

# MINUTES

**Committee:** Amenities Committee  
**Date:** Monday, 01 July 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 Ray Bloxham  
Cllr Lisa Goudie  
Cllr Vincent Wilton (Vice Chair)

## **Also Present**

Andrew Chapman-New, Cranbrook Town Council  
Alexandra Robinson, Cranbrook Town Council

## **A/24/36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology was received on behalf of Cllr Colin Buchan.

## **A/24/37 DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATION**

No interests were declared or dispensations granted.

## **A/24/38 MINUTES**

It was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey seconded by Cllr Les Bayliss and **resolved** to accept and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 8 April 2024 as a correct record.

## **A/24/39 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No Members of the public were in attendance.

## **A/24/40 AMENITIES MONITORING REPORT**

Members requested that the report be updated and that reports be brought to the September Committee regarding, Happy to Chat Bench, Memorial Benches and the Nature Reserve.

The Committee noted the Amenities Monitoring Report.

## **A/24/41 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:

- River Quality Water Sampling showed no quality issues
- Photography Walk

The Committee noted the Ranger report.

## **A/24/42 TREE PLANTING UPDATE**

The Chairman reminded members that the Committee had recently approved the proposed Tree Planting projects and invited the Ranger to update on progress. The Ranger reported that an additional funding opportunity had been sought to plant in Great Meadow along the former fence line to allow improved movement through the lower section of the field but providing a visual barrier. Further planting schemes would include a

riparian buffer along the Cranny Brook near the Education Campus and in the vicinity of Basin 2c. The Ranger reiterated his invitation for volunteers to be involved and support the planting projects.

The Committee noted the update report.

#### **A/24/43 PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS**

The Chairman referred to the report outlining the current Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) and invited members to consider whether areas needed to be extended or additional areas identified and included in the annual review to be carried out by Environmental Health at East Devon District Council in September 2024. Members considered the existing Dog Exclusion Zones and Dog on Leads Areas in Cranbrook and whether there needed to be additional areas in keeping with the growth of the town.

Members discussed the requirements for areas within the Country Park and suggested that it would be pragmatic to form a working group to review the public space protection orders and specify any additional areas to East Devon District Council.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Ray Bloxham seconded by Cllr Les Bayliss and **resolved** to establish a working group to review the Public Space Protection Orders in Cranbrook and submit details of any proposed additional locations with plans to East Devon District Council in advance of the submission deadline, to include Cllrs Ray Bloxham, Les Bayliss and the Deputy Clerk.

#### **A/24/44 NO MOW MAY**

The Chairman invited the Ranger to report on the outcome of 'No Mow May' in which the usual grass cutting regime was altered to leave some areas to continue to grow whilst managing amenity areas with fewer but sufficient cuts to allow access to areas of the Country Park. The Ranger reminded members of the notable balance ensuring that biodiversity could be maintained as well as the varied demands on the Country Park and the implications of not cutting at all. If No Mow May were to be extended into 2024 and future years that the management of the different areas would be adjusted accordingly. The Committee suggested a cutting scheme that was in line with the existing management plan and compatible with the aims of 'No Mow May.'

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Ray Bloxham seconded by Cllr Vince Wilton and **resolved**

- 1) to review the Public Open Space owned by Cranbrook Town Council to designate clear areas of tussock grass which is not cut at all, meadow grass cut once a year (between late July and August) and amenity grass having 16 cuts per year.
- 2) for verges to be left long with a border cut around the outside to maintain tidiness and visibility, to provide an overall annual mowing scheme and
- 3) for the Ranger in consultation with the Communications Officer to provide visual information to explain the cutting regime on the Council's website.

#### **A/24/45 COUNTRY PARK - BALING**

The Chairman invited the Ranger to update Members on the management of meadow grass, its cutting, baling and removal from the Country Park for the forthcoming season. The Ranger reminded members of the practices in recent years; most notably the suspension of baling in 2022 upon the advice of the Fire Service and in 2023 where the Meadow grass was cut but not baled and left in situ. To repeat this, it would have negative implications for the biodiversity of the Country Park and the Committee considered the options for the management of Meadow Grass for 2024 season and future years.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Ray Bloxham seconded by Cllr Vince Wilton and **resolved** to

- 1) subject to agreeing a scheme of remediation should any damage occur to approve the quotation from the external contractor to cut, bale and remove from site at a cost of £2,280 (plus VAT) for 2024 and
- 2) to delegate to the Clerk and the Chair of the Committee to negotiate the appropriate fee reduction with the Council's Ground Maintenance and Landscaping Contractor.

**A/24/46 COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH UPDATE**

The Committee expressed its thanks to the Community Speed Watch Volunteers for their efforts and involvement in the scheme and noted the report.

**A/24/47 VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGN UPDATE**

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

**A/24/48 ALLTERRAIN MOBILITY SCOOTER UPDATE**

The Committee noted the update report and the progress on the delivery of the all-terrain mobility scooter.

**A/24/49 CRANNAFORD ALLOTMENTS – REQUEST TO ALLOW DOGS**

The Chairman reported to Members that the Council had received a request from an allotment plot holder to allow dogs onto the allotments which would be a change from the current position to only allow guide dogs on Council property. The Committee considered the implications and views of current plotholders.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Vincent Wilton seconded by Cllr Kevin Blakey and **resolved** to not allow dogs onto the allotment site as per the existing tenancy agreement and would again encourage the plot holders to form an allotment association.

**The meeting closed at 20:40**