

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2016/09/19 – 05

MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Council Chamber, Claremont House, Lydney on Monday 19 September 2016 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs C Harris (Chairman), B Berryman, R Christodoulides, H Ives, C Legg and D Pugh

Cllr B Pearman

Mrs J Smailes – Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Miss C Wheeler – Executive Officer (EO)

Cllr Harris 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. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Ives proposed Cllr Pugh for the position, seconded by Cllr Christodoulides. Cllr Harris proposed Cllr Christodoulides for the position, however, Cllr Christodoulides declined the nomination. There being no other nominations Cllr Pugh's appointment was put to a vote which was carried. Cllr Pugh was duly elected to the position.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received and noted from Cllr Street.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Amenities meeting held on 20 June 2016 were confirmed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Berryman, seconded by Cllr Ives. Vote carried.

It was noted that since the last meeting it had been necessary to remove an item of play equipment from Primrose Hill Meend due to health and safety concerns which had therefore been addressed under Delegated Powers.

5. **OPEN FORUM**

No requests to speak were received.

6. **PLAY AREAS**

Members were provided with a copy of the Annual Play Inspection Reports, which had been undertaken by Monmouthshire County Council in respect of the following areas:-

- Primrose Hill Meend
- Court Road
- Beauchamp Meadow
- Fallers Field



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It was noted that the Council had no option but to seek to address any items which had been identified as a medium/high risk. It was **proposed by Cllr Harris** that Delegated Powers would be bestowed on the CEO to address any items so identified. Unanimous.

Action by – the CEO

Attention was drawn to the requirement to provide new safety surfacing at Primrose Hill Meend, as specified in the Annual Play Inspection. It was **proposed by Cllr Legg, seconded by Cllr Pugh**, that a new safety surface would be installed. Unanimous.

Action by – the CEO

Cllr Christodoulides expressed concern over the withdrawal by other organisations from the practice of providing play equipment in Tutnalls. Members were reminded that a developer may be compelled to provide a play area as part of their planning consent and that the Council had adopted a policy that it would consider requests to adopt play areas on an individual basis, subject to receiving a commuted sum for its on-going maintenance.

Cllr Christodoulides requested that the matter of play provision for Tutnalls be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Action by – the CEO

7. **CHRISTMAS**
Street Lighting Plan

Members were provided with a further copy of the lighting plan which had been approved at the July Full Council meeting. The CEO was requested to contact both Tesco and the Fire Station once again to ascertain if they would be willing to illuminate trees on their land.

Action by – the CEO

Lights Switch On 2016

Cllr Berryman confirmed that the Manager of the Lydney Car Wash site had consented to its use and that the Council would be able to use the offices as the Grotto, as these were no longer used by the business. Members were reminded that the Committee had previously bestowed Delegated Powers on the CEO to purchase Christmas decorations for use in the Grotto.

Cllr Christodoulides kindly offered to collect the Grotto gifts from the Town Council's office on Friday 25 November 2016 (Cllr Pugh agreed to act in reserve). Cllr Ives agreed to collect the income generated by Santa's Grotto and Cllr Berryman agreed to return the Santa Suit, any unsold gifts, together with the income generated, to the Town Council's office on Monday 28 November 2016.

Cllr Harris agreed to approach traders in the town to ascertain if they would be willing to remain open until the conclusion of the Christmas lights switch on.

Cllr Berryman advised that the theme for this year's Christmas Windows would be "White Christmas" and it was agreed that once again participants would be required to ensure that their display remain in situ until 1 January.



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Whilst Cllr Harris hoped that all Amenities Committee Members would attend the event to assist with marshalling she requested that an e-mail be sent to all Councillors requesting that they too attend. Members were informed that two members of Ground staff would attend the event to address the generator/lighting for the band however, no Officers would be in attendance.

Action by – the CEO

It was agreed that a further approach would be made to the local Fire Station to ascertain if they would be willing to attend the event. Cllr Harris also committed to pay a personal visit to the station.

Action by – the CEO and Cllr Harris

8. **GRIT BINS**

Members were asked if they wished to consider purchasing an additional two grit bins (plus signage) at an approximate cost of £220 plus VAT, in order that they may be sited during the winter months. Purchase **proposed by Cllr Pugh, seconded by Cllr Berryman**. Unanimous.

Action by – the CEO

9. **DOG WASTE BINS**

Members were informed that requests for dog waste bins had been received for the following locations:

- Junction of Meadow Bank/Bracken Close – purchase and weekly collection charges included in 2016/2017 budget
- Lydney High Street (possibly adjacent to Bathurst Pool) – purchase and weekly collection charges included in 2017/2018 budget

After a short discussion it was **proposed by Cllr Christodoulides, seconded by Cllr Legg**, that the Council would consent to the purchase and installation of the dog waste bins for the junction of Meadow Bank/Bracken Close as per the timeframe shown above, however, Council reserved the right to relocate the bins should it find that they were not well used. Unanimous.

Action by – the CEO

Regarding the dog waste bin for Lydney High Street, it was **proposed by Cllr Ives, seconded by Cllr Christodoulides**, that the Council would include the purchase and weekly collection charges in its 2017/2018 budget in respect of the bin. Unanimous.

Action by – the CEO

10. **FINANCIAL**
Budget Commitments

A copy of the proposed 2017/2018 Committee Budget was issued to Members and they were informed that the proposed budget had incorporated provision for the purchase of the works vehicle, the purchase of a UTV and automated spraying equipment, increased floral displays and additional grass cutting. Whilst it was noted that this had resulted in a significant increase in the Committee's budget, the CEO anticipated that overall the Council's budget would only increase by a small percentage, always assuming that the



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Billing Authority chose to pass on a proportion of LCTS Grant or the Council resolved to make up such from its General Reserves; buffering any potential loss in LCTS Grant funding. It was felt that the Council would be increasing service provision for the Town if it chose to undertake those optional services.

Vehicle

Prior to the meeting Members were provided with details of a number of options regarding the lease agreement for the works vehicle. Noting that that vehicle had proved to be reliable during the term of its lease, it was **proposed by Cllr Legg, seconded by Cllr Ives** that the Council would purchase the vehicle at the end of its lease for £3,500 plus VAT. Vote carried.

Action by – the CEO

Weed Spraying

Prior to the meeting Members were provided with a copy of the report from the Head Groundsman which provided a number of solutions to the Committee's desire to increase the amount of weed spraying which was undertaken in the Parish.

Cllr Ives felt that a possible solution to the issue would be to request that the Town's County Councillor utilise a portion of their £30,000 highway maintenance fund on weed spraying. However, it was noted that this arrangement would be subject to the agreement of the elected Councillor, which could not be guaranteed. Furthermore, it was highlighted that the Council would not have any control regarding when the work would be undertaken, its frequency, etc. During discussion it was noted that the purchase of a UTV with spraying equipment would enable it to be used by Groundstaff elsewhere in the Parish when not engaged in weed spraying activities. Additionally, it was felt that a better service could be provided to the electorate if weed spraying was undertaken by Groundstaff and Members felt that the Council needed to develop a long-term strategy for addressing weeds in the Parish. It was **proposed by Cllr Berryman, seconded by Cllr Pugh**, that the Council would initially include £6,000 in its 2017/2018 budget to fund the purchase of a UTV with spraying equipment. Unanimous.

Floral Displays

Members were provided with a copy of the proposed planting plan for summer 2017 which incorporated floral displays being placed on most lampposts and barrier rails through the Town. Members recalled that favourable comments had been received for this year's trial display. The CEO advised that investigations had taken place on the possibility of entering into an annual hire contract with the supplier (at a cost of £4,900 including VAT for 2017) or a three year hire contract (at a cost of £4,773.60 per year). It was **proposed by Cllr Harris** that the proposed planting plan would be approved and that the Council would enter into a three year hire contract with the supplier. Unanimous.

Action by – the CEO

Addendum to Existing Contracts

Grass Cutting Contract

Members were reminded that Delegated Powers had been bestowed on the CEO to liaise with the Council's contractor regarding the option clause to extend the existing contract and Members were presented with an overview of the revised contract, which included



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cutting areas of grass currently cut by Gloucestershire County Council (for which said Authority would reimburse the Council the “going rate” for two cuts). Members were also informed that the overview included an increase in the number of contracted cuts to a maximum of 16 for the Town (including 4 x adhoc cuts), together with an increase in the number of Gateway cuts to a maximum of 10 (including 2 x adhoc cuts). Attention was drawn to the annual charge of the contract extension over the four year term (2017-2021). Approval of the addendum to the existing grass cutting contract was **proposed by Cllr Harris**. Unanimous.

Litter Picking

Members were provided with an overview of the proposed addendum clause (option to extend the term) to the existing litter collection contract for a four year term (2017-2021). It was noted that whilst the contractor had applied a small increase to the contract in Years 1 & 3, they had committed to hold their prices in Years 2 and 4. Approval of the addendum to the existing litter collection contract was **proposed by Cllr Ives, seconded by Cllr Christodoulides**. Unanimous.

Committee Budget 2017/2018

Attention was then turned to the proposed draft budget of £75,769.00. It was noted that the Committee held the widest remit of the Council and after a short discussion it was **proposed by Cllr Pugh, seconded by Cllr Berryman** that the proposed budget of £75,769.00 would be approved (Note: The approved Committee budget may be reduced by £6,000 regarding the UTV if the discretionary LCTS Grant was not paid to Lydney Town Council by the Billing Authority – Forest of Dean District Council with the Committee instead seeking Full Council approval for the sum to be taken from General Reserves). Unanimous.

11. COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Members advised that numerous favourable comments had been received regarding both the overall appearance of the Town and the floral displays provided by the Council.

Members advised that publicity signage had been erected on both the Aylburton and Oakdale roundabout; the CEO was requested to arrange removal of any/all fly posting in and around the Town unless it had been approved temporarily by Gloucestershire County Council Highways.

Action by – the CEO

Cllr Pugh requested that consideration be given to the provision of a litter bin in the Hams Road Car Park. Members advised Cllr Pugh to raise the matter at the next meeting of Lydney Recreation Trust.

Cllr Harris praised the floral displays which had been installed at Lydney Car Wash by its Manager. The CEO confirmed that a letter of thanks had been sent to the Manager on behalf of the Council

The meeting closed at 8.18 pm.

Chairman

B Harris

Date

16.1.17