

# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2013/06/17 – 01

MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING held in the Council Chamber, Claremont House, Lydney on Monday 17 June 2013 at 7.01 pm.

**PRESENT:** Cllrs B Thomas (Chairman), B Berryman, D Biddle, R Bonser, C Harris, V Hobman, C Matthews and W Osborne

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

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Cllr Thomas 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. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Cllr W Osborne proposed that the Committee stand on the existing appointment. **Seconded by Cllr Biddle.** Unanimous.

Accordingly, Cllr Thomas was re-appointed to the position of Chairman.

2. **APOLOGIES**

None.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the Amenities meeting held on 22 April 2013 were confirmed as a true record. **Proposed by Cllr W Osborne, seconded by Cllr Matthews.** Unanimous.

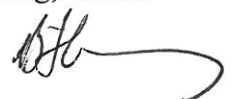
5. **OPEN FORUM**

None.

6. **ALLOTMENT/ALLOTMENT PROVISION**

Members were informed that the original pathway which had led to the allotments had become overgrown, unused and had vegetative material deposited on it. The CEO advised that Two Rivers Housing had agreed to lease the two grassed verges which fronted the Council's allotment site to the Council for a peppercorn rent. By dividing one of the verges (and also dividing allotment number 8 into three) it would enable the Council to offer a further five allotment gardens (potential for a further two or hardstanding would also be available). Members were reminded that they had previously approved an estimate to replace a large proportion of the boundary fencing and they were then asked to approve a revised estimate which had been obtained based on the enclosure of the areas leased from Two Rivers Housing for the sum of £4,606.00 plus VAT.

During discussion it was noted that Two Rivers Housing had yet to determine the amount of the peppercorn rent; that two lampposts were located on one of the grass verges and that the Council would ensure that both lampposts were not enclosed by its fencing; that a



# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2013/06/17 – 02

quotation had been obtained from Abbey Tree Services for £395.00 to reduce the existing hedge line which fronted the original footpath to 4' in height. Cllr Biddle questioned if it would be possible to obtain the land via Asset Transfer whereas Cllr W Osborne suggested that the Council should consider obtaining a 20 year lease. The CEO advised Members that if they wished to consider an Asset Transfer the Council would be responsible for the land ad infinitum, however, should a lease be favoured the Council would be able to return the land if allotment gardening reduced in popularity. Furthermore, the CEO reiterated the plan to re-establish the original entrance path to the allotment site which sought to protect the Council's boundary should it wish to hand back the land at a later date.

After a short further discussion it was **proposed by Cllr Harris** that the quotation from Abbey Tree Services would be accepted, with advice taken re appropriate date to undertake work. **Seconded by Cllr Matthews. Cllr Bonser proposed** that the revised estimate for fencing be accepted. **Seconded by Cllr Harris.** Unanimous. The CEO sought confirmation that Members agreed the area to be fenced, together with acceptance that the cost for the work was above that previously authorised. Noted.

**Action by – the CEO**

Cllr Bonser called for the IBCs which are to be provided by the Council to be placed along the side of a fence and she spoke in favour of only providing one gate to the allotment site (plus existing) in order to afford greater security. Accordingly **Cllr Bonser proposed** that the views of current tenants be obtained prior to the erection of fencing/siting of gates. **Seconded by Cllr Matthews.** Unanimous.

**Action by – the CEO**

Cllr W Osborne called for the Committee to consider a future issue of the footpath through the allotments as it was dividing a number of the allotment gardens.

### 7. CHRISTMAS EVENT

Cllr Harris spoke of the difficulties which she had encountered when attempting to meet with Mrs Callow of Lydney Town Hall Trust Management Committee (LTHTMC). Accordingly, Cllr Harris suggested that Cllr Bonser would be better placed to act as the liaison between the Council and LTHTMC regarding arrangements for the event, as Cllr Bonser had been appointed as the Council's representative on LTHTMC. However, Cllr Harris indicated that she would be happy to remain on the Sub-Committee.

