



## Operations & Amenities Committee

**Present:** Cllrs Goodman (Chairperson), Bolanz, Chapman, Cooper-Marsh, Hitchin, Johnson and Maslen

**In attendance:** Town Clerk, Operations Manager, Project Deliver Manager

**Absent:** Cllr s Collins and Dunford

**Minutes** of the meeting of the **Operations & Amenities committee** held on **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024** at **7.15pm** in the Eaton's Centre, The Maltings, St Neots, PE19 8ES.

### Public Participation

There is one member of the public present who wished to address the Council in relation to the Museum Repair agenda item.

### ACTIONS

**037 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were noted from Cllrs Collins and Dunford.

Admin

**038 Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

**039 Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Operations and Amenities Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024 as a true and accurate record subject to Cllr Goodman's declared interest been amended to reflect the interest was in relation to a cemetery plot not an allotment.

**040 Action list**

Members received the committee action list.

The following matters were highlighted;

Jubilee Trees - The Clerk was awaiting a cost from HDC on planting of wildflowers and trees already purchased by the Council at a green space in Eaton Ford. Once received a purchase order would be issued to carry out the work this autumn.

South Street Toilets – Repair and maintenance work was almost complete, except for some outstanding rendering required to a door frame which was in worse condition than anticipated.

Brickhill Play Park – Members noted that the see saw, bench and surfacing at Brickhills play area had been installed. Members were aware of an online video



expressing concerns in relation to the park and the condition of paths leading to it. It was felt the Council should continue to pursue the installation of a dropped kerb with HDC. Members noted that the Operations Manager was raising some queries related to the equipment with the installer and addressing the mis-match of play park names register on google maps.

Moore's Walk – Members noted that work to the garden had progressed well and that it should be re-opened to the public on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

#### **041 Local Highways Improvement Bids 2024-25**

- i) Members received communication from Cambridgeshire County Council on the timeframe for the determination of Local Highway Improvement (LHI) bids, noting this had been postponed to the October Highways & Transport committee meeting for approval.
- ii) Members received and considered communication from Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) on an LHI bid to install MVAS signage at Andrew Road and Caernarvon Road, Eynesbury. Members noted a request from the CCC on identifying a preferred MVAS signage provider.

The Town Clerk provided information from CCC Cllr S Taylor on the preferred signage of two residents who had campaigned for MVAS signs.

Members agreed that it was important that the selected signage was compatible with the current data reporting program used for the Council's other MVAS signs. The Council's existing MVAS signs were Swarco, which was one of the CCC approved providers. Member also felt that compatible batteries with existing signage was important. The committee also agreed that signage should not flash up the speed a vehicle is travelling, but rather a sign or speed limit.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee express a preference for the Swarco signage, pending confirmation other approved signage can operate from the same reporting program and have compatible batteries.

#### **042 Jubilee Hall**

The Town Clerk presented a report to Councillors on the status of the Jubilee Hall, Eaton Socon. Information was presented to the committee explaining that;

- (a) There has at no point been a transfer of ownership.
- (b) The Town Council is the legal owner of the Jubilee Hall.
- (c) However, the Council is the legal owner as a custodian (or holding) trustee on behalf of the Eaton Socon Institute (Charity) and the Hall is not an asset of the Council.



- (d) The Eaton Socon Institute is the beneficial owner of the Jubilee Hall.
- (e) The Council must, at all times, act on the directions and instructions of the Management Committee, as the charity trustees of the Eaton Socon Institute.

Members noted that the Jubilee Hall will be added to the Council's asset register with a note on the status of the building for the purpose of correct record keeping. The asset will not be included in the asset register total values submitted as part of the Council audit as the Council is the legal owner on the basis is a custodian trustee on behalf of the Eaton Socon Institute, who are the beneficial owner.

Members noted that the Council will be asked to appoint representatives to the Management Committee and that this matter will go to the Full Council for consideration when the Management Committee contact the Council.

#### **043 St Neots Museum Building**

The Town Clerk presented a report on repair works required to the St Neots Museum building's roof. The Council had previously had a heritage building survey carried out, which resulted in recommendations on repair and refurbishment required for the building. The Council's Project Delivery Manager reviewed the recommendations and the condition of the building, working with specialists in old buildings it was quickly identified that the priority work for the building would be the repair of the roof. The Council would need to ensure that the building was watertight before considering any further repairs and improvements to the buildings structure.

A representative of the museum addressed the committee to explain the importance of having the work done, which would ensure the Museum's displays and artifacts were protected and allow the museum to move forward with the installation of digital information boards, for which they had grant funding.

Officers explained that there were five jobs required to investigate and repair different sections of roofing across the building. Officers had progressed with four jobs, which could be carried out under delegated revenue maintenance budgets.

The Committee was asked to recommend completing a further job on the roof at the rear of the museum, which would complete the work needed and ensure the entire roof was secure, protecting the building for years to come.

**RESOLVED to RECOMMEND** that the Council release £9,990.00 in funding from the earmarked reserve for Community Buildings to complete the replacement of the rear felted flat roof (Job 4), including removal and disposal of 3nos redundant A/C plants and relocation of 8nos working A/C plants with replacement of the pipework.



#### **044 St Mary's, St Neots Church wall**

The Town Clerk introduced a report outlining the Council's responsibility for the maintenance and repair of closed church yards in St Neots. The Town Council is responsible for Closed Churchyards in St Neots, Eynesbury and Eaton Socon and maintenance includes paths, trees and boundary walls/fencing. The perimeter wall at St Mary's St Neots needs serious repair, with the majority of bricks requiring complete replacement. As the wall is adjacent to a highway there is a health and safety risk that needs to be considered.

The Project Deliver Manager outlined the approach the Council would need to take to the project, stating that the first step in enabling work would be to approve funding for a Structural Engineer to produce drawings for the rebuilding of the wall on which design and quotations could be based. Members expressed concern over the cost of the works, which could be substantial, although the Council may be able to phase delivery of works depending on Structural Engineer recommendations.

**RESOLVED to RECOMMEND** that the Council approve expenditure of up to £2,000.00 from General Reserves to appoint a professional consultant (Structural Engineer) to renew the recommendations of previous Structural Survey and provide the design drawings for the St Mary's Church wall rebuild/repair.

#### **045 Emergency Callout Service**

Members received and noted a report from the Town Clerk on engaging Huntingdonshire District Council as emergency contact, responder and keyholder for public toilet buildings. The Clerk explained that under delegated powers and budgets he wished to enter into an agreement with HDC Shared Serves to act as emergency contact for the three toilets.

**RESOLVED** the Town Clerk enter a two-year contract with Huntingdonshire Council's Shared Services to act as emergency contact and key holder for three Town Council managed toilet blocks in St Neots at a cost of £1 per day per toilet block, totalling £1,095 per year which will be funded from the Public Toilet revenue budget.

**RESOLVED** that the Committee support the expenditure of £2,000 from budgeted Public Toilet funds to have emergency pull cords for all three Town Council managed toilets connected to the Shared Services monitor station and that the Town Clerk enter a two-year monitoring contract at an annual fee of £200 per toilet block.

#### **046 Jubilee Mosaic**

Members received and considered a report from officers and a supporting report from the Jubilee Mosaic artist and the condition of the mosaic and recommendations for repair works and damage prevention.



Members discussed the recommendations within the report at length, agreeing that as well as repairing the art work action should be taken to help protect the mosaic in the future, but that any such action should be practical and feasible.

The Operations Manager commented that he supported the recommendations that the shingle in the area is removed and replaced with a resin and that a drainage channel be installed around the mosaic to prevent water getting beneath tiles and freezing. He had sought costs for both. Members commented that drainage would need to be flush around the mosaic.

A Member asked whether the resin could be added over the top of the mosaic. The Operations Manager explained the artist had investigated this but had not found an adequate solution.

Members noted that recommendation 1, which was professional cleaning of the mosaic would be progressed under the Operation Team's maintenance of the site.

It was proposed and seconded that the Committee resolve to progress with obtaining quotes for recommendations that shingle around the mosaic is replaced with resin, a decorative drainage channel is installed, and the position of bins are considered.

**RESOLVED** that the Operations Manager obtain and bring to the committee quotes for replacing all stones and shingle at Jubilee gardens with resin to prevent damage to the jubilee mosaic.

**RESOLVED** that the Operations Manager obtain and bring to the committee quotations for installing decorative drainage around the edge of the jubilee mosaic.

**RESOLVED** that the Operations Manager look at relocating a bin to remove a desire line for foot traffic over the mosaic.

#### **047 Street Furniture**

Members received and considered a report from officers on parklets formally located in the Market Square. Members noted the poor condition of the parklets, which would take time and resource to refurbish and that there is limited value or suitable locations for them.

**RESOLVED to RECOMMEND** that the Council disposes of two 'parklets' through the donation of the materials, if there are no parties wanting the parklets that they be disposed of and the Council's asset register amended accordingly.



**048 Date of Next Meeting**

Members noted that the date of the next Operations and Amenities Committee would be on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 7.15pm.

**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON**