

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Auburn, Bradford, Chowns (Chair), Eakin, Howells (Town Mayor ex-officio), Shields, Sims, Sinclair & Whattler

ALSO PRESENT: Julia Lawrence – Deputy Town Clerk
Sophie Jarvis – Minute Taker

E326 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

E327 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

E328 THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES

RESOLVED:

That the Nolan Principles be received and noted.

E329 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

E330 TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2022

Councillors Auburn and Bradford arrived at 7:05pm.

Councillor Bradford made comment about minute no. E317 on page 1614 – anti-social behaviour at the Recreation Ground. He stated that the Parish Officers to which he referred to in this section of the minutes were employed and wanted to inform members of this as this was not reflected in the minutes.

All members were in favour of accepting the minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Environment and Leisure Committee meeting held on Thursday, 17 November 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record.

Councillor Whattler arrived at 7:10pm.

E331 TO REVIEW ACTION SHEETS

The Deputy Clerk informed members that minute no. E319 – resurfacing works on the skatepark had been completed on Wednesday, 18 January 2023. She also asked Councillors if they had time to walk to the skatepark and inspect the works undertaken to ensure that it was completed to a satisfactory standard. Councillor Bradford stated that as no criticism had been received via any social media platforms, he deemed that the works had been completed to a satisfactory standard.

RESOLVED:

That the Action Sheet be received and noted.

E332 CEMETERY

- i. That in accordance with Standing Order 23(a), authority be given for the Deeds of Exclusive Right of Burial 734, 735, 737 and 738 to be signed, granting the exclusive right of burial to those named on the interment form.
- ii. That in accordance with Standing Order 23(a), authority be given for the Deeds of Exclusive Right of Burial 164 to be signed, granting the transfer of the exclusive right of burial to those named on each transfer request.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That authorisation be given for the signing of the Deeds for Exclusive Right of Burial 734, 735, 737 and 738 granting the exclusive right of burial to those named on the interment form.**
- 2. That authorisation be given for the signing of the Deeds for Exclusive Right of Burial 164 granting the exclusive right of burial to those named on the interment form.**

E333 SPORTS AND PLAY CONSULTING

Councillor Bradford proposed that Ledbury Town Council appoint Sports & Play Consulting “if and when it is needed” to provide advice and support for the installation of new children’s play equipment at the Recreation Ground, which will help support officers in following the correct processes as laid out in Standing Orders and Financial Regulations throughout the process.

Members took a vote and there was 1 abstention, all other 7 members were in favour.

RESOLVED:

That the Sports & Play Consulting company be used “if and when needed”, to provide specialised advice and support for the installation of new children’s play equipment in the Recreation Ground.

E334 GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK EVENT

The Deputy Clerk informed members that the Great Big Green Week Event is a national event which is taking place in June 2023 in which the Climate Change Working Party would like take part in.

Councillor Eakin stated that £2,000 is a reasonable budget to commit to this event and proposed that this recommendation be accepted. Councillor Shields clarified that the budget is for the work of the Climate Change Committee and will help with other events as well as this one.

Councillor Whattler stated that he believed anything to do with Climate Change was not cost effective on the basis that the UK only produce 2% of the worlds CO2 levels and are only 1% of the world population, referring to a video that he had shared with Councillors prior to the meeting.

Councillor Sinclair stated that if CO2 levels are the problem, then the Chinese can be blamed as they produce the most CO2 and in the past 8-years have produced more than Britain has since the Industrial Revolution. Councillor Sinclair stated that it was his belief that The Green Party had set up this organisation as a charity to extract taxpayers' money and to campaign. He added that he believed that they are trying 'to encourage people to obtain new behaviours, as it sounds like they are trying to confuse people's minds'.

Members then interjected to point out that this event is nothing to do with the Green Party. Councillor Bradford called for a Point of Order due to Councillor Sinclair being interrupted whilst making his point. Councillor Sinclair continued that the recommendation for this budget of £2,000 should be referred to the Grants Working Party and not Environment and Leisure Committee as the Climate Change Working Party are asking for a grant. He then stated that grants can only go to charities registered in Ledbury which this event is not and therefore, should not be eligible for funding.

