

# MINUTES

**Committee:** Amenities Committee  
**Date:** Monday, 08 April 2024  
**Time:** 7:00 pm  
**Venue:** Younghayes Centre, 169 Younghayes Road EX5 7DR

## **Present**

Cllr Kim Bloxham (Chair)  
Cllr Les Bayliss  
Cllr Kevin Blakey  
Cllr Colin Buchan  
Cllr Lisa Goudie  
Cllr Vincent Wilton

## **Also Present**

Cllr Ray Bloxham  
Andrew Chapman-New, Cranbrook Town Council  
Alexandra Robinson, Cranbrook Town Council

## **A/24/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies were received.

## **A/24/26 DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATION**

No interests were declared or dispensations granted.

## **A/24/27 MINUTES**

It was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey seconded by Cllr Colin Buchan and **resolved** to accept and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2024 as a correct record.

## **A/24/28 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No Members of the public were in attendance.

## **A/24/29 AMENITIES MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee noted the Amenities Monitoring Report.

## **A/24/30 RANGER REPORT**

The Chairman referred members to the Ranger Report outlining the activities carried out since the last meeting and proposals for forthcoming activities.

Members commented on the following points:

- Tree Planting
- Activities had continued despite the inclement weather particularly with local community groups
- Remediation of Great Meadow following works undertaken by EON

The Committee noted the Ranger report.

## **A/24/31 UNESCO BIOSPHERE – NORTH DEVON**

The Chairman invited the Ranger to update Members on the proposed Woodland Creation project and how it might be implemented in the Country Park. The Ranger confirmed the recently updated Advisory Report and

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the grant process which was intended to meet the costs of the project in full and leave a small surplus for the purchase of additional materials such as wooden stakes or posts.

Members noted that the Grant Fund was provided through Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and Rural Fund Agency and support would be provided over a period of 15 years. It was further noted that the project would be incorporated into updated versions of the Country Park Management Plan and Hedgerow Management Plan.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Les Bayliss, seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved** to

- 1) Approve the application of the Devon Woods Project subject to there being no additional financial contribution needed.
- 2) Delegate to the Ranger to plant and install any required protection with the help of volunteers to mitigate additional costs to the Town Council and
- 3) Delegate to the Ranger in consultation with the Country Park Working Group to review the Country Park Management Plan and the Hedgerow Management Plan and report back.

#### **A/24/32 VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGN - UPDATE**

The Committee noted the report and the summary data from the Vehicle Activated Sign.

#### **A/23/33 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Due to the sensitive or confidential nature of the following item it was proposed by Cllr Vincent Wilton seconded by Cllr Les Bayliss and **resolved** to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting on the basis of Section 1 paragraph 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 which stipulates that a council may, by resolution, exclude the public from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings.

*Cllr Lisa Goudie abstained.*

#### **A/24/34 PLAY AREAS - GATES**

At its meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024, the Committee considered the requirement for gates at each of its play areas and concluded it was good practice to retain Self-closing Gates. It was noted that gates at three of the play areas were failing and the Committee reviewed the works required to remediate across those areas and the associated costs.

Whilst the previous recommendation was to service the gates without replacement the Council's Play Park Maintenance contractor had made a further inspection and advised that it would not be economically viable to repair the gates in Hayes Square Play area and his recommendation would be that they were replaced. Similarly, the Committee had enquired whether some of the gates at St. Martin's Play Area could be repurposed elsewhere, but these would require repair and it would be costly to install replacement fencing. The Committee noted the ongoing costs associated with the management of the Play Areas.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Vincent Wilton seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved** to defer consideration and to

1. Delegate to Officers to seek advice from the RoSPA Play Safety Training, in April 2024 and
2. Establish a Council Working Party to investigate and review the wider Play Park Maintenance and to report back. The Working Party to include Cllrs Kim Bloxham, Vincent Wilton and Les Bayliss and the Deputy Clerk.

#### **A/22/35 PLAY AREAS – SAFER SURFACE – NORTHWOOD ACRES**

The Committee referred to the report regarding Northwood Acres, Play Area to consider the installation of wet pour safer surfacing beneath two pieces of equipment to improve ground conditions and access to the

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equipment during periods of inclement weather. Members noted the budget constraints and the need to prioritise remediation in the Play Areas.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Vincent Wilton seconded by Cllr Colin Buchan and **resolved** to defer to the Play Park Working Group and to report back to the Amenities Committee.

**The meeting closed at 20:02**

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