



---

**MINUTES OF PROPERTY & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING**

held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020 at 6.30pm

**DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS, THIS MEETING WAS HELD USING ZOOM.**

**Present:** Philippa Biddlecombe (Chair), Margaret Bebbington, Stephen Biddlecombe, Bob Gilbey, Judi Morison, Pek Peppin, Penny Steiner and Rob Worth.

**Locum Clerks:** Stephen Hill, Patrick Pender-Cudlip

**No members of the public were present.**

**The meeting started at 18.30**

**2020**

**PI32 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Sally Snook and from County Councillor Mike Lewis.

**PI33 Declarations of personal or pecuniary interest (these must be declared BEFORE the agenda items concerned are discussed. Persons with a declared pecuniary interest must leave the meeting room when these are discussed).**

There were no declarations of interest.

**PI34 Minutes of Property & Infrastructure Committee meetings of 28<sup>th</sup> September & 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

**RESOLVED:** It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> September be approved, to be signed by the Chair at a later time.

**RESOLVED:** It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> October be approved, to be signed by the Chair at a later time.

**PI35 Action points from previous meetings:**

a) **Oak saplings** – see P136 c), below.

b) **Repairs on Donald Pither Field** – the Football Club has received permission to carry out work on the rail and replace the dugout, but given current circumstances they do not intend to go ahead at present.

c) **New bench** – Committee members are sympathetic to the idea of installing a new bench in the cemetery.

d) **Dog fouling notices** – Committee members expressed support for the erection of cost-effective notices on the playing field warning that dog fouling on public land is dangerous and a criminal offence.

***Action 201123/1: Committee Chair***

**PI36 Infrastructure:**

a) **Roadworks** – The roadworks on Wyke Road have been delayed by vegetation clearance but were expected to commence shortly.

b) **River Cary water quality** – members discussed the pollution caused by water runoff from agricultural land and the Dimmer landfill site. They were pleased to hear that the water testing specialist who had been employed previously was back at work but noted that the accuracy of water sampling may be compromised when river levels are high.

**RESOLVED:** It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Council's water testing specialist be consulted and asked to test the river Cary for agricultural and landfill pollutants when appropriate.

- c) **Tree planting** – Members expressed gratitude to a resident who had offered to plant indigenous trees on agricultural land along the Barrow Road. The saplings had been supplied by South Somerset District Council (SSDC) and nurtured by Bob Gilbey.  
**RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to accept a resident’s kind offer to plant c.50 saplings supplied by SSDC on agricultural land along the Barrow Road.**
- d) **2021 Tree strategy** – Members discussed the draft Tree Strategy prepared by the Assistant Clerk. They agreed on the environmental importance of increased tree cover in the parish and considered how best to respond when SSDC offered to supply saplings free of charge. They expressed gratitude for such offers but stressed the importance of ensuring that only the most appropriate native species be accepted.  
**RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Assistant Clerk be thanked for all her work researching and drafting the 2021 Tree Strategy and that the Full Council be recommended to accept the Strategy following consultation with Julian de Bosdari.**

**PI37 Properties – Pavilion and Donal Pither Memorial Field**

- a) **Play area inspections** – It was reported that no serious problems had been reported by the most recent SSDC Operational Inspection and the Clerk was asked to check the schedule of Annual and Operational inspections.
- b) **Play equipment** – It was reported that the Council had received the \$106 funding and that the Clerk would arrange the installation of swings and a zip wire.

**Action 201123/3: Interim Clerk**

**PI38 Market House:**

- a) **The Shambles Lift** - The Committee discussed the unsatisfactory performance of the lift in recent times and the apparent inability of the maintenance company to keep it in working order. Members agreed that it needed fixing as a matter of urgency since the Market House is likely to be open for bookings again soon. It was agreed that unless the maintenance can get on top of the problem the Clerk should look for another contractor.
- b) **Staircase** – Members agreed that it would be better to defer repainting the staircase until other works in the Market House had been completed.  
**RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the painting of the staircase be postponed.**
- c) **Bird fouling** – Members discussed possible solutions to the perennial problem of bird droppings including the possible installation of repellent pellets, gels or spikes on ledges and parapets. It was agreed to seek advice from SSDC’s Environmental Health Department.

**Action 201123/4: Interim Clerk**

**Action 201123/5: Interim Clerk (PPC)**

**PI39 Cemetery and Chapel**

- a) **Chapel** – After discussing the need for repairs to the woodwork Members gratefully accepted Bob Gilbey’s kind offer to carry out the necessary repairs himself.
- b) **Paths and drives** – It was agreed that the extent of subsidence and surface damage makes patching unviable and that a more substantial repair is needed. The Clerk would ask contractors to specify and quote for the necessary work.

**Action 201123/6: Interim Clerk**

c) **Memorials**

Members noted suggestions about a memorial wall or memorial garden but felt that headstones are more appropriate in a cemetery while another bench would make better use of the limited space available. They also felt it would be worth looking into the possibility of acquiring another site for ‘green burials’.

**PI40 Fairfield**

- a) **Climbing Fort** – Members noted that a majority of respondents to a public consultation were in favour of a climbing fort but not a wooden shelter. The Clerk would check details of the proposed fort with the contractor who had submitted the most attractive bid, and also with SSDC, and then submit recommendations to the Full Council at its next meeting.

**Action 201123/6: Interim Clerk**

- b) **Extra fencing** – A team of volunteers has been assembled and the work will be done shortly, social distancing regulations permitting.

**PI41 Millbrook – converted toilet block**

- a) **Conversion project** – The work is nearing completion. Most of it has been done by volunteers but the employment of professionals where necessary and the cost of materials seem likely to lead to the project going over budget by c.£2k. Judi Morison reported that the Food Sharing project planning group is working well and plans to provide a Community Larder situated in the converted building. The intention is to apply to SSDC for a set up grant to cover the cost of a fridge and freezer as well as new signage. Members expressed particular gratitude to a local businesswoman who is offering commercial equipment to the Community Larder at a greatly reduced price. The use of the Millbrook block as a base should make the Community Larder substantially more accessible and effective, not least in cutting down food waste and food miles.
- b) **Renaming** – Members agreed that a new name would be appropriate.  
**RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that to recommend to the Full Council that former toilet block in Millbrook car park be renamed the Millbrook Hub.**
- c) **Letting part of the Millbrook Hub** – in response to an advertisement placed by the Council a prospective tenant has expressed an interest in renting the premises as a studio.  
**RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to recommend to the Full Council that the eastern side of the Millbrook Hub be offered to the prospective tenant at a rent of £200 per calendar month, payable in advance, plus a £200 refundable deposit, exclusive of electricity, water and business rates, initially for a period of six to twelve months with one month’s notice by either party, with the tenant responsible for decoration.**

**The meeting ended at 19.56**

*Members of the Council considered the following matters in the exercise of its functions, that “No member of the public, job applicant, elected member or employee shall receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, sexual orientation, marital status or disability”*

**The next meeting of the Properties and Infrastructure Committee will be held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7:00pm. Any items for inclusion on the agenda should be forwarded to the Town Clerk by Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021.**