

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Amenities Committee meeting held on Wednesday 16th December 2020 at 7:30pm

held remotely using appropriate technology in accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crimes Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (“the 2020 Regulations”) which came into force on 4th April 2020.

(Minutes subject to approval at the next meeting of the Council)

Present: Cllr Moulard – Chairman
Cllrs Anstey, Hale, Paton, White & Wilson

In Attendance: Mr P Goddard, Town Clerk
Mrs R Edwards, Asst Town Clerk
Cllrs Adams, Earth & Goldsmith (Public Gallery)
Cllr Bellows

1. To receive any apologies for absence

No apologies received.

2. To receive any declarations of interest.

No declarations were made.

3. To receive any matters raised by Members of the Public

No matters raised.

4. To consider the Recreation Ground and Open Spaces

The Chair thanked the RFO for her document ‘Review of the Recreation Ground’ which was very useful and comprehensive.

Cllr White reported on the following considerations for the Recreation Ground and other open spaces.

a. Installation of a running / walking track

Cllr White reported that a track around the perimeter of the Recreation Ground, also incorporating the Brownsey field, would be just under one mile per lap.

Cllr Anstey reported that the gap between one of the football pitches and the hedge is only 2 yards. Any track in this position could only be used when no football game is being played. Cllr Wilson asked whether the Council owns the land on the other side of the hedge and whether it might be possible to use this land for the track instead.

Action: Clerk to investigate the possibility of using the land on the other side of the hedge for a running track

b. Provision of a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area)

Cllr White said he thought this a good idea but that the right site needed to be found. Cllr Paton had reservations about MUGAs, reporting that in some other areas MUGAs have not been used for sports but for congregating or smoking instead. Cllr Anstey said that a good MUGA would provide a facility that local people could use and would add value to the Rec although he raised concerns that MUGAs could look like a cage and attract litter. Cllr White recommended that any MUGA be sited in a central location to discourage small groups forming.

c. Brownseys Field

Cllr White suggested the Amenities Committee review the lease of pitches and consider the acquisition of extra land at the Rec. He said that extra space adjacent to the Recreation Ground would help with the increase in the number of people wishing to play sports in the town after the new housing developments are built.

d. Groundstaff Work Area

Cllr White recommended that the work shop and compound be made to look more appealing. Cllr Wilson suggested a hedging screen surrounding it.

e. Complete Review of Play area and Equipment

Cllr White recommended that a complete refurbishment, reshaping and reposition of the paddling pool be undertaken and the hedge moved. He'd like to see a better and more extensive picnic area in the Rec.

f. Avon Valley Shed

Members agreed that a meeting of the full Council was needed in January in order to progress the Men's Shed project.

g. Memorial Gardens

Cllr White noted that local Councillors have worked hard to make improvements to the Memorial Gardens and would like to see these improvements maintained in order to keep the tranquility of the gardens. Cllr Hale asked that the paths be made more accessible for wheelchair users. Cllr Paton reported that the laying of gravel in some areas has reduced the water pooling but that gravel is needed by the kiosk and by the gate too. Cllr Anstey reported that the ground needs forking in the dips in order to help water drain away. Cllr Anstey recommended that the gate be replaced as it is difficult to use and appears locked; a new gate will provide better access for pedestrians and those arriving with wheelchairs or bicycles.

h. Car Park at the Recreation Ground

Cllr White suggested improving the hardstanding and charging people to park. Cllr Anstey said that in the shorter term, the requirement is to level the car park and to choose a surface which lasts for 3-4 years instead of the 1-2 years when this work has been done previously.

The Clerk reported that he had costings from NFDC which he would email to members and noted the importance of protection that would appease the environment agency. He also suggested it might be possible to come to an arrangement with the NFDC for them to monitor the car park, rather than FTC doing so themselves.

Cllr Wilson was concerned that residents would not be happy having to pay to use the car park. Cllr White suggested that the local parking clock could cover car parking in the Rec car park as it does in the NFDC car parks.

i. Band stand

Cllr White recommended a bandstand in the Recreation Ground. He reported that local bands are interested in playing in a bandstand and it would look nice in wedding photos.

j. Sports Club

Cllr Anstey recommended expanding the use of the Sports Club building and having a modernised building for functions, weddings and other celebrations.

k. More benches in the Recreation Ground and other Open Spaces

Cllr White said would like to see a cluster of picnic benches and fixed barbeques; a family-friendly and aesthetically pleasing area. Cllr Earth suggested that families may like sponsor a bench in memory of a loved one.

l. Provision of adult exercise equipment

Cllr White recommended that adult exercise equipment be strategically located around the town. A route could be planned with maps available and the start and finish point being the new exercise track at the Recreation Ground.

Cllr Wilson reported that two or three pieces of equipment aimed at people less mobile would make a good Senior Playground and that funding is available until February. Cllr Mouland said this would be excellent for the aging population of Fordingbridge.

m. Changing rooms

Cllr White reported that the Council is nearly there with the renovation of the changing rooms in the Rec.

n. Fishing Swims for Disabled People

Cllr Anstey would like to see fishing swims for disabled people developed in the Rec and that funding and grants are available from the fishing association. He reported that the tenant at The Kiosk is very knowledgeable on this subject and guidance packs are also available.

o. Riverbank management

Cllr Anstey reported that more people are swimming in the river since Covid and stressed the importance of riverbank management. In the past the reeds and bushes have been allowed to grow to protect the bank. However, in order to encourage people, he recommended that these be cut back in places. Cllr Wilson recommended consulting Natural England for advice. Cllr Mouland recommended tidying up around the slipway.

The Members of the Amenities Committee arranged to meet at the Recreation Ground to consider priorities for the Recreation Ground. They agreed to consider

- Benches and Barbeques
- Planting
- Swim for fishing
- Pitch Enhancement to improve the state of the pitches

Action: Amenities Committee to meet at 10am on Saturday 9th January at the Riverside Kiosk to discuss priorities for the Recreation Ground

5. To receive a report from the Clerk or any other relevant business

Nothing to report.

6. To note the date of the next meeting as 20th January 2021

The meeting closed at 8:19 p.m.