Councillor Howells called for a Point of Order as he believed the debate was irrelevant. He clarified that there is a Climate Change Working Party that has been appointed by Ledbury Town Council to make recommendations through the Environment and Leisure Committee and regardless of individuals opinions on climate change and whether they believe it or not, all that needs to be done is for the committee to decide whether to accept the Climate Change Working Party recommendations or not.

Councillor Bradford asked for clarification on the practibility of this event and how residents will be informed of the practical steps as stated in the report. Councillor Eakin interjected to correct Councillor Bradford on his grammar and stated 'practicality'. Councillor Shields clarified that members of the Climate Change Working Party will do this by creating posters and having stalls under the Market House to help raise awareness. Councillor Chowns also stated that this event is a public awareness exercise.

Councillor Sims stated that the recommendation is to provide a budget of £2,000 within the 2023/24 budget for the Climate Change Working Party to cover events such

as The Great Big Green Week. Councillor Sims seconded Councillor Eakin's proposal and asked members for a vote to be taken on this proposal.

Councillor Eakin stated that what is being proposed here is an effort to encourage certain behaviours through voluntary participation and education as we often done with various events and other charities do this with all sorts of activities in Ledbury and elsewhere. He also stated that a comparison of this and an ongoing act of genocide is in the worst possible haste and warrants at very least an apology.

Councillor Sinclair stated that he believed any members of the Committee who were supporters of the Green Party should have made a Declaration of Interest at the start of the meeting as he believes it is a Green Party issue. Councillor Chowns clarified that this is not the case and that the event is independently run.

Councillor Chowns read out an email received from Herefordshire Council's Democratic Services which stated: "*The Great Big Green Week is widely used across the country as a celebration of community action to tackle climate change. Thus, unless specifically referenced, the title does not promote the Green Party or any specific political party*".

Councillor Eakin then pointed out to members the Council's Standing Orders and stated if he remembered correctly that it reads "Councillors should only be able to speak once on an item in the agenda." Councillor Bradford stated that he believed this was at Full Council meetings to which Councillor Chowns clarified that the same applies to all committee meetings. Councillor Bradford then asked the Deputy Clerk to check standing orders to clarify if a member can only speak once on any agenda item at a committee meeting.

A named vote was requested by Councillor Sinclair.

Cllr Auburn	For	Cllr Shields	For
Cllr Bradford	Against	Cllr Sims	For
Cllr Chowns	For	Cllr Sinclair	Against
Cllr Eakin	For	Cllr Whattler	Abstention

Councillor Bradford then asked whether the Deputy Clerk had found the Standing Order for committee meetings about a member only speaking once on an item in the agenda. The Deputy Clerk read out the information on committees and sub committees, however this was not the relevant Standing Order. Councillor Howells stated that he believed this decision was at the Chairman's discretion. Councillor Chowns stated that he had allowed members to speak more than once on an item in the agenda in this meeting and that he would continue to do so for the remainder of the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That Members of the Environment and Leisure Committee were in favour of the Climate Change Working Party participating in the Great Big Green Week and approved a budget of £2,000 to cover this event and other related opportunities during the year.

E335 "NO BALL GAMES" SIGN – BLENHEIM DRIVE, LEDBURY

Councillor Sinclair proposed that the “No Ball Games” sign should not be reinstated in Blenheim Drive as there had been no further reports of attempted damage or distress to the residents there. All Councillors were in favour of this proposal.

RESOLVED:

That the “No Ball Games” sign is not to be reinstated in Blenheim Drive due to there being no further complaints of attempted damage or distress to the residents that live there.

E336 CEMETERY MAPPING SOFTWARE UPDATE

Councillor Sinclair proposed that the recommendation put forward for Pear Mapping to complete the additional works for a cost of no more than £750.00 plus VAT be accepted. 7 members were in favour and there was 1 abstention.

