

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 3rd April 2024 at 7.00pm in the Forest Suite, The Gateway, Ringwood

PRESENT: Cllr Andrew Briers (Chair)
Cllr Becci Windsor (Vice Chair)
Cllr Rae Frederick
Cllr John Haywood
Cllr James Swyer
Cllr Glenys Turner

IN ATTENDANCE: Charmaine Bennett, Carvers Clubhouse & Events Manager & Clerk to the meeting (in the Town Clerk’s absence),
Nicola Vodden, Office Manager
Kelvin Wentworth, Grounds Manager
Helen Short, Allotment Administrator
Cllr Philip Day

ABSENT: Cllr Gareth DeBoos
Cllr Mary DeBoos
Cllr Janet Georgiou
Cllr Peter Kelleher

**OS/6339
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were sixteen members of the public present. Three spoke in the public participation section of the meeting and all present were interested in agenda items.

A resident of Kestrel Court, who was impacted by the recent fire, asked if there had been any changes to the tenancy of allotment holders as she understood there was no way of evicting the person concerned as the agreement currently stood.

The Chairman of the Allotment Association at Upper Kingston allotment site, where two-thirds of tenants are association members, spoke on their behalf giving reasons why this site should be excluded from the bonfire ban which the Committee would consider later in the meeting. He explained the differences from other sites, how bonfires are managed considerately and responsibly at Upper Kingston and the good relationship with the Football Club, its immediate neighbour.

A resident of Top Lane read a statement in relation to the proposed plans to replace the sheds at Carvers Recreation Ground. He described the current views they have from their property overlooking the school fields and the recreation ground. He recounted a previous Clerk’s assurance that any replacement would be of similar height with little impact to their bungalow, whereas the proposed building was overwhelming in size and scale and would dominate their view given its height of 27ft and distance from the boundary. He expressed his extreme disappointment that they have not been kept informed of changes to the Council’s intentions until this year and they had not been made aware that the planning authority (NFDC) had been asked for pre-application advice twice. He had employed an independent planning consultant and read his comments to the Committee. Whilst there was sympathy towards the grounds team’s requirements, there was concern with the way the process has been handled, disregard of NFDC planning team leader’s advice that the sheds replacement plan was not appropriate, resulting increase in traffic movements, impact on residential properties and personal access onto Carvers field. He pointed out there was no mention in Ringwood



Neighbourhood Plan despite it being in progress for 3 years, there were concerns over costs to the public purse, the requirement for expensive specialised advice and lack of public consultation. Their own survey of neighbours had shown they were against the plans. He suggested that other alternatives should be looked into and invited Members to visit his property and see the impact which would result from the proposed building.

**OS/6340
APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apoloiges for absence had been received from Cllrs G DeBoos, M DeBoos, Georgiou and Kelleher.

**OS/6341
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllrs Briers and Turner declared a pecuniary interest in agenda items 5. Allotment fire response and 6. Allotment garden rules review as they are allotment tenants at the Upper Kingston site. They would leave the meeting whilst these matters were discussed.

**OS/6342
MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th March 2024, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

At 7.19pm, Cllrs Briers and Turner left the meeting. Cllr Windsor took the Chair for agenda items 5. and 6.

**OS/6343
ALLOTMENT FIRE RESPONSE**

Members considered the Town Clerk’s report on progress since the incident at Southampton Road allotment site at the end of January.

As agreed, a 1.8m fence had been erected on the boundary between the allotment site and Kestrel Court and costings had been sought for legal advice on termination of the tenancy of the plot from which the fire originated. The cost for advice would be £700 + VAT. The Town Clerk did not recommend taking this forward, unless Members directed otherwise, and indicated that officers would seek to secure future compliance with the Allotment Garden Rules and any changes to the rules to be determined later in the meeting, at the relevant plot.

In relation to the strip of earth left on Kestrel Court side of the fence, some roots and stumps were still present. The Grounds Manager would look at what could be done to improve this for the residents.

RESOLVED: 1) That the Town Clerk’s report on recent developments (*Annex A*) be noted; and
2) That the Grounds Manager consider options to remove roots and stumps and make improvements in the strip of earth in Kestrel Court.

ACTION K Wentworth

**OS/6344
ALLOTMENT GARDEN RULES REVIEW**



Members considered the Town Clerk's report (*Annex B*) and discussions followed on the issues for decision listed at paragraph 3. There had been a number of suggested changes to the current allotment rules in respect of weed burning tools, bonfires, incinerators, firepits, barbecues, flammable liquids and tenants' personal insurance cover.

Weed burning tools – It was agreed to ban weed-burning tools on all allotment sites.

Bonfires – Tenants had been asked to observe a ban voluntarily pending the formal review of the allotment rules. There had been some objection to the ban being made permanent as this was how tenants disposed of uncompostable green waste. The committee felt the rural location and distance from residential properties was a major factor in differentiating the Upper Kingston allotment site from the other three sites, which were closer to town and in close vicinity of residential properties. It was agreed to change the seasonal ban on bonfires at Southampton Road, Hightown Road and Crow Arch Lane allotments sites to an all-year ban.

Incinerators, fire pits and barbecues - In relation to the recommendation at 3.2.2. that the ban be extended to include incinerators, fire-pits and possibly barbecues, it was agreed that further information was needed for the Committee to decide these points. Officers are to further discuss, assess options and consult on arrangements for a single communal facility at each site for the safe incineration OR collection and disposal of green waste. Arrangements are to be site specific, do not need to be the same across all sites and the phasing in of any new arrangements needs to be considered also. This is to be referred back to the Committee to resolve and not delegated to officers. Members wished to make a distinction between disposable barbecues and other barbecues available, with the aim of reducing risks but not taking away the associated social benefits.

As 3.2.2 was not resolved, it followed that 3.2.1 was not resolved either. Should it be decided at a future meeting that a ban on any of these items should be put in place at Southampton Road, Hightown Road and Crown Arch Lane, Members can also consider whether this should be extended to Upper Kingston or not.

