



Operations & Amenities Committee

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

In attendance: Town Clerk, Operations Manager

Absent: Cllr Maslen

Minutes of the meeting of the **Operations & Amenities committee** held on **Tuesday 11th June** at **7.15pm** in the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, PE19 2BH.

Public Participation

There were no members of the public present.

ACTIONS

012 Apologies for Absence

There were none.

Admin

013 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

014 Election of Deputy Chairperson

The Chairperson called for nominations for the position of Deputy Chairperson of the Operations and Amenities Committee for the 2024-25 council year.

Admin

RESOLVED that Councillor Chapman be elected as Deputy Chairperson of the Operations and Amenities Committee for the 2024-25 council year.

015 Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Operations and Amenities Committee held on 21st May 2024 as a true and accurate record.

016 Working Group

Members received and noted a list of existing Working Groups and Membership for those Working Groups that report into the Operations and Amenities Committee.

It was noted that Cllr Dunford should be listed as a member of the Moores Walk Garden Working Group.

RESOLVED that Cllr S Smith be appointed to the LHI and SID Working Group.



017 Action list

Members received the committee action list. The following key updates were received;

Moores Walk Garden

Work was due to start in August 2024. The later date is to increase the chances of a successful planting scheme. Horticulturalist due to come back to Working Group with more specifics on plants chosen.

Public Toilets

Work on the new changing places toilet was scheduled to be completed by mid-July 2024. However, the Clerk was awaiting formal confirmation from HDC. The Clerk is in contact with Access in St Neots and has updated them on the status of the project.

The Operations Manager informed the committee the works to redecorate the exterior of south street toilets were due to take place the week of 23rd June 2024.

Brickhills Bench installation

It was noted that this needs progressing and the Operations Manager would pursue further surfacing quotes.

Jubilee Trees

A Member asked if the trees ordered could be planted around play parks. The Clerk confirmed that the trees had been ordered for a particular location which was already agreed.

018 Local Highways Improvement Bids 2024-25

Members received and noted an update from Cambridgeshire County Council on a complex LHI bid submitted for St Neots town centre. The application, supported by the County Council Ward Member, focused on creating better accessible routes to key locations in the town through dropped kerbs, markings and pavement improvements. A feasibility report on the bid had now been carried out and scoring was due to take place in June. A representative of St Neots Town Council was invited to attend to speak in support of the bid.

It was agreed that Cllr Johnson would attend the panel scoring to speak on the application on behalf of the Town Council.

Cllr
Johnson

019 Steve Van de Kerkhove Community Centre

- i) Members received a report from the Town Clerk asking for confirmation that a pedestrian gate be included in a planning application to be submitted to Huntingdonshire District Council to surface the trackway and parking area at the Steve Van de Kerkhove Community building. The gate would be in the boundary fencing with Duck Lane.



RESOLVED that the council include the creation of a pedestrian access gate in the boundary fence between Steve Van de Kerkhove Community Centre and Duck Lane.

- ii) Members received and considered an initial draft lease with the Mans Cave for a building at the Steve Van de Kerkhove Community Centre. The Clerk informed Members that he was awaiting a rental valuation for the property.

Members raised the following points;

A clause prohibiting drinking of alcohol on the premises without prior permission should be included.

A three-year break should be included in the lease.

The Clerk should progress with obtaining a valuation of the property to ensure a true rental value can be established. While it was acknowledged the tenant would be a community group the Council had to truly reflect the value of its asset and the support that was being given to any tenant if a lower rent is agreed.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk obtains a rental valuation for the buildings at the Steve Van de Kerkhove Community Centre at a maximum cost of £950.

020 Public Toilets

Members received and considered Heads of Terms for new leases to be agreed with Huntingdonshire District Council for the lease of public toilets at Riverside and Tebbutts Road.

Members raised some concerns over a full repairing lease and what contributes HDC might make towards repair and maintenance under a new lease. The provisions under the existing lease should be kept, whereby the amount incurred by the Town Council would be limited.

A lease of 20 years was thought to be potentially too long, but with a break clause of 10 years would be acceptable. Access for maintaining toilets should be included, particularly for SNTC vehicles to park without charge in adjacent HDC car parks.

The Clerk noted Members comments and would go back to HDC with a view to bring forward a draft proposed lease to the July committee meeting.



021 Play Park Inspections

Members received and noted an updated play park inspection document and the works which were underway to address issues or recommendations raised.

Members requested that making safe a wooden plank at Bevington play area be made a priority.

022 Cemetery Land

Members received and noted a verbal update from the Town Clerk.

The Clerk informed Members that he had heard back from Highways England with regard to potential future cemetery land for St Neots. The Clerk has been advised that Highways England seek to limit land taken to deliver schemes as much as possible. In the unlikely event that any land is found to be surplus at the end of the scheme, it'll firstly be offered back to the original landowner, which is required by law.

In regard to the A428 works, as compound land is not needed after the scheme has been delivered, these areas have been leased. This means that on this occasion they are not able to assist with our request, however they will keep a record of our enquiry should there be any surplus land that the original landowners don't want back. While this is unlikely, it is possible. The project team expects to be more informed of the possibility of this by the time they open the new road to road users.

023 Strategic Priorities

Members received a report from the Town Clerk and considered the strategic priorities of the committee which they wished to see the focus of resource over coming years. Members agreed with the priorities set out in the report, but also spoke in favour of adding the museum building repair to the priorities and highlighting heritage investment, potentially supported by a heritage strategy. The wider view of investing in all SNTC owned properties in the long terms was also highlighted.

Members discussed a WW2 pill box and taking ownership of this should the opportunity arise.

Highlighted committee priorities;

Cemetery Land

Identifying and securing new cemetery land

Operations Depot

Clarifying medium to long term operations depot requirements and securing better depot provision.



Play Park Investment

Finalising and agreeing forward planning investment for SNTC sites. Including new provision and increased accessible play.

Jubilee Garden

Improving and enhancing the community space and the heritage it links to.

Local Highways Improvement Bids

Developing a strong process for the identification, evaluation, and submission of Local Highway Improvement Bids.

Changing Places Toilet

Completing the provision of a Riverside Changing Places toilet.

Museum Building

Repair and maintenance of the Museum building inline with heritage building survey recommendations.

Heritage

Establishing a heritage strategy for the Council's approach to its sites and heritage information.

024 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the date of the next Operations and Amenities Committee would be on 9th July 2024 at 7.15pm.

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON