

Didcot Town Council

**Environment & Climate Committee
(acting as a Working Group)**
Monday 21st March 2022 at 7.30pm
Zoom



Minutes

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

PRESENT

Councillors:

A Macdonald (Chair)
P Davies
A Hudson
A Thompson
P Giesberg
M Walsh
P Siggers

Officers:

Mrs J Wheeler (Town Clerk)
Mrs L Blake (Planning and Environment Officer)

73. To receive apologies.

Cllr C Wilson (Vice Chair) tendered their apologies. Cllr P Siggers substituted.

74. To receive declarations of interest.

No declarations of interest were received.

75. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 17th January 2022.



It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting, subject to the amendment, and note them as such.

76. Questions on the minutes and review the progress report.

The Committee heard the updates for each item as listed on the following three pages.

Action	Topic	Responsible	Rating	Meeting 17.01.2022	Meeting 21.03.2022
Tyne Avenue		Councillors	Amber	<p>A response was received from DTFC on 4th January 2022 via email (original letter was sent via post in December but not received) and forwarded to Committee members.</p> <p>DTFC were happy for the Town Council to maintain the verge on Tyne Avenue.</p> <p>The matter was on the agenda for consideration.</p>	<p>A further letter was sent by registered post to DTFC on 25th January 2022, asking for the club to sign an agreement (attached, 4a).</p> <p>The PEO made further contact on 8th March 2022 in regard to a response to the agreement. DTFC replied that they are <i>“happy for the council to cut this section of grass and fully appreciate this does not constitute any ownership liabilities, we are grateful for the Council's support to ensure this area is properly maintained whilst the continuation of the ownership discussions is still under review.”</i></p>
Edmonds Park Pavilion (construction) & Splash Pad		Officers	Amber	<p>Planning permission had been granted for the Pavilion. A date for the next Pavilion and Splash Park working group was to be arranged by the Property and Facilities Manager.</p>	<p>A meeting was held on 11th February 2022. Notes from this meeting were attached to the progress report (4b).</p>
Ladygrove Sandpit – Improvement of Ladygrove Park		Officers	Amber	<p>The new OSM will look into the progress of this once in post.</p>	<p>The Train and Carriage chosen by the Committee for the sandpit, had been ordered.</p>
Bus Shelter adoption		Officers	Amber	<p>The PEO was waiting on an update on the draft agreement with Taylor Wimpey.</p>	<p>No further update had been received.</p>
Creation of ‘wild’ areas of the Town Council’s parks		Councillors	Amber	<p>This matter was addressed in the Outdoor Services Manager’s report.</p>	<p>The matter was addressed in the Outdoor Services report – but the areas had been planted.</p>

Installation of Notice board at Corner Stone		Officers and Councillors	Amber	There was no update to report.	The Outdoor Supervisor was due to meet with Sustainable Didcot w/c 14 th March 2022 to discuss installing the board.
Tidying up of the noticeboards		Officers	Amber	The work would be completed during the winter months.	Work on this would be arranged for early 2022.
Wheelchair Inclusive Swing		Councillors & Officers	Amber	It was approved to arrange a meeting with residents who had responded to the open letter, to discuss the possible next steps.	The matter was on the agenda for consideration.
Jubilee- Avenue of Trees		Councillors & Officers	Amber	A site visit was arranged for 27 th January 2022. Cllrs D Macdonald, P Davies, P Siggers, A Hudson and D Rouane attended.	The matter was on the agenda for consideration.
Cemetery Notice Board		Officers	Amber		The new noticeboard was supposed to be delivered w/c 14 th March; however, it had arrived badly damaged at the supply company's office so was re-ordered. Approximately delivery would be 3-4 weeks.
Cemetery Access Path		Officers	Green		It was approved at the meeting on 15 th November to accept the quote to install a new access path at the cemetery. Work on this was delayed due to the weather, however, it was completed on 10 th March 2022.

					
<p>Installation of rubber matting for the Table Tennis tables</p>		<p>Officers</p>	<p>Green</p>		<p>Rubber grass matting was installed on all 3 table tennis tables w/c 7th March 2022.</p> 

Metal Detecting

Cllr P Davies asked for an update on this. Officers confirmed that the information would be forwarded to the Committee by the end of the week.

Welfare Containers at Edmonds Park

The Town Clerk confirmed funds had been agreed by Full Council and Officers were actively looking for suitable and available units.

Tyne Avenue

As Didcot Town Football Club had given DTC permission to maintain the 2m strip of grass on Tyne Avenue, Cllr P Davies asked when the cutting of this area would commence.

The Town Clerk confirmed that the mower's had been in the garage since January 2022, being serviced. The Outdoor Services Supervisor was chasing this up. Once the mowers were returned, cutting of this area would be introduced to the Outdoor Team's mowing routine.

Adding items to the progress report

Cllr M Walsh requested that the replacement trees for Edmonds Park, the replacement of the Zip wire at Ladygrove Park and the Tiny Forest project for Edmonds Park be added to the Progress report.

Cllr P Davies requested that signage for Ladygrove Lakes (informing visitors to not feed the ducks and geese bread) also be added.

Installation of noticeboard at Cornerstone

The Chair informed the Committee that the noticeboard had been installed by the Outdoor Team.

77. To consider the Outdoor Services report.

The Committee noted the Outdoor Services report.

Allotments

The Committee agreed to postpone the beekeeping on allotments until 1st April 2023, although Cllr M Walsh enquired as to why DTC should postpone installing bumble bee pods on the allotments.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to delay the honey beekeeping trial on the allotments until the 1st April 2023. The Committee also **RESOLVED** to progress with the purchase of a

bumble bee pods and insect hotels on each allotment site once the new OSM is in place.

Cemetery

The Committee discussed the extra interment space at the cemetery and **RESOLVED** to allow the resident to purchase it, if this would not cause any issues for the Outdoor Team.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the memorial bench application.

Parks General

The Committee **RESOLVED** to purchase the materials for the replacement of some of the timber surrounds around the bark areas in Edmonds Park, Great Western Park and two areas in Ladygrove Park, at a cost of **£1350.79** ex. VAT (timber and bolts) – to be taken from cost centre 3149 ('Play Bark top-up').

Officers will continue to investigate costings of bark to 'top' these areas up.

Ladygrove Park Zipwire replacement

Cllr M Walsh asked that the previous resolution to apply for S106 or CIL funds for the replacement zipwire be retracted as the cost for this was taken from the Environment and Climate Committee's 'Play Equipment Maintenance' budgets.

The Chair confirmed no funds were applied for, as the decision would have needed to be made by the Finance and General Purposes Committee (which would have hugely delayed the project) and apologised for not making this clear to members.

Welfare Containers for Edmonds Park

Budget for this had been approved by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Property and Facilities Manager was investigating what suitable units were available for purchase.

Ladygrove Lakes

The Town Clerk explained that the exact location for the borehole, previously approved by the Committee, was unclear so suggested another site meeting with the company in order to progress with the first two steps of the borehole plan.

The meeting would be arranged once the new OSM was in post and all members would be invited to attend.

Members enquired as to the progress of catching the non-native Catfish in the lake. Officers explained that no update had been received from the Fishing Association, but they would 'chase' this up.

It was agreed that the Town Clerk could arrange for the water testing to be done at the lakes at a cost of £275.

Events

Ladygrove Park:

- **Didcot Railway Centre Transport Rally** – Sunday 22nd May 2022, 7am-5pm

It was **RESOLVED** to approve these dates.

Trees

400 saplings had been received from the Woodland Trust and most of them had been planted within the town. Cllr P Davies asked that this be advertised on social media. Officers would arrange this.

The Town Clerk was progressing with the Town Council's Tree Inspections.

Ladygrove

Cllr P Davies had received a request from a resident for the Committee to consider installing a bench on the west side of Ladygrove, at the bottom of the mounds, due to the need to rest on the journey to the shops.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to investigate installing a bench in this location, whether this be a memorial bench, or a Town Council purchased bench. The cost of a bench could be taken from cost centre 3168 'Street furniture maintenance'.

Cllr P Davies mentioned again that the bus shelter on Mersey Way is missing half a section of Perspex so needed replacing. The PEO would contact the bus shelter company for a quote to replace this and forward the details to members.

78. To consider the Queen's Green Canopy/Jubilee Planting update and recommendations to Committee

The Committee considered the update.

Cllr P Davies thanked the Outdoor Services Team for the work they had done in Ladygrove, clearing, and installing the new bollards.

When discussing the Queen's Green Canopy/Jubilee planting project, the Committee **RESOLVED** to allow Officers to pick the most suitable tree supplier for the TOE application, due to the new OSM's in depth knowledge of trees. The areas for planting were also agreed.

It was **RESOLVED** to arrange a meeting with SODC, once the new OSM was in post, to investigate an avenue of trees as a joint venture. Members would be invited to attend.

All members agreed.

79. To consider the Litter pick proposed project for Didcot report and the recommendations to the Committee

The Committee considered the report.

It was agreed to support this project by creating a page on the website to advertise litter pick sessions and gain support from the community. Cllr P Davies explained that the Ladygrove Residents Association had carried out numerous litter picks in 2021 and if DTC contact them, then they would find willing volunteers. Problematic areas could be listed and reported back to SODC. Members advised Officers to contact Biffa for the loan of equipment.

80. To consider the proposal from Cllr P Davies regarding future projects for the shared cycle path additions to visible desired lines on Ladygrove and the recommendations to the Committee

The Committee considered the proposal.

The proposal consisted of 3 locations in Ladygrove, for the shared cycle path additions to visible desired lines, to be considered as future projects for DTC:

- Location 1
NE of the shops on Ladygrove from the crossing point by the rear yard entrance heading NW to the static exercise equipment under the pylons.
- Location 2
Near the NW end of the shared cycleway under the pylons west of Avon Way towards the foot bridge over the railway into Southmead.
- Location 3 – To widen the 2m tarmac path to 3m wide
The SW corner of the football club enclosed land and the path from the end of Bowmont Water to the connection at the far NW end under the pylons.

The Committee discussed the three locations and **RESOLVED** to allow Officers to investigate costings for the work at location 3, 'to widen the 2m wide tarmac path to a 3m wide block paved path' so that the information would be ready as a future project. The new OSM will lead on this, once in post.

All members agreed.

81. To consider the report regarding the next steps for the Splash Park and the recommendations to the Committee

Cllr P Davies discussed the minutes of the Pavilion and Splash Park Working Group (item 4b) where he had requested that the new Architect look at the Sports England brief, to check enough space is dedicated to changing rooms and was disappointed that the minutes did not reference this.

Cllr Hudson explained his concerns regarding a delay due to changing the design to incorporate 4 sets of changing rooms and the additional cost this would cause.

The Chair explained that this would be the responsibility of the Properties and Facilities Committee in the future and would be discussed at future meetings.

The Committee considered the report regarding the Splash Park next steps and wanted to ensure that if a Splash Park were to be constructed in Didcot, it should be of adequate size for the town.

Concerns were expressed due to the cost of replacing the rubber safety surface in 5-6 years' time and how community engagement could delay the start of the project. *Community engagement was carried out two years ago and the response was extremely positive.*

The Chair explained that the Council could apply for funding to cover the additional costs of the Splash Park.

It was **RESOLVED** to allow Splash to aid the Council in the tender design and with the planning application, at a cost of £5500.

It was also **RESOLVED** that Officers would investigate funding opportunities to put to the Finance and General Purposes Committee to consider.

82. To discuss re-installing the pathways on the Ladygrove Mound report and the recommendations to the Committee

The Committee considered the report.

Cllr P Davies was concerned that removing the pathways was considered an option and urged the Committee to only consider re-installing them. This would not have to mean construction work, but maintenance to what was already there. Cllrs P Giesberg and M Walsh agreed.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to re-install the pathways, once costings, materials etc had been agreed by the Committee, with the help and support of the new OSM.

In the interim, Officers would investigate options and costings for the Council.

83. To consider the Wheelchair Inclusive Swing progress report and the recommendations to the Committee

The Committee considered the report.

The Committee noted the ROSPA recommendation to ensure the swing is fully enclosed and concerns were raised due to the potential for the swing to feel less inclusive. Officers explained that the swings need to be locked to ensure safety to all users.

It was **RESOLVED** for Officers to investigate the possibility of a joint swing to enable an able-bodied person to swing alongside the wheelchair swing. Quotes would be sent to members.

The meeting closed at 21:00

Signed: _____ Chair

Date: _____