Flammable liquids – The Grounds Manager commented that it would be impossible to police any ban or restriction on the use of flammable liquids. The safe storage was thought to be low risk and manageable. Transporting flammable liquids to and from the allotments had its own risks and this was taken into consideration. Members wished to encourage the use of battery-operated tools, however acknowledged this could be costly.

Insurance cover – It was noted that the National Allotment Society offer allotment tenants liability insurance, however there are exclusions attached and it would not have helped in this situation. Making insurance cover mandatory was not recommended because of impracticalities in monitoring compliance and the exclusions that would apply. Tenants can be encouraged to voluntarily obtain insurance cover.

No other changes to the rules were proposed. Better dialogue with allotment associations was something Members wished to encourage.

RESOLVED: 1) That the ban on weed-burning tools across all sites be formalised;
2) That the ban on bonfires at Southampton Road, Hightown Road and Crow Arch Lane allotment sites be formalised;
3) That in relation to issues raised at paragraphs 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 of the Town Clerk's report, regarding possible extension of the bonfire ban to include incinerators, fire pits and possibly barbecues, these are to be researched further as outlined above and brought back before the Committee for consideration at a future meeting;



- 4) That no ban be put in place in relation to the storage of flammable liquids on allotments; and
- 5) That liability insurance for allotments tenants is not to be made mandatory, however this is to be encouraged.

ACTION C Wilkins / R Fitzgerald

At 8.13pm, Cllrs Briers and Turner re-joined the meeting. Cllr Briers took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

**OS/6345
GROUNDS SHEDS PROJECT UPDATE**

Members considered the Town Clerk's report (*Annex C*). The decision to submit a planning application had already been made and this item was to determine if there were any further directions to officers regarding the submission of the planning application.

The Grounds Manager reported on efforts made to find suitable locations and facilities for an alternative base for the grounds team and how these attempts had not resulted in any substantive options. He also explained that any further changes to the plans for replacement sheds at Carvers, reducing the size of the building, would result in there being inadequate space for machinery and it would not be suitable for all of the intended uses.

It was explained that an outline application could be submitted without the need for specialist reports and the next stage would be to get an indication from the planning authority.

There was some concern that not enough public consultation had been conducted and Members considered whether more should be undertaken, prior to the submission of the planning application. A proposal was made to proceed without further consultation and this was agreed. It was noted that once the application is registered and as part of the planning process, there would be a period of public consultation where comments could be registered with NFDC.

RESOLVED: That no further directions be given to officers regarding the submission of outline planning application.

ACTION C Wilkins

**OS/6346
CARVERS WORKING PARTY**

Cllr Frederick reported that the storage solution was resolved at the Full Council meeting on 27th March. The latest version of the Masterplan had been received from the landscape architect. It will be checked and referred back to the Working Party for consideration.

RESOLVED: That the notes of the Carvers Working Party meeting on 6th March 2024 (*Annex D*) be received.

**OS/6347
EVENTS MANAGEMENT**

D-day anniversary



The location of the beacon (on 6th June 2024) has changed from the Bickerley to the War Memorial Gardens. A D-Day flag is being purchased and will be added to the union jack outside the Gateway building.

Family Fun Day – 5th April 2024

A request was made for help on the day and any volunteers were asked to contact the Events Manager.

Sponsorship

Cllr Frederick reported that a different approach to sponsorship had been adopted this year and she was pleased to announce that £3,300 had already been secured for events in 2024.

- RESOLVED:** 1) That the notes of the Events Management Sub-Committee on 20th March 2024 (*Annex E*) be received; and
2) That the verbal update on events be noted.

**OS/6348
CHRISTMAS ILLUMINATIONS**

The Working Party met with a representative from Gala Lights to discuss design options for the Christmas illumination 2024, which is planned to be bigger and more spectacular. When details have been finalised, this will be reported back to the Committee at a future meeting.

- RESOLVED:** That the verbal report on the Christmas Illuminations Working Party meeting on 20th March 2024 be received.

**OS/6349
PROJECTS (current and proposed)**

The updated report had been circulated with the agenda (*Annex F*).

- RESOLVED:** That the updated projects report be received.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:41pm.

Note: The text in the Action Boxes above does not form part of these minutes.

RECEIVED
24th April 2024

APPROVED
1st May 2024

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN



RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**3rd April 2024****Update on allotment fire response****1. Introduction and reason for report**

- 1.1. This report is by way of a factual update on events since the allotment fire on 30th January as previously reported (see Minute ref. OS/6234).

2. Background information and options

- 2.1. The committee recommended that a fence be provided to replace the burnt hedge. Enquiries revealed that planning permission would be needed if the fence were to exceed 1.8m in height. To avoid delay a fence 1.8m high was ordered and has been installed.
- 2.2. The committee directed the Town Clerk to seek advice on terminating the tenancy of the plot from which the fire originated. Enquiries since have established that the cost of that advice would be £700 plus VAT. (This fee would cover the advice alone and not any further steps directed by members.) This would be a large sum to pay when resources are tight and there are many other things upon which it could be spent that would provide larger benefits to more residents. Accordingly, officers will seek to secure future compliance with the Allotment Garden Rules at the relevant plot in other ways unless members direct otherwise.
- 2.3. The committee resolved to review the Allotment Garden Rules and that is the subject of a later agenda item at this meeting.

3. Issues for decision and any recommendations

Members are invited to note this report.

For further information, contact:

Christopher Wilkins, Town Clerk
Direct Dial: 01425 484720
Email: chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk

Review of Allotment Garden Rules

1. Introduction and reason for report

- 1.1. Upon receiving (at the meeting on 7th February) a report about a fire at the Council's allotment gardens site off Southampton Road, this committee resolved to review the Council's Allotment Garden Rules (see Minute ref. OS/6234). A copy of the current rules is attached as Annex 1.

2. Background information and options

- 2.1. The committee's decision to review the rules was inspired, in part, by safety concerns raised by the occupiers of homes adjoining or close to the Southampton Road site. At that previous meeting, several residents asked for information and various actions; not all of which relate to the Allotment Garden Rules. This business item is concerned only with the review of the Rules.
- 2.2. It is normal practice for town and parish councils which provide allotments to promulgate rules for their proper management. There is no prescribed form for these and they vary from place to place. Their primary purpose is to promote the orderly use of the allotments, to prevent nuisances to other tenants and neighbours and to protect the public purse from excessive and unreasonable expense when plots are given up. They can certainly be used to promote health and safety but this is not their primary function.
- 2.3. The rules should be no more restrictive than they need to be. The Council's ability in practice to monitor and enforce compliance is quite constrained (by want of powers and limited resources). Furthermore, it would be hard to justify imposing restrictions on allotment tenants that do not apply to the owners of private gardens in the vicinity that may be just as close to adjoining homes.
- 2.4. The following themes/revisions were canvassed or requested at the previous meeting:
 - 2.4.1. A complete ban on the use of weed-burning tools (the tenants have been asked to observe such a ban voluntarily pending a possible rule change and there has been no "push-back" against this so far).
 - 2.4.2. An all-year-round ban on bonfires at the Southampton Road, Hightown Road and Crow Arch Lane sites but not Upper Kingston (tenants have also been asked to observe this voluntarily but it has been objected that it leaves tenants with no adequate means of disposing of some green waste and unfairly discriminates between the sites).
 - 2.4.3. A ban on storing flammable liquids in sheds on allotments.
 - 2.4.4. Insurance cover for tenant's liabilities. (Such cover is available through The National Allotment Society but it excludes damage caused by any heat process other than small private bonfires. Alternative policies may be available. The tenants have been urged to consider arranging such cover.)
- 2.5. The regulation of bonfires raises some difficult issues. First, whilst it is true that there are no homes close to the Upper Kingston site (and this could be grounds for treating it differently from the others) it is surrounded by hedges and quite close to other buildings (one currently under construction at very substantial expense). Secondly, some allotmenters have recently been using incinerators, fire-pits or barbecues on their plots. Prohibiting bonfires but not these other sources of naked flame might seem arbitrary but, in practice, banning them all may be difficult to enforce. Finally, most bonfires are currently used (quite safely)

to dispose of non-compostable green waste. Without them, some other means of disposal will be needed. This could take the form of a single suitably-managed incinerator at each site. Alternatively, the Council could arrange skips at each site. Both would involve some costs. Who should bear this; the allotmenters through increased rents or the council-taxpayers through the precept?

3. Issues for decision and any recommendations

Issue for decision:

- 3.1. **Should the ban on weed-burning tools be formalized? (Officers RECOMMEND this be done; as a proportionate response to the recent emergency that is unlikely to prove contentious.)**
- 3.2. **Should the ban on bonfires at the Southampton Road, Hightown Road and Crow Arch Lane sites be formalized and/or extended to include the Upper Kingston site?**
 - 3.2.1. **Subject to 3.2.2 below, officers RECOMMEND that the ban at Southampton Road, Hightown Road and Crow Arch Lane be formalized but leave members to decide whether it should be extended to Upper Kingston**
 - 3.2.2. **Officers RECOMMEND that the ban on bonfires be extended to include incinerators and fire-pits but leave members to decide whether to include barbecues and further RECOMMEND that authority be delegated to officers to discuss and agree arrangements for a single communal facility at each site for the safe incineration of green waste or its collection and disposal (at no expense to the Council)**
 - 3.2.3. **Should the storage of flammable liquids on allotments be restricted? (Officers do NOT RECOMMEND this course because such fuels are needed for normal use of strimmers, mowers and other tools and the impracticality of monitoring and enforcement.)**
- 3.3. **Should any further action be taken regarding allotmenters' liability insurance? (Officers do NOT RECOMMEND that such insurance be required because of the impracticality and burden of monitoring compliance and the exclusions from cover but would be willing to take further steps to encourage voluntary take-up.)**
- 3.4. **Should any other changes to the Rules be made? (Members are respectfully urged to seek the advice of officers before advocating or approving any other changes.)**

For further information, contact:

Christopher Wilkins, Town Clerk
Direct Dial: 01425 484720
Email: chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk



RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

THE ALLOTMENT ACTS, 1908 to 1950 RULES AS TO ALLOTMENT GARDENS

Made by the Ringwood Town Council with respect to allotment gardens for the Town.

INTERPRETATION OF TERMS

1. Throughout these Rules the expression “the Council” means the Ringwood Town Council and includes any Committee of the Council or any officers appointed by the Council to undertake duties under the Allotments Acts, 1908 to 1950.

DEFINITION OF THE PERSONS ELIGIBLE TO BE TENANTS OF THE ALLOTMENT GARDENS

2. (a) Allotments are provided for any resident, over the age of 18, who lives within the Ringwood parish boundary, subject to availability. A chronological waiting list will be kept and allotments will only be let to residents, over the age of 18, of neighbouring parishes if there are no suitable residents within the Ringwood Town Council boundaries on the list. Whilst there is a waiting list, a tenant may not be allocated more than only one full allotment plot.
- (b) For the purposes of this clause, the Council, acting through its Town Clerk, may determine that a resident shall not be deemed to be a “suitable resident” if he/she has previously held an allotment, the tenancy of which was terminated as a result of non-payment of the rental or a failure to comply with any of the General Conditions set out in Clause 4 of these Rules.

AGREEMENTS FOR LETTING ALLOTMENT GARDENS

3. An agreement to let an allotment garden to an applicant may be signed by the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk on behalf of the Council.

NEW TENANCIES

4. All new tenants from 30th September 2015 will be required to pay a deposit of £24, this will be refundable if either the tenant leaves/or the Council terminates their tenancy and the allotment is left in a clean and tidy condition.

GENERAL CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE ALLOTMENT GARDENS ARE TO BE CULTIVATED

5. The tenant of an allotment garden shall comply with the following conditions:-
 - a) The tenant shall keep the allotment garden clean and in a good state of cultivation and fertility and in good condition.
 - b) The tenant shall not cause any nuisance or annoyance to the occupier of any other allotment garden, or obstruct any path set out by the Council for the use of the occupiers of the allotment gardens.

