

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7 JULY 2022

PRESENT: Councillors Bradford, Chowns, Morris, Shields, Sinclair, Troy and Whattler

ALSO PRESENT: Julia Lawrence – Deputy Town Clerk
Charlotte Barltrop – Minute Taker

E268 ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THE 2022/23 MUNICIPAL YEAR

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Stephen Chowns be duly elected as Chair of the Environment and Leisure Committee for the 2022/23 municipal year.

Councillor Chowns asked the Committee to observe one minute silence in respect of the late Councillor Dee Knight, who had been Vice Chair to the Environment and Leisure Committee, adding that she was hard working and always showed great enthusiasm.

E269 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Auburn, Beddoes-Davis and Howells.

E270 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None Received.

E271 THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES

RESOLVED:

That the Nolan Principles were received and noted.

E272 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE 2022/23 MUNICIPAL YEAR

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Nina Shields be duly elected as Vice-Chair of the Environment and Leisure Committee for the 2022/23 municipal year.

E273 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members of the Environment and Leisure Committee agreed that quorum should be three nominated councillors.

Councillor Shields noted that no reference had been made to the Climate Change Declaration and how it was being monitored. Members agreed that it should be added to the Terms of Reference.

Councillor Bradford stated that there was also no reference to the War Memorial and considered that this should also be included. Members were aware that it was currently being addressed by Full Council due to the sensitive issues that had been taking place but it was agreed that once these matters were resolved, it would then revert back to this Committee under its Terms of Reference.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the members of the committee agreed for a paragraph relating to the Climate Change Declaration be added to the Terms of Reference.**
- 2. That the War Memorial be added to the Terms of Reference once the current repairs had been completed.**

E274 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No Members of the public were present.

E275 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EXTRAORDINARY ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 APRIL 2022

Whilst Members of the Committee accepted the minutes, Members sought confirmation on the following:

E266.3 Feedback relating to meeting between Governors of John Masefield High School and Community Development Officer (CDO). Councillor Shields confirmed a meeting had taken place and it was agreed that the Deputy Head would work with the CDO going forwards.

E266.7 Free parking all day on Saturday, 3 December 2022 as opposed to Friday, 2 December 2022.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Extraordinary Environment and Leisure Committee Meeting held on Thursday, 21 April 2022 be accepted and signed.

E276 TO REVIEW ACTION SHEETS

Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee made reference to the following Action Points:-

E260 – Climate Change spend – The Deputy Clerk advised the meeting that £2,000 had been spent on 8 hours training, provided by Garden Organics Direct, for volunteers and the then Community Development Officer on Waste Reduction Techniques.

E260 – “No bicycles” sign – Councillors were concerned that the Market House will be damaged by people chaining their bikes to the timbers and therefore a sign should be erected. The Deputy Clerk reported that she had since written to Herefordshire Council’s Principal Building Conservation Officer (“PBCO”) who had advised that listed building consent would be required if signs were attached to the Market House or the railings. Alternatively subject to receiving the necessary consents from the highway authority (if required), Ledbury Town Council could erect pole signs without planning permission.

The PBCO further suggested that several small signs, preferably white and black or cream and brown in colour be attached to the railings by screws but not glue. Members of the Committee were totally adverse to having screws. Councillor Bradford asked that we contact specialists (Caroe) to see what they could recommend. It was suggested that a Victorian style sign with rope or chain to minimise damage may be in keeping with the existing old cast iron signage. Councillor Chowns noted that the Methodist Church was in the process of getting a sign and agreed to obtain contact details of the signwriter.

The Committee agreed that this needed to be resolved as quickly as possible.

E260 – Traffic lights at Top Cross. Councillor Sinclair believes that there is a sensor which operates the light sequence and that this is not operating correctly. The Deputy Clerk is to investigate whether these lights are an “intelligence system” working on the basis of the amount of cars travelling through the lights.

Councillor Chowns made reference to the Action Points numbered E104(2) to E169. The Deputy Clerk advised Members that these were action points outstanding prior to her arrival but had been left on the schedule so that they are not forgotten.

E176(4) – Shelter. The Committee agreed for the street artist to return and repaint the Shelter and apply anti-vandal paint. The Committee also agreed that should the Shelter get damaged again in terms of the mural, then it would be repainted but only in one colour and for the anti-vandal paint to be applied.

