

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2012/07/16 – 05

MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Council Chamber, Claremont House, Lydney on Monday 16 July 2012 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs B Thomas (Chairman), B Berryman, D Biddle, C Harris, V Hobman and C Matthews

Three members of the public
Mrs J Smailes – Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Miss C Wheeler – Executive Officer (EO)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Osborne and duly accepted.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Amenities meeting held on 18 June 2012 were confirmed as a true record. **Proposed by Cllr Biddle, seconded by Cllr Hobman.** Unanimous.

4. **OPEN FORUM**

Mr Owen, 3 Augustus Way, Lydney – highlighted that a Youth Council had yet to be formed, despite the Committee stating at its June meeting that it would be possible for the Youth Council to be involved in the Christmas Lights switch on. Cllr Thomas clarified that the Youth Council would be involved in the event if and when the Youth Council was formed.

5. **AMENITIES BUDGET**

At the meeting Members were provided with a copy of the budget which had been amended to reflect the formation of the Committee and inclusion of its responsibilities. Members were requested to consider transferring the floral displays budget from the Highways budget to the Amenities budget. **Proposed by Cllr Hobman, seconded by Cllr Harris.** Unanimous.

Responding to a question which had been raised by Cllr Harris, Members were informed that the remit of the Amenities Committee also included bus shelters and maintenance of trees, together with their associated budgetary provision. Members were also reminded that the Council had already awarded its three year plant supply contract (which included summer and winter planting) prior to the Committee's formation and approval was sought to debit the amount of such requirements from the budget at each time. **Proposed by Cllr Biddle, seconded by Cllr Hobman.** Unanimous.

6. **CO-OPTION**

Cllr Thomas informed Members that the Committee would be authorised to co-opt members of the public for specific tasks. Councillors were asked to put forward the names of any suitable candidates, together with details of the type of tasks for which they would be willing to assist. The CEO clarified that no voting rights would be afforded to members of the public who were co-opted.


17 Sept 12

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2012/07/16 – 06

Cllr Harris felt that Mr Colin Knight/Mrs Lyn Callow could be approached to ascertain if they would be interested in assisting with the Christmas Lights switch on.

Members were reminded that they were to provide the CEO with name of possible co-optees, in order that Members may vote on the proposals.

7. BUS SHELTER – ALLASTON ROAD

Prior to the meeting Councillors were provided with a copy of the quotation which had been obtained from Mike Jones Plant Hire for the removal of the shelter.

Members were informed that Town Council Ground staff had recently strimmed the area so as to improve its appearance however, they were unable to remove the roof of the shelter due to the suspected presence of asbestos. Furthermore, the CEO had been advised that buses no longer called at the stop and she gave a commitment to confirm that this was correct.

It was noted that the CEO had been granted delegated powers to spend up to £400.00 to repair/replace the shelter, however, Mike Jones Plant Hire had quoted £485.00 plus VAT to remove the shelter and whilst Remnants were willing to construct a replacement, Members acknowledged that this would far exceed the amount which they had initially authorised. After a short discussion **Cllr Harris proposed** that the shelter should be removed and not replaced (subject to the CEO obtaining confirmation that buses no longer called there). **Seconded by Cllr Matthews.** The motion was put to a vote which was carried with one abstention. It was noted that the funding for the removal of the shelter may need to be vired from other budgetary headings.

Action by – the CEO

8. ALLOTMENT PROVISION

Cllr Thomas reported that no further progress had been made on this matter as the Council's mapping software was still being developed.

9. STREET FURNITURE

Members were informed that a request for dog fouling signage had been received from a resident in Linwood Road who was experiencing problems with owners allowing their dogs to foul along the road. The CEO reminded Councillors they had previously purchased a supply of the aforementioned signs from the District Council, however this had now been exhausted and that the District Council had advised that they no longer held such signage.

A copy of the quotation obtained from the supplier who provided the original signs to the District Council was issued to Councillors and it was felt that the CEO should approach other Town Councils to ascertain if they would be willing to place a consortium bid. Discussion then took place over the construction of the sign and it was accepted that such signage needed to be of metal construction in order for it to remain weather-proof.

Cllr Thomas felt that Councillors would need to view the area concerned and requested that they bring their comments to the next meeting. It was also accepted that the District Council's Streetwarden's were empowered to issue penalty tickets for dog fouling. Furthermore, Councillors were reminded that the Council had agreed that the responsibility for issuing said tickets in the Parish would fall under the remit of the Streetwardens. Cllr

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2012/07/16 – 07

Hobman was asked to ascertain if there was a district wide Bylaw in respect of dog fouling, or if the Council would be permitted to invoke its own Byelaw.