- c) The tenant shall not take any dog in his charge onto the allotment site except on a lead and under control.
- d) The tenant shall not underlet, assign, or part with the possession of the allotment garden or any part of it.
- e) The tenant shall not, without the written consent of the Council, cut or prune any timber or other trees, or take, sell, or carry away any mineral, gravel, sand or clay.
- f) The tenant shall keep every hedge that forms part of the allotment garden properly cut and trimmed, keep all ditches properly cleansed, and maintain and keep in repair any other fences and any gates on the allotment garden.
- g) The tenant shall not, without the written consent of the Council erect any building on the allotment garden, provided that consent shall not be refused under this sub-paragraph to the erection of any building reasonably necessary for the purpose of keeping hens or rabbits or for the storage of gardening implements. Consent under this Clause will not normally be given for any building, or buildings, that in total exceed 6' x 8' (2m x 2.4m) in size at the Hightown Road, Southampton Road and Upper Kingston sites. The maximum size permitted at the Crow Arch Lane site is 6' x 4' (2m x 1.2m). Under no circumstances is asbestos, or any form of asbestos, to be used on any building, fence or structure on the allotment garden.
- h) The tenant shall not, without the written consent of the Council, keep any tree exceeding 2m in height on the allotment.
- i) The tenant shall not use barbed wire for a fence adjoining any path set out by the Council for the use of the occupiers of the allotment gardens.
- j) The tenant shall, as regards the allotment garden, observe and perform all conditions and covenants contained in the lease (if any) under which the Council holds the land.
- k) The tenant shall observe and perform any special condition which the Council considers necessary to preserve the allotment garden from deterioration, and of which notice to applicants for the allotment garden is given in accordance with these Rules.
- l) Watering: standpipes are provided for obtaining water for the Allotment Garden. **Under no circumstances may tenants connect sprinklers or automatic water systems to the water supply.** Use of open containers such as baths to collect water are prohibited, however covered water butts are permitted.
- m) The tenant shall not use the allotment garden for the purpose of any trade or business.
- n) The tenant shall be permitted to compost garden waste on the plot providing:
 - (i) the total area of any compost heaps shall not exceed 9 square metres

(3m x 3m);

(ii) no household waste shall be brought onto the plot; and

(iii) the compost shall be properly managed to avoid infestation by vermin.

- o) Bonfires are permitted on allotments (subject to Rule 11). However consideration shall be given to neighbouring properties and allotment holders and to weather conditions. No bonfires or incinerators shall be left unattended and must be completely out before they are left.
- p) The use of carpet as ground cover is prohibited on allotments.

PAYMENT OF RENT

- 6. The rent of an allotment garden shall, unless otherwise agreed in writing, be paid yearly on the 29th September in each year.

POWER TO INSPECT ALLOTMENT GARDENS

- 7. Any member or officer of the Council shall be entitled at any time when directed by the Council to enter and inspect an allotment garden.

TERMINATION OF A TENANCY OF AN ALLOTMENT GARDEN

- 8. The tenancy of an allotment garden shall, unless otherwise agreed in writing, terminate on the 29th September each year.

It may also be terminated by the Council by re-entry after one month's notice:-

- a) If the rent is in arrear for not less than 40 days, or
- b) If the tenant is not duly observing the Rules affecting the allotment garden, or any other term or condition of his tenancy, or if the tenant becomes bankrupt or enters into any form of compromise with his creditors.
- c) Any tenant wishing to terminate their tenancy after payment of their annual allotment fee shall receive a percentage of their rent in a refund, based on the date the tenancy is terminated. The rent retained is to cover administration fees.

The tenancy may also be terminated by the Council or tenant by twelve months' notice in writing expiring on 29th September in any year.

If any items are left on the allotment after eviction the Council has the right to dispose of those items as they so wish.

EXEMPTION OF CERTAIN LETTINGS FROM THESE RULES

- 9. These Rules shall not apply to any land let to an association, or to any allotment garden which the Council, under special circumstances, to be recorded in their minutes, may exempt from these rules, but shall apply, except as aforesaid, to an allotment garden though held under a tenancy made before these Rules come into operation, but not so as to affect any right to compensation for an improvement executed before these Rules come into operation.

SERVICE OF NOTICES

10. Any notice may be served on a tenant either personally or by leaving it at his last known place of abode, or by registered letter addressed to him there, or by fixing the same in some conspicuous manner on the allotment garden.

BONFIRES

11. Notwithstanding any other provision in these Rules, no bonfire shall be lit on the Council's allotment sites at Crow Arch Lane, Hightown Road and Southampton Road, during the period each year starting on (and including) 1st May and ending on (and including) 30th September.

RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

3rd April 2024

Replacing the Grounds Sheds at Carvers

1. Introduction and reason for report

- 1.1 At the meeting on 1st November 2023, the Committee resolved to proceed with a planning application (see minute ref. OS/6301).

2. Background information and options

- 2.1 Members are respectfully referred to Report D in the document pack for the November meeting for the relevant background to the decision but will also be aware of the concerns raised by a local resident since it was prepared.
- 2.2 Standing Orders prevent reconsideration of the earlier decision at this time but it is open to members to give further direction to officers about the implementation of that decision.
- 2.3 Officers could be instructed to delay the application pending a further search for existing alternative premises to buy or rent. The Grounds Manager has continued this search throughout the project planning process to date and will attend the meeting to give an update on his efforts to members. A successful outcome to these efforts would probably be preferable to the development of Carvers on environmental and amenity grounds (though it might be less satisfactory from an operational standpoint and in its impact on Council Tax payers).
- 2.4 Officers could also be instructed to consult more widely with local residents before an application is submitted.
- 2.5 Finally, members could direct officers to make changes to the proposed design.
- 2.6 However, all of these would entail delay and time is becoming an increasingly important factor.
- 2.6.1 As previously mentioned, officers are concerned about the standard of the welfare facilities for grounds maintenance staff. The provision of adequate welfare facilities is a legal duty under the Health & Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974. Failure to do so could expose the Council to enforcement action and penalties. Officers are not confident that the facilities currently provided would meet this standard if subjected to scrutiny.
- 2.6.2 Officers are also concerned about the current lack of satisfactory wash-down facilities for the Council's vehicles and equipment. Again, there are legal duties under environmental protection legislation to prevent run-off from such activities polluting watercourses or ground water. Although, staff do their best and have no clear evidence that pollution is being caused, there are no structural measures in place to prevent it at the only sites currently available to them. These arrangements might well fall short of the required standards if subjected to investigation and scrutiny.

