

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

LEISURE & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held at The Reading Rooms (32 The Circle) at 7pm on Thursday 6th April 2023.

Present Cllr J Ballman (Chair)
Cllr M Beale
Cllr M Lucas (Vice Chair)
Cllr J Yeowell
Cllr W Stone (Non Committee Member)

Officers A Briggs (Estates Manager)
A Reeves (Parish Clerk)

Public M Ware – Idverde Contract Manager

Meeting started at 7.00pm.

LR248 Apologies
Cllr R Ballman

Members noted the item.

LR249 Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation
Cllr M Lucas declared an interest in The Leisure & Library Trust.

Cllr J Ballman declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Hreod Burna Urban Forest (HBuF), the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and The Leisure & Library Trust.

Cllr M Beale declared an interest in The Leisure & Library Trust & The Penhill Orchard.

LR250 Grounds & Street Cleansing PQMS Data Review
The Estates Manager presented the associated document. A copy of which can be found in Annex A.

57 Quality Inspections had taken place in March, w. These were broken down in to:

- Bins 15 inspections - Average score 4.86
- Grass 15 inspections - Average Score 4.33
- Hard surfaces 19 inspections - Average score 4.15
- Hedges 4 inspections - Average score 4.45
- Shrubs 4 inspections - Average score 3.75

M Ware explained a shrub bed in Somerford Close hadn't been completed, so had been graded a lower mark with follow up action to be taken.

Average grading score for March – 4.39

March pass score – 94.7% (pass grading is marked 4 or above)

Members were informed that the pass mark was for those areas inspected as part of the PQMS, not for the contract as a whole. Further information was provided on how components of the scheduled were graded.

Cllr J Ballman commented on the high % pass rate being achieved.

M Ware advised marking was conducted on aspects seen as per each individual site inspection. Further commenting that with the upcoming grass cutting schedule, it would be likely grading would be impacted due to a higher potential for issues.

Cllr M Beale asked whether additional cuts could be factored into the grass cutting at both Penhill and St Marks Parks.

M Ware advised both parks currently fall within the general specification, commenting the possibility of enhanced specification work coming from the Parks Working Group.

Cllr J Ballman also commented on the type of machinery used for cutting.

M Ware commented that cylinder mowers would provide a better cut.

A Briggs commented on the inclusion of a 'Parks' budget code within the 23/24 financial year, which may be used for these types of enhancements.

Members were presented with the individual site inspection detailed information.

A Briggs provided further clarification on grading scores.

A discussion on bin capacity was held.

Cllr M Beale queried the existence of a section of grass that had been listed on the data sheet, believing it to not be there.

Cllr J Yeowell queried the grading marking and specifically asked about the response times to client issues within Ferndale.

M Ware advised he would total up the number of graded marks for future meetings and provide context on the Ferndale response times following the meeting.

M Ware extended an invite for Cllr J Yeowell to attend future PQMS inspections

A Briggs asked for the pass marking from the start of the year to be presented at future meetings.

It was explained the 'Item b' was to be deferred to the proceeding meeting, due to the third party not being available to conduct the external inspection.

RESOLVED – Members noted the item.

M Ware left the meeting at 7.20pm

LR251 Oasis Skate Park – Location Feasibility Work

Cllr J Ballman invited Cllr W Stone to talk on the item.

The Estates Manager informed Members that the March 23 Full Council had resolved for the Leisure & Rec Committee to conduct a feasibility study on location suitability, for the relocation of the Oasis skate park.

Cllr W Stone spoke at length advocating Medlar Court in Pinehurst as his preferred location. It was commented that this preference was based on the views of residents following consultation work.

Cllr W Stone informed the Committee Members he had conducted resident consultation and spoke with a number of partner organisations such as the police and SHINE Pinehurst. Receiving a number of signatories and comments on the idea.

A response from the police hadn't been received at the time of the meeting.

Cllr W Stone handed out a copy of the documentation to Committee Members for their perusal.

Cllr M Beale asked for a copy of the consultation letter.

Cllr J Yeowell queried the proposed location at Medlar Ct.

Cllr J Ballman queried the content of the feasibility study.

The Estates Manager presented the report written by the Clerk.

A Survey Monkey will be created and provided to local residents as per each site of the report, as to seek views.

The Parish Clerk commented that good practice was for a skate park to be at least 150m from the nearest housing. If this wasn't possible, there would need to be mitigation in place such as tree cover to reduce sound travel.

It was explained the feasibility would be a site-specific assessment, coupled with consultation work and views of ward Members.

The report would be presented to a future L&R Committee.

Cllr J Ballman queried the necessary action required should more than one site be considered as a feasible option.

It was advised that more than one planning application would need to be submitted.

The group held further discussion on the item.

The Parish Clerk advised the site operator has not put a time pressure on resolution. As to allow the correct site to be identified.

The Estates Manager advised work would commence on drafting the scope to complete the feasibility study and consultation work WC 10th April.

Cllr J Ballman requested the scope brief prior to commencement of the work.

Action – The Estates Manager to provide Members with feasibility scope of works brief prior to commencement of the piece of work.

RESOLVED – The Estates Manager is to circulate the brief for the scope of works contained within the location feasibility study to Cllrs by email. Cllrs may respond with comments via email. That the feasibility report be presented to a future L&R Committee for review.

LR252

Mechanical Sweeper Report

The Estates Manager presented the associated document. A copy of which can be found in Annex B.

Cllr M Beale provided positive comments on the work completed along Crossways Avenue during the demonstration.

Cllr M Lucas provided positive comment on the success of the demonstration. However, raised concern over the affordability within the current financial year.

Cllr M Beale echoed Cllr M Lucas comments.

Cllr J Yeowell queried the life expectancy of a machine and whether training was required.

It was advised the life expectancy would be dependant on the amount of usage the machine had over its operation, and how well it was being maintained.

Training would be required.

Members queried why Swindon South were disposing of their machine.

It was confirmed that SSPC had resolved to procure 2 new machines and had no further use for their existing machines.

Cllr J Ballman spoke at length, commenting on the increased efficiency and productivity a machine would provide, along with the improvement in the current cleaning standard being delivered.

Cllr M Beale asked how often a single machine could complete a circuit of the Parish within a year.

The Parish Clerk estimated a machine could complete a circuit of the Parish 2 x per annum.

Cllr J Ballman commented on the work becoming easier with a machine once the bulk of historic detritus is cleared.

The group held discussion at length on the item.

The Estates Manager advised that a residential survey would be distributed within the Parish newsletter, as so residents can feedback on the standard of existing service being delivered, along with providing comment on what they may wish to see included within the provision moving forward.

Cllr M Lucas commented that brushes could be changed to allow multifunctionality.

Cllr W Stone asked for the Clerks views on purchasing CSSPC used machinery.

The Clerk provided response.

The Chair summarised the available options.

Cllr J Ballman proposed that the Parish Clerk approach CSSPC with an expression of interest for their Sweeping machine, seek the cost, which can be compared to the leasing options provided by Karcher, and report back to a future meeting.

Cllr M Beale seconded.

Members voted in favour.

RESOLVED – That the Parish Clerk is instructed to contact Central Swindon South Parish Council to seek information and costs of their mechanical sweeping equipment. That the Clerk report back the costs and availability to the June Committee Meeting for consideration.

LR253

Play Area Working Group

The Estates Manager presented the associated document(s). A copy of which can be found in Annex C & D.

Cllr J Yeowell commented on the life expectancy of many of the existing pieces of Play Area equipment.

The Estates Manager updated on a number of repairs that had taken place since the document had been drafted.

The Estates Manager highlighted within the Play Area strategy document, the need for a clear objective. It was explained this would be necessary when approaching and submitting external funding applications.

The Estates Manager further commented that 1 or 2 projects should be identified to proceed with over the next financial year, as this will provide clear aim to funders on what the money will be spent on.

Members were reminded of the 2 play projects that already have match funding committed with Ward Cllr Allowance.

Cllr J Ballman spoke at length about the condition of CSNPC play area facilities. Commenting on the collaboration work of the Play Area Working group with Pipa and Mums on a mission around improving accessibility and inclusivity.

Members were informed that the Clerk was in process of drafting a report for consideration, regarding a public works loan board that could be used to finance the delivery of play area projects over the coming years.

Cllr J Ballman detailed at length the benefits to securing a loan to complete the works.

Members were reminded that the current play area budget for 23/24 Financial Year was £25,000 with an additional £20,000 – total £45,000.

Cllr W Stone suggested the Parish contact a local company to enquire about funding.

Cllr J Yeowell asked about the timeframe for a public works loan board application.

It was confirmed as approx. 3 months.

The Estates Manager commented that the expectation should be to ensure every park is updated and to a certain standard. With a number of identified parks made fully inclusive and accessible.

The group held discussion on the matter.

Cllr M Beale raised a question on interest rates.

Cllr M Lucas commented on the consideration to further include monies for the buildings within a Public Works Loan, as to complete upgrades and works to the buildings.

Cllr M Beale echoed Cllr M Lucas comments.

The group held discussion on the matter.

The Clerk commented that a consolidation approach to improving the condition of multiple Parish assets, including play areas and buildings might be best.

Cllr J Ballman raised concern with this approach, commenting that play areas do not provide an income generation.

Further discussion was held.

Cllr J Ballman proposed that the Clerk draft a report for a public works loan application to allow for play area project work.

All Members voted in favour.

RESOLVED – That the Clerk be instructed to write a report containing options for a Public Works Loan to support the delivery of play area projects. Report to be presented to a future Committee for consideration.

LR254 Penhill Bowls Club

The Estates Manager presented Members with a quotation, sourced to conduct a building condition survey on the vacant Penhill Bowls Club.

Members were informed that Ward Cllrs had been contacted and were content with proceeding with the most competitive quotation.

That already committed Ward Allowance would be used to finance the work.

Cllr M Beale asked for further information on sourcing a contractor.

The Estates Manager provided response.

RESOLVED – Members Noted the Item.

LR255 Des Moffatt Western CC – Electrical Work

The Estates Manager informed Members that following the periodical electrical inspection at the Community Centre, it was highlighted that one of the main distribution boards was outdated and in need of renewal.

An associated quotation was presented.

The Estates Manager recommended that 2 further quotations were sought as comparable before a request would be submitted to Committee to proceed.

Members agreed.

RESOLVED – Members noted the item.

LR256 Fire Door Assessment(s)

The Estates Manager presented the associated document. A copy of which can be found in a Annex E.

Cllr J Ballman queried the time frame for completion of the necessary works.

The Estates Manager advised that as the works had been highlighted by the assessor, an acceptable time frame as practicable would need to be in place as to resolve. Due to the significant cost, the expectation would be to allow for relevant procurement to take place.

Cllr J Ballman proposed to proceed with the recommendation as per the officers report.

RESOLVED – Members Noted the report. Members requested the Estates Manager seek comparable costs and present a report to a future Committee.

LR257 Football Pitch Renovation Works

The Estates Manager referred to an already agreed schedule of pitch renovation works (Vertidrainage).

It was explained the intention was to complete additional works at the same time. Additional works confirmed as 'Top Dressing'.

The Estates Manager explained the process and advised Members that Football Foundation funding was still available to cover all intended works.

An associated quotation was presented.

Cllr J Ballman queried the different amounts and whether this was an ongoing activity.

The Estates Manager advised the practice hadn't been completed before. Therefore, this would be a good opportunity to measure its success.

RESOLVED – Members noted the item and approved the works to proceed.

LR258 23/24 Tree Stock Condition Survey

The Estates Manager referred Members to the on the ongoing dispute with SBC regarding large tree maintenance on areas of leased land.

The Committee were advised that following discussions with the Green Infrastructure Program Manager at SBC, it had been agreed SBC would cover the cost of necessary tree survey works.

Parish Council advised to proceed with the Idverde quotation to conduct tree surveys in Autumn 2023.

Members agreed with the action.

Cllr M Beale asked about an ongoing dispute with a Lime tree at Chippenham Close Community Centre.

No further updates.

RESOLVED – Members noted the item and approved the works to proceed.

LR259 Nature Restoration Working Group

The Estates Manager presented the associated document. A copy of which can be found in a Annex F.

Members were provided with a verbal updated on a project called 'Tiny Forest'.

The Estates Manager has been working with an organisation called 'Earth Watch' to assess the feasibility of delivering Tiny forest projects in CSNPC.

Members were informed of funding that's is available to SBC, that can be applied for to finance the project(s). SBC have agreed to submit a funding application on behalf of CSNPC and other interested local Parish Councils.

Members advised 2 sites had been earmarked for assessment as to their suitability. Named as Churchward Allotment & Allington Rd Allotment.

Cllr Beale raised concern over size of the Allington Rd site.

It was advised consultation work would be completed prior to delivery.

Action – Estates Manager to forward information about EarthWatch following the meeting.

RESOLVED – Members noted the item

LR260 **St Marks Green Flag Report**

The Estates Manager referred to the associated document.

Committee were advised to review the document following the meeting and return with any comments.

The Parish Clerk referred to the suggested judging process, advising that early indications for site selection indicated St Marks would be included. However, this wasn't guaranteed.

Officers now tasked with ensure the upkeep of the area.

The Parish clerk provided members with an update on the fire damaged bin store.

RESOLVED – Members noted the item

LR261 **Display Energy Certificate(s)**

Members were provided with information on the difference between a 'Display Energy Certificate' (DEC) and an 'Energy Performance Certificate' (EPC)

The Estates Manager advised the DEC's for all Community Centres had been completed, reminding Members that these documents were a legal requirement to have on display.

Members were informed that the audits of the Building Management Systems (BMS) was due to commence over the next 4 weeks. Both documents would be linked to reflect the current performance, and provide the basis for upgrades and improvement works ongoing.

RESOLVED – Members noted the item

The meeting closed at 9:06pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Leisure & Recreation Committee