

Stonehouse Town Council



MINUTES (subject to agreement at the next Committee meeting)
OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES, RECREATION AND TOURISM COMMITTEE HELD ON
MONDAY 31ST MARCH 2014 AT 7PM IN THE TOWN HALL, HIGH STREET, STONEHOUSE.

Present:

Councillors	John Aldis	(Convenor of Committee)
	Chris Brine	(Chair of Town Council)
	Simon Lewis	(Vice Chair of Town Council)
	Roger Govier	
	Tony Howarth	
	Gary Powell	(Deputy Convenor of Committee)

Also Present: Liz Lawrence-Deputy Town Clerk, Cllr Pam Swain, Cllr Theresa Watt
Philip Morton, Network Rail

K3/120 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

There were no apologies to be recorded.

K3/121 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are reminded of their obligation within the requirements of the adopted Model Code of Conduct to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests where applicable.

- (1) Councillor Aldis declared an interest in item K3/129 (1) with regard to the report from youth group leaders.**
- (2) Councillor Powell declared an interest in item K3/138 (1) as a member of the Stroud & District Youth Football League Association.**

K3/122 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17th
FEBRUARY 2014

The Minutes were approved as a correct record.

K3/123 PUBLIC ADJOURNMENT (15 minutes)

Members of the public may speak only once for a maximum of 5 minutes on any specific Agenda item.

Whilst there was no public participation Philip Morton, Network Rail, was in attendance with a request to be given the opportunity to provide Members with details of the works planned to take place on the level crossing at Oldends Lane between 21st April and 7th May 2014. The Committee invited Mr Morton to join the meeting.

Mr Morton explained that Network Rail intend to carry out some remedial works to move the barrier machine and therefore increase the width of the pedestrian path which will make it a much safer route. To enable completion of the works a site compound will be required for welfare and storage units and Network Rail are seeking permission for this to be located in an area of the Oldends Lane car park.

K3/123 Continued

As some initial communications have taken place with the Town Clerk/RFO, Network Rail have been made aware of the hire charges that would be imposed on them whilst the compound is on the car park-this would incorporate a daily charge and a refundable deposit subject to no damage being incurred.

Councillor Aldis drew attention to the opening of the new skatepark and youth centre which is due to take place on 3rd May 2014. It is anticipated that there will be a requirement for several car park spaces and Members would not wish to have any disruption to the event. Mr Morton could not foresee any reason why this should be the case and would ensure that the relevant personnel on site are fully informed.

Following consideration, the Committee Resolved to grant permission for Network Rail to install a small compound area within the Oldends Lane car park for the period stated. This permission would, however, be based on the receipt of payment in advance for (a) the hire charges and (b) a refundable deposit which would be returned subject to no damage to the car park surface etc being incurred plus also the outstanding charges for the parking of a vehicle on a previous occasion.

Councillor Brine took the opportunity to raise an issue about the crossing which local residents frequently express their concerns about. The time that the barriers have to be kept down whilst waiting for a train to go through often creates time difficulties for people working in the nearby Industrial Estates. Historically regular users of Oldend Lane have become aware that the time delay can often be for quite lengthy periods and thereby some drivers will risk speeding under the barriers just as they begin to come down.

Mr Morton explained that the barriers are reliant on the location of the detecting signals to the level crossing. The closing of the barriers is, however, controlled manually by an operator having full vision of the crossing area but obviously when he becomes aware of how many trains need to go through the Oldend Lane section he will have to ensure that the barriers remain down until these have passed through. It is possible that at some point in the future Network Rail could consider upgrading the barrier system at which point it might be possible to investigate the barrier downtime.

K3/124 ALLOTMENTS

The Deputy Clerk has agreed to meet with the Chairperson of the Tenants' Association for an inspection of the site on the 27th March – a report will be given.

The Deputy Clerk reported to the Committee on the inspection which had identified a small number of plots as being Red coded. It was noted that the tenant of one of those plots had recently been served with a Notice to Quit and the tenancy of one or two other plots had only just been terminated. It was accepted that when taking into account the weather conditions during the early 3 months of the year the plots were generally in reasonable condition.

K3/125 COURT VIEW

To consider advice received from SDC Legal Department.

Whilst noting the District Council's comments the Committee expressed their continued concerns about this particular issue and Resolved that the Town Council's solicitor should be contacted to clarify exactly what the legal position is in respect of the transfer of land. The Committee Recommend that the Town Council re-visit their policy decision on this particular matter.

K3/125 Court View (continued)

Councillor Theresa Watt and John Aldis recently met with representatives of the Stroud Valleys Project to discuss the work they have been undertaking around the wildlife areas within the development. Councillor Theresa Watt was invited to report to Members on their discussions.

Some concern had been expressed that the work being carried out was not within the Management Plan and also there was some doubt as to whether SVP had the appropriate licenses for the newt areas. Councillor Watt was advised by SVP that they have obtained the necessary licence and will continue to work on the site but only within an area away from the newts breeding grounds. SVP will be undertaking a newt survey on 25th/26th April - further details available.

