

HUNGERFORD TOWN COUNCIL

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DRAFT MINUTES of the **Recreation, Amenities and War Memorials Committee** meeting held on Tuesday 16th November 2021 at 7.00pm, in the Library, Hungerford.

Present: Cllrs Simpson, Winsor, Knight, Alford, Mills, Shatford, Schlanker and Lewis (arrived 7.10pm).
Members of public: Jerry Keates. Two representatives from HAHA, Ted Angell and Andrew Downs, (left meeting at 7.40pm).

In attendance: Sarah Hennessey (Deputy Town Clerk).

RA2021056 Apologies for absence – Cllr Yakar-Wells. District Councillors Benneyworth, Cole and Rowles.

RA2021057 Declarations of Interest – Cllrs Alford and Schlanker (Item RA2021059).

RA2021058 Agreement of minutes of meeting held on 21st September 2021 and update on actions:

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: To accept the minutes of 21st September 2021 as a true record. One abstention.

Update on actions: The shower heads in two changing rooms at the Triangle Field have been replaced by our maintenance man (RB).

The new Theatre Company licence agreement has been agreed by our solicitor and has been sent to the Theatre Company for signing.

The new lease for the Triangle Field was discussed at the last F&GP meeting. Our solicitor has been requested to make a few small amendments and this will then be forwarded to HRFC.

All other actions were completed.

The to-do list and maintenance list were read through. Some of the actions highlighted on the recent H&S walkrounds have been added to RB's maintenance list. The committee is concerned that RB does not feel pressured by the number of extra tasks added to his list.

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Lewis

Resolution: RB to identify the items on his list that could be delegated to a contractor and a quote obtained for a contractor to carry out this work. The cost for this work to come from the money that has been set aside in the budget for this purpose.

RA2021059 Allotments

Receive report from HAHA. Ted Angell (Chair) advised that HAHA held its first public event since before lockdown with the Produce and Craft Show in October. Lettings are good – the Marsh Lane site is virtually full, there are a few vacancies at the Fairfields site. A few issues were raised following the recent Health and Safety walkround at Fairfields, mainly regarding the condition of the paths and sheds. **ACTION:** Office to set up a meeting with the site landlords (Sovereign).

Andrew Downs (Treasurer) advised invoices and invitations to renew tenancies will be sent out in January. Due to not being able to hold any social events during lockdown, the committee has had to control expenditure.

TA advised that the current five-year lease at Marsh Lane expires in December 2022. HAHA is keen to discuss renewal of the lease with the landowner and development partner and has

considered ways in which HAHA might contribute to achieving a longer lease for the site.
ACTION: A face-to-face meeting to be set up to which all interested parties will be invited.

RA2021060 Croft Field Activity Centre

– Receive update on progress of improvement project. Planning permission has been granted and invitations to tender will be sent out in due course.

– Consider quote to move CCTV screen/equipment to North Room (report attached).

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Knight

Resolution: To accept the quote in the sum of £453.71 + VAT for the screen/equipment to be moved to the North Room.

RA2021061 Skate Park

Update on progress of plans for improvements to the Skate Park. A provisional meeting has been set up with Maverick to discuss skate park design options on Friday 26th November at 10am. This will be confirmed nearer the time. Members of the working party will attend.

RA2021062 Leisure Strategy Update

Discuss options for assisting with installation of a 5G pitch. Propose recommendations to Full Council. With regard to HTC's land proposal at JOG School, this will be discussed at the next WBC AMG meeting on the 26th November.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Knight

Resolution: To submit a formal expression of interest for the asset transfer via the WBC devolution page. **ACTION:** Town Clerk to submit.

RA2021063 Health & Safety – Including any other concerns relating to Covid19

Review reports of recent site walk rounds (circulated). Discuss actions relating to bench and fencing at cemetery. The recent walkround at Smitham Bridge playground raised concerns over the fencing adjacent to the railway embankment. The fencing had been cut by the Fire Service during a recent incident. **ACTION:** Office to contact Network Rail to advise them the fencing needs to be repaired. RB to investigate and make temporary repair if necessary.

Cllr Winsor commented that, following a recent accident at the Skate Park, it might be helpful if a H&S audit of the office was undertaken to ensure there were no outstanding H&S requirements.

