

**Minutes of a Remote Okehampton Town Council Parks Committee Meeting held on
Monday 21st September 2020 at 7pm**

Committee Members Present: Councillor C Marsh (Chairman)
Councillor J Yelland (Mayor)
Councillor J Goffey (Chairman, Property)
Councillor T Leech (Chairman, Planning)
Councillor B Tolley (Chairman, Policy & Resources)
Councillor G Button
Councillor C Holt
Councillor M Ireland
Councillor P Jessop

Other Members Present: Councillor D Sanger

In Attendance: Mrs E James (Town Clerk)
Mr J McGahey (Park-Keeper)
1 Member of the public

260 **Apologies for Absence** – None

261 **Deferment of Business** – None

262 **Mr McGahey, Park-Keeper** – Mr McGahey reported that during the pandemic lockdown it had mainly been himself working on a limited basis undertaking essential maintenance tasks. On return there had been a lot of catching up to do and a lot of the jobs that were planned for this year had been put on hold.

263 **Members' Questions** – None

264 **Minutes** - The minutes of the Parks Committee meeting held on 9th March 2020 were **APPROVED** to be signed by the Chairman at a later date on the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Goffey.

265 **Matters Arising** –

265.1 **CCTV** – Cllr Leech reported that the lockdown had put back work on the system. Negotiation with potential hubs, who were all running on slightly different systems, was ongoing.

It was noted that with the approval of Cllr's Marsh and Yelland a remote camera had been approved and purchased for the park as part of the main CCTV project and would be integrated into that system once installed. Installation of the camera was planned for early October.

A solution in relation to the vandalism which had caused the temporary closure of the play area, had been agreed with RoSPA and the Council's insurer. Cllr Yelland extended thanks to the Roundtable for helping with the cost of the repairs.

265.2 **BodyWorn CCTV** – It was noted that the units had been used on one occasion and the footage had been passed to the Police. Mr McGahey reported ongoing vandalism including smashed bottles and stones being pulled from the walls above the shelters in Simmons Park.

265.3 **Volunteers** – Work planned to be undertaken in Platts Meadow by StOC had been cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic.

Action

- 265.4 Landmark Tree** – The Hornbeam tree had been received and planted in the Putting Green
- 265.5 Putting Green** – Planned enhancement of the area had largely been deferred due to the pandemic. Fairways had been cut out and bunkers would be created over the winter.
- 265.6 Fairplace** – A tree had been planted in the centre of the area having been delivered on one of the hottest days of the summer. The majority of the planting in the garden had been deferred until 2021, although some donated plants along with some that were grown by Mr McGahey during lockdown had been planted.
- 265.7 Moor Otter 2020** – The programme had been cancelled due to the pandemic and rescheduled to take place in Easter 2021.
- 265.8 Hanging Basket Competition** – Noted that it had been cancelled
- 265.9 TPO's** – It was noted that the Council's application for TPO's to be placed on 4 Oak trees in Simmons Park had been confirmed.
- 265.10 West Bridge Wildflower Planting** – It was noted that it had not been possible to obtain the seeds in time for sowing in 2020.
- 265.11 Vehicles** – It was noted that the van was purchased in March and the tractor part exchanged in June. Mr McGahey reported that the new tractor machinery was cutting field much better, was working really well and was a marked improvement on the old vehicle. The provision of a van was making work quicker and easier.
- 265.12 Cemetery Management** – It was reported that a meeting had been held with the Rev and a Churchwarden. A meeting of the group was scheduled for the following day to discuss the outcome and correspondence from the Rev.
- 265.13 Land Behind Lidl** – It was noted that the platform decking and structural repairs had been completed
- 266** **Bookings** –
- 266.1** The Clerk reported that the majority of bookings for 2020 had been cancelled due to the pandemic but that the following had taken place:
- Fitness Bootcamp on a free trial basis until the end of September 2020
 - Winkley Morris Dancers performance on 11th August
- 266.2** On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Jessop, it was **RESOLVED** to approve to continuation of the fitness Bootcamp which would remain free of charge whilst the government rule of 6 was in force, and this would be the case for use by other groups, subject to receipt of required paperwork and insurance details.
- On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr (6 in favour, 3 against) it was **RESOLVED** that Rowlands Fair could attend in October providing government guidance permitted such events, it was safe for it to go ahead and subject to the provision of insurance and other documentation.
- 267** **Antisocial Behaviour and Criminal Damage in Simmons Park** –
- The Clerk reported on recent incidents of vandalism to the play area which had been reported to the police. Consultation with RoSPA had resulted in a solution which had been accepted by the Council's insurer allowing the area to be reopened. Mr McGahey advised how the area was being managed.

