

MINUTES

Committee: Amenities Committee
Date: Monday, 18 July 2022
Time: 7:00 pm
Venue: Younghayes Centre, 169 Younghayes Road EX5 7DR

Present

Cllr Barry Rogers (Chair)
Cllr Les Bayliss
Cllr Kim Bloxham
Cllr Ray Bloxham
Cllr Colin Buchan
Cllr Kevin Blakey

Also Present

One member of the public
Alexandra Robinson, Deputy Clerk, Cranbrook Town Council

A/22/43 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received. All were present.

A/22/44 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None declared

A/22/45 MINUTES

It was proposed by Cllr. Colin Buchan, seconded by Cllr. Ray Bloxham and **resolved** to accept and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2022 as a correct record.

A/22/46 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no requests from members of the public to make representations, ask questions or give evidence.

A/22/47 AMENITIES MONITORING REPORT

The Chairman invited Cllr Kim Bloxham to update members and noted that the item in relation to Bollards in Younghayes Place Car Park had been omitted from the report.

The Committee noted the amenities monitoring report, subject to amendment.

A/22/48 VERGE REMEDIATION – MEAD CROSS

The Chairman referred to the updated report on Mead Cross area of public open space. The Committee had previously considered the matter on 9th May 2022 (ref Minute A/22/27). The area had become unsightly due to inconsiderate parking and the verge being driven over. The Committee considered the potential solutions of either planting or bollards to solve the continued disruption of this area. Members discussed the alternative measures and their associated costs.

Following consideration, it was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey, seconded by Cllr Colin Buchan and **resolved** to request a further officer report to provide clarification on suitable bollards and their efficacy to a future meeting of the Amenities Committee.

Signed

12 September 2022

A/22/49 COUNTRY PARK - WILLOW HURDLE TRIAL

The Committee considered a report on the areas of the hedge boundary within the country park, that have suffered from residents using gaps in the hedgerow as a shortcut to the country park. The Open Space Ranger had installed temporary barriers while the hedge recovered but this has not been sufficient and therefore the report proposed the use of Willow Hurdles to give a preventative barrier and allow the hedge to regrow.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. Colin Buchan, seconded by Cllr. Kevin Blakey and **resolved** that the Country Park Rangers would create willow hurdles in the worst affected gaps as a trial, with the support and engagement of the community in their construction and use.

A/22/50 INSTALLATION OF 'HAPPY TO CHAT' BENCH

The Chairman introduced the report which made reference to a recent a newspaper article showing how some councils are combating loneliness in their communities using 'Happy to Chat' benches, a concept started in Cardiff. The idea was raised to have a 'Happy to Chat' bench in Cranbrook. Three locations were proposed based on footfall and residents' feedback to the Open Space Ranger.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Barry Rogers, seconded by Cllr Les Bayliss and **resolved** that the item be deferred subject to

- a) further report from the officer finalising costs of proposed bench, together with costs associated with a secure base and ground fixings;
- b) details of funding opportunities and
- c) details of alternative locations, the existing proposed sites having been discounted.

A/22/51 COMMUNITY GARDEN

The Committee considered the report outlining the proposed Community Garden. Members raised concern at the recommendation to defer the project on the basis of lack of community interest and time. Members provided examples of local groups who had indicated their willingness to support the facility. In addition a local community interest company had expressed an interest in assisting in the construction development and ongoing management of the garden for the benefit of the community in Cranbrook. The Committee would welcome further details on the potential development of the project.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. Ray Bloxham, seconded by Cllr. Les Bayliss and **resolved** to defer the decision on the community garden subject to a further more detailed report from the two country park rangers outlining the involvement of the community interest company.

A/22/52 BALING OF MEADOW GRASS IN THE COUNTRY PARK

The Chairman invited Cllr Ray Bloxham to update Members on the report which considered the management of bales left in the Country Park following the annual cut of meadow grass. Members recalled that the Country Park Management Plan (CPMP) dictated that all meadow grass be cut annually and the arisings baled and removed. In noting the recent four incidents of fire in the Country Park members agreed the importance and urgency in addressing the baling of meadow grass.

Following discussion it was proposed by Cllr Kim Bloxham, seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved to recommend** to Council that the Country Park Working Group be re-formed with terms of reference to specifically look at the issues and consequences of baling and to report back with recommendations. The review to consider financial implications, impacts on biodiversity and issues associated with risk.

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm.

Signed

12 September 2022