The need for better facilities was first identified quite a few years ago and the need for them has only grown more urgent in the meanwhile.

3. Issue for decision and any recommendations

Issue for decision:

- 3.1 What further directions (if any) should now be given to officers regarding the submission of a planning application?**

For further information, contact:

Christopher Wilkins, Town Clerk
Direct Dial: 01425 484720
Email: chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk

Kelvin Wentworth, Grounds Manager
Direct Dial: 07918 615200
Email: kelvin.wentworth@ringwood.gov.uk

Carvers Working Party

Notes of meeting held at Ringwood Gateway on Wednesday 6th March 2024 at 6pm

Present: Cllr Rae Frederick (Chair) – *From 6.15*
Cllr Andy Briers
Cllr Mary DeBoos
Cllr Janet Georgiou
Cllr Peter Kelleher
Cllr Becci Windsor

In attendance: Charmaine Bennett
Christopher Wilkins – Town Clerk

Absent:

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

In Cllr. Frederick's temporary absence, Cllr. M. DeBoos was the sole nominee to act as chair, was elected unopposed and took the chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Frederick has said she would be late.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No disclosable pecuniary interests were declared.

4. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Notes of the meeting on 1st November 2023 were approved for signature by the Chair as a true and correct record.

5. STORAGE SOLUTION

Charmaine Bennett referred to her report circulated with the agenda (Report B) and added further information as follows:

- (a) She has arranged to speak to a planning officer but all indications are that the proposed twenty-foot storage container would not need planning permission;
- (b) Containers can be hired or bought outright. If kept for more than 18 months (and this would be the case here) purchase would be the cheaper option. The base also influences cost – timber railway sleepers would be cheaper and more easily removed than a concrete pad. Total estimated cost (with cladding and timber base) would be about £7,015. This could be funded 50% from the events reserve and 50% from the building reserve.
- (c) The precise design/finish of the cladding could be decided later.

Cllr Frederick joined the meeting during this item

RECOMMENDED TO RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE:

- 1) That a twenty-foot storage container be bought and installed on a timber base beside the Clubhouse with suitable cladding added and
- 2) That the Policy & Finance Committee be asked to approve the funding of these works from the Events Reserve and Clubhouse Building Reserve in equal shares.

ACTION C Wilkins

Cllr Frederick took the chair.

5. CARVERS MASTERPLAN

The revised version circulated with the agenda (Report A) was reviewed and the following observations made:

- a. The document is best viewed and treated as a representation of the Council's broad intentions rather than a detailed design of intended alterations;
- b. Since no drop-off facility separate from the car park itself is shown, assigning them separate labels risks causing confusion; the labels should be combined;
- c. The suggested location of the bike pump track is impractical but since there is no obviously better alternative, one can only conclude that there is insufficient space for this feature along with everything else and it is best excluded altogether.

ACTION: C Wilkins to ask designer to make these further changes
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6. PROJECT COSTS AND FUNDING

The Town Clerk reported that New Forest District Council has delayed a decision on its call for bids for CIL funding so we still do not know if we have been successful.

The Town Clerk also reported no further developments regarding the section 106 negotiations about the Hightown Road/Nouale Lane housing development site but noted that the planning process has been extended to the end of the year.

There were no firm updates on other sources but it was noted that the next round of Veolia grants will open shortly.

ACTION: All to update funding spreadsheet with further developments
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7. NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 1st May 2024 at 6pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.55pm.

RECEIVED
2nd April 2024

APPROVED
1st May 2024

COMMITTEE CHAIR

WORKING PARTY CHAIR

Events Management Sub-Committee

Notes of meeting held on Wednesday 20th March 2024 at 1230, at Ringwood Gateway

Present: Cllr Rae Frederick (Chair)
Cllr Becci Windsor
Cllr James Swyer
Cllr John Haywood

In attendance:
Charmaine Bennett, Events Manager
Sam Bracher, Office Administrator

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Mary DeBoos

2. Declarations of interest

No interests were declared.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting – 21st February 2024

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st February 2024 having been circulated, be approved, and signed as a correct record.

4. D-Day 80th Anniversary

The event manager proposed a change in location for the Lighting of the Beacon on Thursday 6th June. Originally, they were looking at holding this at Bickerley Village Green but because this is taking place at 9.15pm on a school night, it is anticipated that the numbers attending will be low, so this location maybe too large. The proposal is to move it to the War Memorial Gardens, which is also more in keeping with the event.
Change of location agreed by all sub-committee members.

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| <p>ACTIONS:</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr Frederick to follow up on her email to Price Fish & Chips regarding the change of location and details on what they can offer. 2. The event manager to order a D-Day themed flag for outside Ringwood Gateway. 3. Cllr Windsor to follow up with her contact on prices for supplying the Beacon for the event. 4. Cllr Frederick to speak to Ben from Ringwood Carnival asking him to co-ordinate putting up Union Jack flags along the High Street the weekend before the event. 5. Cllr Swyer to liaise with the parish church to change their flag in the lead up to the event. 6. The event manager to start promotion of this event after Easter. |
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5. Family Fun Days

First event to take place on Friday 5th April.
Activities to include Mad 4 Animals show, bouncy castles, skateboarding lessons, climbing cave, inter school competitions, ice cream van and face painting.

