

Didcot Town Council



Property and Facilities Committee Wednesday 27th September 2023 at 7.30pm All Saints Room, Didcot Civic Hall.

Minutes

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

Present:

Cllr K Morrison (Chair)
Cllr H Macdonald (Vice Chair)
Cllr A Jones
Cllr D Guerra Aragão
Cllr A Hudson
Cllr L Hislop

Officers:

Mrs J Wheeler – Town Clerk
Mr S Mundy – Estate Manager

25. Apologies

Apologies were tendered from Cllr Z Mohammed and Cllr M Khan

Cllr D Guerra Aragao substituted for Cllr Z Mohammed.

26. Declarations of interests

There were no declarations received.

27. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th July 2023

The Chair paged through the minutes for any amendments or questions.

It was proposed by Cllr A Hudson, seconded by Cllr A Jones, and **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting and noted them as such.

28. Questions on the minutes

No questions received.

29. To note properties report including the financial summary and consider the recommendations.

The Committee noted the report.

Cllr H Macdonald entered the meeting at 19.33.

29.1 To note the Civic Hall bar takings and usage figures

The Committee noted the bar takings and usage figures for the Civic Hall.

The Estate Manager explained to the Committee that the team have been looking into how to increase bar sales, this included looking at local distillery's and obtaining samples, and the visibility of the staff at the bar area.

The Estate Manager then explained how officers were looking to increase the awareness of the Civic Hall bookings, by taking pictures of the rooms so customers can see how the rooms can be setup. The officers were also investigating creating a new website for the Civic Hall. The Estate Manager also explained to the Committee the recent customer feedback and gave the group samples of the surveys completed.

The Committee asked the Estate Manager to investigate ways DTC can quickly contact the Police in case of an emergency due to an event that had recently occurred where members of staff felt threatened.

29.2 To note the Civic Hall financial summary

The Committee noted the Civic Hall financial summary.

29.3 To note the Civic Hall works update

The Committee noted the Civic Hall works update which included: -

- Roof repairs completed above the stage roof
- Replacement of window actuators within the Main Hall

29.4 To consider replacing a further two actuators within the Civic Hall Main Hall

The Estate Manager explained to the Committee how a further two actuators had failed when the electrician attended the Civic Hall to fix the three actuators agreed at the Committee meeting on Wednesday 26th July 2023 and how it would be good to get replaced now before next summer, to ensure all was working correctly.

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr A Jones, and **RESOLVED** to proceed with the quote from **SCOOP Electrical Services** for **£424.34+VAT** using budget code 4043 repairs and maintenance.

29.5– To note the current progress on the new Pavilion build

The Committee noted the current progress on the New Edmonds Park Pavilion.

The Committee expressed a concern regarding Thames Water and the water supply which could hold up the opening of the building. The Town Clerk and Estate Manager explained that they will be attending a meeting with the consultants and builders on Thursday 28th September and will gain more knowledge on the situation.

29.6 – To note the Loyd Pavilion works have been completed

The Committee noted that works had been completed at the Loyd Pavilion and were pleased with the results.

29.7 – To note the Civic Hall catering service order

The Committee noted that the catering service had been ordered for a cost of **£880+VAT** using MCFT.

The Estate Manager explained that DTC are currently awaiting a date of this service.

29.8 – To note the Lightning Protection servicing at Didcot Civic Hall and Willowbrook Leisure Centre

The Committee noted that the lightning protection service has been booked in for the Didcot Civic Hall and Willowbrook Leisure Centre. Total cost for the servicing to take place is **£270+VAT** (Didcot Civic Hall **£110.00** and Willowbrook Leisure Centre **£160.00**) using **Rodells**.

29.9 – To note the roller door shutter service for Didcot Civic Hall, The Outdoor Services Depot and Willowbrook Leisure Centre

The Committee noted the roller door shutter service at Didcot Civic Hall, Outdoor Services Depot and Willowbrook Leisure Centre for a cost of **£85 +VAT** per door. Total cost of service **£425+VAT** through **Sprint Door Systems**.

This service has been completed.

30. To note the Willowbrook report including the financial summary and consider recommendations.

The Committee considered the report.

30.1 – To the note Willowbrook usage figures

The Committee noted the Willowbrook usage figures.

The Estate Manager informed the Committee of the new groups hiring Willowbrook and how the usage figures will look different in the future due to Tuesdays now opening from 8am on our system, which will decrease the usage overall and we have increased the times available.

The Estate Manager also explained to the Committee how staff are looking at increasing the social media presence for the site and creating a new website for Willowbrook.

The Committee tasked the Estate Manager to speak to the hirers to ensure they tag Willowbrook into posts and on their own websites.

A discussion took place regarding starter rates for hirers at Willowbrook and the Committee tasked Officers to look at proposals to take to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

30.2 – To note the Willowbrook financial summary

The Committee noted the financial summary.

The Town Clerk explained to the members that DTC will receive a rebate for the business rates paid by Willowbrook in 2022/2023 and the rates paid for both Willowbrook and Civic Hall through part of 2023/2024, through the Business Rate Relief Scheme.

30.3 – To note the current recruitment needs at Willowbrook

The Committee noted the current recruitment needs at Willowbrook, which included three new Leisure Assistants and one Team Leader.