RESOLVED:

That Officers be instructed to advise Pear Mapping to undertake the additional works required to complete the project relating to the cemetery software at a cost of no more than £750.00 plus VAT.

E337 QUEEN’S MEMORIAL IN THE WALLED GARDEN

Councillor Whattler suggested that the already standing memorial in the Walled Garden should not be restored but should be replaced with a new one. Councillor Sims disagreed and stated that the current memorial was legible and at no current risk of falling and did not believe a new memorial should be installed until necessary.

Councillor Bradford informed Members that the Walled Garden is not Ledbury Town Council’s property as it is owned by Herefordshire Council and asked why should the Town Council pay to have it restored when it is on Herefordshire Council’s property.

Members agreed that further information on who’s responsibility it is to maintain this memorial should be provided at the next Environment and Leisure Committee meeting to be discussed further.

RESOLVED:

That the Deputy Clerk seek advice on who’s responsibility it is to maintain the memorial in the Walled Garden and for this information to be provided at the next Environment and Leisure Committee meeting taking place on Thursday, 16 March 2023.

E338 DOG HILL WOOD UPDATE

The Deputy Clerk informed members that the Forestry Commission had been particularly hard to get hold of for advice on a felling licence. Councillor Bradford informed the Deputy Clerk that he had a general email address to which he had

previously sent emails to and had a response from and that he would provide her with contact details after the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the Dog Hill Wood update be received and noted.

E339 MEMORIAL PARK BENCH – DOG HILL WOOD

Members debated the request to install a memorial bench in Dog Hill Wood and as the local resident had indicated that they would be willing to pay for the memorial bench and it would be at no cost to the Town Council, there were no grounds on which to not to allow this.

Councillor Howells suggested that it be made clear to the local resident that should any damage be made to this memorial bench, or should it need repairing, then these costs would need to be covered by the owner. If not, the bench would have to be removed by Ledbury Town Council.

RESOLVED:

That Ledbury Town Council approve the proposal put forward for a memorial bench in Dog Hill Woods to be installed, ensuring that the owner of this bench is aware that they will be responsible for any repairs otherwise if deemed unsafe the bench will be removed by Ledbury Town Council.

E340 CEMETERY GROUNDWORK

Councillor Sims proposed that a new company should be sought to remove the remains of the ivy on the wall in the cemetery which adjoins the Football Club. Councillor Sinclair disagreed and stated the company used before is still the cheapest option for these works. The Deputy Clerk informed members that the work that had already been carried out by this company was to a satisfactory level and that there were no issues with the work they had done. Councillor Sinclair also stated that if there was to be a new company to complete these works then it would have to go out to tender and would create more work for Council staff. Councillor Sims withdrew his proposal and Councillor Sinclair proposed that the existing company proceed with the works at a further cost of £1,400 plus VAT. All members were in favour of this.

RESOLVED:

That the existing company proceed with removing the entirety of the ivy off the wall at the cemetery that adjoins the Football Club for a further cost of £1,400 plus VAT.

E341 SECURITY AT THE RECREATION GROUND

Councillor Sims stated that reading the report provided it was clear that anti-social behaviour is happening in lots of other towns, and that it is something that all towns want to reduce. However, looking at the findings of the report it would be unwise to

pay for additional security and/or a “Park Keeper” when the advice received was that it may not have much/if any impact on reducing anti-social behaviour. Therefore, Councillor Sims proposed that recommendation 1 should be refused, Councillor Eakin seconded this proposal.

Councillor Bradford explained that he had spoken to the Police and that they had informed him that they were looking forward to receiving some help on this and that the Police want intelligence on details of who is causing the anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Shields informed members that she had spoken to members of the public to gain their views on the situation, the two main points that she received were that if additional money was put into security systems at the Recreation Ground, then this would just encourage the anti-social behaviour to move elsewhere. Secondly, if a ‘Park Keeper’ was employed then this could create a potential target.

