

MINUTES of the ASSETS & SERVICES COMMITTEE meeting held at Town Hall, Felixstowe on Wednesday 10 July 2024 at 7.30pm

PRESENT: Cllr D Rowe (Chairman) Cllr M Morris
Cllr M James (Vice Chairman) Cllr B Price (from item no.6)
Cllr J Candy Cllr M Sharman

OFFICERS: Mr A Tadjirishi (Town Clerk)
Mrs D Frost (Deputy Town Clerk)
Mrs J Smith (Assets & Services Officer)
Mr T Minns (Grounds & Maintenance Manager)

IN ATTENDANCE: 3 Members of the public.

100. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Council heard from members of the public on the issue of long grass on Blocks A & B in the Cemetery. A family member of someone interred in Block A expressed dissatisfaction, noting that the long grass in this area made visits to loved ones unpleasant and challenging. They were also apprehensive that cutting the grass at the end of summer would only exacerbate the untidiness. Another member of the public echoed these concerns, also citing a recent incident where they tripped over a concealed tree branch, highlighting the long grass as a safety hazard.

101. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from **Cllr D Aitchison, Cllr N Barber** and **Cllr S Harkin**.

Apologies for lateness were received from **Cllr B Price**.

102. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Member(s)	Minute No.	Nature of Interest
Cllr J Candy	All	Other registerable interest (as Members of East Suffolk Council)
Cllr S Harkin	All	Other registerable interests (as an employee of East Suffolk Council)
Cllr D Rowe	#107	Other registerable interests (as Honorary President of FOPWA)

Members were advised that, should any matters arise in the meeting that directly relate to any of their interests, they should make appropriate declarations at that time.

103. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Assets & Services Committee Meeting held on 24 April 2024 be signed by the Chairman as a true record. At the direction of the Chairman and with the assent of Members, the Cemetery Update Report was brought up the agenda to the next item.

104. CEMETERY UPDATE REPORT

The Grounds & Maintenance Manager presented the Cemetery Update Report, highlighting the current rewilding efforts in Blocks A & B at Felixstowe Cemetery during the summer months. Members discussed the impact of these efforts on both cemetery visitors and local wildlife. It was emphasised that the rewilding initiative aimed to preserve local ecology and manage resources efficiently.

The positive effects of rewilding on local wildlife was highlighted in discussion and it was proposed that the cutting schedule for the rewilded areas be aligned with other parts of the Cemetery, due to concerns about the negative impact on visitors.

The Committee also reviewed the renewal of the telecoms site agreement at Felixstowe Cemetery with Clarke Telecom. Concerns were expressed regarding the significantly reduced offer from Clarke Telecom, leading to a recommendation to reject the initial proposal. It was agreed that the free legal advice offered should be sought before proceeding with further negotiations.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the Cemetery Update Report be noted;**
- ii. the strimming schedule for Blocks A & B at Felixstowe Cemetery will return to a 4-week cycle; and**
- iii. the initial renewal offer for the telecom mast contract be rejected, with legal advice to be sought and negotiations to be initiated.**

105. ASSETS & SERVICES BUDGET REPORT

The Committee considered the summary and detailed report showing income and expenditure against budget to 28 June 2024.

It was RESOLVED that the Budget Report to 28 June 2024 be received and noted.

106. TOWN HALL UPDATE REPORT

Committee received the update report on the Town Hall. The Deputy Town Clerk also presented members with a quote of £480 + VAT that had just been received, for re-decoration of the Clerk's Office to put in place foil backed plasterboard to help with the damp problem. The quote was from the same company who did the ceiling in the Chamber earlier in the year. Members discussed the value of engaging with a local company that has previously delivered satisfactory work for the council, rather than commissioning another survey.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the Town Hall Update Report be noted; and**
- ii. the cost of £480 + VAT for damp proofing work in the Clerk's office to be funded from the Town Hall Earmarked Reserve.**

107. WALTON COMMUNITY HALL UPDATE

Committee received the update report on Walton Community Hall. Members discussed the available grants and their potential uses. The Deputy Clerk informed Members that there was an additional community fund from Sizewell C that could be applied for. There was a question raised whether these funds would specifically cover heating improvements. The Deputy Town Clerk clarified that the grants are intended for a comprehensive approach for environmental projects at Walton Community Hall, with heating improvements being a key component.

It was RESOLVED that the Walton Community Hall update report be noted.

108. BROADWAY HOUSE UPDATE REPORT

Committee received the report from Broadway House. Members discussed the FOPWA lease renewal, the Town Council's current level of involvement, and the rental income from FOPWA. A suggestion was made to consider a rent increase for the renewal and it was proposed that the Town Clerk be delegated the authority to finalise the lease renewal, subsequent to consulting with the Chairman of FOPWA on the possibility of a small rent increase.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the Broadway House update report be noted; and,**
- ii. the Town Clerk be delegated the authority to finalise the lease renewal with FOPWA.**

109. ALLOTMENTS UPDATE REPORT

The Assets & Services Officer presented the Allotments update report. Members also reviewed the report on the potential cost of installing a boundary fence at the Cowpasture allotments. Members unanimously agreed not to fund the fence installation.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the Allotment update report be noted; and,**
- ii. no further action be taken regarding the fence installation at Cowpasture.**

110. ALLENBY PARK AND GOSFORD WAY PARK

Committee received the updates on Allenby Park and Gosford Way Park. Members discussed the benefits and costs of installing a water tap at Allenby Park and explored potential funding options. Although they agreed to accept the concept and ongoing maintenance of the water tap installation, they did not wish to fund it.

Additionally, Members considered options for renovating the gates at Allenby Park. It was decided to approach outside companies to obtain quotes for both restoring the existing gates and installing new ones. This to include a design plan for the new gates.

It was RESOLVED that:

- i. the Parks Update Report be noted; and,**
- ii. The Felixstowe Society be informed that the Council have decided not to fund the tap but will not object if the Society chooses to fully fund its installation; and,**
- iii. Investigations be made in the cost of either restoring the existing gates at Allenby Park or installing new ones, including a design plan for the new gates.**

111. LANGLEY AVENUE PLAYING FIELDS – ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE LISTING

It was RESOLVED that the application for re-nomination of Langley Avenue Playing Fields as an Asset of Community Value be submitted to East Suffolk Council.

112. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 9.00pm. The next meeting was noted as being scheduled for Wednesday 18 September 2024 at 7.30pm.

Date: _____

Chairman: _____