E179(1) – Providing replacement bins around Ledbury. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that she would be undertaking a project in due course to establish what bins needed replacing bearing in mind some bins had been burnt. Committee members were concerned that Ledbury Town Council would be expected to incur costs to replace bins whereas the Deputy Clerk made it clear that this exercise was purely to establish

what bins needed replacing and for Herefordshire Council to take responsibility if such bins belonged to them.

E179(2) Benches in Dog Hill Woods – Councillor Chowns made particular reference to the two benches which were concrete lumps with the seat missing. Councillor Chowns advised Members that a meeting had been scheduled for tomorrow, Friday, 8 July, to visit the Woods and establish a programme of works to start in the Autumn which would include benches.

E189(1) – Market House, quinquennial works. The Deputy Clerk advised that a report had been received from Caroe regarding works and this would be circulated to Members of the Committee. Councillor Bradford considered that the Market House had deteriorated and that a programme of works needed to be acted upon as soon as possible. The matter is to be brought back to the next Committee meeting.

E202-3 – St Katherine’s Car Park Lighting - Councillor Whattler gave an update that the car park is no longer as dark now that the trees had been removed and suggested that, should they be required, solar lights may be a good option in this space. Councillor Shields asked if the lighting can be considered as part of the landscaping which is to happen. The Deputy Clerk informed the committee that the HC Project Board would be meeting in the Autumn to consider street lighting within the car park. Councillor Bradford considered that officers of the HC Project Board should be invited to attend the next Environment and Leisure Committee meeting in September to give an update. Councillor Chowns suggested that Councillor Harvey may be able to assist in this regard.

E214 – Market House Timber Assessment – as noted above under reference E189(1).

E224 – Blossom trees in the High Street. The Committee debated having trees in the High Street. Whilst they can lower the temperature of the High Street in extreme weather conditions, it was reported that they also do not thrive well in large pots let alone damage that could be created to infrastructure should they be planted in the ground. The Committee decided that no further action should be taken in respect of this action point based on the facts that had been presented.

E225(1) – Dog Hill Woods – action point to be followed up following visit with Guy Tustin on 8 July 2022.

E225(2) – Replacement signage in Dog Hill Woods – to be addressed in agenda item number 14.1.

E225(3) – Benches in Dog Hill Woods – to be addressed following visit with Guy Tustin on 8 July 2022.

E229(2) – Fencing around Christmas Tree – Members considered that metal barriers would look unsightly around the Christmas tree and suggested that picket style fencing would be more appropriate. The Deputy Clerk was requested to look into

options for wooden fencing around the Christmas tree as opposed to the metal barriers. As noted on the Action Plan, the Deputy Clerk advised that this was a project to be addressed from September onwards.

E254(2) – CCTV, Recreation Ground - The Deputy Clerk advised that the Clerk and herself were to arrange a meeting with Herefordshire Council's CCTV Monitoring Officer to discuss the possibility again of Herefordshire Council taking ownership of the CCTV. The Deputy Clerk is to update the Committee at the next meeting on Thursday, 15 September 2022.

E277 ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS CHURCH, CLOSED CHURCHYARD

Members of the Environment & Leisure Committee were provided with details noting that the maintenance of St Michael and All Angels Churchyard is charged to Ledbury Town Council and that a suitable budget should be considered in the annual budget of future years.

Councillors Bradford and Sinclair considered that Ledbury Town Council should question this as it was argued that Ledbury Town Council is not a local authority – the local authority being Herefordshire Council. Councillor Shields recommended that the Clerk seeks legal clarification on the correct term for Ledbury Town Council, whether it is deemed a local authority or parish council, and report back at the next Committee meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk seek clarification on the definition of “Local Authority” and that this item be brought back to the next Committee meeting.

E278 ASBESTOS SURVEYS

Members were advised that asbestos surveys had been carried out in all Ledbury Town Council buildings, which included the Council Offices, Market House, Cemetery Chapel and Mortuary, in February 2022. Copies of all the surveys/certificates had been circulated to Committee Members.

RESOLVED:

That the asbestos surveys be received and noted.

E279 CEMETERY UPDATE

Members of the Committee were provided with an update regarding ongoing works at the Cemetery.

Members were also advised about the general state of the Chapel in terms of its presentation. The Deputy Clerk had advised that the carpet needed cleaning and the woodwork re-staining. Councillor Bradford considered that it would be more appropriate to replace the carpet with carpet tiles as opposed to getting it cleaned. The Deputy Clerk was asked to obtain costings for this option as well as costs for the re-staining.

Members were informed that Herefordshire Wildlife Trust would be carrying out some voluntary work in the cemetery and it was anticipated that this work would start in August 2022.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Members receive and note the contents of the report.**
- 2. That the Deputy Clerk obtain costs to replace the carpet in the Chapel with tiles and the re-staining of the woodwork and bring these back to a future meeting of the committee.**

E280 RECREATION GROUND

13.1 Zip Wire

Members of the Committee accepted that works needed to be undertaken as soon as possible and agreed to accept the company that could carry out the works at the earliest opportunity.

13.2 Cantilever Tyre Swing

Members of the Committee reviewed the quotations that had been presented and felt they were too expensive. Councillor Sinclair considered that the Council needed to look at cheaper options, such as a local blacksmith to put metal bands to reinforce the existing oak beam and reinstall the tyre or to completely replace the piece of oak beam. Members agreed that this course of action should be pursued and the Deputy Clerk is to seek costs from a local blacksmith as well as costs for a piece of oak beam.

13.3 Skate Park

Members of the Committee were provided with an update in respect of the Skate Park.

Councillor Sinclair considered that 10% of monies should be held back as retention monies to ensure that the job has been completed correctly albeit appreciating that the balance of monies (£26,181.80 + VAT) could be settled for up to 6 months following completion.

Members of the Environment and Leisure Committee agreed to continue with the proposals put forward subject to approval from the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee.

13.4 Basketball Court

The Deputy Clerk advised Members that the resurfacing to the basketball court were scheduled for the week commencing Monday, 22 August 2022.

13.5 Consultation with Schools regarding play equipment

Members were advised of the outcome of the consultation confirming that the Quest Enterprise was the preferred choice but due to lack of funding, this would not be pursued in this financial year. Councillor Shields recommended that this is brought back to the new administration next year to advise what was selected following the consultation process and asked that the three schools be informed of the outcome.

RESOLVED:

That Members of the Environment and Leisure Committee:

- 1 That the company who are able to offer the fastest completion time on the zip wire be appointed to undertake the works.**
- 2 That the Deputy Clerk revisit the options put forward for the repair of the cantilever tyre swing and report back to the next meeting of the committee.**
- 3 That the proposals put forward by Evolution Skateparks be recommended to the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee.**
- 4 That the start date for the resurfacing works at the basketball court be noted.**
- 5 That the outcome of the consultation in respect of the play equipment, confirming that the Quest Enterprise was the preferred choice be noted. That this be addressed in the new financial year following the elections, when the new administration would be in place. The Deputy Clerk was asked to provide feedback to the schools of the outcome.**

E281 DOG HILL WOODS

14.1 Geological Signage

Members of the Committee reviewed the quotations that had been presented and agreed to accept proposals put forward by Company 3.

14.2 Visit to Dog Hill Woods

Members noted that a meeting with Guy Tustin was scheduled for the afternoon of Friday, 8 July 2022 to consider a programme of works at Dog Hill Woods.

RESOLVED:

- 1 That company 3 be appointed to create the signage for Dog Hill Woods.**

- 2 That the Deputy Clerk report on the visit to Dog Hill Woods at the next meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee, to be held in September.**

E282 MEMORIAL BENCH AND/OR PLAQUE FOR THE LATE COUNCILLOR DEE KNIGHT

General discussion took place regarding benches/plaques for councillors in general and Councillor Bradford believed that if a memorial for Councillor Knight was put in place, this would set a precedent. He considered whether a memorial garden for councillors/mayors, past and present, could be located within the Cemetery, and/or a wall plaque in the Chapel may be more appropriate.

Members were unable to agree whether to have a memorial bench/or plaque for the late Councillor Dee Knight but agreed that a more general discussion should take place at the next Environment and Leisure meeting to discuss the possibility of having a memorial garden and/or benches in memory of deceased councillors/mayors.

RESOLVED:

That the idea of a memorial garden should be added to the agenda of the next meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee for further discussion.

E283 PROPOSED TREE PLANTING

Members of the Committee were advised that Liz Duberley, Service Manager Built and Natural Environment for Herefordshire Council, was keen to see what tree planting opportunities there would be in Ledbury, subject to funding, and had invited Councillors to join her to establish suitable locations for tree planting.

RESOLVED:

That Councillors Chowns, Shields and Sinclair offered to be part of this project to discuss proposed tree planting.

E284 JOHN MASEFIELD COMMEMORATIVE PROJECT

Members briefly discussed the report that had been presented by the Community Development Officer.