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| ACTIONS: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The event manager to chase up a local school for prices to hire out their PA system to use at the event. Noted that an alternative could be the speaker and microphone the local rugby club have via Cllr Windsor. 2. Cllr Frederick to ask for councillors to volunteer on the day at up coming committee meetings. Jobs to include running an RTC stand, counting footfall and gaining visitor feedback. |
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6. Event Sponsorship

Cllr Frederick reported that Charmaine and herself met with Frettons Solicitors to secure them as title sponsor for the fireworks and Christmas events. This has now been confirmed and part of the offer include main sponsor of Santa's Grotto at Christmas and their business logo on the firework tickets.

Cllr Frederick told the group that the sponsorship package options they put together for 2023 did not work very well. She is proposing that for 2024 they approach businesses with individual bespoke proposals E.G. to sponsor a certain feature or area of the event. She encouraged other members to use the same approach.

7. Other Event Items

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| ACTIONS: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The event manager to send round a link to members to complete online training for senior stewards from Protect UK covering areas such as security and potential threats at events and what to do when you come across suspicious packages. 2. The event manager to arrange a meeting with Sam, who is taking over the Christmas Window Competition, to go through actions. 3. The event manager to order the new gazebos after the group agreed to go with the colour green. She will also contact Letters & Logos to order some velcro patches to use on the gazebos with RTC and Carvers Clubhouse logos. |
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The event manager has been spending time turning the event plans into project plans ensuring all the information on running the event is in one place, including links to formal documents like road closures, contact information, promotion, communications and actions.

The event manager told the group that 30 stalls have already been confirmed for the Christmas event. There has been some push back from some of the larger food stalls on the increased prices but she is confident that these spots will be filled.

The group are still waiting for confirmation on if the Roundtable will run their charity bar at the events. If it is a no for Christmas, Cllr Frederick proposed that the bar is offered to The Fish Inn to run. Cllr Windsor added that another option was for the Rugby Club to run a charity bar.

Cllr Haywood told the group that he will use £300 of his NFDC councillor allowance to help towards the costs of the Skate Jam event held at Carvers Clubhouse in August.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 13:25

The next Event Sub-Committee meeting – Wednesday 17th April at 13:00, Carvers Clubhouse.

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APPROVED

RLOS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Current Projects Update

No.	Name	Status	Recent developments	Description and notes	Lead Officer/Member	Financing
Full Council						
FC1	Long Lane Football Facilities Development	In progress (scheduled for completion in 2024)	The artificial turf pitch has been completed and is now in use. The PWLB loan has been drawn down. A Construction Contract for the pavilion and other works has been entered into. Work on these started on 5th June 2023. The new building is expected to be ready for occupation in Summer 2024.	A joint venture with Ringwood Town Football Club and AFC Bournemouth Community Sports Trust to improve the football facilities for shared use by them and the community.	Town Clerk	The current expectation is that the Council's contribution to the project will, in effect, be limited to a modest loss of income from the site (but over a long term).
Planning Town & Environment Committee						
PTE1	Neighbourhood Plan	In progress	Examination commenced - responses to Examiner's questions agreed by Steering Group and submitted 11/01/2024. Examiner's Fact Checking Report received and commented on - final report awaited.	To prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the civil parish of Ringwood but limited in scope to a few specified themes.	Deputy Town Clerk	Spent £24,957.42 (£18,000 funded from Locality grants, £3,650 additional budget agreed for SPUD youth engagement work (F/6061)). £3,492.58 remaining of original RTC budget.
PTE2	Human Sundial	Complete, with exception of interpretation board	Work to refurbish human sundial and install surrounding benches now complete. Time capsule cover stone replaced on 21/07/2023. Interpretation board with details of sundial, Jubilee Lamp etc. to be designed and costed.	Replacement of damaged sundial and surrounding paviers; installation of removable benches to protect it for the future.	Deputy Town Clerk	£10,659.15 spent funded from CIL and contribution from Carnival. Additional £580 for repair of cover funded from CIL (C/6957).
PTE3	Crow Stream Maintenance	Annual recurrent	Spraying of stream banks undertaken 05/05/2023, annual flail carried out in August and stream clearance by volunteers on 28/09/2023. NFDC released additional £10,000 from developers' contributions to allow this work to continue for another 10 years.	Annual maintenance of Crow Ditch and Stream in order to keep it flowing and alleviate flooding	Deputy Town Clerk	Budget of £1,000 funded by transfer from earmarked reserve
PTE6	Shared Space Concept - Thriving Market Place	In progress	£10,000 released by NFDC from UKSPF to undertake options appraisal/feasibility study. HCC survey work completed November 2023. Project Brief agreed by HCC, NFDC & RTC at meeting on 19/02/2024.	Concept for town centre shared space identified through work on the Neighbourhood Plan. Working in partnership with NFDC and HCC.	Deputy Town Clerk	HCC funded survey work. £10,000 grant from UKSPF (via NFDC).
	Greening Ringwood	In progress	Public meeting held on 05/07/2023 and project leads in place for 5 new projects. Official launch of Phase 20/04/2024 in Gateway Square. Update from coordinator to be presented to PT&E on 01/03/2024.	Greening Campaign Phase 2 to run from Sept 2023 to July 2024, focussing on making space for nature; energy efficient greener homes; climate impacts on health and wellbeing; waste prevention; and cycle of the seed.		£50 signing up fee funded from General Reserve.
	Bus Shelters	In progress	HCC framework contractor has completed survey of shelters free of charge. This has yet to be reviewed. Results and availability of funding will be discussed with HCC.	Review of Council owned bus shelters.		No agreed budget
Projects being delivered by others which are monitored by the Deputy Clerk and reported to this committee:						
	Crow Lane Footpath	In progress	Developers' contributions paid to HCC to implement. Additional funds required to progress and approved by NFDC Cabinet on 02/11/2022 - report indicates delivery in 2024/25. HCC working on design.	New footpath to link Beaumont Park with Hightown Road, alongside west of Crow Lane	Hampshire CC	Developers contributions
	Railway Corner	In progress	Project supported by RTC. Planning application awaiting determination (23/11081).	Project to improve and promote historical significance of triangle of land at junction of Hightown Road and Castleman Way.	Ringwood Society	No financial implications.
	Memorial Bench for Michael Lingam-Willgoss	In progress	Consent to install bench has been granted by HCC. Legal fees covered by County Cllr Thierry. Date for installation yet to be agreed.	Provision of memorial bench in Market Place in memory of Michael Lingam-Willgoss.	Ringwood Carnival / Ringwood Rotary	No financial implications.
Policy & Finance Committee						
PF5	Poulner Lakes Lease	On hold	Awaiting track maintenance solution - see Recreation Leisure & Open Spaces Committee item RLOS21.	Negotiating a lease from Ringwood & District Anglers' Association of the part of the site not owned by the Council	Town Clerk	Some provision for legal advice or assistance may be needed eventually.

