

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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DRAFT MINUTES of the **Recreation, Amenities and War Memorials Committee** held on Tuesday 16th July 2019 at 7.00 pm in The Library, Hungerford

Present: Cllrs Simpson, Knight, Hawkins, Alford, Gaines and Lewis.

1. **Apologies for absence** - Noted from Cllrs Winsler, Cusack, Brookman, Farrell.
2. **Declarations of interest** – Cllr Knight - Triangle Field Management Committee.
3. **Agreement of minutes of meeting held on 18th June 2019 and update on actions:** *Cllr Lewis proposed the minutes as a true record, seconded by Cllr Knight, one abstention, rest in favour.*

-Updated To Do List and Maintenance List (circulated) – The lists were read through.

Cllr Knight advised the Legionella's visit is scheduled for 26th July.

Action: Cllr Knight to report back by next Friday on the TFMC H&S actions.

Action: Clerk to approach WBC to improve the kerb outside St Lawrence's

Action: Marsh Lane lease has been signed by two parties. Awaiting third and final signature. Chase regularly.

4. **Update on HTC walkarounds and actions required –**

Action – Clerk to check boundary of Marsh Lane to see if trees are within it.

Action – Two sheds at Fairfields need repair and vegetation needs removing from rooves. HTC to instruct maintenance man.

Action – Cllrs Hawkins, Alford and Lewis to meet at Fairfields with Haha and Clerk, 10am Monday 22nd July to look at sheds, fence, benches and trees.

The Clerk explained that the volume of Councillor walk-rounds and subsequent actions are placing an excessive administrative burden on the office personnel. The current Councillor walk-rounds are in addition to an annual visit to all HTC assets by Health and Safety Consultants Ellis Whittam. *Cllr Hawkins proposed rather than have regular Councillor walkrounds, HTC carry out selected audit checks following Ellis Whittam visits, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.*

5. **Tragedy & War Memorial Garden maintenance** – Consider strategy for improvement of these areas – **see attached report.** Cllr Hawkins added that at the Tragedy Garden the plants and roses require attention and some compost is needed. The War Memorial Garden soil is even worse. The weeds are deep rooted, and the shrubs need cutting back. A raised bed was suggested, and Dobbie's could be approached for flowers, but this raises difficulties for watering. Windowflowers could be asked to include these beds when watering the hanging baskets.

Action: Cllr Hawkins proposed she looks at options/quotes and brings them back to Sept R&A, seconded by Cllr Simpson, all in favour.

6. St Saviour's: -

• Propose amendments to the cemetery regulations as drafted –

Action: Cllr Simpson proposed the changes to the cemetery regulations as drafted including the option not to allow the scattering of ashes and the change to 1 hour between interments, seconded by Cllr Gaines, all in favour.

• Overseeing of burials - Consider changes to procedure, following cemetery training – This is not a mandatory requirement although recommended. Cllr Simpson proposed HTC staff oversee burials only on an ad hoc basis due to time constraints, seconded by Cllr Hawkins, all in favour.

• Consider improvements for access and parking at the cemetery and future burial space

Action: Office to obtain a quote to extend the parking area as indicated on the map.

Action: Add burial space to the H2036 agenda.

7. Swimming Pool House

• Consider quotes for repair/replacement of fencing and gate –

Action: Cllr Simpson proposed spending a maximum of £653 to repair the fence and install a new gate (subject to budget) seconded by Cllr Knight, all in favour.

• Update on tenant's request to use garage as another bedroom – Building regulations would be required. The tenant has made significant improvements already to the property.

Action: Bring back to R&A once the landowners Town & Manor have considered the request.

8. St Lawrence's – Consider proposal for meadow area in churchyard – see report attached.

Cllr Simpson proposed acceptance of the proposal for St Lawrence's Churchyard, seconded by Cllr Knight, all in favour.

9. Play parks

-Consider quotes for safety surface at Smitham Bridge – Deferred to next meeting

-Update on guidance from Network rail on warning signage required for Smitham Bridge – No further action is required.

10. Croft Field Activity Centre (this item was taken after item 3)

-Consider colours for bonded floor – Councillors agreed on a dark grey. The work should be carried out the week commencing 29th July.

-Update on decision/meeting regarding bollard - Representatives from Hungerford Nursery asked why it was felt necessary to install a bollard. The Nursery have been using the car park in the Croft Field for many years and it is safer than the road. The area has got progressively busier and other groups/visitors use both the Croft Field car park and the Nursery car park. The Nursery do encourage walking to school and have a prize scheme for those that take part however there are 123 children at present and it is not possible for all to walk. Councillors were invited to visit the family centre from 9am to 11am on Thursday when there will be a celebration about keeping the centre open.

Cllr Knight advised one reason for the bollard was security and to prevent travellers. Other reasons include the car park maintenance costs, the centre running at a loss and hirers of the centre not being able to park. Although the nursery uses the car park for drop offs and pick ups some people are parking for much longer.

