

DAWLISH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the
Civic Amenities Committee
held at The Manor House, Dawlish on
Wednesday 25 April 2018 at 7.00 pm

Present

Councillor Foden (Chairman)

Councillors A. Fenne, G. Fenne, Lowther, Mawhood, Robins, Taylor and Wrigley.

Other Members in attendance

Councillor Tamlyn.

Officer in attendance

Andrew McKenzie – Town Clerk

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Tamlyn, whilst not a Member of the Committee, declared an interest in relation to minute

Items requiring Urgent Attention

The Clerk advised of one urgent item – Little Week Play Park and Sandy Lane Skate Park

Public Participation

There were no members of the public in attendance.

The following minutes will be considered for approval at the next meeting of the Civic Amenities Committee and may be subject to change until that time.

59 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mayne and Prowse.

Resolved unanimously to note these apologies.

60 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no requests for dispensation.

61 MINUTES

Resolved unanimously that the minutes of the Civic Amenities Committee meeting held on 14 March 2018 be approved, adopted and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record of the meeting.

It was noted that minute 52 referred to Manor House Gardens. The content of the item related to the Manor Gardens, and not part of the grounds that fall within the curtilage of the Manor House. The item should have read Manor Gardens and Lea Mount.

62 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Council reviewed its Committees' terms of reference annually and the Civic Amenities Committee considered whether any amendments, additions or deletions should be made to its own.

It was suggested that the Committee meet monthly instead of the current bi-monthly arrangement.

Resolved that the Committee recommend that Full Council approve the change of meeting frequency from bi-monthly to monthly from May 2018.

It was suggested that the words '*and gardens subject to lease*' be added after 'War Memorial' under Section 3 – Purpose.

Resolved that the Committee recommend that Full Council approve the additional wording of '*and gardens subject to lease*' after 'War Memorial' under Section 3 – Purpose.

Following general discussion, the Clerk advised that the Definitive Map of parish footpaths would be circulated to all Members of the Committee when available.

63 COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARDS

Members considered whether community notice boards should be purchased using Section 106 monies for the new housing developments.

During discussion, it was noted there may be issues as to where such boards would be sited, whether planning permission was required and who would ensure the boards were up to date and used for the correct purpose.

The Chairman advised she would visit the sites concerned to identify suitable locations and make enquiries of the developers to establish the appropriate permissions, following which she would report back to a future meeting of the Civic Amenities Committee where a proposal would be made to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for the necessary funds to be made available.

Resolved

That the Chairman undertake site visits at the relevant developments and report back to a future meeting of the Civic Amenities Committee with updates before formulating a proposal to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

64 MANOR GARDENS & MAINTENANCE

The Town Clerk circulated an updated received from Teignbridge District Council regards their forthcoming programme of works relating to Manor Gardens:

Grass cutting

Parks is a frequency of between twelve and thirteen working days

Shrub beds

Approximately eight weekly cycle

There are very few other contractual obligations to the Manor site.

Last winter, works completed

Shrub bed adjacent to the entrance planted with a variety of shrubs.

All shrub beds bark mulched.

Recent meeting / walk around

Further to a recent meeting / walk around with Cllr Wrigley and other members. We discussed various works which were required in and around the grounds (Manor / lawn)

To update

Manor

The wild area near to the rockery has been cut cleared as requested

The Rhododendron near Dawlish Water has been cleared of Bramble and other vegetation, four Gunnera have been purchased to plant in the margin of this area as agreed (Currently with sub-contractor, will be planted this week)

Repositioning of bench (To be arranged)

Lawn

Grass verge with rotten stump (opposite theatre) stump removed, soil imported and area turfed as requested.

Members wished to place on record their thanks to Teignbridge officers Mark Payne and Graeme Smith for their attention to Dawlish and the useful working relationship that has since evolved following their site visit to the area in February. It was suggested that frequent site visits be undertaken in the future.

Resolved

(a) That the update be noted;

(b) That quarterly site visits be established with Teignbridge officers regards maintenance in the Manor Gardens and Lea Mount areas.

At this juncture, the Clerk advised in terms of gateway signs to the town, he had made representations to Devon County to have them cleaned ready for the summer season. Devon County's cleaning programme of all signs from Teignmouth, through Dawlish to Exminster would encompass approximately 400 signs and it was not known when Dawlish's would be cleaned.

The Clerk advised that the Outside Services team would clean gateway signs within the Parish in the coming weeks.

65 BROWNS BROOK ALLOTMENTS

The Clerk advised that all pitches at the Brown's Brook Allotments had been leased and there were currently 33 people on the waiting list.

Members stressed the Town Council should do all it can to establish additional allotment sites where there was a clear need. New allotment sites were to become available with the recent housing developments and the situation would be assessed once all plots were leased.

Resolved

That the update be noted.

66 PLAY PARK AT CARHAIX WAY

The Clerk advised that the play park located at Carhaix Way would be maintained by a maintenance company called Greenbelt; further information relating to the organisation could be found at www.greenbelt.co.uk.

There was still a further play park that was currently closed to residents; Councillor Wrigley advised he would be meeting with Teignbridge officers on Tuesday, 1 May to discuss this and would report back.

Resolved

That the update be noted.

At this juncture the Chairman took the urgent item of business.

67 SKATE PARK AND LITTLE WEEK PLAY PARK

The Clerk advised that the ROSPA reports for both sites had been received and copies of the documents would be tabled at the next meeting of the Committee. Neither site had received any high-risk scores, with the majority being low.