Councillor Morris noted that there was no budget and that this should be addressed at the Working Party. Reference was made to Councillor Morris becoming the Chair but Members were informed that the Chair for this Working Party would be nominated and elected at the first meeting of the Working Party. The Deputy Clerk advised Members that a member of the public who wished to remain anonymous had offered to donate £1,000 towards the memorial and who wished to attend the Working Party.

RESOLVED:

That Members of the Environment and Leisure Committee:

- 1 Agreed that consideration be given to a poets' commemoration to focus solely on John Masefield.
- 2 Agreed that the Clerk writes to Dr Philip Herrington, University of London, for confirmation that there are no known concerns about John Masefield that may cause controversy, and thereby damage the reputation of Ledbury or its Town Council.
- 3 Agreed that the John Masefield Society be contacted and advised of the Council's plan to commemorate John Masefield within the Town.
- 4 Agreed that a working party be established to progress this project.

Standing Orders were suspended for 15 minutes to allow the Committee Meeting to proceed beyond 21.00 hours.

E285. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDER 3(X)

RESOLVED:

That Standing Order 3(x) be suspended for 15 minutes to allow the committee to consider the remainder of the business on the agenda.

E286 CULTIVATION LICENCES

Members were asked to give consideration to the response from Balfour Beatty and agree what areas, if any, Ledbury Town Council wished to take over the responsibility of via a cultivation licence.

Members believed that Ledbury Town Council should not take responsibility for grass cutting as this should remain with Balfour Beatty albeit appreciating that the number of cuts had reduced quite significantly. Councillor Shields made reference to a nationwide campaign to stop cutting grass verges and to grow wild flowers. This was well received by the Committee and should be supported.

RESOLVED:

That the members of the Committee agreed not to take over any cultivation licences and that this should remain the responsibility of Balfour Beatty to maintain grass cutting and/or grass verge areas.

E287 WORKING PARTIES

- 19.1 To receive and note the minutes of the meeting of the Events Working Party held on Thursday, 28 April 2022, Tuesday, 17 May 2022 and Wednesday, 29 June 2022 and consider any recommendations therein.

The Committee referred to item E97 of the minutes dated 29 June 2022 and confirmed that they would be pleased to run another event, similar to what was run on 3 June 2022 in respect of the Platinum Jubilee. Councillor

Bradford considered that we should involve the Gurkhas or HMS Ledbury. Councillor Shields suggested an event on the afternoon of Community Day, especially as the events for Community Day finished by 2.00pm (in the Burgage Hall), at which time Ledbury Town Council could organise an afternoon picnic at the recreation ground. This was well received and agreed by Members of the Committee.

The Committee were also in favour of pursuing the Heritage Open Day event in September.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the minutes of the Events Working Party held on Thursday, 28 April 2022, Tuesday 17 May 2022 and Wednesday 29 June 2022 be received and noted.**
- 2. That an annual picnic event should be run on the same day as Community Day in the afternoon.**
- 3. That officers proceed with the Heritage Open Day event in September 2022.**

19.2 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING PARTY HELD ON MONDAY, 30 MAY 2022 AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN.

Councillor Shields stated that she believed there had been a misunderstanding as she had not registered a complaint but merely a letter of concern on behalf of the Working Party wishing to agree how the Working Party could work better with the Environment and Leisure Committee. Confusion appears to have stemmed from the recommendations put forward which were believed to be in line with the Corporate Plan, Terms of Reference and what Ledbury Town Council wanted the Working Party to do. When recommendations were turned down by the Environment and Leisure Committee, the Working Party were unsure how to proceed. Councillor Shields said that having reviewed minutes/reports, they are unclear and she now believes that the Working Party are unsure what is required of them.

The projects under consideration are:

- (i) review of single use plastic policy;
- (ii) litter picks; and
- (iii) promoting community engagement.

The Climate Change Working Party expressed their wish to run events and Councillor Shields referred to National Recycling Week in September but unless this is agreed, it becomes too short notice and then leaves little time to get volunteers to help.

Councillor Shields referred to the Terms of Reference, a copy of which of circulated at the meeting. However due to a lack of time, the Chair agreed that this should be brought back to the next Environment and Leisure Committee meeting for further discussion.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the minutes of the Climate Change Working Party held on Monday, 30 May 2022 be received and noted.**
- 2. That this item be added to the agenda of the next Environment and Leisure Committee Meeting to facilitate further discussion.**

E288 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

To note that the date of the next meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee is Thursday, 15 September 2022.

The meeting ended at 9.21pm

Signed Dated
(Chair)