

# MINUTES

**Committee:** Amenities Committee  
**Date:** Monday, 03 February 2025  
**Time:** 7:00 pm  
**Venue:** Younghayes Centre, 169 Younghayes Road EX5 7DR

## **Present**

Cllr Kim Bloxham (Chair)  
Cllr Les Bayliss  
Cllr Kevin Blakey  
Cllr Colin Buchan  
Cllr Lisa Goudie  
Cllr Kevin Kendall  
Cllr Barry Rogers  
Cllr Vincent Wilton (Vice Chair)

## **Also Present**

Cllr Ray Bloxham  
Andrew Chapman-New, Cranbrook Town Council  
Alexandra Robinson, Cranbrook Town Council

## **A/25/1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies were received, all members were present.

## **A/25/2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATION**

Cllr Kevin Kendall declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7, as a regular hirer of the Younghayes Centre.

## **A/25/3 MINUTES**

It was proposed by Cllr Barry Rogers, seconded by Cllr Vincent Wilton and **resolved** to accept and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2024 as a correct record.

## **A/25/4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No Members of the public were in attendance.

## **A/25/5 AMENITIES MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee commented on the development of the Community Garden and arrangements for a meeting with the Crannaford Allotment ploholders.

The Committee noted the Monitoring Report.

## **A/25/6 PLAY STRATEGY WORKING GROUP - UPDATE**

The Chairman reminded members that following the installation of the Skatepark a group of students from both Cranbrook local schools were invited to form the Skatepark Ambassadors group, to promote positive etiquette of the park. The Working Group have sought ways in which to support the Ambassadors and a report outlining a community event was brought forward for members to consider.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Colin Buchan seconded by Cllr Barry Rogers and **resolved** to

1. Note the updated report from the Working Group.
2. Agree to instruct Team Rubicon to provide a Skate Jam Event, preceded by a coaching event specifically for the Skatepark Ambassadors at the Skatepark at a cost of £1,740 plus VAT.

Signed .....

7 April 2025

3. To delegate to the Clerk and the Communications Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair to publicise the event package.

### **A/25/7 BOOKINGS POLICY**

The Chairman introduced a new Bookings Policy and invited members to consider it as a supporting document intended to assist the hire of Council assets. Members reviewed the document and suggested that it would be helpful if considered by both the Policy and Safety Working Groups before being recommended for adoption by the Council.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Vincent Wilton seconded by Cllr Colin Buchan and **resolved** to

1. Note the report.
2. Delegate to the Clerk and the Property Administrator to review the suite of documents for use in the hire of all the Council's Assets through the Policy and Safety Working Groups and bring revised documents back to the Amenities Committee.

*Cllr Kevin Kendall having declared an interest did not take part in the debate or vote thereon.*

### **A/25/8 COVID-19 DAY OF REFLECTION 2025**

The Chairman advised that the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport had announced a UK wide Covid-19 Day of Reflection to be held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2025 and had encouraged Local Councils to mark the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Pandemic. Members noted a Memorial bench and three Elm trees were planted in 2022 in St. Martin's Public Open Space and considered a proposal to plant an ornamental spring flowering tree in the vicinity of the bench to allow residents to commemorate the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary and reflect on those affected by the Pandemic.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey, seconded by Cllr Vincent Wilton and **resolved** to

1. Purchase a suitable ornamental tree, selected as option B from within the report up to a maximum cost of £100 to mark the COVID-19 Day of Reflection 2025.
2. The specific location of the commemorative tree to be delegated to the Ranger in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee.
3. The tree to be planted and maintained by the Council Ranger supported by the Council Handy Person.
4. To delegate to the Clerk and the Communications Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair to publicise the event.

### **A/25/9 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:

- St Martin's Tree Planting Update
- Council Tree Planting Event
- Ranger suggestion for a revised document format

The Committee noted the Ranger report.

### **A/25/10 COUNTRY PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN WORKING GROUP - UPDATE**

Cllr Ray Bloxham reported that the Working Group had discussed the requirements needed for the updated Country Park and Hedgerow Management Plans and outlined the key elements. The Country Park Management Plan and Hedgerow Management Plan were currently lengthy and less practical as a working document. The revised format would combine the two into an Open Space Management Plan and would incorporate all aspects including the country park, hedgerows, verges, trees, in parcel green spaces and future areas yet to be transferred to the Town Council. The revised format would allow for the addition of newly transferred areas and include a management specification for each type of open space.

Signed .....

7 April 2025

Members welcomed the comprehensive review of the documents and supported the proposed approach and content, particularly that it would incorporate future areas transferred to the Town Council as they arose. The Committee thanked the Working Group for their efforts on the formation of the revised documents.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Barry Rogers, seconded by Cllr Colin Buchan and **resolved** to

1. Note the Working Group update report.
2. Agree to the proposed approach for the new digital Open Space Management Plan and its content.

#### **A/25/11 ENGLAND WOODLAND CREATION OFFER**

The Chairman invited the Ranger to update members on the progression of the England Woodland Creation Offer Grant and the associated works. Members noted the update report and proposed governance arrangements to ensure the process was duly regularised.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Colin Buchan, seconded by Cllr Barry Rogers and **resolved** to

1. Note the report
2. Recommend to the full Council to delegate authority to the chairs of the Council's Finance & Personnel and the Amenities Committees to have oversight of the project governance and the financial claims.
3. Provide six-monthly update reports to the Committee.
4. Note the creation of new expense and income nominal in relation to the project in the Council's financial accounts which will document the expenditure and reimbursement and that the net position will be nil.
5. The Committee to approve the first tranche of spending at a total of £3,286.50 from the list of standard cost items.

#### **A/25/12 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

Due to the sensitive or confidential nature of the following item it was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey, seconded by Cllr Les Bayliss **resolved** to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting on the basis of Section 1 paragraph 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 which stipulates that a council may, by resolution, exclude the public from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings.

*Cllr Lisa Goudie recorded a vote against.*

#### **A/25/13 COUNTRY PARK – MEADOW GRASS MANAGEMENT**

The Chairman reminded Members of the decision to instruct a contractor to cut, bale and remove the Meadow grass during the Summer 2024. At its last meeting the Committee sought an update report and proposal on works for the 2025 cutting season.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Kevin Blakey, seconded by Cllr Barry Rogers and **resolved** to:

1. Note the report.
2. Recommend to Council to instruct Lee Farm Services to complete two cuts of Meadow Grass, baling and removal from the Country Park up to a total spend of £7,700.

**The meeting closed at 20:25**