During discussion Cllr Bonser sought advice as to whether she would be required to join the Council's Sub-Committee, however, as the Council was not organising a Switch On event, it was felt that the only liaison between the two organisations was purely due to the time of the Switch On. Cllr Bonser was requested to inform LTHTMC that the Council was not organising an event, other than purely switching on the Christmas Lights. After a further short discussion it was proposed by Cllr Berryman, seconded by Cllr W Osborne, that the Council would only organise the lights through the Town (and the switching on of same), with the only co-ordination with LTHTMC being the time of the Switch On in order that their event may follow the Switch On, should they wish to organise their event in such a way. Unanimous.

It was noted that Cllr W Osborne had been approached by a member of the Riverside Choir who had advised that the Choir had previously arranged to perform outside the Co-operative Store on the day of the Switch On. Cllr Bonser advised that she would inform



# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2013/06/17 – 03

LTHMTC accordingly in order that they may contact the Choir if they wished. Following a question raised by Cllr Bonser, it was confirmed that the Council would not provide mince pies and mulled wine at this year's Switch On event.

### 8. PLAY AREAS

#### Playground Policy Document

It was noted that the Playground Policy Document which had been revised by the CEO would be considered by Full Council at the June meeting.

#### Annual Play Inspection Reports

Prior to the meeting Members were provided with copies of the Annual play inspection reports the contents of which were duly noted.

#### Playing Field and Playground of the Year competition

It was **proposed by Cllr Biddle** that the Council would not enter the competition this year. No objection/further comment was made.

#### Zip Wire (and other equipment sited at Primrose Hill)

The CEO gave an overview of discussions which had taken place with Officers from Forest of Dean District Council and the support which was given by Councillors for the letter to be sent prior to the June meeting. It was noted that no response had been received from the equipment provider and members were asked if they wished to consider referring the matter to the Council's legal representative. It was **proposed by Cllr Biddle, seconded by Cllr Matthews**, that legal advice be sought. The CEO's actions prior to the meeting were endorsed.

**Action by – the CEO**

Further to the above it was noted that no decision would be taken on the future of the zip wire/Primrose Hill equipment erected by same supplier until a response had been received from the equipment provider. The CEO advised that if further problems were experienced with other equipment installed by same provider the Committee would have no option but to decommission the affected unit. It was also noted that a letter explaining the reason behind the decommissioning of the equipment had been sent to Primrose Hill School.

#### Under 5 Play Equipment

Cllr Matthews regretted that no action had been taken on this matter. However, during discussion the CEO felt that the cost of providing a play area would amount to at least £10,000 which included replacement fencing and surfacing (which ideally would utilise wet pour). It was agreed that the CEO would obtain quotations for a new play area in order that they may be considered at the next meeting.

**Action by – the CEO**

Noting the comments which had been recorded by Monmouthshire County Council on the Annual Play Inspection for Primrose Hill, Cllr Bonser questioned if the Committee wished to consider the removal of the dog waste bin on site, or the amendment of the signage. After a short discussion it was **proposed by Cllr Bonser** that the Committee would change the signage to reflect no dog fouling, rather than no dogs. **Seconded by Cllr Berryman.** Unanimous.

**Action by – the CEO**



# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2013/06/17 – 04

Members noted that Forest of Dean District Council's Street Wardens had conducted an exercise at Lydney Docks to target dog fouling and that the problems experienced in Summerleaze were being continually addressed. Temporary signage would be erected in problem areas and all Councillors were encouraged to report problem areas direct to the Street Wardens.

**Action by – all Councillors**

### 9. SIGNAGE

#### Walkers are Welcome

Members were asked to consider if the Committee wished to purchase additional signage (fingerpost signs) in order to direct walkers to Lydney Railway Station and the Docks from the roundabout on the A48 at Station Road, and on the A48 at the Church Road junction.

Whilst it was noted that Walkers are Welcome had secured a grant of £2,000, it was insufficient to purchase the above referenced fingerpost signs. Cllr Matthews spoke in support of the signs. It was **proposed by Cllr W Osborne, seconded by Cllr Matthews**, that the Council should purchase two signs in the current financial year. The motion was put to a vote which was unsuccessful.

**Cllr Harris then proposed** that the Council should purchase one sign for the roundabout on the A48 at Station Road in the current financial year, with the second sign purchased in the 2014-2015 financial year. Members noted that Arriva would only cover the cost of signage at the Railway station. Vote carried.

#### Noticeboards

Prior to the meeting Members were provided with details and prices for two styles of noticeboards and were asked to consider purchasing a noticeboard for both Primrose Hill and Oakdale.

Discussion took place on where the noticeboard would be sited at Primrose Hill, with Councillors speaking both for and against siting it on Primrose Hill Meend. It was **proposed by Cllr Bonser** that the Council would purchase the larger style of the noticeboard; that the Council would contact Kear Partnership Homes to ascertain if they would be willing to contribute towards the cost of the noticeboard to be sited at Oakdale and that Members would then consider at the next meeting if the Committee could fund a further noticeboard for Primrose Hill Meend. **Seconded by Cllr Matthews**. Cllr Berryman spoke in support of providing a noticeboard for the Oakdale Estate, as residents felt distanced from the Council's activities/events in the town. The motion was put to a vote which was unanimous.

**Action by – the CEO**

### 10. ASSET MANAGEMENT

Prior to the meeting Councillors were provided with copies of quotations which had been obtained for work connected to the Council office in order to maintain the Council's asset in a good state of repair. The following comments were made:

#### Maintenance/repair work to Office, Corridor and Chamber

Items raised were felt to be of a cosmetic nature, therefore, it was **proposed by Cllr Matthews, seconded by Cllr W Osborne**, that the matter be carried forward to the next financial year. Vote carried.

**Action by – the CEO**



# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2013/06/17 – 05

## Replacement Blind

It was **proposed by Cllr Matthews** that the purchase of a replacement blind for the rear door of the building be left until the new financial year. However, **Cllr W Osborne proposed** an amendment to the motion that the Council would consider the purchase of a replacement blind once the Police had vacated their building at the rear of the site. Cllr Matthews voiced her acceptance of the amendment; the motion was then put to a vote which was carried.

## Repair to Cabinet

Approval was sought to enable the doors of a filing cabinet in the kitchen area to be re-attached in order to safeguard the security of the documents contained within. It was **proposed by Cllr W Osborne, seconded by Cllr Biddle**, that Delegated Power would be bestowed to the CEO and two Councillors (Cllrs Thomas and Hobman) to arrange for a repair to be effected to the value of £500.00. Unanimous.

**Action by – the CEO**

## 11. GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT

Prior to the meeting Councillors were provided with a copy of the response which had been obtained from the Council's Contractor, following Cllr W Osborne's comments regarding the width of the verge which had been left at the Aylburton gateway.

During discussion it was noted that the Contractor had complied with the specifications which had been included in the contract (and agreed at prior meetings). It was suggested that Cllrs W Osborne, Thomas and the CEO would meet with the Contractor in order to discuss the situation; Members were reminded that the contract was effective until October 2016. Unanimous.

**Action by – the CEO**

Cllr W Osborne requested that the Council remove sapling/brambles which were growing on the side of the carriageway not far from the Council's office, causing members of the public to step onto the highway to pass. CEO agreed to arrange for the Council's Ground staff to address the matter.

**Action by – the CEO**

## 12. COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Cllr Bonser spoke on the feelings of isolation and vulnerability which were experienced by residents of Oakdale and she encouraged her fellow Councillors to lend pressure to the provision of a bus route for the development. During discussion it was noted that the Town Council had objected to the application to defer the implementation of the bus route and that Lydney Dial-a-Ride had approached the Planning Officer considering the application to offer their services for transporting children to school but had yet to receive a response.

Cllr Biddle advised that the telephone box by Lydney Railway Station was currently out of order.

Cllr Matthews gave a commitment to report problems with dog fouling to Forest of Dean District Council's Street Warden service. Furthermore, Cllr Matthews advised that she had cause to report three instances of flytipping and Cllr Thomas suggested that Members may wish to keep a log of such instances.



# LYDNEY TOWN COUNCIL

## AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING – 2013/06/17 – 06

Cllr Harris gave a commitment to report a problem with dog fouling in Steel Avenue to the Street Warden service.

13. **MEETING DATES**

Members noted that the next Amenities Committee meeting would take place on 21 October 2013 at 7.00 pm.

The meeting closed at 8.18 pm.

Chairman .....  .....

Date ..... 21 Oct 2013 .....