

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2020/01/20 – 08

MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Council Chamber, Claremont House, High Street, Lydney on Monday 20 January 2020 at 7.01 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs A Harley (Chairman), Z Arnold, J Carr, A Harley, R Holmes, S Holmes and R Kemsley

Mr D Kent – Town Clerk

Miss C Wheeler – Assistant Clerk (Minute Taker)

Cllr Harley informed all present that no practice fire evacuation had been scheduled for the duration of the meeting. All attendees were then informed of the locations of the nearest fire exits.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Cllrs Leach and Tremlett.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Amenities meeting held on 21 October 2019 and the Extra Ordinary meeting on 25 November 2019 were confirmed as a true record. **Proposed by Cllr Z Arnold, seconded by Cllr Kemsley.** Vote carried.

4. **OPEN FORUM**

None.

5. **ALLOTMENTS**

Members were provided with copies of the allotment map and a spreadsheet detailing the size, plot classification and annual cost. Members were reminded that at the October meeting they had been invited to visit the allotment site for themselves in order that they may view the allotments.

Members were informed that one allotment tenant had formally requested that the Council consider revising its classification policy. Discussion took place on the size of the plots, whether they should be calculated in square meters, whether to levy a square meterage charge, etc. Members were also reminded of the need to consider the charges which would be applied from 1 April 2020.

It was **proposed by Cllr Z Arnold, seconded by Cllr Carr** that the allotment charges and plot classification would remain unchanged for the next 12 months, however, tenants would be advised that the Council was looking to engage with the tenants on the issue of charging anomalies in order that the matter could be resolved in time for the 2021 fees. Unanimous.

Action by – the Clerk

Cllrs S Holmes and Carr offered to speak to the tenants on behalf of the Council.

Action by – Cllrs S Holmes and Carr

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From viewing the spreadsheet Members noted that Allotment 1A and Allotment 1B had been rented separately by a couple, however, a concessionary rate had only been applied to one allotment despite the fact that both parties were eligible. It was **proposed by Cllr Z Arnold, seconded by Cllr Carr** that the concessionary rate would be applied for both allotments, effective from April 2020. Unanimous.

Action by – the Clerk

6. MISCELLANEOUS CHARGES

Prior to the meeting Members were provided with a copy of the miscellaneous charges and a suggestion relating to a proposed increase.

It was **proposed by Cllr Carr, seconded by Cllr Z Arnold**, that a 2% increase would be applied across the board. Unanimous.

Action by – the Clerk

7. PLAY INSPECTION

Members were asked to approve the appointment of Monmouthshire County Council to undertake the Annual Play Inspection for 2020, at a cost of £439.17 plus VAT.

Proposed by Cllr Kemsley, seconded by Cllr Carr. Unanimous.

Action by – the Clerk

The Clerk was requested to ensure that when the grass cutting contract for 2020 commenced the contractor ensured that the Meend was cut back to the tree line.

Action by – the Clerk

8. CHRISTMAS EVENT

Members were provided with an opportunity to review the 2019 event.

It was noted that Cllr Tremlett had received positive feedback after the event and that a number of members of the public had expressed an interest in becoming involved in the 2020 event. Cllr Harley felt that those who attended the event had a good time and she felt that the Council may wish to consider investigating a road closure for Newerne Street in order that members of the public may safely cross to and from the event. Cllr Harley requested that the possibility of gaining a road closure be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Action by – the Clerk

Discussion then took place over a letter which had been published in a local newspaper referencing the work of the Town Council. Recalling at the January Full Council meeting the Council had agreed to issue a press release on the 2020/21 Precept, Cllr Z Arnold questioned if the press release had been issued. The Clerk gave a commitment to issue such shortly.

Action by – the Clerk

9. PROVISION OF DOG WASTE BIN

Members were informed of the request which had been received from a member of the public for a dog waste bin at the junction of Redrow Homes and Highfield Road. Members were informed that filled dog waste bags were being left in grit bins on the Estate.

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During discussion Members were informed that the proposed location (in the area of the traffic lights onto the Estate) had been chosen as it was a crossing point for those wishing to walk their dogs around other Estates/green spaces. Members suggested that an approach could be made to the developer to ascertain if they would be willing to cover the cost of a dog waste bin, however, Members ultimately felt that this may take too long to resolve. The Assistant Clerk advised that she had contacted Forest of Dean District Council to ascertain if they would be willing to install litterbins on the Estate and had been informed that a litter problem had not been reported on the Estate, but the situation would be kept under review; that a litter bin would not be installed purely to address an issue with dog fouling.

The Clerk advised that whilst budgetary provision had been exhausted for dog waste bins it would be possible to vire funding from the grit bin heading; a service charge had been included in the 2020/21 budget with the current budget covering any charge from the installation date of the bin to the new financial year.

It was **proposed by Cllr Z Arnold, seconded by Cllr Carr**, that the Council would purchase and install a dog waste bin. Unanimous.

Action by – the Clerk

10. SUMMER PLANTERS

Members were asked to consider if they wished to enter into a new planted container rental contract for Summer or if they wished to approve alternative arrangements.

Members were advised that the Head Groundsman had expressed health and safety concerns over the continued hire of streetlight planters due to the increase in traffic and the abuse Groundstaff were subjected to from vehicle drivers. The Head Groundsman also requested that the Council provide funding to replace two three-barrel planters as they were deteriorating.

During discussion Members were advised that the costings obtained by the Head Groundsman had been obtained in August 2019 and therefore may need to be revised prior to placing a firm order. Furthermore, Members were provided with a copy of the budgetary provision which had been included in the 2020/21 budget in respect of the summer hire contract and the replacement of a number of the wooden barrels. Members accepted the possible need to revise the costings provided that the expenditure was within the specified budget heading.

It was **proposed by Cllr Carr, seconded by Cllr S Holmes**, that the Council would not enter into a hire contract for planted containers for Summer 2020, instead it would look to expend up to £2,000.00 on replacement planters in respect of the three-barrel planters; approximately £2,650.00 on 18 x barrier baskets, approximately £2,100.00 on additional summer and winter planting for the purchases. Unanimous.

Action by – the Clerk

11. COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr R Holmes noted that at the November meeting of the Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust the Town Council's Head Groundsman had suggested that the Council may wish to consider changing to an alternative pesticide/system for weed control. Cllr Harley felt that this matter would initially be considered by the Environmental Working Group.

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Members noted that the Head Groundsman was currently working on a report detailing the options available for consideration by the Committee.

Cllr Carr advised that the Environmental Working Group would meet later in the week.

The meeting closed at 8.09 pm.

Chairman

Date