30.4 – To note works completed at Willowbrook

The Committee noted the works that had been completed since the last Committee meeting which included: -

- Replacement fan for the Air Handling unit
- Various small works

30.5 – To consider installing insulation to areas in Willowbrook

The Estate Manager explained to the Committee that Willowbrook currently has little to no insulation, to start with DTC should look to put insulation above the reception and the function room.

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr A Jones, and **RESOLVED** to proceed with the quote from **Polar FM** for **£3681.10** using budget code 4043 repairs and maintenance and this would cover the reception area and the function room.

The Committee asked the Estate Manager to investigate grants to cover these costs.

30.6 – To consider replacing a bollard outside the centre which had been damaged and removed

The Estate Manager explained that a bollard outside of Willowbrook had been driven into, damaged and had to be removed. DTC require this replacing for lighting at the entrance of Willowbrook so that the disabled parking would be lit up and visible.

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr A Jones, and **RESOLVED** to proceed with the quote from **Eco-Lectrical** for **£645.30+VAT** using budget code 4043 repairs and maintenance.

30.7 – To consider changing Willowbrook Leisure Centres name

The Estate Manager explained to the Committee how the Willowbrook Leisure Centre name clashes with the Willowbrook Park housing development in Northeast Ladygrove and was unsure if this name would stick or if it would cease when the development was completed he wanted to bring this to the attention of the Committee as a potential clash of names. When searching for Willowbrook Leisure Centre, the Willowbrook Park development is the first item that shows on Google.

The Committee asked the Estate Manager to speak to the hirers on their thoughts on the Willowbrook name as a whole and if this was something that should change.

It was decided that Officers should keep an eye on the development. When a new Leisure Centre is built within this development then the Planning and Development Committee should be made aware of the Leisure Centre name, so this doesn't clash with the Willowbrook name.

30.8 – To note servicing the moveable door within the function room

The Committee noted the moveable door service for the function room for a cost **£335+VAT** through **BH doors**.

30.9 – Any Projects to add to the 2024/25 Budget

The Town Clerk explained that one major project that will need investigating is the Splash Park. The Town Clerk explained if this goes ahead there will be no further funds available for any new major projects.

Cllr K Morrison wanted the Condition survey to be looked at for the next financial year.

31. To consider the updating the planned flower beds at the New Edmonds Park pavilion

The Committee considered the report.

The Committee heard how the new Edmonds Park Pavilion cannot be completed without the planting taking place within our current planning application. As the planting would need to take place in December/ January this isn't possible due to possible snow and heavy frosts as the plants would die.

The Outdoor Team investigated the current planned planting scheme proposed by the builders and stated most would not be viable and. In their opinion, could be completed cheaper.

The Estate Manger presented two options.

Option 1 – The builders complete the planting but add an amendment so the building can be signed off with planting taking place in the spring.

Option 2 – To add an amendment for the Outdoor Services Team to complete the planting and ask the builders to amend this.

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr A Jones, and **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** option two to request an amendment to the planning authority for the Outdoor Services team to complete the planting at the new Edmonds Park Pavilion and for the Officer to speak to the South Oxfordshire District Council Bio-Diversity team regarding the new proposed planting scheme to gain approval.

32. To consider the future of the tennis courts in Ladygrove

The Committee considered the report.

The Estate Manager gave a summary on the history of the tennis courts in Ladygrove and explained how the Ladygrove Management Working Group decided that the Property and Facilities Committee pursue with options for the tennis courts in Ladygrove.

A discussion took place between the Councillors exploring if charging for the courts would be viable, and to run this from Willowbrook.

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr A Jones and **RESOLVED** to recommend that the Ladygrove Tennis courts be kept as free to use and review depending on vandalism. Cllr H Macdonald abstained from the vote.

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr A Jones and **RESOLVED** to proceed with the quote from Fleet Lining for **£510.10+VAT** to purchase the Paints and three saddle bags required to paint all courts.

33. To note the progress report on items not on this agenda

The Committee noted the progress report.

The Committee agreed that the item from 30/5/22 Min should be removed.

34. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 the committee will be asked to exclude the press and public from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

35. To consider the direction of Willowbrook Leisure Centre

The Committee considered the report.

The Estate Manager explained to the Committee the history Willowbrook and presented to the Committee the report compiled by the Mulhall Leisure Consultants. The following three proposals were explained: -

1. Didcot Town Council continues the in-house operation of Willowbrook Leisure Centre
2. Look to put the facility back out to tender
3. Didcot Town Council continues to run the in-house operation but create a new charitable company

A discussion took place with all Councillors stating which option the Council should go with. The Town Clerk explained how much work would be involved with proposal three.

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr A Jones, and **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND to FULL COUNCIL** to continue with proposal one Didcot Town Council continue to run in-house operations with a view to moving to proposal three - that Didcot Town Council continue to run in house operations and create a charitable trust.

36. To consider taking in specialist support for the building of the North Brook Community Centre

The Committee considered the report.

It was proposed by Cllr K Morrison, seconded by Cllr A Jones, and **RESOLVED** to work with **Mr N White** on a job by job basic for **£45per hour**. It was **AGREED** that Mr N White look through the North Brook Community Centre specification for three hours.

Meeting closed at 21:20

Signed _____ Chairman Date _____

DRAFT