

Didcot Town Council

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the
Environment and Climate Committee
Monday 19th October 2020
Online at Zoom.us



Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of this committee.

PRESENT

Councillors:

Cllr P Davies
Cllr A Hudson
Cllr A Macdonald
Cllr D Macdonald (Chair)
Cllr D Rouane
Cllr A Thompson
Cllr C Wilson

Officers:

Janet Wheeler (Town Clerk)
Tony Rudge (Outdoor Services Manager)
Guy Langton (Planning & Environment Officer – Minutes)

Others:

Cllr M Walsh (non-committee member)
Cllr J Moody (non-committee member)
Cllr P Siggers (non-committee member)
Cllr K Khan (non-committee member (part))
J Sparrowhawk (guest)

Cllr Walsh addressed the Committee, requesting it include the purchase and installation of an outdoor fixed concrete table tennis table in one of the Council's parks, for example Ladygrove, where there is already hard standing. Table tennis has health and social benefits for all ages, regardless of ability. The sport is easy to pick up and play and paddles & balls are relatively cheap. People can get competent quickly but mastery of the game takes much longer, maintaining interest. Concrete tables were designed for tough urban conditions with a built-in concrete or 6mm galvanised steel 'net'. It is vandal and theft resistant, protected with a sealer to make graffiti removal easy and practically maintenance free. A clear space of 8m by 4m for each table is recommended, with a 3m access for delivery. If it proved popular, other tables could be added in the future.

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The Committee thanked Cllr Walsh for her suggestion, noting it would be added to the budget list for discussion at item 56. The Committee noted that players would be expected to bring their own paddles and balls.

- 58. To receive apologies.**
No member tendered their apologies.
- 59. To receive declarations of interest**
Cllr Thompson and Cllr D Macdonald declared that they were allotment holders and thus would not take part in item 55.
- 60. To consider the Outdoor Services Manager's attached report.**
The Committee noted that the new height restricting barrier was due to be fitted at the Edmonds Park car park gate week commencing 9th November 2020. Once installed the car park would then be reopened for public use between 08:00-18:00 hours.

Edmonds Park Pavilion

The Committee heard that the old building was fenced off for safety reasons. An asbestos survey had been carried out and no asbestos was found, with samples were sent away for testing but all results found no asbestos, though it may be found as the demolition progressed..

The original estimates included supplying and laying a temporary trackway from the Park Road car park to the old pavilion and supplying temporary fencing along the trackway for public safety, this was considered necessary to prevent damage to the football pitches but represented a significant part of the overall cost. The Committee heard that making use of the Fairacres Road access, which would require the removal of a gate and posts for access, would remove the need for the proposed accessway. The demolition would take approximately 5 days and all residents of Fairacres would be informed in good time.

Councillor D Macdonald proposed, Councillor Hudson seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to demolish the building using the Fairacres Road access, and to recommend to the Finance and General Purposes Committee that a budget of £20,000 was allocated to the project. All members agreed.

Stubblings Land Pathway

The Committee heard that either a bonded gravel path or a tarmac 1.8m wide path would be suitable for all prospective users. Bonded gravel would need maintenance every other year to maintain the surface integrity, tarmac could be maintenance free for over ten years. There were options of connecting Bluebell Lane to the Wheatfields entrance, the Barleyfields entrance or to the path that runs from Barleyfields to Brunel Road.

Estimates had been received for both types of path. Tarmac would be approx. £149 per linear metre and bonded gravel approx. £78 per linear metre if installed by a third party, though the Council's Outdoor Staff were qualified to undertake the work, which would reduce the cost further.

Councillor D Macdonald proposed, Councillor Rouane seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to install a tarmac path from the entrance at Bluebell Lane to the path running from Barleyfields to Brunel Road and to recommend to the Finance and General Purposes Committee that a budget of £20,000 be allocated to the project. All members agreed.

61. To consider the Allotment Holder's appeal procedure.
The Committee considered the procedure as presented.

Councillor D Macdonald proposed, Councillor Hudson seconded and it was **RESOLVED** to approve the procedure for use, amending the wording to remove the implication of 'ownership', allotment holders being tenants. All members agreed.

Councillor D Macdonald proposed, Councillor Wilson seconded, and it was **RESOLVED** to review the Council's allotment rules at the Allotment Liaison Group, including amending the wording to remove the implication of 'ownership', allotment holders being tenants and to establish rules for resolving caused by allotment holder's behaviour.. All members agreed.

62. To consider the 2021-22 budget.

The Committee heard that the budget headings had been prepared using a 3% uplift to reflect inflation, unless otherwise noted on the table. Councillor Thompson noted concern that the proposed increase was 9%.

The Committee noted that unspent funds from 2020-21 could be carried across to earmarked reserves by making the request to journal the amounts to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

At the Chair's request, the Committee considered the budget headings line by line, to be received for final consideration at the next meeting of this Committee, scheduled for the 16th November 2020.

Cllr Rouane noted that round numbers were more readily understood, the Committee suggested each was rounded down to the nearest ten.

The income anticipated from allotments, the cemetery and the sale of season tickets to fish at Ladygrove Lakes would be confirmed at the next meeting of this Committee, the Committee having provided guidance that increases should reflect inflation, a report would be presented for consideration.

The Committee noted the available Section 106 allocations at the end of the table.