Proposed: Cllr Winsor

Seconded: Cllr Knight

Resolution: To request our H&S consultants (Peninsula) undertake a H&S audit of the office.

The recent walkround at the cemetery highlighted issues with two missing fencing panels and a bench that needs attention. **ACTION:** Office to contact the owner of the neighbouring property to ascertain ownership of the fence.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Lewis

Resolution: Existing bench to be removed and a replacement bench purchased to a maximum value of £500. **ACTION:** Office to order bench and RB to install. Bench to be moved from current position under the tree.

Our contractor who cuts the grass at the War Memorial Avenue has requested that signs be put up to try and encourage owners to clear up after their dogs as there is a lot of dogs mess in this area.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Lewis

Resolution: Delegate to office the purchase of new signage to be installed at the War Memorial Avenue.

RA2021064 Cemeteries

Consider amendments to cemetery regulations (circulated).

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Alford

Resolution: To accept the amendments to cemetery regulations.

ACTION: Office to publish amended regulations on HTC website and circulate to funeral directors.

RA2021065 **Trees**

Consider quotations and propose tree work as required (report attached).

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Shatford

Resolution: To accept the quote for the tree work recommended by the arboriculturist in St Lawrences churchyard as per points 1, 2 and 3 in tree report. Total sum £2,280.

The committee noted the tree work to the lime trees and box elder as per point 4 in tree report. This work to take place winter 2022-23 and budgeted for in next year's budget.

The committee noted the quote from the tree surgeon for work at St Saviour's cemetery to remove trees with ash die back. **ACTION:** Office to obtain two comparative quotes for this work.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Knight

Resolution: To appoint arboriculturist to obtain professional plan on tree replanting and check safety of damaged sycamore at cost of £285.

The committee noted that we are still waiting for permission from the WBC tree officer to trim branches of yew tree and horse chestnut tree overhanging Bridge Street. These trees are sited on private property and the committee do not feel that HTC should be responsible for the cost of removing these branches.

Proposed: Cllr Schlanker

Seconded: Cllr Simpson

Resolution: If permission is received from WBC, HTC to write to landowner requesting them to remove the branches at their own cost.

There is a large ash tree at the entrance of the Fairfields allotment site. This is checked annually by our tree surgeon and the canopy lifted when required. The committee would like this tree to be checked for signs of ash die back and if found, it might be best to consider removal of the tree at this stage rather than wait for its condition to worsen.

Proposed: Cllr Simpson

Seconded: Cllr Winsor

Resolution: To request our tree surgeon inspect the ash tree for signs of ash die back and provide a quote for removal of the tree.

RA2021066 **Consider R&A budget for 2022-23 (refer to draft)**

Several amendments were suggested to the proposed budget which would give a net R&A budget for 2022-23 of £48,641, an increase of 3.4%. This is subject to amendments to some of the proposed budget lines which need to be queried with the RFO prior to approval.

PART 2

Confidential

The public and press may be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity might be prejudicial to the public interest as per the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

RA2021067 **Triangle Field**

Receive update on progress of new lease. Discussed above under update on actions from previous meeting.

Meeting closed at 9.15pm.

REPORTS

Public Report to: R&A committee 16/11/2021

Agenda Item No RA2021060: Consider quote to move CCTV screen/equipment to North Room.

Background The CCTV screen and equipment for the camera at the Croft Field Centre is currently located in the attic in the North Room. This makes it very difficult for office staff to access when required to view and capture footage. Staff have to meet the maintenance man at the centre as he has to bring a ladder to gain entry to the attic, there is no light in the attic space, no room to stand up and it is very dirty and dusty in there. This obviously raises health and safety issues, particularly regarding using the ladder.

A quote has been obtained from Smart for moving the screen and equipment from the attic to the North Room. The screen will be mounted on a wall bracket and the equipment will be housed in a lockable metal cabinet. This would make it more accessible and it will be secure.

The quote is for **£453.71** ex VAT.

Options

This matter would normally be considered by H&T committee. However, due to the proposed alterations to the centre, R&A committee to consider if they want to spend money on moving the equipment now or wait until alterations have been completed at a future date. If the equipment is moved now and needs to be moved again once alterations have been completed, Smart have advised that the cost of moving it a second time will be lower as the costs of the cabinet and cable have been included in this quote and would not be included in a future quote.

