn – Community Services Assistant (Remotely)

One members of the public (Remotely)

1102 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Members received apologies from Cllr Platt due to being on Holiday and Cllr Meredith-Shaw due to work commitments. Cllr Connell would be attending the meeting late.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the apologies from Cllr Platt due to being on holiday and Cllr Meredith Shaw due to work commitments.

1103 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Statutory Declarations of Interests from Members in relation to:

- (a) No Disclosable pecuniary interests were declared by members.
- (b) No Non-Pecuniary interest were declared.

1104 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair thanked Cllr Meridith-Shaw for Chairing the last meeting and congratulated them at being elected Vice Chair.

Acknowledgment was made to the busy June and July with the Family Fun Day and Skate Competition with a continued busy schedule over the summer. Councillors were thanked for their continued support.

1105 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

The member of the public did not choose to address the Members at this time.

1106 INVITED SPEAKER

No speaker was invited to attend this meeting.

1107 MEMBERS QUESTIONS

Cllr Toinko raised a question in relation to the previous tree planting at Hinksley Road and Station Road as part of the Green Canopy. The Environmental Improvement Working Group discussed the need to maintain or replace trees and possibly some hedgerows. A budget for this work was requested with the work being carried out by the working group.

The Acting Town Clerk advised that funds may be available within the revenue budget and would confirm this via email.

Action - Acting Town Clerk

Cllr Badham was due to ask a question in relation to the progress of the War Memorial listing that was applied for in June 2021. Cllr Badham had found the information and confirmed that the application had been successful, and the War Memorial had been listed as Grade 2 status -

[Flitwick War Memorial , Flitwick - 1479194 | Historic England](#)

Members expressed the opinion that there should be publicity for this, and that Cllr Badham would forward the information to the acting Town Clerk.

Action - Acting Town Clerk

1108 MINUTES

- a. A typo in section 1098C stating Public Art was raised with the correct group being the Environmental Improvement Working Group.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept to adopt the minutes of the Community Services meeting held on 6th June 2023 with one amendment.

Action – Community Services Officer

1109 MATTERS ARISING

Members asked for an update on the Ragwort at Manor Park, The Acting Town Clerk had approached Natural England in relation to the Ragwort at Manor Park and an onsite visit had taken place with an agronomist. It had been confirmed that there would be a requirement to treat the Ragwort via spraying next year. A further update would be made at the Community Services Committee in due course. year.

Action - Acting Town Clerk

Clarity on Item 10099B, the missing Omega report was raised, the Acting Town Clerk confirmed this was missed off the June meeting.

1110 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- a. **Appointment of Members to Allotment Working Group**

Cllr Platt was elected to the Allotment Working Group at the previous meeting. Two further members were requested to join.

It was **RESOLVED** elect Cllr Gleave and Cllr Thomson to join Cllr Platt on the Allotment Working Group.

Action – Community Services Manager

b. Skate Park Lighting Times

Members received a report from the Community Services Manager and considered the recommendations within the report in relation to the time restraints that needed to be put in place with the Skate Park lighting times.

The Community Services Manager confirmed that they had correspondence with the current Out of Crime Officer to confirm if there had been any changes to the reported Anti-Social Behavior (ASB) since the light installation. It was confirmed that currently the lights that were operating on a sensor rather than timer and this had no effect on the ASB statistics, however this would be reviewed again within the next 6 months.

Discussions took place as to the environmental aspects of the lights and it was acknowledged that this would be minimal due to the light source.

Members asked if there had been complaints about the lights. The Community Services Manager confirmed that one letter had been received from a resident with concerns around the lights.

It was **RESOLVED** to use a timer to set the Skate Park Lights, 16.00 – 22.00 Wintertime and Summertime 21.30 – Midnight. Members agreed for the Community Services Manager to review the timings after 6 months.

Action – Community Services Manager

c. Community Cooking Course

Members received a report from the Community Services Assistant and considered the recommendations in the report in relation to offering Free cookery courses.

Positive support was received for this proposal with the Funding being secured.

It was **RESOLVED** the delivery of a four, six-week cookery courses for parents and children.

(The course would run one afternoon per week, from 15.45 to 17.30. Spaces limited to ten adults with a maximum of two children each per six-week course. Children must be aged 7 years or over.)

d. Community Allotment

Members received a report from the Community Services Assistant in relation to creating a Community Allotment and clarity was requested.

The Community Services Assistant confirmed that the idea to have the allotment was due to the success of the Hub Vegetable patch and to help to create a link with the growing, cooking and community fridge, especially with the lack of donations coming in to help with sustainability. It was confirmed that the funding would be to establish an allotment that would be open to all, including raised beds.

