

**Minutes of the meeting of the
PARKS, OPEN SPACES, CONSERVATION & FOOTPATHS COMMITTEE
held on Monday 16th July 2018 at 7:52pm
in the Committee Room, The Freight House, Bradley Way, Rochford.**

Cllrs present: Mrs E Gadsdon, R Gardner, R Patient, Ms A Rees-Jones, M Strubel, S Wootton & Mrs M Weir.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman were absent from the meeting. Cllr Mrs M Weir volunteered to Chair the meeting and this was agreed by all Members.

14. Apologies for non-attendance at meeting:

Chairman Mrs P Young, Vice-Chairman S May and Cllr Mrs N Shaw had given apologies.

Members received the apologies tendered.

15. Declarations of any:

a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest;

b) Other Pecuniary Interest; or

c) Non-Pecuniary Interest

on any matter on the agenda for 16th July 2018:

No declarations were made relating to a), b) and/or c). Members also made no declarations relating to any change in their Register of Members' Interests.

16. Public Forum:

No members of the public were present.

17. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th June 2018 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.

18. Action List Update – July 2018:

18.1 Members noted that the wall post in Elizabeth Close Playground would be continued to be monitored.

18.2 Members noted Minutes of the RDC Parish Parks Forum meeting which had been held in February still had not been received and that the Clerk continued to chase them.

18.3 Members were reminded of the approach from KeyMed regarding assisting towards the costs of improving the pond. Stillwater had carried out the duckweed removal and treatment procedure and positive comments had been received from the public. A silt treatment was due to be undertaken in the Autumn. The Clerk informed Members the next stage would be to carry out marginal planting and she would contact KeyMed when the duckweed and silt removal was finalised. Members noted that the pond levels had once again dropped due to the spate of hot weather.

18.4 Members were referred to Agenda item 8 (Minute 21).

- 18.5 Members noted that they were to alert the office when the boggy area in Spencers Park returned so a site visit could be arranged.
Members further noted that there had been some work in the area in question and wondered if the boggy area had been due to a blocked drain.
- 18.6 Members noted a review of the Parks and Open Spaces Management would be presented to Members in the September meeting and this would include the Fuelcard costings which was a matter that had been referred from Full Council.
- 18.7 Members noted the Tree Survey would be carried out by RDC in September 2018.
- 18.8 The Clerk had submitted a request via the EALC Weekly Bulletin to obtain recommendations for a suitable company to carry out a Risk Assessment (RA) on the Magnolia pond but had yet to receive any response.
- Members noted and **accepted** the Action Update List and **agreed** to the removal of the closed items.

19. Financial Report - June 2018:

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

20. Report Damage to Parish Truck:

Members noted the report and explained there had been a small amount of damage to the near-side wing of the truck. Members agreed as it was a work's vehicle, small accidents while being used for its purpose were highly probable. Members discussed repairing the damage, noting that they felt it was important to uphold a good image to the public. Questions were raised around making a claim on the insurance and it was noted that approach may negatively impact the insurance premium and Members were unsure if that would be most cost effective given the damage appeared to only be cosmetic. The Clerk informed Members the excess on the current policy was £150, but she had renewed the policy for the coming year earlier that day. The Clerk confirmed the insurance policy did not include a No Claims Discount (NCD) protection.

Members agreed it would be necessary to obtain quotes before deciding whether to proceed with any repairs. Members with suggestions of where to take the truck to be assessed for repair were to contact the Clerk accordingly so she could arrange for a suitable number of quotes.

21. Email correspondence from resident regarding BR43 and FP26 Lincoln Road:

a) Site visit with resident agreed; dates provided:

Members noted the email from the resident which contained their availability.

b) Members to agree date and participation

Members requested that the Clerk email Members with date suggestions so a site visit could be organised in due course.

22. Annual Playground/Adult Gym Inspection Reports:

Members were very pleased with the content of the inspection reports, which was noted to be very thorough. It was further noted that all equipment had been marked as 'low risk' or 'very low risk' on the reporting matrix.

Members discussed some of the equipment and raised questions about the advisory notes on some of the play and adult gym pieces, noting that the inspection company

had indicated some of the more newly installed equipment did not meet current BS EN standards. The Clerk assured Members that the inspection company was a reputable company and had come via recommendation from Rochford District Council. Similarly, it was noted the play equipment installation company was of equal standing. The Clerk also reminded Members that a weekly inspection was carried out on both playgrounds and the adult gym.

Members agreed it would be necessary to seek clarification around the conflicting information to ensure the equipment was installed to the correct standards and regulations.

23. Correspondence from resident in Glencrofts regarding concerns about trees backing onto their property from the Open Space:

Members noted the correspondence and that a tree survey was due to be carried out. The Clerk reminded Members that also a 3m mowing strip between the open space and neighbouring walls was regularly maintained. Members discussed the fact that there was unfortunately no 'right to light' regarding trees and that a lot of the trees in the open space were well-established and existed before the housing development. Members noted that the trees in question looked to be self-seeded oak trees and agreed it would be necessary to look at the trees and do what they could to relieve some of the issues raised by the resident. The Clerk would visit the site with the regular contractor and any work would be carried out following the bird nesting season.

Cllr M Strubel and Cllr Mrs E Gadsdon enquired about what was happening following the departure of the Groundsman. The Clerk was concerned these questions had been asked and once again reminded each Member that a large project was under way and this would need to be reviewed at the September meeting. This information was on the Action Update list which had been noted earlier in the meeting.

Cllr Mrs Weir noted that there were weeds approximately 6ft high by the metal fencing by the weir in Spencers and that it wasn't clear there was a weir there. The Clerk pointed out that the current contractor was under a tight schedule to get the important works done and therefore extra work could only be done if time permitted. Members agreed the regular contractor was still doing an excellent job.

24. Summary of Decisions:

- Clerk to obtain quotes for repairing damage to wing of truck.
- Clerk to contact KeyMed following completion of silt and duckweed treatment of pond to ascertain if their offer of a donation for marginal planting is still valid.
- Clerk to email Members with date suggestions for site visit for BR43 and FP26.
- Clerk to seek clarification around conflicting Annual Playground/Adult Gym reports to ensure equipment meets standards.
- Clerk to visit Glencroft with regular contractor to assess trees following correspondence from resident.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8:28pm.

Chairman