

**Minutes of the meeting of the  
PARKS, OPEN SPACES, CONSERVATION & FOOTPATHS COMMITTEE  
held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017 at 8:22pm  
in the Committee Room, The Freight House, Bradley Way, Rochford.**

**Present:** Cllr R Gardner, Cllr S May, Cllr R Patient, Cllr Mrs L Shaw, Cllr M Strubel and Cllr D Weir, Mrs M Weir & Mrs P Young.

- 1. To elect a Chairman for the Civic Year 2017-18**  
Cllr R Patient nominated Cllr S May for Chairman which was seconded by Cllr D Weir. Cllr Mrs L Shaw also nominated Cllr Mrs P Young which was seconded by Cllr R Gardner. A secret ballot was held with an equal number of Members in favour of both nominations. The Chairman's casting vote was therefore used and Cllr Mrs P Young was elected Chairman.
- 2. To elect a Vice Chairman for the Civic Year 2017-18**  
Cllr Mrs P Young nominated Cllr S May for Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Mrs L Shaw and carried with the majority of Members in agreement.
- 3. Apologies for non-attendance at meeting:**  
Cllr Mrs E Gadsdon had given apologies.  
Members **received** the apologies tendered.
- 4. Declarations of any:**
  - a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest;**
  - b) Other Pecuniary Interest; or**
  - c) Non-Pecuniary Interest****on any matter on the agenda for 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017:**  
None were declared.  
Members were reminded that any changes in their Register of Members' Interests should be notified to the Clerk, in writing within 28 days.
- 5. Public Forum:**  
No Members of the public were present.
- 6. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017 and to approve the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting:**  
The Minutes of the meeting were **approved** as a correct record and Members approved the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting.
- 7. Action List Update – May 2017:**
  - 7.1 Members noted that the path improvement work in Spencers Park would commence the last week in May.
  - 7.2 Members noted that research for the wording for the new signs in Magnolia Park was ongoing and that the Clerk would liaise with RDC on the matter.

- 7.3 Members noted budget provisions for 2017/18 had been made for the deteriorating wall post in Elizabeth Close Playground and that the posts would continue to be monitored accordingly.
- 7.4 Members noted the 2017/18 budget had included a contingency for the possible CCTV, but that further investigations were necessary.
- 7.5 Members were reminded money had been allocated to the 2017/18 budget to allow the Adult Gym to be relocated within Magnolia Park and work would commence in the summer after a Health and Safety Sub-Committee meeting.
- 7.6 Members were advised the next Parish Parks meeting for the 10<sup>th</sup> May had been cancelled and a new meeting date was due to be set.
- 7.7 Members noted the Clerk had received a preliminary quote from the contractor for the post reinstatements on the Spencers Park bridle path. Members confirmed they were content with the quote and that work should go ahead accordingly.
- 7.8 Members noted that a Working Group for the Magnolia Park Management Plan had met and revisions of the plan had been agreed.
- 7.9 The Clerk informed Members KeyMed had been in touch and had asked for estimated costings for aquatic plants. Stillwater Management were due for a site visit in June 2017 where the next phase of works would be discussed and it was agreed advice on the types of aquatic plants could be sought then. Members noted that the pond was currently at a very low level and discussed options around increasing the water levels but it was agreed many issues needed to be considered. Members also briefly mentioned the attenuation pond which had suffered a fire, but were reminded that pond was the responsibility of Anglian Water. Cllr Mrs L Shaw reminded Members that the Flood Forum was open to all Members and items on the attenuation pond were ongoing.
- 7.10 Members were informed a site had taken place on the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017 and were referred to Agenda item 14 (Minute 14)
- 7.11 Members noted the damaged section of fencing in Magnolia Park and that budgetary consideration was required for 2018/19 for possible future fencing replacement.

Members noted and **accepted** the Action Update List and **agreed** to the removal of the closed items.

#### **8. Financial Report – April 2017:**

There were no questions and Members **accepted** the Financial Report.

