

Marlborough Town Council



Amenities and Open Spaces Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee held Monday, 10 January 2022 in the Court Room, Marlborough Town Hall at 8.05pm

PRESENT Councillor Donald Heath Chairman
Councillor Mark Cooper Town Mayor
Councillor Andrew Ross
Councillor Jo Waltham
Councillor James Sheppard
Councillor Caroline Thomas

ALSO

PRESENT Richard Spencer-Williams Town Clerk
Dawn Whitehall Administrator
Nigel Weatherly Grounds Manager
Neil Goodwin Marlborough.News
Plus 3 members of the public

PRESENTATION: MARLBOROUGH FLOWER FESTIVAL

The Chairman welcomed **Val Compton** to the meeting who outlined her proposal to replace the annual South West in Bloom entry with a Flower Festival to tie in with the Platinum Jubilee year. Salient points included:

- To aim to be more inclusive – not just focusing on the MiB judging route and date, but for the whole town, all year
- A tie in with Jubilee year to “Make Marlborough fit for a Queen”
- To ask for volunteers (*a mums and dads army!*)
- Not to be prescriptive: to leave it to residents, shops and businesses to ‘do their bit’
- To see the town through the eyes of a visitor, then make improvements. An example was the poor state of the signs on bridges over the Kennet
- To avoid the considerable resource time involved in planning and preparation for South West in Bloom entries

Members were very supportive of her proposals, particularly as the Marlborough in Bloom Committee no longer existed, meaning that any work required for a town entry would fall to Town Council staff. They also hoped she would get involved with

the working party to plan activities around the Jubilee celebrations.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Representatives of College Fields & Barton Park Residents Association asked how CFBPRA could be involved in (a) replacing trees cut down in the Ash Dieback tree management programme and (b) the Jubilee tree planting programme.

The Chairman thanked them. It was suggested they link in with the Platinum Jubilee consultation day, and would be invited to feed into any working party that may be formed in either respect, and a written response would be provided via the Town Clerk.

363/21

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from **Councillors Barrett-Morton and Farrell**.

364/21

DECLARATIONS

There were no declarations.

365/21

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman commented on the new fence at the Recreation Ground cottages which had really smartened up the appearance of the area.

366/21

MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held 22 November 2021 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman

367/21

ACTION LOG

Members noted the updated action log. Comments included:

12: inventory list: work was still ongoing to compile a full list. **Councillor Ross** was concerned that some of the larger items, especially vehicles, represented "brand Marlborough" and could give a poor perception if not in the best condition. The **Grounds Manager** was investigating electric vehicles, and had two demonstrations scheduled for later in the week. It was agreed to add an agenda item to the next meeting to review the inventory list, focusing on the bigger items.

ACTION POINT: to review the grounds equipment inventory at the next meeting

13: **Councillor Thomas** would investigate whether any green spaces or verges owned by Wiltshire Council would be suitable locations for Jubilee tree planting.

14: the new dog waste bin for the footpath between Manton Hollow and Barton Park had been delivered and would be installed w/c 17 January.

368/21

GROUNDS MANAGER'S REPORT

Members noted the Grounds Manager's report. Questions and matters arising included:

- That the specification for quotations for replacement of toddler play equipment at Wye House Gardens was in line with the most recent discussions and should include sensory equipment
- That the new lighting at the Skatepark was a great success with no light spread, and was being well used. Anticipated issues from nearby residents had not come to fruition and there had been no complaints. **Councillor Ross** recommended that all Councillors should be invited to view them and that the improved facility should be publicised.
- There was still a requirement for improved signage at Marlborough Cemetery both to help identify (brand) the location as well as clarify that the car park was for Cemetery visitors only. It was agreed to incorporate this into the ongoing work around signage and branding.
- Whether all graffiti was being reported to the police, and whether a photographic record should be made. The Town Clerk confirmed that a log of all incidents of antisocial behaviour, graffiti or vandalism was maintained and shared with police where appropriate.
- A request to provide rough estimates of replacement fencing at Coopers Meadow to the Chair of the Finance & Policy Committee
- Whether the gravel area at the 7th Wiltshire Regiment memorial could be weeded and tidied up
- Whether stepping stones could be incorporated into the War Memorial to provide a more stable surface for people laying wreaths

ACTION POINT: to include the requirement for improved signage at Marlborough Cemetery in ongoing work to review/brand signage.

Members considered the mowing of the amenity area at Stonebridge Meadow:

- It was unclear whether this was:
 - a request for the A&OS Committee to consider, or
 - whether a trial had already been decided with Councillor representative agreement given on behalf of the Town Council at the Stonebridge Meadow Management Committee (SMMC).

(Attendees who had been at the meeting stated different recollections of the outcome)
- SMMC had discussed two actions: to reduce the frequency of mowing to allow shorter wildflowers such as daisies and buttercups to grow, without affecting its use for picnics, dog walkers etc and when mown, to leave the cut grass at a slightly longer length
- Whether to create pockets of amenity areas with mown paths between them and around seats (roughly 50% left long)
- Whether to trial for a period, and how long that should be (1 and 3 years were mentioned)
- Concern that amenity space would be lost
- Whether there should be an on-site meeting to properly understand what was being proposed (or had been agreed)
- Whether a clear proposed plan and regime was required

- Whether a decision taken at the SMMC could be reversed by A&OS

RESOLVED: that the Committee supports the proposal to reduce mowing to allow the growth of short wildflowers without any loss of amenity space but requires a management plan, and that the Town Council's representatives will feed this back to the Stonebridge Meadow Management Committee

Members of the public left the meeting

369/21 OPEN SPACES WORKING PARTY

Members noted the work progressed by the Open Spaces Working Party. Discussion points included:

- Whether to apply to the Area Board for LYN funds for youth provision at The Common
- Whether there was too much emphasis on anti-social behaviour in the report
- Whether the OSWP should include proposals to address problems caused by dog fouling
- That a new bridge at Stonebridge Meadow to link to the boardwalk had already been agreed and budgeted
- Whether any plans for the Recreation Ground should be made in conjunction with the project to upgrade the workshop
- A reminder that the OSWP can make recommendations, not decisions: its recommendations will be considered by the A&OS Committee

The next meeting was scheduled for February and the Chairman encouraged more Councillors to attend.

The Grounds Manager left the meeting

370/21 REQUEST TO TRADE AT RUGBY CLUB CAR PARK

Members considered a request for a mobile pizza vendor to trade from the Rugby Club Car Park every other Thursday or Saturday (never both) between 16:30-20:30:

- MRFC had no objection to the request
- As landlords the Committee had an opportunity to grant permission prior to any licence applications being submitted
- Whether the Common was an appropriate location for regular trade
- Whether it would set a precedent for other fast food providers to seek permission
- Whether other locations should be suggested, for example to share different evenings with the existing trader at George Lane car park
- To clarify the legal implications relating to trading on Common land
- Whether MRFC would receive any financial gain
- Whether to allow a trial period, making it clear that this would not set a precedent for other businesses

- Whether the Town Council could specify days and times, or whether MRFC would wish to tie it in with home games and/or training dates

RESOLVED: to give permission for a 6 month trial period for Pizza Revolution to trade either every other Thursday or Saturday (never both) between 16:30-20:30 using a customer pager facility to fulfil orders, subject to clarification and confirmation of the trading licensing requirements from Wiltshire Council

371/21 CEMETERY REPORT

Members noted recent Grants of Exclusive Rights of Burial and memorials and inscriptions which had been approved.

Members expressed sadness to note the passing of Mr Gordon Heath who had been the Town Council's Health and Safety Officer.

The meeting closed at 9.33 pm

Signed:
Chairman

Date: