

**REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE OF BUNTINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MANOR HOUSE, BUNTINGFORD ON 7<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024 AT  
7:00 PM.**

**Membership:** Councillors S. Bull, Mrs J. Danagher M. Furness, Mrs P. Furness (Chairman), K. Harrington, P. Ricketts & D. Wallace.

**Present:** Councillors Mrs P. Furness, S. Bull, Mrs J. Danagher, P. Ricketts, D. Wallace and M. Furness.

**Officers in attendance:** J. Jones (Town Clerk) & A. Georgiou (Admin Assistant)

**252. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies from Councillor K. Harrington.

**253. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

No declarations.

**254. TO RECEIVE A REPORT AND UPDATE FROM THE CHAIRMAN.**

The Chairman stated that there was nothing to report that would not be covered in the meeting.

**255. TO APPROVE AS A TRUE RECORD AND AUTHORISE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 3<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2024.**

Following a proposal, second and a vote of four in favour and two abstentions it was **RESOLVED**

That the minutes are a true record and the Chairman was authorised to sign them.

**256. ACTIONS FROM 3<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2024 MINUTES.**

a. **K. Harrington to investigate cherry trees at cemetery.**

Not present. P. Ricketts had spoken to K. Harrington and they are both investigating companies.

b. **P. Ricketts to investigate trees for Norfolk Road Playing Field.**

To be covered within the agenda.

c. **P. Ricketts and K. Harrington to find tree suppliers to investigate how many trees can be planted at NRPF and Cemetery.**

To be covered within the agenda.

d. **A. Georgiou to investigate Herts CC nature grant.**

It was stated that the Environmental Improvement Grant will not likely fund planting at Norfolk Road Playing Field, however the response to the wildlife area and cemetery projects were positive. It was noted that the grant has to be match funded.

**257. LAYSTON COURT GARDENS - TO DISCUSS ISSUES RELATING TO LAYSTON COURT GARDENS.**

It was reported that the autumn planting has been undertaken and looks very nice.

The purchase of the gardens is ongoing with the solicitors.

The gazebo has been repaired.

It was noted that there are lots of weeds growing out of the river bank onto the path adjacent to the river. It was noted that this is a Highways issue.

**258. NORFOLK ROAD - TO DISCUSS ISSUES RELATING TO THE NORFOLK ROAD PAVILION, SKATE RAMPS, MUGA AND ALL OTHER ISSUES RELATING TO NORFOLK ROAD PLAYING FIELD.**

The Environmental improvement grant was said to be not suitable for this area as the area is too small and not enough trees can be planted. However there are still damaged trees that should be addressed. It was suggested that any planting should be done now as this is the best time of the year to do it. It was suggested that if any planting is done, they should be bigger than saplings. Councillor Ricketts

agreed to get advice and investigate quotes. It was suggested maple trees would be a good option.

It was stated that the pump track and MUGA are still very well used. It was reported that there has been an issue with installing the new lights at the MUGA, however this is due to be completed on Monday.

It was reported that some of the trees on the northern end of the field are beginning to get a bit out of control. It was agreed that quotes should be sought to cut back the overgrowth.

It was reported that someone has dumped grass cuttings on the area between the scout hut and the MUGA. It was thought that this must be the cricket club. If the grass is still there next week the cricket club will be approached.

A quote had been received to undertake a yearly service on the new roller shutters at the pavilion. Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

**RESOLVED**

**That this Council accept a quote of £150 per annum from Pegasus for a yearly service on the roller shutters.**

**259. SWCC - TO DISCUSS ISSUES RELATING TO THE SWCC GROUNDS, PITCHES AND PLAYGROUNDS.**

The Environmental Agency have started work on the borehole on the land between the car park and Luynes Rise.

The playing fields continue to be well used. The installation of flood lights was discussed at a previous meeting to allow for evening games in the winter months, however there were concerns that flood lights will cause a disturbance to neighboring properties. It was also hoped that once the Freman 3G pitch comes to fruition, it will be able to accommodate further games.

It was asked if there was any update on the tunnel replacement in the play area.

It was reported that the tunnel is due to be installed by late December / early January.

It was also noted that the gates on the play area at Norfolk Road are due to be installed in late November.

**260. HARE STREET ROAD PLAYING FIELD - TO DISCUSS ISSUES RELATING TO FIELD, PLAYGROUND AND WILDLIFE AREA.**

It was reported that the HCC Environmental Improvement Grant may be available for the Capel Manor project at the wildlife area. A plan will be needed from Capel Manor College before an application can be made. Further work to the area can also be tied in to the creation of an access road from Dray Gardens. It was suggested that Hare Street Road should become the main focus for the Amenities Committee over the coming 12 months. It was suggested that the S106 application for a walking /jogging track will also include landscaping and planting.

It was noted there was discussion about a community orchard which could potentially tie in with the S106 path and associated planting.

It was reported that Capel Manor College are coming back to the site on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November, it was asked if HCC representatives responsible for the grant could also be asked to come. A. Georgiou agreed to contact HCC officers.

It was noted that there is very rarely anybody using the goal posts. It was suggested that once the path and access has been completed, there are other things that could potentially be done with S106 funding.

**261. BOVIS AMENITY LAND - TO DISCUSS ISSUES RELATING TO ALL AREAS OF THE AMENITY LAND.**

The area is still due to be improved as part of the River Rib project. The group are awaiting all the

relevant permissions.

**262. LAYSTON CEMETERY - TO DISCUSS AND CONSIDER ANY ISSUES RELATING TO LAYSTON CEMETERY.**

It was suggested that if any grant money is received from HCC for environmental improvement it should be spent on Hare Street Road first.

It was also suggested that any planting done at the cemetery needs to be discussed with the contractors to ensure it will not inhibit their work.

It was suggested that there is an area at the bottom of the cemetery by the attenuation pond that could be utilised for planting.

It was also suggested that a living arch is a nice option, as long as it does not impede any other maintenance work.

Whilst planting is a nice idea, there were concerns that it will take up valuable grave space.

There were also concerns that the water at the bottom of the cemetery is not fenced.

It was suggested that smaller scale projects should be investigated at the cemetery and the big project should be Hare Street Road.

It was agreed that tree planting at the cemetery should be put on hold, however there is still an option for cherry trees to be planted as memorial trees if people wish, however an area needs to be located.

It was also noted that if further planning applications are received planting can be asked for as part of the S106 agreements.

Councillors were wary of the budget and cost of maintenance of additional trees.

**263. FIRST CONSIDERATION OF 2025/2026 BUDGET.**

The current tree maintenance budget is £6,000.

If the High Street project comes to fruition there will be further planters to look after, this has been accounted for in the budget.

It was noted that this is just the first draft and there are still some uncertainties.

**264. HARE STREET ROAD GARDENERS ASSOCIATION - UPDATE.**

The AGM is coming up, unfortunately Councillor Mrs Furness is unable to attend. The Chairman of the association will be changing, the new Chair Elect is Richard Stockwell. The secretary will remain unchanged for the time being.

**265. TO HIGHLIGHT ANY ISSUES OF CONCERN AROUND THE TOWN.**

County Councillor Jones had sent an email to the Mayor requesting that the Town Council maintain the new hanging baskets as part of his project at Church Street. The Council had previously said it cannot maintain the baskets as it will take up too much of the gardener's time in the summer months. As the official request has now been received it was suggested that the Council email Councillor Jones explaining the Town Council does not have the capacity to take on the maintenance of the hanging baskets, however would welcome enhancements to Church Street.

Following a proposal, second and a unanimous vote it was

**RESOLVED**

**That this Council email County Councillor Jones explaining it does not have the capacity to maintain the hanging baskets.**

**266. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM MEMBERS OF THE RIVER RIB RESTORATION GROUP.**

Already discussed. Awaiting permissions.

**267. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE S106 OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES WORKING PARTY AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE WORKING PARTY.**

There is still no movement on the Freman 3G pitch.

Buntingford Cougars are now finishing their application for a new portakabin themselves.

The access at Hare Street Road is being dealt with by the solicitors.

It was suggested a meeting should be held once the access issue is finalised. It was also suggested that

moving forward with future developments could be added to the agenda.

**268. TO INVITE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE MEETING.**

None present.

Councillor Ricketts asked to be made aware if HCC officers would be meeting with Capel Manor College, so that he can make sure Capel Manor know whether to expect them.

Councillor Ricketts also asked if the office had a copy of the TPO on The Causeway. The office agreed to investigate.

Meeting closed 20:33

Next scheduled meeting of the Amenities Committee Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2024 7.00pm.

**Actions to be taken**

**P. Ricketts to investigate trees at Norfolk Road Playing Field.**

**Office to get quotes to cut back trees at Norfolk Road Playing Field.**

**A. Georgiou to invite HCC officers to meet with Capel Manor College.**

**Office to investigate TPO on The Causeway for P. Ricketts.**