



Operations & Amenities Committee

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

In attendance: Town Clerk, Operations Manager

Absent:

Minutes of the meeting of the **Operations & Amenities committee** held on **Tuesday 12th March** at **7.30pm** in the Priory Centre, Priory Lane, St Neots, PE19 2BH.

Public Participation

There was one member of the public present.

ACTIONS

097 Apologies for Absence

There were none.

Admin

098 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

099 Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Operations and Amenities Committee held on 13th February 2024 as a true and accurate record.

Admin

100 Action list

Members received the committee action list. The following points were raised;

Autumn Planting – The Council will need to agree its autumn planting order in April. The Operations Team have previously put forward suggestions on ways to reduce planting costs. Any changes were previously deferred. It was agreed that Councillors would be invited to attend a site meeting with the Operations Team to look at key areas where changes or reductions to flower beds could be made.

Cllrs Dunford, Goodmand, Johnson and Chapman expressed an interested in attending.

Brickhills Inclusive Play and Play Park Strategy – It was agreed a meeting of the Play Park Working Group would be held to bring back recommendations on how to progress the inclusive play see-saw at Brickhills, wider play ambitions, a new Eaton Ford park and funding. The Clerk had not received a further update on a dropped kerb at Brickhills and would raise this again with the HDC open spaces team.

LHI and Speed Indicator Signs – A Councillors asked that Members who wish to join the Working Group let the Clerk know, as at present there were only two members.

101 Highways Issue Petition

Members received a petition on highway improvements in the area of Queens Garden and Eaton Socon Pre-School. The petition had been deferred from the previous committee meeting as no one was able to attend the Committee meeting to speak on behalf of the petition.

The Town Clerk informed the committee that due to illness a representative to speak on the petition was not available to attend.

Members expressed support for the matters outlined in the petition but felt that they needed to hear more from the petitioners to understand the issues and proposed measures.

The Clerk reminded the committee that while the Highways LHI scheme provided an avenue for the Town Council to put forward highway improvements it was restricted to one application per ward. The Council do not know what other highways issues might be brought to the Council agendas between now and the opening of the LHI scheme and as such the Committee should not commit to supporting an LHI bid until it is in a position to evaluate all potential bids for the Eatons Ward. The concerns should first be addressed to the Highway Authority through the relevant County Councillor. Cllr G Seeff was aware of the petition.

A Member suggested that the matter should be deferred again.

The Chairperson suggested that the Clerk and Chairperson invite representatives of the petitioner and Cllr G Seeff to a site meeting to learn more about the issues which were being raised.

It was commented that any meeting should include ward representatives, who deal with LHI discussions that may come through from residents. It was suggested the petitioner be encouraged to contact Highway Officers to ask their opinion on what measures might be suitable and potential costs.

RESOLVED to defer further consideration of the petition and the issues set out within it to the next meeting of the committee. That a site meeting is arranged between representatives of the petitioner, the Chairperson of the Operations & Amenities committee, Town Council Ward Members and County Councillor Seeff.



102 Local Highway Improvement (LHI) Bid 2023/24 – Eynesbury Ward

Members received and noted a consultation letter which was due to be circulated to properties around the Luke Street area where the proposed one-way system would be implemented. The Clerk informed the Committee that the letter drop would include St Mary Street properties and that the Highway Officer had confirmed they were in communication with the caravan site. The Clerk would contact the school to make sure they were aware and ask that they are included in the letter drop, which they could in turn share with parents.

103 Moores Walk Communal Space

The Clerk provided an update to Councillors, confirming quotes had been received and issued to HDC for consideration. HDC have agreed to the proposed work and costs provided. The quotes received were within the available budget from HDC and once approval of a particular quote had been made the Clerk would issue a PO and look to engage a preferred contractor.

It was confirmed the existing benches would be refurbished and the bin would be a heritage style bin.

It was noted that planting didn't include sensory plants. The Clerk commented that this could be picked up as part of the project delivery.

Jet washing of the site was not included in the quoted works. This is something the Operations Team could look at, but it was noted due to the location of the garden it could be difficult.

Thanks were expressed to the resident who had put themselves forward as part of the Working Group.

104 Museum Building Works

Members received and considered a draft tender document for works to St Neots Museum building, which were highlighted through a historic building survey. The Clerk explained he would continue to work with the museum to liaise with them closer on the process.

It was suggested that an amendment is made to emphasise the tenderers should provide a full breakdown of project costs for each area of work to allow for potential phasing and better evaluation.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Council approve the Museum Repair Work tender and that the Clerk initiate the tender process subject to further liaising with the museum trustees.



105 Steve Van de Kerkhove Community Hub

Members received and considered a report from the Operations Manager on surfacing of the access track and parking area at the Steve Van de Kerkhove Community Hub. The report recommended that self-binding gravel be no longer considered as a surface solution for further investigation. This was due to the lack of guarantees that would be provided by the supplier and the contractor.

Officers had also been asked to look at costings for a resin surface option. The costs on this were had not been received, but the Senior Maintenance Technician commented that they believed the costs would be considerably more expensive than a tarmac solution and would not offer the same level of surfacing as tarmac.

Members discussed the surfacing, with some commenting that for longevity and cost tarmac would form the better solution, but that it was important to have the most sustainable solution. A Member commented that a tarmac solution would fit with the existing tarmac paths in the cemeteries.

A Member commented that the Committee needs to understand the pros and cons of tarmac and resin and how drainage will be dealt with.

It was noted that even with a preferred tarmac solution new quote would need to be brought forward due to the time that has passed since the initial quote.

RESOLVED that the Operations Manager obtain three quotes for tarmac surfacing of the entrance track, parking area and pedestrian path at the Steve Van de Kerkhove Community Hub. That companies quoting are also asked to provide a price for a resin surface.

106 Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the date of the next Operations and Amenities Committee would be at 7:15pm on 16th April 2024.

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON