



FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 03RD OCTOBER 2023 AT 7:45 PM AT THE RUFUS CENTRE

Present:

Cllr Thompson (Chairman)
Cllr Toinko
Cllr Wilsmore
Cllr Gleave
Cllr Platt

Stacie Lockey –Town Clerk
Susan Eldred – Community Services and Amenities Manager (CSAM)
Zoe Putwain – Community Services Officer (CSO)
Sue Quinn – Community Services Officer (CSO)

1114 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Badham and Cllr Connell due to ill health.
It was **RESOLVED** to accept apologies from Cllr Badham and Cllr Connell due to ill health.

1115 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.

1116 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The chair thanked those that took part in the coffee morning on Friday 29th October held at Flitwick Village Hall in aid of Macmillan. Expressing that there was a great response and many people attended.

1117 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Due to technical reasons no members of the public were able to join the meeting remotely.

1118 INVITED SPEAKER

No speaker was invited to attend this meeting.

1119 MEMBERS QUESTIONS

No members raised questions.

1120 MINUTES

- a. Members received and were asked to adopt the minutes of the Community Services meeting held on Tuesday 1st August 2023 with no amendments.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes for the Community Services meeting held on Tuesday 1st August 2023 with no amendments.

Action – CSO (ZP)

1121 MATTERS ARISING

Cllr Toinko asked for clarification as to the lights at the Skate Park as they had seen that the lights were not on when going past the park between 7pm and 9pm. The Community Services Manager confirmed that they would address the comment and acknowledged the time Summertime ending time change.

Action – CSAM

1122 ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

a. **The Lockdown Car Show 2024**

Members discussed last year's event and discussed the layout of the park and the need to obtain a SAG for the event.

It was **RESOLVED** to give permission for the Lockdown Lorry, car and bike show to take place on Millenium Park on the 18th August 2024 with no charge subject to SAG approval.

Action – CSAM

b. **Community Allotment**

Members discussed the report given by the Community Services Officer in relation to the request to have a dedicated allotment for the use of a community. Community Services and Amenities Manager confirmed that the waiting list was 15 people on each site.

The Community Services Officer (SQ) addressed the Council that they had heard about people that are finding their allotments too much to handle and suggested that the group could assist others on their allotments to alleviate some of their work and to allow for the Community to grow items for the fridge. They expressed that the move to have an allotment would allow for items grown to be used in the Community Fridge. They identified that there has been a lack of availability of fresh produce in recent months and an allotment would help to increase availability. Comments were made also as to the influence a Community Project would have on people suffering with anxiety and depression.

The Community Services and Amenities Manager and Town Clerk expressed that they had no official requests in relation to any allotment plots, but this could be raised at the next working group to ask Allotment holders if they are struggling to contact the Council. However, it was noted that this would be in April 2024 due to the quiet season.

The proposal for an allotment to be situated at the Rufus Centre was discussed with the need if this moved forward to go to the Business Committee for discussion as to it changing the change of use of the premises.

Concerns were raised as to the suggestion of £20,000 for an allotment, even in a grant form, being extensive with there being no indication as to how successful a Community Allotment would be.

It was suggested that the Scouts who already have an allotment that is allocated free of charge may be approached with the idea of sharing their allotment with the Community as this would not take away the availability of another allotment from the already extensive waiting list. It was also suggested that the allotment was currently used by Scouts may not be to full capacity. This would also give a chance to gauge interest in a community allotment.

It was noted that in the agreement subletting a plot is not permitted, however as the allotment is owned by Flitwick Town Council this would not be an issue.

It was **RESOLVED** to approach the Scouts in relation to their Allotment to ask if they would be willing to have a Community Allotment group share their allotment.

Action – CSAM

community Services Officer (SQ) left the meeting 20.15 pm.

c. Family Fun Day 2024

Members discussed the options in the report to how the Family Fun Day 2024 event would look and aspects of the event.

Suggestions on the report included a music event, incorporating a Skate event, adding paid for wrist bands and an optional Firework Display.

The music option had little interest in the discussion as did the Firework addition which was perceived as not value for money.

Skate event- It was also mentioned that it is very hard to film live sporting events and that the images on the screen may not be sustainable through the competition. The consensus after discussion was to keep the Skate Competitions as an independent event.

Members discussed the suggestion of adding paid wristbands for the event for people outside of Flitwick, and acknowledged the complications and logistics that could arise should this be incorporated. It was suggested that lost armbands, and lack of enforcement may cause conflicts on the day. The Open for all policy previously established was preferred. Although it was noted that if the influx to the event continued from people outside of the town this may need to be investigated for future years.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept option 1 from the report as follows without the addition of wristbands or Fireworks.

Event Options One:

1. The event continues as in previous years, this will include: • Event running time 12 noon – 10pm • Free Fun Fair (12 – 8pm) • Free Cinema Showings (3 Films) • Food Court • Stalls • Free Popcorn Approximate Cost - £20,000 ex vat

Action – CSO (ZP)

d. D-Day Anniversary - Beacon

Members discussed the option to purchase a Beacon to be used at the 80th Commemoration of D-day and future events. Options include both a wood fire beacon that would need to receive planning permission to be installed at either Station Square, Station green space or Millenium Park.

All of the spaces identified were not deemed appropriate and the Mount, that is the highest point in Flitwick, being an Archaeological site is eliminated from consideration.

Information as to the previous Beacon was requested with the Community Services and Amenities Manager confirming that the small burner previously used was not fit for purpose.

It was noted that Ampthill Town Council have a large beacon and space to hold an event and it was suggested that the Council signpost to Ampthill. It was felt that there was no location in Flitwick that would allow for a successful event. With limited use of a Beacon making a purchase of either Beacon not financially viable.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept option 6 which included not purchasing a beacon or holding an event in June 2024 and signposting to other locations.

e. **Community Hub**

Members received a report with a request to change the resolution made on Tuesday 4th April 2023 in relation to the opening times of the Community Hub on Wednesdays due to the low attendance in the afternoon,

It was **RESOLVED** to amend the opening times of the Community Hub to 2.30pm and to allow for Officers digression to be used for any further alterations.

Action – CSO (SQ)

f. **Allotment Bonfires**

The suggestion that permission to hold bonfires on allotments was withdrawn was discussed by members having been suggested by the Reps. This was suggested due to the complaints received from allotment holders and neighbors when fires were lit.

With the AGM for the Allotment holders taking place 2 weeks from the date of the meeting, it was suggested that if the decision was agreed formal notification could be made at the AGM. The revised rules would be included in the new Allotment contracts issued for 2024.

It was **RESOLVED** to amend the Allotment Agreement to state 'No bonfires will be permitted on-site at any time'. This revision would be in place for the contacts issued in January 2024

Action – CSAM

g. **Scarecrow Festival 2024**

Members received a report as requested from the Community Services Officer in relation to the Scarecrow Festival 2024 with suggestions as to the time change to September to tie in with harvest time and ideas for themes.

It was **RESOLVED** to amend the festival to over a weekend in September with the theme for 2024 being Childrens films.

Action – CSO (ZP)

h. Sunday Markets

Members received a request from the Sunday Market Manager to run a Market on Sunday 29th October as an additional date for this year.

It was **RESOLVED** to allow that Sunday Market to take place on the 29th of October.

Action – CSO (ZP)

i. Manor Park

Members received an update around the previously discussed ongoing issues with Ragwort and Hogweed within Manor Park. Confirmation following liaison with Natural England and a report being carried out by an agronomist was given on the best way to manage the spread of Ragwort and Hogweed within the park.

Members were asked to consider the report and instruct Officers to carry out the management of Ragwort and Hogweed as detailed within the report. This will be covered financially by the revenue budget, so no further expenditure was to be considered.

The Town Clerk gave clarification as to the way in which the chemicals would be used and if there would be a requirement to close the park for effective treatment to take place. They confirmed that this would be looked into if members agreed to move forward and did also inform the committee that there is a legal requirement to prevent the spread of the identified plants to other sites.

It was clarified that the Ragwort would not be able to be treated by spot treatment due to the extensive volume, but the hope would be that the Hemlock would be treated this way. With the time frame it was clarified that the action wouldn't take place for around two months at which time the stewardship scheme will be ended.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the report and move forward with the planning of treatment.

Action – TC

1123 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

a. Toucan Crossing

Members noted the information from Bedfordshire Council in relation to the Toucan Crossing installation at the 101 roundabouts are programmed to be constructed between 6 – 24th November 2023.

b. Community Financial Report

Members noted the financial report.

c. Officer Update

Members received an update report from the Community Services and Amenities Officer and discussed items included in the report. An additional verbal update was given confirming that the volunteer time allocated to the Community Fridge from April to September was established at 240hrs.

Members commented that it was great to see such a long report and acknowledged the update on Remembrance and Christmas lights that had been requested at the previous meeting.

1124 **PUBLIC OPEN SESSION**

Due to technical reasons no members of the public were able to join the meeting remotely.

1125 **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.

12a **Youth Provision Report** - 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.