Action: Cllr Simpson proposed the Clerk orders a sign to be put in place stating the car park is 10-minute maximum stay unless you have hired the premises, seconded by Cllr Knight, all in favour.

Action: Office to seek quote for a lockable height restrictor to be placed at the car park entrance. It was suggested a members' bid could be applied for.

Action: The Nursery offered to hand out fliers to promote the Croft Field Centre

Action: The Nursery will find out how many nursery people use the car park and stress that the max stay is 10 mins. They will attend our next R&A meeting in Sept.

11. **Funding for drinking water tap at Hungerford Football Club** – Cllr Lewis has yet to hear back from the Football Club. **Action:** Bring back to next meeting.
12. **TFMC** - Cllr Knight advised the committee met on 27th June. RFC will proceed with the nearside barriers first due to funding and begin preparing the application for more floodlights. Electrical testing has been carried out. A member of the Rugby Club has agreed to do weekly H&S testing. Hand soap dispensers have been installed. The Trim trail is being varnished and has a new group using it. Santas grotto is planned for 7th Dec and DONM is 28th August.
Action: It was requested that spraying of the weeds on the bank around the saplings is carried out. Cllr Knight will take this to the next TFMC meeting.

Meeting closed 8.55pm

Hungerford Town Council

Public report to:

Recreation and Amenities Committee

Agenda Item No 5:

War Memorial and Tragedy Gardens

Background

I voluntarily took on the responsibility to carry out some work at both of these gardens last year. Since then I have been working on my own and with the Council contractor to do some basic maintenance and also where possible other work such as planting seasonal bedding plants.

Working in the gardens has enabled me to understand the areas and the demands /requirements of each.

Recently comments have been received about the need for improvement at The War Memorial Gardens.

Support for joint working at The War Memorial Garden from The Smarten Up Hungerford team may be available.

Both gardens in my view require significantly more investment of time and resources than is currently recognised. This is particularly acute during the spring and summer.

Objective

- 1) Discuss the position with the Recreation and Amenities committee and propose a visit to the gardens for all or some members of the committee.
- 2) Consider a short and long term strategy for the gardens.
- 3) Agree a strategy and confirm whether this needs to go to Full Council.

Options.

Agree/disagree with the objectives above.

Financial and Legal implications

This *may* require more financial investment.

Reference to Council Strategy, where relevant

N/A.

Consultation:

This is the beginning of the consultation process.

Other information

Risks:

- Deterioration of the areas in the longer term.

Benefits:

- A strategy for these areas would provide a degree of confidence to their longer term future.

Recommendation(s)

Discuss proposals and agree a way forward.

Signed: Sally Hawkins June 2019

St Lawrence Churchyard proposed conservation management plan **Version 2. May 2019. Mike Morecroft.**

The objective of this plan is to increase the diversity of species of plants and animals in the churchyard, whilst continuing to provide a peaceful and attractive setting for the church. It is also important that it continues to be a place for people to walk and sit quietly and for use during church events, including Sunday School, Easter Egg Hunt and barbeques. As a closed burial site, it is important to ensure that its role as a place of remembrance is respected. If implemented sensitively there is an opportunity to enhance these other roles of the churchyard as well as its biodiversity. This document provides an outline plan for consultation and comments are welcome.

3 Management areas are proposed

1. **Wildflower meadow area.** Cut once per year in summer. Hay to be removed and composted (or given away)
Initially allow to grow tall without seeding to see what comes up. Wildflowers could subsequently be seeded by using 'green hay' i.e. grass cut from a nearby species-rich grassland – potentially from drier parts of Hungerford Marsh (subject to consultation with Town and Manor of Hungerford). The chosen site would need to be selected to have similar conditions to the churchyard in terms of soil, water table and ideally semi-shaded. Alternatively seed or plug plants could be obtained from a specialist supplier. Control of coarse grasses, nettles, docks, brambles etc., may be necessary in early years.

2. **Woodland flower area.** Woodland plants such as native bluebells, primroses, anemones or wild daffodils, to be introduced as bulbs or plants. Cut once per year in summer if necessary. Note this area is largely bare soil at present and cutting is not likely to be necessary except around the edge.
3. **Short grass area.** All remaining parts of churchyard, including a 2m. strip around the edge of the wildflower meadow area. Cut as required to maintain short turf as at present. Grass to be removed and composted

Use of herbicides and fertiliser to be avoided throughout churchyard. Hand weeding by volunteer group if necessary.

Trees to be maintained as at present, including pollarding of lime trees. Normal safety precautions to be taken to avoid risks from falling trees or branches. In the event that new trees are planted, the meadow area should be avoided and native tree or shrub species preferred.

Bird and bat boxes to be installed on larger trees. Habitat piles and bug houses to be constructed in places around the edge, where ashes have not been interred.

Volunteer group to be established, drawn from members of the community, including the church and HEAT. Opportunities to be provided for community groups especially for children and young people to be engaged in management of the churchyard.

Signs to explain the plans for the church yard to be put up to explain the reasons for changing management.