PF11	92 Southampton Road	In progress (commenced March 2023)	One of the tenants has left. A new letting agent has been instructed, notice to quit has been served and possession proceedings commenced. Urgent repairs have been completed.	Reviewing the letting of this council-owned house	Town Clerk	Rent receipts and other financial implications of any changes are unclear at present but will be considered as part of the review.
PF12	Base budget review	Commenced Feb. 2024	Inaugural meeting being arranged.	A review by members and officers of the council's base (revenue) budget, probably focused on a few types of expenditure or areas of activity, to identify possible options for change and/or savings.	Finance Manager	No anticipated costs other than staff time.

Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee

RLOS4	Grounds department sheds replacement	In progress (Commenced design work in April 2021.)	Officers have been working with a planning consultant on project design and two rounds of pre-application planning advice have been completed. A planning application has been prepared in draft and discussions with neighbours begun.	A feasibility study into replacing the grounds maintenance team's temporary, dispersed & sub-standard workshop, garaging and storage facilities. Combined with a possible new car park for use by hirers of and visitors to the club-house.	Town Clerk	Revised capital budget of £4,000 (originally £10,000 until virement to RLOS19)
RLOS5	Cemetery development	In progress (Commenced design work in April 2021. Aiming to complete by December 2024.)	Design and funding arrangements for a memorial wall have been agreed in principle. An architect has been instructed and prepared the tender documentation for the construction contract.	Planning best use of remaining space, columbarium, etc.	Town Clerk	Capital cost estimated at £37,500 will be met from a combination of earmarked reserves.
RLOS10	Waste bin replacement programme	In progress (Commenced April 2020)	The replacements scheduled in years 1 and 2 have been completed. An order for the final round of replacements has been placed.	Three-year programme to replace worn-out litter and dog-waste bins	Grounds Manager	Budget of £2,000 a year.
RLOS14	Poulner Lakes waste licence	In progress	Surrender requirements and process have been investigated and discussed with Environment Agency and New Forest District Council. Consultants, ACS Testing, have been engaged to provide technical advice and support. A fuller picture of the surrender requirements and process is expected to emerge early in 2024.	Arranging to surrender our redundant waste licence to avoid annual renewal fees	Town Clerk	
RLOS19	Carvers Strategic Development	In progress (Commenced Feb. 2021)	The Masterplan prepared by landscape designer New Enclosure was approved by the Carvers Working Party on 5th July. Responses to the public consultation on this have been evaluated and an updated plan prepared. This was considered by the Working Party on 6th March and final changes agreed.	Devising a strategic vision and plan for the future of Carvers Recreation Ground pulling together proposals for additional play equipment and other features	Carvers Manager	Revised budget of £6,000 (virement from RLOS4).
RLOS21	Poulner Lakes track maintenance	In progress (under discussion since Jan. 2021)	Costs estimates for re-surfacing schemes obtained from two suppliers. NFDC officers have been consulted about related mitigation schemes and possible support - decision expected in March 2024.	Devising a sustainable regime for maintaining the access tracks at Poulner Lakes to a more acceptable standard.	Town Clerk	Yet to be settled
RLOS23	North Poulner Play Area skate ramp request	In progress (commenced Mar. 2023)	A 'half-pipe' has been identified as a likely cheaper and easier option. The likely costs and wider implications of installing this are being investigated.	A local resident requested provision of a 'quarter-pipe ramp' at this site and has been fund-raising for it	Deputy Town Clerk	Yet to be quantified and agreed
RLOS24	Poulner Lakes Circular Path	In progress	Works to reduce and landscape the drainage retention pond completed. It's performance will be monitored through the winter.	HCC has funded the creation of a circular path for pedestrians and cyclists to improve accessibility and so encourage greater use	Deputy Town Clerk	Staff time only

Staffing Committee

None

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Proposed/Emerging Projects Update

No.	Name	Description	Lead	Recent developments	Progress / Status Stage reached	Estimated cost	Funding sources
Full Council							
	None						
Planning Town & Environment Committee							
	Roundabout under A31	Planting and other environmental enhancements		Area being used by National Highways for storage of materials during works to widen the A31.	Floated as possible future project		
	Lynes Lane re-paving Rear of Southampton Road	Ringwood Society proposal Proposal by Ringwood Society to improve appearance from The Furlong Car Park and approaches			Floated as possible future project Floated as possible future project		
	Dewey's Lane wall	Repair of historic wall		Re-build/repair options and costs are being investigated	Shelved as a TC project		
	Signage Review	Review of signs requiring attention - e.g. Castleman Trailway, Pocket Park, Gateway Square	Cllr Day		Floated as possible future project		
	Crow ditch	Investigate works required to improve capacity and flow of ditch alongside Crow Lane, between Hightown Road and Moortown Lane					Developers contributions
Policy & Finance Committee							
	Paperless office	Increasing efficiency of office space use	Cllr. Heron	Discussions with Town Clerk and Finance Manager			
Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee							
	None	(Current projects expected to absorb available resources for several years)					
Staffing Committee							
	None						