Reference to Action Plan

Aim – To improve health and safety.

Available budget (£s) including cost centre

4291 Croft Field Repairs/Maintenance £1,412 left in budget.

4374 CCTV Maintenance £856 left in budget.

Recommendation(s)

The best option, based on the above information

Signed Deputy Town Clerk November 2021

Public Report to: R&A 16th November 2021

Agenda Item No RA2021065: Trees - Update on Tree Program.

Background The tree programme has been updated and should be referred to alongside this report.

Reference to Action Plan Aim – Ensure public open spaces are well maintained (Medium to High Priority)

Objective Make safe trees that HTC is responsible for, particularly where adjacent to the roadside, in public open spaces and where damage is being caused to third party property.

Retain a clear line of sight between our CCTV poles to maximise the signal.

Quotes have been obtained for the tree work recommended by the arboriculturist in St Lawrences churchyard as follows:

1. T8,9,11 Dismantle large Elm to ground level and deadwood sycamores as recommended using small 15m cherry picker (Required due to condition of trees), chip waste and remove from site - **£650**
2. T 10,12,13,17 Raise canopy on all these trees to the specified height - **£450**
3. T5,6 Large mature poplars require 27 mtr cherry picker in order to access the canopy to reduce tops and side by specified amounts as per consultant's recommendations - **£1180**
4. Trees G14/15 Lime trees along path, re pollard as we do every few years and shorten back branch on Box Elder -**£850** with rubbish removed and disposed of. (**NOTE: not due until Winter 2022-23 – note file and ensure money in budget**)

Quote obtained from tree surgeon for work at St Saviours to remove trees with ash die back.

5. Large 27 mtr cherry picker needed in order to gain required reach for overhanging road side Ash as well as canopy height of mature Ash in churchyard. Due to the advancement of Ash die back we are

prevented from climbing these trees. Cost per day of 27 mtr cherry picker, van chipper with three men on site £880

Per day. Estimate to dismantle all affected trees 4/5 days.

(NOTE: we are advised due to the hire of the cherry picker it is more cost effective to carry out works in one go)

Quote obtained from arboriculturist

6. To advise on safety of sycamore damaged by freak wind on Halloween (may require felling) and to provide a sketch plan showing proposed new tree planting at a cost of **£285** plus VAT.

UPDATES on other work:

I have applied to the WBC tree officer for permission to trim 2.5m off branches of a yew tree and horse chestnut tree overhanging the road in Bridge St (owned by Great Grooms). The horse chestnut tree branches particularly are starting to affect the CCTV signal. I have obtained Hungerford Tree Surgery's and Smart, our CCTV contractors' advice. Recently a lorry took out one of these branches and a vehicle then ran over the debris.

UPDATE: Permission is still awaited

I have also applied to WBC tree officer for permission to remove self-seeded so called weed trees (an Elder and an Ash) from NR land along the Cuttings. These are pushing against the fence and encroaching on the building opposite. They are starting to cause a problem with the CCTV and will become a much larger problem if left to grow as they are in the wrong place. **UPDATE: Now removed by SSE**

Available budget (£s) including cost centre Ear-marked reserves £6926

Health & Safety and Legal implications Liable for third party property damage and injury to members of public

Consultation:

Permission required from Tree officer at West Berks for work within a conservation area other than work to remove dead wood

Recommendation(s)

Appoint Hungerford Tree Surgery to carry out work as quoted in 1, 2, and 3 above, as recommended by the arboriculturist.

Note budget for work quoted in 4. Suggest delay until due date.

Obtain comparative quotes and advice for the work at St Saviour's (as required by our financial regulations for all quotes over £3,000).

Appoint arboriculturist to obtain professional plan on tree replanting and check safety of damaged sycamore.

You may wish to visit St Saviours to view the trees with ash die-back. Distressingly there are several beautiful well-established trees that are affected. See photo below. 4 ash trees in row shown to the right of the Wellingtonia all have ash die back and are included in the quote to be felled.



In the above photo, taken facing south from in front of the Garden of Remembrance, most of the trees are Ash including those on the boundary too. These are at present unaffected by the disease.



Above is a photo of the Ash tree closest to St Saviour's entrance which is in poor condition. It is one of the roadside Ash trees that are more of a danger and included in the quote to fell.

Signed: Town Clerk 15/11/2021