

MINUTES of the MEETING of the RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE  
held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on WEDNESDAY 17  
JANUARY 2024 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 Dawn Johnston

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Hazel Stephens  
x1 Member of the public  
Graham Blew – Town Clerk  
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/RFO

**ABSENT:** There were none

**373/23-24. ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.**

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

**374/23-24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Elizabeth Wickham due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from the Senior Groundsman/Gardener due to other commitments.

**RESOLVED:**

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

**375/23-24. SUBSTITUTES.**

There were none.

**376/23-24. 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.***

**377/23-24. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.**

The Town Clerk advised members of the following:

1. On behalf of the community groups the Town Council had successfully applied to the British Heart Foundation Defibrillator Scheme and a new defibrillator (in an unlocked heated external cabinet), would soon be delivered, and installed in Swanscombe Park.
2. Further to minute 460/22-23 and in accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1 (iv) (and in consultation with the Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee) a continuation contract for gang mowing in 2024 had been signed.

**378/23-24. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 NOVEMBER 2023**

**Recommended:** That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 November 2023 were approved and signed as a true record.

**379/23-24. 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, Equipment/ Staffing and Miscellaneous.

**Recommended:** That the report be noted.

**TOWN CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT.**

**380/23-24. TREES AT ST PAULS CLOSE, SWANSCOMBE.**

Further to minute 287/23-24 the x3 Horse Chestnut Trees were surveyed and confirmed to be dead and required felling as soon as practical. The Planning Authority were informed, under a 5-day notice, and agreed for the trees to be *felled "as an exemption in order to remove a risk of serious harm under Section 14 of the current tree regulations."*

After having liaised with the Chairman and a representative from the church, and having obtained x3 quotations, the works were successfully undertaken on the 19 December 2023 at a cost of £1,600.00.

As part of the permission to fell the trees, which were covered by a TPO, the Town Council *"are under a duty to plant x3 replacement trees the details of which are to be agreed in writing with the local authority"*.

**Recommended:**

1. That the decision be noted, and the actions taken be endorsed.

2. That the x3 replacement trees be planted in the grass area situated between Swanscombe Street and the play area.

**381/23-24. TREE AT SPRING VALE.**

After the storm on Tuesday 2 January 2024 one of the trees at Spring Vale split with the section that fell damaging one of the garages at the rear of the houses. Members were issued with supporting documents to confirm the actions taken by Officers.

The Town Clerk advised members of the correspondences received, since the incident, from x3 residents living in that area. After discussion it was agreed to await the result of the tree survey due to be carried out this year before any further action/s were considered.

**Recommended:** That the decision be noted, and the actions taken be endorsed.

**382/23-24. REQUEST TO USE KNOCKHALL RECREATION GROUND – FUNFAIR.**

Members considered the request to hold a Funfair at Knockhall Recreation Ground and, after discussion it was agreed that Knockhall Recreation Ground was not suitable for funfairs and that the Policy (minute 90, 31 May 2007) should be revised to read “Knockhall Park should not be used by Funfairs”.

**Recommended:**

1. That the request to use Knockhall Recreation Ground for a Funfair be declined.
2. That the Policy should be that Knockhall Recreation Ground should not be used by Funfairs.

**383/23-24. RECREATIONAL FACILITY CHARGES 2024 – 2025.**

Members considered the proposed price increases which had been increased by 2.5% overall and rounded up appropriately. As previously agreed, the allotments had been increased by 10% to include the staged recovery of the administration costs of the Allotment Association.

\*\* These figures had been considered when members previously agreed the Estimates for the forthcoming 2024 – 2025 financial year (minute 360/23-24 *Finance and General Purposes Committee and minute 368/23-24 Special Full Council, 11 January 2024*).

**Recommended:** That the Recreation Facility Charges 2024 – 2025 be endorsed.

384/23-24. **INGRESS PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE – UPDATE.**

Further to the update provided to all Members at the full council meeting on 7 December 2023 (minute 321/23-24) a response had been received from Gareth Johnson MP.

The Major Projects Team Leader (DBC) had arranged a Teams meeting on 4 January 2024 between Senior Officers, the Environmental Protection Officer (DBC), Crest Technical Director and Crest Acoustic Consultant. Topics discussed at this meeting, and requiring action from Crest, included:

- **Internal Acoustics** (Conditions 10 and 11 of planning permission for DA/12/00233/FUL).
- **Noise limiting device** (Conditions 10 and 11 of planning permission for DA/12/00233/FUL).
- **Bike / Bin Store** (Conditions 14 and 15 of planning permission DA/12/00233/FUL).
- **Additional Car Park.**
- **Letter from Development Director, Crest Nicholson Eastern, dated 20 April 2017.**

Members discussed the update and Councillor Peter Harris requested that he be involved in the issues regarding internal acoustics.

**Recommended:** That the update be noted.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 7.35 pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairman)