



COMMUNITY WELLBEING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Committee meeting held on
Thursday 21st October 2021 at 19.00hrs in the Town Hall, 1 High Street,
Cullompton, EX15 1AB

Present

Chair: Councillor Janet Johns

Committee Members: Martin Beckwith, James Buczkowski

In attendance

Note: Councillors attending by remote access are not able to participate nor vote in the meeting but may raise questions during the agenda item for Members' Questions

Officers: Maria Weston (Deputy Town Clerk)

Mr. Nick Savage, Volunteer Footpath Warden (VPPC) (via Zoom)

1 no. member of the press was present (part only of the meeting) and 1 no. member of the public.

CW Chair's Announcements

183. The Chair did a roll call of those present in the Town Hall.

Tufty Play Area - Tractor: We now have a timeline of what has been happening with regard to the tractor. The supplier of the tractor has been contacted a number of times to chase the required replacement part for the steering wheel.

CW Apologies for Absence

184. Apologies were received from Councillors Eileen Andrews, Matthew Dale, Gordon Guest & Kate Haslett.

(Apologies were also received from Councillors Anthony Connolly & Michelle Rowe)

CW Declarations of Interests

185. Councillor Buczkowski declared a personal interest in agenda item no. 14 (Tree Provision, Tiverton Road) as lives in proximity to the area.

CW Public Participation

186. This agenda item allows members of the public present at the meeting to raise matters which are relevant to the work of the Committee.

No matters were raised.

Note: At this point of the meeting it was noted that the internet connection was intermittently dropping.

CW Minutes

187. Consideration was given to the draft Minutes of the meeting held on 16th September 2021. (Supporting Paper A to the Agenda)

RESOLVED to confirm the draft minutes of the meeting held on 16th September 2021 as a correct record.

CW Action List

188. The Action List as applies to the Community Wellbeing Committee was received and reviewed (Supporting Paper B to the Agenda)

- **No. 13 - Ex-chimney stack:** An update as to the position with the ex-chimney stack on FP1 (Leat path) will be chased (MDDC)
- **No. 2 – Leat Bank:** A specification has been written in conjunction with the VPPC and this will be progressed once the DCC Footpath Warden has undertaken a site assessment.
- **No.25 - Tree Planting:** It was noted that the Devon Tree Trust would be supplying free trees for the current 'Tree planting drive' and it was suggested this be a community engagement venture and not solely left to the Town Council. Local groups could also look to tree maintenance. Note: It was agreed that 'tree planting' should be added as a future agenda item for consideration by the Committee.
- **No.19 – Signage; Near to Padbrook Roundabout:** A clear resolution had been made for information relating to this signage to be circulated to members. A further request was made for this information. Administrator to arrange for this to be circulated to members.
- **No.17 – Top Field Allotment Site; Wildlife Cameras:** Confirmation was requested as to the position with the provision of the cameras. Administrator to confirm.

CW Financial Monitoring

189. Information about the Community Wellbeing Committee income, expenditure and commitments, compared to the 2020/21 budget estimates was received and reviewed; this included:

- (i) Financial Summary & Graphs (Supporting Paper C to the Agenda)
- (ii) Committee Income & Expenditure - Month 5, August 2021 (Supporting Paper D to the Agenda)
- (iii) Committee Income & Expenditure - Month 6, September 2021 (Supporting Paper E to the Agenda)
- (iv) Nominal Ledger Year-to-date breakdown of Committee Expenses & Income (Supporting Paper F to the Agenda)
- (v) Committee Earmarked Reserves (Supporting Paper G to the Agenda)

RESOLVED to note the financial reports.

CW Public Rights of Way (PROW)

190. Supporting Papers to the agenda H(I) – PROW report, H (II)- Proposed Improvements to Footpaths Report and H (iii) List of Footpaths Report, were noted and an (oral) report was received from Cullompton's Volunteer Parish Paths Co-ordinator (VPPC)

The (oral) report included:

- **Footpath Accessibility:** An update, following the resolution made by Full Council 22nd July 2021: *That a meeting is arranged with Councillor Guest, the Volunteer Footpath Warden*

and the Devon County Council Rights of Way Officer to collect evidence regarding accessible footpaths which can be used as the basis for a formal letter to DCC) – A meeting had taken place with the VPPC, Cllr. Guest and Deputy Town Clerk (DTC). Cullompton's paths had been prioritised; taking into account their locations, any stiles and how well they are used etc. A draft letter to be sent to DCC has been sent to the Chair and DTC.

- **Leat Repairs:** VPPA had met with Devon County Council's Footpath Warden and details of a suitable contractor to undertake the work will be supplied. Details are awaited and will be chased.
- **Leat Incident:** Brief update given on a recent incident whereby a member of the public (mobility scooter user) had falling into the Leat (Footpath no. 1; the third known incident of this nature). The individual had to be given assistance and was physically lifted from the watercourse. Discussion ensued regarding potential means of addressing this issue including the question of signage being erected to warn of the narrow pathway. It was noted that DCC's past recommendation had been that signage should not be added to the path as this would make things worse as this implies that places with no signage are safe. Most PROW are not suitable for wheelchairs/mobility scooters etc. We need to follow up all actual incidences that occur so that we can then have conversations with DCC. The better we understand what happened the easier it will be to agree the way forward.
- A communication from Cllr. Guest was read out which highlighted his view that FP1 is not conducive to the use of wheelchairs or mobility scooters
- Headweir Road Play Area; Planting Scheme: The question was asked as to whether the proposed planting scheme had been costed. The Administrator advised that she believed this had been done but did not have any details.

NOTE: It was agreed that a site visit to the Leat path (FP1) be arranged with attendees to include: VPPC, DTC, Community Wellbeing Committee, Supermarket (Tesco) and DCC's Footpath Warden.

The Chair extended grateful thanks to the VPPC for the report supplied.

CW Outdoor Team Report

191. Consideration was given to a report from the Outdoor Team about recent and planned work which was reviewed (Supporting Paper I to the agenda) and the following points raised:

1. **Tufty Park – Tractor; damage (steering wheel):** Please refer to appendix A (questions asked about the tractor and the responses given)

Discussion ensued including:

- Damage had been identified but it seems this has taken quite some time to be addressed. The supplier has been 'blamed' however there is a real concern about how the Town Council is assessing risks in the areas under its control; the whole risk management process.
- One of the questions that had been asked was if a risk assessment had been carried out on the tractor once the damage had originally been identified. The answer was no.
- Further, it was understood a risk assessment had not even been carried out on the Heras fencing that had been installed around the tractor and it was felt this posed a health & safety risk in itself. The fencing had been installed as a direct result of Councillor 'intervention'.
- The need to understand if the damage was caused due to wilful damage or if this was as a result of a faulty product (part) was noted - NB: This may impact on any associated insurance claim.

2. **Tufty Park Hedge:** It was advised that further litter clearance from and cutting of the Tufty Park hedge had been undertaken recently by the Outdoor Team. It was noted that additional cutting and litter clearance of the hedge is still required.
3. **Upcott Field Entrance:** The work by the Outdoor Team to clear the Upcott Field steps (vegetation) was appreciated by the Committee; it was felt this area looks very nice.

RESOLVED: That following consideration of the Tufty Park Play Area tractor issue (damage to the steering wheel) and associated mitigation (Heras fencing) that:

- i) a review of the appropriateness of the fencing by a competent party should be undertaken;
- ii) should it be deemed that the Heras fencing is appropriate; The Heras fencing should be checked to ensure that it is properly installed and is safe. The fencing should then be checked on a weekly basis (when the play area inspection is done) and the checks documented;
- iii) efforts should be made to expedite the repair of the steering wheel; establish if the play area supplier has the required part to allow the necessary repair and to determine if the Outdoor Team Supervisor considers that the steering wheel's stem/tube/pole should be cut at an appropriate level to negate any potential health & safety issue.

CW Comments & Complaints

192. An overview of the Committee's Comments & Complaints Log was reviewed and noted (Supporting Paper J to the agenda) with the following comments:

No. 93 - Pigeons: It was noted that a member of the public had recently visited the Town Hall and had advised of their report to MDDC that a large flock of pigeons were roosting down behind Fore Street and this was resulting in a large quantity of droppings in this area. Further, that a price had been obtained by this individual for a specialist company to humanely trap the pigeons but the individual did not feel they should burden the cost of this themselves. The administrator informed members that the advice given was that other landlords/residents in the location should be contacted about the issue and as this is a possible health & safety risk due to the excrement, that perhaps the Environment Agency should be made aware.

CW Youth Services

193. Consideration was given to Cullompton's Youth Services Provision and Management:

- Youth Services Update Report (Supporting Paper K to the agenda)
- YMCA's Quarterly Report (July 2021-Sept 2021) (Supporting Paper L to the agenda);
- Youth Strategy (Supporting Paper M to the agenda)
- Service Level Agreement with the YMCA (Supporting Paper N to the agenda)

It was noted that:

- i) the YMCA quarterly report looks good; with the number of attendees at the youth sessions improving and the format of the report (albeit perhaps too colourful)
- ii) serious consideration needs to be given to the Town Council's Youth Strategy which in its current form is quite large; too aspirational and not achievable. A Town Council

*resolution had been made (see following) with regard to expanding the remit of the Youth Services Working Group.

**Town Council Resolution 24th October 2019:*

RESOLVED: That the Youth Services Working Group continues its good work but expands its remit to look at how it can be ensured that the needs of all those under the age of 25, living in the parish or using the services available in the parish, are given equal consideration

RESOLUTION/RECOMMENDATION: *To The Youth Services Working Group –*

That following consideration by the Community Wellbeing Committee of Cullompton's Youth Services Provision that:

A recommendation be made to the Youth Services Working Group to ask that it revisits the Town Council's Youth Strategy with a view to making this into a more achievable and realistic vision.

Note: It was requested that the Youth Services Working Group is asked for its proposals in terms of how the Town Council can fulfil its resolution (to facilitate formal direction) * to include:

- is the Town Council's Youth Strategy realistic? Should this be refined and reduced in size? What can we realistically achieve?
- Should the Town Council have a role of co-ordination and support of other sectors?

CW Japanese Knotweed

194. Consideration was given to a report which detailed an update relating to the Town Council's serious concern about the presence of Japanese Knotweed (and potentially Giant Hogweed) in Cullompton at Crow Green/Bridge and the potential detrimental impact this may have. (Supporting Papers to the agenda: O – Introductory report with comments received and O1 – Supplementary Information received)

Discussion ensued and it was agreed that the Town Council had made appropriate representations to both the Environment Agency and Mid-Devon District Council. It was further suggested that the Town Council's Outdoor Team:

- i) monitors the Japanese and Giant Hogweed situation at Crow Green/Bridge;
- ii) periodically assesses/monitors the Leat (Mill Stream) watercourse flowing in the vicinity of Crow Green/Bridge.

CW Allotment Fees

195. Consideration was given to the allotment fees for both the Haymans Close and Top Field sites for the 2023-24 period (Supporting Paper P to the agenda) and it was:

Note: 1 year's notice to tenants is required for any change to the fees.

RESOLVED: That the allotment fees for both the Haymans Close and Top Field sites for 2023-24 should remain as is currently set for 2022-23

Site	Full Plot	Half Plot
Top Field	£45.00	£25.00
Haymans Close	£35.00	£20.00

CW Tree Provision, Tiverton Road

196. Consideration was given to a request from a member of the public to allow them to plant trees on a verge in Tiverton Road (Supporting Paper Q to the agenda) and it was:

RESOLVED: That following consideration by the Community Wellbeing Committee of a request from a member of the public to allow them to plant trees on a verge in Tiverton Road:

- i) That written approval is given to the member of the public to advise that the Town Council is happy for them to plant 5 no. trees on the grass verge in Tiverton Road as follows:
 1. Field Maple;
 2. Silver Birch;
 3. Wild Cherry;
 4. Rowan
 5. Hazel
- ii) – With the understanding that the Town Council appreciates the offer of the individual carrying out initial maintenance on the trees which should be carried out for a period of 3 no. years’ after which time the Town Council would assume responsibility for the tree’s maintenance;
- iii) Whilst the Town Council is grateful for the offer of the sycamore saplings being planted, due to concerns with the size these trees could grow to, would suggest that the individual may wish to contact the Cullompton Community (Fields) Association (CCA) about these.

Note:

- i) Councillor Buczkowski declared a personal interest as is a Trustee of the CCA.
- ii) It was felt by members that the individual concerned should be commended for their efforts with regard to tree planting. This will be relayed by the Meeting Administrator to the party concerned.

CW Mid Devon District Council Playing Pitch Strategy

197. Consideration was given to the MDDC Playing Pitch Strategy with a view to making an associated recommendation to Council regarding any comments that the Town Council may wish to make (Link to the Strategy: <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/your-council/consultation-involvement/current-consultations/> or contact the town Council office if a paper copy is required)

No comments on the MDDC Playing Pitch Strategy were made by the Committee (This should be referred to the (Full) Town Council for its consideration.

CW To consider Members Questions

198. This agenda item is to give Councillors an opportunity to ask questions which are relevant to the work of the Committee.

(Cllr. Buczkowski – following Cllr. Snow’s previous comments – CW)

Administrators Note: Cllr. Snow had left the meeting at 8:10pm.

- **Tufty Park Play Area – Hedge:** Comments to be relayed to the Outdoor Team Supervisor for noting (not necessarily for actioning).

The Meeting closed at 8:47pm