K3/126 RECREATION WORKING GROUP

To receive a report from the Working Group

Councillor Pam Swain was invited to report on behalf of the Working Group.

The main reason for the Group's recent meeting was to discuss the views put forward by representatives of the Elm Road Community Project group following an invitation to attend. Unfortunately no one from the ECRP group attended and no communication had been received. However, the Members of the RWG took the opportunity to have further discussions about the site.

John Jeynes had also attended part of the meeting to talk to the Group about the Neighbourhood Development Plan into which the future of the Elm Road site could potentially have some impact. Some general discussion was held on local recreation facilities and John Jeynes stressed the need for the Town Council to be very specific in its future recreation plans and ensure that the availability of community venues is shared widely amongst local groups.

K3/127 OLDENDS LANE PAVILION

Still awaiting final drawings and specifications from Mike Hughes & Partners for Phase 2 works Phase 1 works – materials have been specified and now await a start date.

Committee are to discuss other works to be carried out from the match funding of £6500

Having been circulated with information on the additional items that could be provided from the match funding, the Committee Resolved to approve the purchase and installation of CCTV and security lighting.

K3/128 YOUTH BUILDING - RAMP

Committee to consider quotations and agree a way forward.

The Committee were provided with details of two quotations for the construction of an appropriate ramp exit from the building. Members felt, however, that the costs were still excessive and Councillor Chris Brine therefore offered to contact two local specialist suppliers to ascertain quotations in alternative materials.

K3/129 YOUTH BUILDING

1. To receive a report from youth leaders

The written reports were circulated and noted.

2. To receive a report from Youth Working Group

The written reports were circulated and noted.

K3/129 Youth Building (continued)

3. To review the remit of the Youth Working Group

The main purpose of the Youth Working Group was to provide new facilities for the young people of Stonehouse and the provision of both the youth centre and skate park has now been successfully achieved. In view of this the YWG feel that the management of finances, strategy and general maintenance of these facilities should no longer come within the remit of this Committee and following consideration Members Resolved that the Finance & Strategy Committee should in future be responsible for such matters.

The YWG do, however, still have aims to oversee the provision of youth related services and it was therefore also Resolved that the Group should be allowed to continue pursuing these objectives.

For Resolution: That Youth Working Group reports to Finance & Strategy Committee with effect from the new Civic Year 2014.

4. To agree costs of new lock on kitchen door

The Committee Resolved that this work should be carried out subject to a maximum cost of £100.

5. To agree Youth Leader Provision costs for 2014

The Committee were informed that a short-term contract has been agreed with Young Gloucestershire up until July 2014 but the long term aim is to combine with adjoining parishes so that financial support can be raised for a full-time youth worker.

6. To consider request from Global Arts Inc to use youth building for 2 ½ days per week to hold workshop sessions.

The Committee had been circulated with the details of this request but were informed by Councillor Simon Lewis that the request is actually on behalf of Stonehouse Community Partnership who are currently working with Global Arts Inc as their main contractor to deliver various projects including a work experience programme. It is hoped to provide a facility for 3 days a week, not 2 ½ as originally reported, where up to 15 people plus two leaders can attend workshops/courses to gain transferable skills to help with future employment, the preparation of CVs and interview techniques. This experience will be directly gained from being involved in the planning, organisation and delivery of the various Festivals planned for Stonehouse.

Following consideration Members Resolved to support this request on the basis that the age of those attending the workshop should be up to 25 years old.

K3/130 SKATEPARK

1. A further litter bin has been requested by Council Members. The cost of a new bin will be in the region of £390. Committee to discuss and agree a course of action.

The Committee Resolved that an additional bin should be purchased and installed in an appropriate area by the skate park.

2. A member of the public has asked if he may organise a skating competition on the park

During consideration of this request it was noted that training was one of the lottery bid objectives and if this could be provided through an authorised event then it should be encouraged. Following further discussion Members Resolved that the request be approved subject to the receipt of appropriate Public Liability insurance cover and CRB checks being carried out.

K3/130 Skatepark (continued)

3. Graffiti now evident on ramps – Committee to discuss

Members stressed that the Town Council will not tolerate abusive graffiti but are aware that it is very likely that the skatepark area will incur different forms of “street art”. Some discussion also took place on various reports of anti-social behaviour around the skatepark and it was noted that the Police have been made aware of these concerns. They are regularly attending the area working with the young people to try to reduce local issues.

K3/131 LITTER BIN PROVISION – BRIDGEND AREA

The grit bin that was provided by the Town Council at the top of the footpath that leads from the Downton Road bridge down to the canal towpath is being used as a litter bin. Stroud District Council has offered to meet the cost of a suitable bin and emptying but have asked if the Town Council would be willing to cover the installation cost of £105.00 + VAT. Committee to consider. **The Committee Resolved to approve the cost for installation of a new bin.**

K3/132 LAND ACQUISITION

Pending Land Registry Searches

This information was noted

K3/133 GARDEN OF REST

Work to trees has been completed in the sum of £284.87

This information was noted.

K3/134 IN BLOOM

Committee to consider the costs of new planters and watering systems. Due to the uncertainty over the bus shelters repair or replacement alternative planting has been costed out which may require funding from general reserves.