Action by – Cllr Hobman

10. CHRISTMAS EVENT/LIGHTS

Councillors were asked to consider the arrangements for this year's event. Cllr Berryman informed Members that if the Council wished to organise a procession they would need to obtain a road closure, provide a detailed plan of their marshalls, provide reflective jackets to marshals, erect signage advising that the road would be closed in advance of the event, obtain insurance, etc. Cllr Berryman also felt that the parade would be a greater challenge as it would take place under the cover of darkness and would involve children. Cllr Harris recalled that the Town Hall Trust Management Committee would meet on Wednesday 18 July 2012 and she felt that they and the Lydney Traders Association could be approached to ascertain if they would be willing to contribute towards the cost of the parade as it would effectively link the two events. Members were also made aware that they would need to obtain a risk assessment for the event.

Speaking on behalf Lydney Traders Association, Mrs Callow advised that the Association did not require a road closure for their activities which would be based on the old car lot and would take place on Saturday 1 December. Cllr Biddle requested that the EO obtain a provisional costing from the Council's insurers and suggested that the Council could provide 10 marshals. However, Cllr Harris felt that both Lydney Traders Association and Lydney Town Hall Trust Management Committee could also be approached to provide marshals. Cllr Berryman stressed that the Council would be required to provide marshals on each junction.

Councillors were asked to consider how they proposed to transport Santa to the Town Hall. Cllr Harris believed that the Town Hall Trust Management Committee were still intending to host Santa's Grotto, but hoped to be able to provide further information after their next meeting. Accordingly, Cllr Harris called for the matter to be an agenda item for the next meeting.

During discussion Cllr Berryman once again stressed the amount of work which would be necessary to undertake in order to obtain a road closure and Cllr Thomas touched on the matter of a street collection. Members were reminded that Town Council staff were working to their full capacity and as the Council wished to pursue a Neighbourhood Development Plan it may need to prioritize its staff's workload. Cllr Thomas felt that the Council needed to plan for next year's event in order that it may prioritize. Cllr Matthews felt that it would be possible for a street collection licence to be granted to a committee, rather than an individual.

Mr Owen questioned if the Council would have any objection to receiving contributions/offers of assistance towards the event. Members were reminded that the Council had allocated £250.00 in its budget towards Jinglefest. Cllr Thomas requested that at the next meeting the Committee agree the arrangements for the Parade, the provision of a risk assessment and appropriate insurance cover.

Action by – all Councillors

BT
17 Sept 12

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2012/07/16 – 08

11. **CEMETERY/CHURCHYARD PROVISION**

Cllr Thomas reported that the Council awaited a response from the organisation concerned before further action could be considered.

Discussion then took place on the maintenance of the Cemetery and Councillors noted that further discussion on this matter would also take place as an exempt item of business for the Finance and Scrutiny Committee. The CEO advised that the Committee would need to consider the level of maintenance it would wish to see in both the Cemetery and St Mary's Churchyard. It was noted that the Council currently provided a grant to the Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust to maintain the public park and it was suggested that members of the electorate may wish to see the Cemetery maintained to the same standard as the park. General discussion then took place on the current standard of grass cutting for the Cemetery and Cllr Harris expressed concern that grass cuttings were not removed from headstones. Members were informed that the Town Council's ground staff cut the entrance path into the Cemetery, with all other areas falling under the Council's grass cutting contract. It was highlighted to Councillors that the level of grant provided to the Bathurst Park and Recreation Trust did not reflect the amount of time ground staff spent in the park and it was suggested that in the future the Council may need to adjust its staffing levels, or reduce the amount of grant given to the Trust. Members were also reminded that the Council had agreed that their grass cutting contracts would not include the requirement to collect grass clippings, as this would result in additional charges.

12. **PLAY AREAS**

Prior to the meeting Councillors were provided with copies of the quotations which had been obtained by Cllr Matthews, in respect of the replacement infant play equipment at Primrose Hill. Cllr Matthews reported the problems which she had faced when attempting to ensure that the cost of the equipment and VAT fell within the agreed £8,000 threshold.

During discussion Councillors were reminded that the Local Area of Play (LAP) was intended to be used by children under the age of 5. Concern was therefore expressed over the height of the equipment proposed by one of the organisations and it was noted that not all quotations had accounted for how they would secure the equipment on site during its construction. The CEO also advised that the Committee would be required to purchase a quantity of play bark (for which there was a British Standard) for use around some of the existing equipment. Members noted that the Council would also be required to arrange for the equipment to be inspected by a qualified inspector for which there would be an additional cost.

Cllr Thomas called for Councillors to be provided with a summary of the quotations, together with positive and negative points, for consideration at the next meeting, with any equipment over the Council's budget to be discounted.

Action by – the CEO

Inspection Reports

Members were informed that the Council would need to purchase a quantity of play bark for use around some of the existing play equipment at Primrose Hill. It was noted that a play equipment contractor had provided a quantity of bark from Lydney Park Estate sawmills, however, it was thought that it did not conform to the required British Standard. The CEO advised that it would cost £1,858.00 (including VAT) to obtain 25 cubic metres

BJP
17 Sept 12

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2012/07/16 – 09

of British Standard play bark, whereas it would cost £45.00 to purchase a 1 ton bag of bark from Lydney Park Estate.

Cllr Biddle requested that the opinion of Mr T O'Donovan of Monmouthshire County Council be obtained and it was agreed that the CEO would also obtain a quotation for resurfacing areas which were currently covered with play bark with safety matting.

Action by – the CEO

Councillors then turned their attention to the annual inspection reports which had been produced by Mr O'Donovan. It was **proposed by Cllr Matthews, seconded by Cllr Biddle** that approval would be given to the purchase of replacement chains for the cradle seat swings at Primrose Hill (£160.00 plus VAT) from Monmouthshire County Council and the purchase of three "ownership" signs and one "no parking" sign.

Action by – the CEO

Members' attention was drawn to an e-mail which had been sent to Playahead (and a copy of their reply), regarding problems which had been identified with the new play equipment at Primrose Hill. Members were disappointed to learn that the spring brake on the zip wire had failed once again; that the Head Gardener had felt that problems were being experienced with the bearings on the inclusive roundabout and noted that only approximately £194.00 remained in the playbuilder grant header. Cllr Matthews voiced dissatisfaction with the responses given by Playahead and she felt that it was not acceptable for the brake to fail for a third time. Members also noted that the Council would need to replace 11 climbing holds which had been removed from the equipment by vandals at a cost of £111.67 excluding VAT (which would include an anti-vandal type screw). Unanimous. Cllr Thomas called for the Committee to be provided with details of the number of times that the spring break had failed.

Action by – the CEO

Playground of the Year Competition

Prior to the meeting members were provided with details of this year's competition operated by the Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association. Regrettably Councillors did not feel able to enter the competition this year.

13. GRIT BINS/SNOW CODE

Cllr Harris reported that she had visited the areas where residents had requested salt bins. As a result, **Cllr Harris proposed** that the Council purchase two additional bins this year, one to be located at the top of Beaufort Drive, with the other located at the corner of Primrose Way and Berkeley Crescent which she felt to be a steep gradient. **Seconded by Cllr Biddle.**

Action by – the CEO

Members noted that the EO was in the process of updating Gloucestershire County Council's Adverse Weather contact listing and would also request that the Council be provided with an additional 60 bags of rock salt.

LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2012/07/16 – 10

14. **TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE**

Members were informed that it was suggested that a new area could be created on the Council's website in respect of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and Cllr Thomas advised that he intended to contact Imagitec to understand what would be required. Members were asked to forward any comments on the Council's website to Cllr Thomas.

Action by – all Councillors

15. **CEMETERY**

Members were informed that a number of breaches of the Council's rules and regulations had incurred in the Cemetery (e.g. the placement of solar lights, ornaments, etc) and they were asked how they wished to address the matter. Members were also informed of a complaint which had been received from a member of the public following the theft of solar lights from her late husband's grave.

Cllr Harris felt that no action should be taken regarding the breach of the rules and she felt that the Council should erect a notice in the Cemetery stating that items were left at the owner's risk. Whilst she appreciated that bereaved families would have been made aware of the Council's rules and regulations, Cllr Harris felt that that such information would not have been absorbed by the families. Cllr Hobman recalled that the Council had previously acted to stem the placement of wooden crosses on graves in place of memorial headstones, for which it had received numerous opposition. In view of the opinions which had been expressed, **Cllr Berryman proposed** that whilst the Council would not encourage the placement of ornaments on graves (e.g. solar lights), no action would be taken against the infringement of the rules. **Seconded by Cllr Matthews.**

Cemetery Training

Prior to the meeting Councillors were provided with details of a training course which was being organised by the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils (GAPTC) regarding Cemetery management. It was noted that the EO had previously attended the course and it was **proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Cllr Matthews**, that further consideration of attendance on the course would be deferred to the Finance and Scrutiny Committee.

16. **CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

17. **COUNCILLORS REPORTS**

Cllr Thomas reported that NHS Gloucestershire would be hosting a "drop in" session on 9 August 2012 at Cinderford Rugby Club to discuss the future management of the community health services.

18. **MEETING DATES**

Members noted that the next Amenities Committee meeting would take place on 17 September 2012 at 7.00 pm.

The meeting closed at 8.24 pm.

Chairman 

Date 17 Sep 12