Closed Projects Report

No.	Name	Description	Outcome	Notes
Full Council				
FC2	Strategic Plan	Exploring ideas for medium term planning. Aim to have complete for start of budget-planning in Autumn 2022.	Completed in October 2022	
Planning, Town & Environment Committee				
	Pedestrian Crossings - Christchurch Road	Informal pedestrian crossings to the north and south of roundabout at junction of Christchurch Road with Wellworthy Way (Lidl)	Completed by HCC	
	Cycleway signage and improvements	New signage and minor improvements to cycleway between Forest Gate Business Park and Hightown Road	Completed by HCC	
	Carvers footpath/cycle-way improvement	Creation of shared use path across Carvers between Southampton Road and Mansfield Road	Completed by HCC	
	Replacement Tree - Market Place	New Field Maple tree to replace tree stump in Market Place.	Completed in January 2022 by HCC	
PTe4	Climate Emergency	Funds used to support Greening Campaign, community litter-pick and Flood Action Plan leaflets.	Completed March 2023	
	A31 widening scheme	Widening of A31 westbound carriageway between Ringwood and Verwood off slip to improve traffic flow; associated town centre improvements utilising HE Designated Funds	Scheme completed by National Highways and road re-opened in November 2022.	
	SWW Water Main Diversion (associated with A31 widening scheme)	Diversion of water main that runs along the A31 westbound carriageway. Diversion route included land in RTC's ownership at The Bickerley.	Scheme completed by SWW in 2022.	
	Surfacing of Castleman Trailway	Dedication and surfacing of bridleway between old railway bridge eastwards to join existing surfacing.	Surfacing works completed by HCC early April 2022.	
	Bus Shelter Agreement	Request by ClearChannel in Nov. 2020 for RTC to licence the bus shelters in Meeting House Lane and the advertising on them. Despite various communications, we have had no contact for over a year and therefore regard the original request to be defunct.	Request not followed up by ClearChannel, therefore defunct and removed from project list October 2023.	
PTe5				
Policy & Finance Committee				
PF1	New Council website	Arranging a new website that is more responsive, directly editable by Council staff and compliant with accessibility regulations.	Completed	
PF2	Greenways planning permission	Consideration of applying to renew planning permission for bungalow in garden previously obtained	Decided not to renew	
PF3	Detached youth outreach work	To provide youth workers for trial of detached outreach work	Transferred to Recreation Leisure & Open Spaces Committee (see RLOS20)	
PF4	Review of governance documents	A major overhaul of standing orders, financial regulations, committee terms of reference, delegated powers, etc. Routine periodic reviews will follow completion of this work.	Completed in July 2022	All governance documents will now receive routine annual reviews.
PF6	Health & Safety Management Support Re-procurement	Re-procuring specialist advice and support for discharge of health and safety duties	Completed in February 2023	
PF7	Financial Procedures Manual	Preparation of a new manual for budget managers and other staff detailing financial roles, responsibilities and procedures	Completed in September 2022	Will be updated by Finance Manager as necessary
PF8	Bickerley Legal Title	An application to remove land from the Council's title was made	Completed in October 2023	Application successfully resisted
PF9	Greenways office leases	The tenant of the first floor suite gave notice and left. The building was re-let as a whole to the tenant of the ground floor suite.	Completed in November 2022	
PF10	Councillors' Email Accounts	Providing councillors with official email accounts (and devices, if required) to facilitate compliance with data protection laws.	Completed in August 2023	
Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee				
RLOS1	War Memorial Repair	Repair by conservation specialists with Listed Building Consent with a re-dedication ceremony after.	Completed in 2021-22	
RLOS2	Bickerley Tracks Repair	Enhanced repair of tracks to address erosion and potholes (resurfacing is ruled out by town green status) and measures to control parking.	Fresh gravel laid in 2021-22.	No structural change is feasible at present.
RLOS3	Public open spaces security	Review of public open spaces managed by the Council and implementation of measures to protect the highest priority sites from unauthorised encampments and incursions by vehicles	Completed in 2021-22	
RLOS6	Community Allotment	Special arrangement needed for community growing area at Southampton Road	Ongoing processes adapted	Agreed to adopt as informal joint venture with the tenants' association
RLOS7	Bowling Club lease	Renewal of lease that expired in April 2023.	Completed in July 2023	New lease granted for 14 years.
RLOS8	Ringwood Youth Club	Dissolution of redundant Charitable Incorporated Organisation	Completed in July 2023	Charity removed from Register of Charities
RLOS9	Aerator Repair	Major overhaul to extend life of this much-used attachment	Completed in 2021-22	
RLOS11	Ash Grove fence repair	Replacing the worn-out fence around the play area	Completed in 2021-22	
RLOS12	Van replacement	Replacing the grounds department diesel van with an electric vehicle	Suspended in 2023	Van will be replaced in accordance with Vehicle & Machinery replacement plan
RLOS13	Bickerley compensation claim	Statutory compensation claim for access and damage caused by drainage works	Completed March 2022	Settlement achieved with professional advice
RLOS15	Acorn bench at Friday's Cross	Arranging the re-painting of this bespoke art-work	Completed in 2021-22	Labour kindly supplied by Men's Shed
RLOS16	Town Safe	Possible re-paint of this important survival, part of a listed structure	Suspended indefinitely in September 2022	Complexity and cost judged disproportionate to benefit
RLOS17	Crow Arch Lane Allotments Site	The transfer to this Council (pursuant to a s.106 agreement) of a site for new allotments off Crow Arch Lane	Completed in November 2023	
RLOS18	Cemetery Records Upgrade	Creation of interactive digital cemetery map and scanning of cemetery registers as first stage in digitizing all cemetery records to facilitate remote working, greater efficiency and improved public accessibility.	Completed in 2021	Cost £5,467. Further upgrades are needed to digitize the records fully
RLOS20	Detached youth outreach work	Trialling the provision of detached outreach work by specialist youth workers.	Completed in May 2022	
RLOS22	Bickerley parking problem	Unauthorised parking on the tracks crossing the Bickerley is causing damage and obstruction	Closed off in September 2023	Additional signage has been installed. An estimate of £5,510 to move the "dragon's teeth" was judged disproportionate to the problem.
Staffing Committee				
S1	HR support contract renewal	Renewal of contract for the supply to the Council of specialist human resources law and management support	Completed in 2021-22	
S2	Finance Staffing Review	Reassessing staffing requirements and capacity for finance functions and re-negotiating staff terms	Completed in 2021-22	