

MINUTES of the MEETING of the RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE
held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on THURSDAY 23
NOVEMBER 2023 at 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Harman – Chairman
Councillor Emma Ben Moussa – Vice – Chairman
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Peter Harris
Councillor Lesley Howes
Councillor Elizabeth Wickham

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/RFO
Dan Usher – Senior Groundsman/ Gardener

ABSENT: There were none

280/23-24. ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.

The arrangements and constraints relating to the filming or recording of the meeting were explained.

281/23-24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Dawn Johnston due to other commitments.

RESOLVED:

That the reason for absence, for the above Town Councillor/s, be formally accepted and approved.

282/23-24. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

283/23-24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

As per Standing Order 34 c) the Chairman adjourned the meeting at this point to allow members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business being transacted at the meeting.

284/23-24. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

285/23-24. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2023

Recommended: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 September 2023 were approved and signed as a true record.

286/23-24. SENIOR GROUNDSMAN /GARDENER'S REPORT.

Members were provided with a copy of the report which updated members on the work undertaken, by the Parks Department and the work planned which included:

Broomfield Park, Heritage Park, Knockhall Park, Manor Park, Swanscombe Park, Saxon Court, Valley View, Equipment/ Staffing and Miscellaneous.

Recommended: That the report be noted.

TOWN CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

287/23-24. TREES AT ST PAULS CLOSE, SWANSCOMBE.

Unfortunately, x3 of the large Horse Chestnut trees around the outside of the Church (St Pauls Close) looked like they had died. A formal report from the tree specialist was scheduled for Monday 27 November 2023 and this would enable the Town Council to consider what actions would be most appropriate.

After discussion it was agreed that this item be reconsidered at the 17 January 2024 Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee meeting when the report from the tree specialist would be available.

Recommended: That this item be reconsidered at the 17 January 2024 RLA meeting.

288/23-24. JUNIOR PARK RUN – HERITAGE PARK.

Prior to Covid a request had been agreed (minutes 434/18-19 and 335/19-20) for Junior Park Runs to be held in the Heritage Park. The organiser had been back in contact with the Town Council and, it was hoped that these events (Sunday mornings 9 to 10am) would begin soon.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

289/23-24. THE OLD FIRE STATION – ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE (ACV).

Further to minute 177/23-24 a response had been received from DBC which confirmed that additional information would be required for any re-application and that this would include confirmation of the future use of the building as an ACV now and for the next 5 years.

After discussion it was proposed, duly seconded, and agreed:

Recommended: That the Town Councils re-application be cancelled and that the Town Council work with CAS for them to submit an application once the new Community Hub was completed.

290/23-24. COUNCIL OFFICE AND CAFÉ CHRISTMAS OPENING ARRANGEMENTS.

Members had been issued with a calendar for the Council Offices and Café over the Christmas and New Year and were asked to consider when they wished the office and café to be closed over the festive period. Officers had been consulted and had no objection to using annual leave entitlement to cover any periods of closure.

Recommended: That the Council Offices and Café be closed on 27, 28, and 29 December 2023 with a notice being displayed, in advance, advising Members of the Public of the closures. As per previous years a relevant message would also be recorded for the Council Office answer machine for this period.

291/23-24. ESTIMATES FOR 2024 - 2025.

Officers had begun work on the Annual Estimates for 2024 – 2025 earlier in the year with members first being asked for any suggestions in July (minute 120/23-24), with an agreed deadline of 31 August 2023, which were then duly considered at the Town Council meeting on 19 October 2023.

The Town Council meeting on 7 December 2023 would need to consider the draft Annual Estimates 2024 – 2025 which would then pass to be approved and endorsed by the full Council in January 2024 before setting the Council Tax Base for the 2024 – 2025 financial year.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

292/23-24. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC.

MOVED BY Councillor Lorna Cross and seconded by Councillor Elizabeth Wickham.

RESOLVED:

That, pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following item(s).

293/23-24. GRAVESHAM COMMUNITY LEISURE LIMITED (GCLL) DRAFT PROPOSAL SCALE OF CHARGES 2024 FOR THE SWANSCOMBE CENTRE.

In accordance with the Management Agreement (Section 28), the Managing Director, GCLL, had advised of the proposed Scale of Charges for 2024 and had included the current charges for information.

Members asked for GCLL to make it clear that the resident discount included in the charges applied to residents of both Greenhithe and Swanscombe.

Recommended: That the proposed scale of charges for 2024, submitted by GCLL, for The Swanscombe Centre be agreed.

294/23-24. INGRESS PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE (IPCC) - UPDATE.

Further to the previous update, minute 181/23-24, a verbal update was provided informing the meeting that a Teams meeting had been held with the Senior Planner DBC on 21 November 2023 which had confirmed the outstanding issues that Crest were required to resolve.

Members asked that a meeting of the IPCC Working Group be arranged to consider what could be done regarding the outstanding issues.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 7.55 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)