Members discussed the idea and history of previous allotments being used by Community groups and the idea of a Community Garden.

Members commented on the large waiting list for both allotment sites at present and the fact that the funding would only be available for a 12-month period. Members also commented that access to the current allotment sites might not be accessible for everyone.

After consideration Members agreed that alternative sites should be investigated, such as the Rufus Centre, and a further report be presented at the next meeting.

Action – Community Services Assistant

Cllr Connell joined the meeting 20.06pm

e. Beds Green Flag Awards

Members received a verbal report from the Chairman in relation to the Beds Green Flag Awards and the committee decided to ask the Environmental Improvement Working Group to look into the Beds Green Flag awards with a summary of viability of categories being established and emailed to the group.

Action – Environmental Working Group

f. Grass Cutting Schedule

Members reviewed a complaint about the grass cutting in Flitwick and the reduction in cuts that had been resolved at the Community Services meeting on the 6th September 2022. Members discussed the complaint.

It was identified through discussion that when Central Bedfordshire Council was merged, [Mid Bedfordshire](#) and [South Bedfordshire](#) districts had different grass cutting schedules which includes South Bedfordshire receiving up to 14 cuts per annum.

It was suggested that the Council write to CBC asking for an explanation as to why the cutting schedule was different for mid and south Bedfordshire. It was discussed that different aspects of the Town needed a variety of schedule cuttings; however, it was felt that there should not be a requirement for FTC to pay extra to CBC to cut CBC land. The consensus of the Members was that at this time there would be no changes to the current schedules, as previously agreed.

It was **RESOLVED** to reply correcting the errors in the email and information on the policy discussion.

Action – Acting Town Clerk

g. Circuit Classes

Members received a report from the Community Services Manager around the suggested increase in duration of the Circuit Classes that have been funded by CBC that are due to end on the 17th August 2023.

Support was shown for the activity and increased suggested duration.

It was **RESOLVED** to continue the circuit classes until 31st March 2024, funded via budget code 313/4551 (Family Fun Day surplus) at a cost of £2,030.

1111 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Community Payback Service

Members received a verbal report from the Community Services Manager confirming that the Scheme would be in place by September running one day a week.

More information was requested about the validity of the scheme, publicity aspect and allocated jobs.

The Community Services Manager confirmed that figures would be requested as to the performance of the Scheme and that no publicity of this had been planned.

Members requested an update in the December meeting to give time to evaluate the scheme.

Action – Community Services Manager

b. Public Art Update

Members received an update from Cllr Badham with information on various groups that had been approached in relation to the outlined brief for the public art project, unfortunately no companies had confirmed availability to tender.

Suggestions as to the implementation of equipment to enhance the usage of the Rufus Centre for artists were suggested for use of the 106 allocated funds. Restrictions in relation to 106 moneys being allocated were raised with the Community Services Manager confirming more information would be requested.

It was confirmed that the Business Improvement and Development Board had been discussing improvement to the Lockyer suite at the Rufus Centre. It was agreed once clarity was given as to the 106 Funding a meeting would take place with the Rufus Business and Facilities Manager and Public Arts Working Group.

Action – Community Services Manager

c. Toucan Crossing

Members received a verbal update about the Toucan crossing that was previously scheduled to be placed near the 101 roundabout. It was highlighted that the crossing was scheduled for the summer 2022 and had been delayed. Due to the time frame and change in contractor the work was now progressing under the Clophill roundabout works. A new timeline is still to be confirmed.

d. Community Financial Report

Members noted the Community Financial report.

e. Officer Update

Members discussed items within the report as follows-

- Hemlock at Manor Park and if information boards should be added to the site, or if these would draw more attention to the plant.
- Confirmation given that Litter Picks would return to the weekends after the Summer Holidays.
- The Community Services Officer clarified that they were in contact with Grand Union around doing site visits.
- Members requested an update at the next meeting around the Christmas Light Switch on event and Remembrance.

Action – Community Services Officer

1112 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Sue Livens addressed the Members with the following questions, statements, and suggestions: -

- CPB scheme – That it is a punishment and should be seen as such.
- Rufus Concert venue good idea.
- Grass Cutting – Site lines should be considered.

1113 EXEMPT ITEMS

The following resolution will be **moved** that is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are excluded whilst the following exempt item issue is discussed.

It was **RESOLVED** to move the following items to exempt.

12a **Youth Provision Contract**

It was **RESOLVED** to extend the youth provision contract for two years (until March 2026) at the fixed price of £59,000 per year.

12b **Crime Statistics – noted.**

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Council **resolve** to exclude the public and press by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted.

Meeting ended 21.03pm