Councillor Gary Powell explained to Members present that comparison costs had been ascertained based on using alternative planters which would significantly reduce the time commitment for watering maintenance. The previous supplier of the majority of the Town Council’s floral displays had been approached but was unable to deliver the same service.

Members agreed that from the information circulated the new planters would provide a much more beneficial and cost effective watering system. This would not only reduce the time commitment on the Town Council’s contractor but also that of Councillor Powell who voluntarily has given his weekend time to watering the displays.

Following further discussion it was unanimously Resolved that Councillor Powell and the Deputy Town Clerk be granted delegated powers to pursue appropriate floral displays for the forthcoming season within the allocated budget funding.

K3/135 DOVEROW (Matter of report only)

Following months of high winds and rainfall, damage is now evident to some trees and quotations are being sought for felling in accordance with the Tree Report of last year. The cost will be recovered from the Trust but an interim payment is to be authorised by the Committee as responsible landowners.

This information was noted.

K3/136 DOG FOULING

1. Dog Control Orders – see attached (for information only)

This information was noted.

2. To consider the purchase of a dog bin approx cost £200 (adjacent Oldends Level Crossing)

The Committee Resolved to authorise the purchase of an appropriate dog waste bin subject to confirmation that SDC will empty it.

Councillor Lewis left the meeting at this point to attend another appointment.

K3/137 BOULE COURT

Due to delay awaiting revised costs – Installation can be carried out in April – **Committee are to agree a contingency fund (£1000 currently earmarked) to cover any increase in price over the £12572 S106 funding available.**

Members present were informed that the work on the installation of the boule court is to commence on 22nd April 2014. Members welcomed this information and noted that there will be a £200 increase in the quotation initially submitted and approved. It was therefore agreed that there is no requirement to increase the contingency fund previously earmarked.

K3/138 OLDENDS LANE – LEASE REQUESTS

Councillor Powell left the room whilst Item 1 was discussed.

1. Stroud League have asked if they may lease the storage space to be provided in the new pavilion on a lease of £3000 over 10 years. Committee to discuss

Members present Resolved that the Stroud & District Youth Football League should be allowed to lease storage space within the new pavilion based on a rental of £3000 over 10 years.

Councillor Powell returned to the meeting

2. Stonehouse Town Football team have submitted their vision of facilities on the workshop site, funding would be applied for but is dependent on the Council agreeing to a 25 year lease. (Drawings circulated) Committee to discuss.

Members present noted the drawings that had been circulated. Following discussion the Committee Recommendation put forward is that at this stage the Town Council support the drawing and lease proposals. However, further investigation on the costs of alternative storage space for the Town Council's equipment etc will also need to be carried out and taken into consideration of any final decision.

It was noted that the conversion of the workshop will give the Football Club an opportunity to enter into a more senior League as their current facilities would not meet the criteria required.

K3/139 OPEN SPACE MAINTENANCE

To consider tenders for contract 2014-15 and consider additional care of pitches to improve drainage (see report)

Following consideration of the tenders received and the requirement for additional pitch maintenance, the Committee Resolved to accept the quotation supplied by T.W. Hawkins & Sons SGMS.

K3/140 FINANCE

1. To agree Committee expenditure/receipts (February) £28,504.73 and £28702.60 respectively

The Committee Resolved to approve the expenditure/receipts details as listed.

2. To agree payments to date (March) £6608.82

The Committee Resolved to approve the payments for March as listed.

K3/141 PLAY EQUIPMENT AREAS

Following the RoSPA inspection of the Town Council's play equipment areas their report highlighted the need for attention to be given to some of the safety surfacing as these are considered to be a risk. A quotation has been obtained from a specialist contractor for the necessary repair work. Committee to consider.

Having been given details of the quotation provided by the contractor the Committee Resolved to approve expenditure for the surface repairs to play areas within the three main Playing Fields. Members felt that the costs for the Oldend Lane Playing Field play area need further clarification.

The Committee therefore Resolved that the Town Clerk/RFO should be authorised to ensure that repairs to the surfacing areas highlighted by RoSPA are undertaken provided that the full costs come within the allocated Committee budget.

K3/142 MATTERS OUTSTANDING

Everything Everywhere – This Company have made a payment short of the agreed lease value and have not completed the lease. Council's solicitor has been asked to report on status of Notice to Quit.

The Committee noted this information.

Village Greens – Waiting for further legal advice. In the meantime The Globe have been co-operative in removing advertising signs.

The Committee noted this information.

K3/143 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6th May 2014

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

The Council will by resolution exclude the public from item K3/142 due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and publicity of the item would be prejudicial to the public interest.

K3/144 PERTH

Following completion of the S106 agreement and planning permission the Purchaser will be required to proceed within the timeframe originally agreed. **Committee to confirm Clerk's instructions to solicitor.**

The Committee noted that S106 agreement has been finalised and planning permission for a dwelling on the land has been granted. The Committee therefore Resolved that the Town Clerk should instruct the Town Council's solicitors to proceed with the sale of the land.