Skate Park

The Clerk advised that quotes were being sought for a replacement ramp at the skate park in addition to replacement fencing around the park. Teignbridge District Council were keen that remedial works be completed as soon as possible as the adjacent site would be hosting the South West Youth Games for the first time during the month of July.

Members noted the current condition of the pavilion near to the skate park and hoped Teignbridge had borne this in mind with the Youth Games coming to the site.

Resolved

That the update be noted and the Town Clerk to make enquiries of Teignbridge District Council regards their plans for the former Cricket Pavilion at Sandy Lane.

Little Week Play Park

The Clerk stated that whilst some items of play equipment had received low to medium risk scores, it was mainly due to standards of play equipment changing and these items, having been in place for some time no longer met the current standard; this did not mean however they were classed as unsafe.

The Clerk reminded Members that a sum of money had been set aside by the Town Council for renovation works to the park, which could include replace current items with modern equivalents, wholesale re-design of the equipment or wholesale re-design plus landscaping up to the value set aside.

Councillor Wrigley would be raising the issue of renovation with appropriate officers at Teignbridge, and the subject matter would be an agenda item at the next meeting of the Committee to confirm how to proceed.

Resolved

That the update be noted.

68 BLACK SWANS

The Clerk advised that two investigations were ongoing in respect of the most recent dog attack on one of the Black Swans on the Brook.

He stated the Police had confirmed that five witnesses had been interviewed and statements had been taken. CCTV of the area had been reviewed, which showed the owner of the dogs, all of which were off their leads, on the piazza. Currently the Police were looking at two pieces of legislation with which to bring charges; the first was a dog dangerously out of control however, to prosecute using this legislation a member of the public had to feel threatened and this had not been reported by any of the witnesses. The second was the unnecessary suffering of an animal, which in this instance was the dog in question due to the witnesses stating the owner was seen to be beating the dog when attempting during and after the attack on the Swan. The Police had advised that a voluntary control order could be served on the offender, which could include additional sites to that of the lawn however it was voluntary and could not be enforced. Should the offender not comply with the order it would be used against him if ever taken to court.

The other investigation related to Teignbridge District Council's Environment Wardens taking statements from the above witnesses in preparation of a file being passed through to their legal department to determine whether there was a case to prosecute the owner through the civil courts, because he and the dogs were in breach of the existing by-law on the lawn.

The Town Clerk advised he took very seriously such incidences and would do all he could to request the relevant authorities impose the necessary sanctions where there was clear evidence to do so.

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for his update, and invited Councillor Tamlyn to address the meeting, who read out the following statement:

Firstly I would like to declare an interest in respect of an employee of the council and because I am not on the CAC committee I am aware that I cannot vote

The lawns are a focal point in Dawlish Town Centre and tourists visit the town to enjoy the Swans and Waterfowl on both the lawns and the brook

Like many locals and tourists I am concerned about the safety of the Swans and waterfowl because in the last couple of months two female Swans have died as a result of being attacked on different occasions by different dogs off the lead-and one could say it is not the dogs' fault but irresponsible owners !

A further female swan was found dead on her nest whilst nesting

Three signets vanished and only the remains of one was found

At the moment local people tell me that they are concerned about the lone male swan who sits on an empty nest having lost two of his partners, his daughter and three signets

How can we protect these creatures? I recently put this on Eyes of Dawlish and had over 100 people joined in the discussion about this matter- the majority felt that it was only a few irresponsible owners who let their dogs off the lead on the lawns and the majority abided by the local bye law and kept them on the lead They felt that action should be taken against

irresponsible owners as they are in breach of a bye law

Only about 10% felt that dogs should be banned on the lawns as there are a number of places close by where they can walk their dogs

I am personally concerned about the Health and Safety issues of dogs on the lawns- the number of dogs doing their business and especially in the summer when a number of people sit/ picnic on the lawns- this can be a health hazard !!

Thank you for listening to me and I hope we can find a way of protecting the Swans and water fowl from vicious attracts by dogs- one person on face book commented- you wouldn't take your dog into a field of sheep so why take your dog into an area of Swans/waterfowl- I leave you with that thought.

Following discussion, it was

Resolved that the update be noted.

69 DAWLISH WATERFOWL

The Clerk provided an update as to the current stock of Waterfowl on the Brook as follows:

- 1 mating pair of black swans
- 2 male black swans
- 4 cygnets
- 6 Carolina Wood Ducks
- 4 Black East Indies
- 6 Call Ducks
- 1 Furvous Duck
- 2 White faced Whistlers
- 1 Teal
- 3 Golden Eyes
- 2 Pintail
- 5 Bantum Ducks
- 2 Muscovy Ducks

The Waterfowl Wardens had requested authority to purchase a pair of Teals, 1 white faced Whistler and 1 Furvous Whistler.

During discussion, Members wished to thank the Waterfowl Wardens for the work they do in looking after the waterfowl which proved to be a popular attraction for both residents and visitors to Dawlish and asked for a further report to the next Committee on other works required for the Waterfowl in general.

Resolved

(a) That that Committee formally thanks the Waterfowl Wardens for their work; and

(b) That the Waterfowl Wardens provide an update and an improvements to the waterfowl compound request list to the next meeting of the Committee.

c) That approval is given for the purchase of the waterfowl requested above.

70 GATES AT TUCKS PLOT

Members considered whether to purchase gates to be fixed at either end of the path at Tucks Plot where currently temporary barriers were used to prevent public access when cygnets were in the area.

Following discussion, it was suggested that any gate should have the ability to be left permanently open or closed (with a lock) and incorporate a Swan design. It was then

Resolved that the Town Clerk obtain three quotes for work and to report back to the appropriate Committee when the information has been received.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.

Councillor Alison Foden
CHAIRMAN