Continuance of anti-social behaviour in the town was a concern, and a response from a letter to the Police & Crime Commissioner was on the full Council agenda for 28th September. The possibility of involving other agencies was discussed including WDBC's Community Safety Partnership group whom Cllr Leech would approach.

- 268** **Health and Safety** - The annual safety inspections of the play equipment and skate park had been undertaken by RoSPA in March and the Park-keeper was working through the maintenance items required, he had also updated the risk assessments.

It had been suggested that a funding application be made to refresh/ replace a piece of play equipment which would be considered by Mr McGahey in the coming months.

- 269** **Payment of Invoices** – On the proposition of Cllr Holt, seconded by Cllr Yelland, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the schedule of payments, noting that the Debit Card payment had been for £50, not £20 as stated thereon.

- 270** **Reports of Council Working/Task and Finish Groups** -

- 270.1** **Open Space, Sports & Recreation (OSSR)** – Cllr Leech reported that the WDBC Officer had left and no Officer had yet been appointed to take over the role.

- 271** **Members' Reports and Requests for Agenda Items** -

- 271.1** **Dartmoor National Park Forum** – Cllr Sanger reported there had been a remote meeting which had mainly consisted of a planning application discussion and there was nothing relevant to Okehampton to report.

- 271.2** **Everything Okehampton** – The Christmas lights would be put up this year and Edwardian Evening would be on 3rd December if it was able to go ahead.

- 271.3** **North Dartmoor Search & Rescue** – Cllr Ireland advised that he would request a report for the next meeting.

- 271.4** **Okehampton Community Archive** – No meetings had been held. A grant had been obtained to help the group over a 12 months period as coffee mornings, which were the main source of income, had all been cancelled.

- 271.5** **Okehampton Community Recreation Association (OCRA)** – Cllr Tolley reported that the Pavilion Café had reopened, and the Manager was back from furlough on a part-time basis. Further items to be discussed under Part 2.

- 271.6** **Parklands Leisure Centre Users Group** – No meetings had been held as the facility had been closed.

- 271.7** **Two Museums Walk** – Cllr Goffey reported that leaflets had been printed and were available in the Museum and in Sticklepath.

- 272** **Urgent Items** – The Clerk reported that the Roundtable had requested a flower bed area in Simmons Park that they could maintain and place a Roundtable sign on. They would liaise with the Park-keeper and a report would be made to the next meeting for consideration.

WDBC had contacted the Clerk in relation to the possibility of including Simmons Park car park in their Ringo contract, to be further discussed at the next meeting.

(Mr McGahey and the member of public left the meeting)

PART TWO ITEMS

It was **RESOLVED** that under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item as it involves the likely disclosure of sensitive and confidential information. Proposed by Cllr Ireland, seconded by Cllr Goffey.

273 **All Saints Cemetery Burial Reservation** – Cllr Leech declared a personal interest being a friend of the applicants.

On the proposition of Cllr Yelland, seconded Cllr Ireland, it was **RESOLVED** to approve all 3 requests at the parishioner rate. Any further applications from family members would be accessed on their own merits.

274 **WDBC/Fusion Lease Agreement** – No progress to report

275 **Simmons Park Playing Field Lease** – No progress to report

276 **Simmons Park Carpark Agreement** – No progress to report

277 **Other Lease and Agreements** – To be reviewed in due course. Cllrs Tolley and Marsh updated the Committee on future plans.

Action

On the proposition of Cllr Leech, seconded Cllr Holt, it was **RESOLVED** to exit and ratify decisions made in Part Two.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Councillor Mrs C Marsh
Chairman