#### **9. Store Alarm line problems:**

The Clerk explained to Members that ADT had been called out again as BT were adamant the fault was due to ADT. The ADT engineer, who had been called out initially and reported no faults with ADT equipment, had informed the Clerk he had not changed an 'STU' component, so had agreed to return and change it accordingly. Initial indications were that the new component had fixed the issue, but upon further investigation by the Clerk the line fault had returned. The Clerk explained the next step was to get a BT Red Care engineer out to look at the line. Cllr R Gardner offered to meet the engineer to discuss the issue which was welcomed by the Clerk.

**10. Email from Constable Landscapes, Spencers Footpath Improvement Contractors:**

Members noted the email from Constable Landscapes which had requested a 30% up-front payment. Members discussed the request and some felt it was now a common practice among contractors, noting that it was often necessary given the extent of works and outlay for equipment. Members who opposed the request felt it was inappropriate to ask for the money and noted the payment profile had not been presented during the bidding process. Cllr R Patient moved that the request for a 30% up-front payment be declined, which was seconded by Cllr D Weir. The motion to **decline** the up-front payment was carried with four Members in agreement, three against and one abstention.

**11. Email from Hockley Parish Council regarding Community Protection Officers:**

Members discussed the idea of Community Protection Officers and raised questions over how they could be used effectively, especially in the case of dog fouling. Members noted the information and the Clerk advised Members more information and discussions would occur going forward.

**12. Email from Blunderbus Children's Theatre:**

Members agreed the Blunderbus Children's Theatre was a good concept, but felt Magnolia Park was neither large enough nor suitably equipped for the Theatre company to use. Cllr Mrs P Young moved that the request to host a show at Magnolia Park by the Blunderbus Children's Theatre be **declined** which was seconded by Cllr D Weir, with all Members in agreement.

**13. Email from Cllr Mrs Gadsdon regarding park signs for Magnolia Park:**

Cllr Mrs E Gadsdon was absent and therefore unable to discuss her proposal, but she had sent an email which outlined a suggestion for a duck feeding sign for the Magnolia Park pond which she proposed could be mounted in the middle of the pond, to deter vandalism. Members discussed signage content relating to the feeding of wildlife, along with possible locations for such signs and agreed further advice/research was necessary.

**14. Parks visit: Magnolia Park:**

Members who had attended the Magnolia Park visit relayed that it had been a worthwhile and interesting exercise and it had given them a better understanding of the extent of the nature reserve and park. It was agreed it had been particularly useful to see the damaged fencing sections as it made it easier to establish which sections would need replacing and which could be left. Cllr Mrs M Weir enquired whether the metal bars which had been vandalised had been removed and the Clerk confirmed a contractor was on site that day to remove them. Cllr R Gardner requested an article be placed in the newsletter about Magnolia Park, but was reminded many articles had already been published about Magnolia Park, particularly in relation to the pond project. Members asked if there would be any other visits to the other parks and it was agreed it would be useful for Members to look at both Spencers and Glencroft in due course.

*Members deviated from the agenda item to discuss difficulties/issues when it came to certain agenda items. Some Members indicated they did not always understand what was being discussed. Members were reminded agenda and supporting papers contained all the information they needed which should be read before meetings, but it was accepted some Members found it difficult to retain information, or did not have the resources to recall everything. The Chairman agreed a short summary was sometimes required to remind Members what was being discussed, but that any questions could always be asked outside of the meeting by calling the Office. Cllr Mrs L Shaw apologised if her comment that papers should be read had been viewed as an attack on certain Members, which was noted.*

**15. Summary of Decisions:**

- Cllr Mrs P Young re-elected as Chairman for the civic year 2017-18.
- Cllr S May elected as Vice-Chairman for the civic year 2017-18.
- Date for Stillwater Management June visit to be agreed.
- Clerk to arrange BT Red Care engineer to visit the Magnolia Store to investigate line issues relating to the alarm; Cllr R Gardner to attend if possible.
- Request from Constable Landscapes for an upfront payment of 30% declined.
- Request from Blunderbus to host a show at Magnolia Park declined.
- Further research/advice needed into signage for the Magnolia Park pond.
- Further park visits to be arranged for Glencroft and Spencers park.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:22pm.

Chairman