A vote took place on the proposal to refuse the recommendation to pay for additional security to try and reduce anti-social behaviour, 6 members were in favour and 2 were against.

Members then discussed recommendation 2 – considering a ‘PACT’ style of meeting where members of the public and police can meet so that everyone has the opportunity to voice their opinion. Councillor Howells informed members that there are informal monthly meetings taking place with the Police, Councillor Hughes, the Clerk and the Deputy Clerk which is helping to form closer relations between the council and the police. Councillor Bradford queried if there were any minutes from these minutes, the Deputy Clerk informed him that these were informal meetings and that minutes had not been taken.

Members discussed that PACT meetings used to take place but eventually stopped due to them not being very successful. Councillor Bradford stated that a representative from the Police used to attend all the Environment and Leisure meetings and now it does not seem to be happening even though he still invited them himself. Members agreed that a Police presence would be beneficial to have at future Environment and Leisure Committee meetings.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That additional security or a ‘Park Keeper’ not be put in place following the feedback from other Town Councils and security companies.**
- 2. That the Deputy Clerk invite the Police and members of the public to attend the next Environment and Leisure Committee meeting taking place on Thursday, 16 March 2023.**

E342 WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR EASTNOR CASTLE ESTATE

Councillor Sinclair stated that this is private land and there are no queries with the Woodland Management Plan for Eastnor Castle Estate.

Councillor Shields asked if the Deputy Clerk could write back to Eastnor Castle Estate to thank them for providing this information to Ledbury Town Council.

RESOLVED:

That the Woodland Management Plan for Eastnor Castle Estate was received and noted and that the Deputy Clerk would write to Eastnor Castle Estate to thank them for providing Ledbury Town Council with this information.

E343 MALVERN HILLS AREA OF NATURAL BEAUTY – ANNUAL REVIEW 2021/22 – FOR INFORMATION ONLY

RESOLVED:

That the Malvern Hills Area of Natural Beauty annual review 2021/22 was received and noted.

E344 WORKING PARTIES

a. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EVENTS WORKING PARTY HELD ON 10 NOVEMBER 2022 AND 8 DECEMBER 2022 AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN.

Councillor Sinclair proposed that all the recommendations in the minutes of the meeting of the Events Working Party held on 10 November 2022 be accepted. 7 members were in favour of this, and 1 member abstained.

Councillor Sinclair proposed that all the recommendations in the minutes of the meeting of the Events Working Party held on 8 December 2022 be accepted. 7 members were in favour of this, and 1 member abstained.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the recommendations in the minutes of the Events Working Party held on 10 November 2022 be accepted.**
- 2. That the recommendations in the minutes of the Events Working Party held on 8 December 2022 be accepted.**

b. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING PARTY HELD ON 7 DECEMBER 2022 AND CONSIDER ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Climate Change Working Party held on 7 December 2022 were received and noted.

c. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOHN MASEFIELD MEMORIAL WORKING PARTY HELD ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2022 AND 25 NOVEMBER 2022.

Councillor Sims clarified that the John Masefield Memorial Working Party makes recommendations to two committees: Environment & Leisure Committee and Economy, Planning & Tourism Committee.

Councillor Sims proposed that the recommendations in the minutes of the John Masefield Memorial Working Party held on 23 September 2022 that applied to Environment & Leisure Committee be accepted and all members were in favour of this.

Councillor Sinclair proposed that the recommendations in the minutes of the John Masefield Working Party held on 25 November 2022 to accepted, all members were in favour of this.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the recommendations made in the minutes of the John Masefield Memorial Working Party held on 23 September 2022 be approved.**
- 2. That the recommendations made in the minutes of the John Masefield Memorial Working Party held on 25 November 2022 be approved.**

E345 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the date of the next Environment and Leisure Committee is Thursday, 16 March 2023.

The meeting ended at 8:35pm.

Signed Dated
(Chair)