

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES COMMITTEE

Minutes

of the meeting of the Amenities Committee held at the Council Offices, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth at 20.00 hrs. on **Monday 14 October 2013**.

Those present

Cllr Angela Alder
Cllr Pat Coysten

Cllr Derek Filler
Cllr Tom Reeks
Cllr Andrew Wincott

In attendance:

Cllr Eric Buckmaster
R Bowran - Town Clerk

Cllr Joyce Vincent
Joanne Kenny – Town Projects Manager

A13/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Jane Adams – School commitments.

A13/11 PUBLIC FORUM

To receive representations from members of the public on matters within the remit of the Amenities Committee. There were none.

A13/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any Declarations of Interest by Members. There were none.

A13/13 MINUTES

Resolved: To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 08 July 2013 (A01) [*prop Cllr Filler; secd Cllr Reeks*]

A13/14 ALLOTMENTS

To report on matters relating to Allotments

- Allotment Association. Meetings have taken place with the officers of the allotments associations at Southbrook and Bullfields. A tenant has come forward at Bellmead offering to be their spokesman..
- Rent letters have been sent to all tenants and all but nine have now paid for the next year.
- Water supplies. There are still water charging issues to be resolved at Southbrook. The charging issue at Bellmead resulting from an erroneous sewerage charge by Affinity has been resolved satisfactorily.
- Southbrook. The on-going issue with one tenant in particular is nearly resolved. Tenant has been served with notice and required to clear the site by 28 October. This is in progress albeit with certain anti-social activities. A suggestion that the plot, which may be left in an unusable condition due to the top soil being removed, should be turned into a place with disabled access has been met with approval.
- Vantorts. The dispute between a tenant and a neighbour in Greenstead who has a gate into the site has been resolved.

- Bellmead. A further tree has been cut back at a cost of £150.
- Waiting list. Will be decreased in November as a result of reassessing vacant areas.
- There is apparently redundant land, now gated, owned by EHDC off West Road. Clerk to investigate and determine whether this could be used as an additional allotment site.

A13/07 CEMETERY

To report on matters relating to the Town Cemetery

- Inspections. Continue to be carried out on a regular basis.
- Vandalism. There have been instances when bins and plant containers have been moved and left scattered randomly about the site. Should the vehicle access gate be locked every night?
- Breaches of Regulations. Dog walkers have been seen allowing their animals to roam in the cemetery off the lead. They have not usually been responsive to a challenge pointing out the issue.
- Agreed to have a trial period over the winter of locking the vehicular access between Dusk and Dawn.

A13/08 OPEN SPACES & FOOTPATHS

To report on matters relating to Footpaths and Open Spaces.

- Bullfields
 - Inspection and maintenance carried out, a new young volunteer is working with us on one day a week this autumn.
- West Road
 - Inspection and maintenance carried out. Vandalism to a tree has resulted in the tree being removed.
 - The broken slide is waiting for agreement from the installation contractor to effect a repair.
- Other areas
 - Bell Street flower beds have been maintained.
 - London Road flower beds need to be revamped and a new scheme is being thought out in conjunction with the erection of a town sign.
- Footpaths
 - General state is said to be poor as a result of the loss of our footpaths officer. We are working with HCC to get included in their work programme.
 - There is a need for us to work smarter to fill the void that will remain if footpaths are to be maintained at the standard we aspire to.

A13/09 CIVIC AMENITIES

To report on matters relating to Civic Amenities

- Ranger Activities
 - Report on current arrangements. Steve Parrish continues to be a valuable asset, but is now hard pushed for time.

- Farmers Market
 - August, September and October Markets. Footfall was 800, 980 and 750 respectively. All stalls were utilised and we have placed an order for three more to be delivered in time for the November market.
 - Retailers have raised a petition to EHDC to have the market stopped on a Saturday due to alleged negative impact on trade. We are in a dialogue with EHDC.
 - The issue of lassitude in parking in Bell Street had also been raised and a new approach will be made by our district councillor
- Floral Displays
 - Display for 2013. The watering and upkeep demand significant time from the Ranger. We have purchased a road legal water bowser to facilitate the watering task.
 - We are proposing a winter display this year, again sponsored by Oakridge nurseries.
- Town Signs
 - A proposal is being prepared by Herts Highways to revise and make more relevant a number of highway signs, in particular to highlight the shopping centre of the town.
- Bell Street Conveniences
 - Quotations have been passed to EHDC and we await their response. Issue has been progressed via EHDC CEO and our District Councillor.
- Christmas Lights
 - Initial meeting has taken place with chairman of committee and officers. Briefing meeting for all involved is scheduled for Wednesday 06 November.
 - Christmas competition leaflets have been distributed to retailers.
- EHDC Champions
 - We reported that the district council are nominating Heads of Service to become more involved with the towns and parishes of the district. In the last three months no contact has been made.

Meeting ended at 21:15

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for Monday 10 February 2014.