

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 22 SEPTEMBER 2015

Title of report	MINUTES OF THE COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Alison Smith MBE 01530 835668 alison.smith@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Services 01530 454555 steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Community Services 01530 454832 john.richardson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To consider the recommendations made by the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party.
Reason for Decision	To progress Coalville Special Expenses projects and programmes.
Council Priorities	Value for Money
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	As set out within the budget.
Link to relevant CAT	None.
Risk Management	N/A
Equalities Impact Screening	None discernible.
Human Rights	None.
Transformational Government	None.
Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory

Comments of Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	Members of the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party
Background papers	Agenda and associated documents of the meeting held on 9 July 2015
Recommendations	TO NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE WORKING PARTY MEETING

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Coalville Special Expenses Working Party meets quarterly to consider financial issues which affect the special expenses area. As the group reports directly to Cabinet, all recommendations made will be sent to the first available Cabinet meeting after the group have met for final approval.

2.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 2.1 To consider budget and financial issues which either solely or predominantly affect the special expenses area alone and to make recommendations back to Cabinet.
- 2.2 To consider possible project options regarding the allocation of surplus reserves which have been examined by the relevant budget officers and to make recommendations to Cabinet.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MEETING ON 9 JULY 2015

- 3.1 There are no recommendations made from the meeting for Cabinet consideration, however a number of sub groups were proposed and officers will consider how best to co-ordinate and manage the issues raised in an efficient manner.

APPENDIX 1

MINUTES of a meeting of the COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on THURSDAY, 9 JULY 2015

Present: Councillors R Adams, N Clarke, J Cotterill, D Everitt, J Geary, J Legrys, P Purver, M Specht and M B Wyatt

Officers: Mr L Brewster, Mr J Knight and Mr G Lewis

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR ENSUING YEAR

It was moved by Councillor M Specht, seconded by Councillor J Legrys and

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor J Geary be elected Chairman of the Working Party for the ensuing municipal year.

Councillor J Geary then took the chair.

2. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN FOR ENSUING YEAR

It was moved by Councillor J Legrys, seconded by Councillor M Specht and

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor R Adams be elected Deputy Chairman of the Working Party for the ensuing municipal year.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J Legrys declared a disclosable non pecuniary interest in Item 7 – 2015/16 Events Update due to his involvement with Hermitage FM.

Councillor M B Wyatt declared a disclosable non pecuniary interest in any reference to Coalville, as a business owner in the Town Centre.

Councillor J Geary declared a disclosable non pecuniary interest in Item 6 – Capital Projects Update as a regular supporter of Coalville Town FC.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2015.

Councillor J Geary reiterated his disappointment that a visit to Broom Leys Allotments had still not been arranged. He referred to correspondence that had been

circulated to Members suggesting that an open day was to be held in September and suggested that the Members' visit should coincide with this.

Councillor N Clarke referred to the discussion that had been held at the last meeting in respect of cemetery charges. He stated that it had been agreed that further information would be brought to this meeting but that this did not appear to have happened.

Councillor J Geary stated that he had spoken to the Head of Community Services regarding this matter and he had advised that it may be worthwhile to establish a sub group to discuss this in advance of the next meeting of the Working Party.

Councillor J Legrys stated that he agreed with this approach but it was important that Officers provided the relevant financial figures to Members.

Councillor M Specht referred to Councillor J Geary's suggestion at the previous meeting that the issue be considered instead by the Policy Development Group.

Councillor M B Wyatt stated that it was important to identify whether this issue solely affected the Coalville Special Expenses area or not. If it did, he suggested that the issue should be looked at by the Working Party rather than the Policy Development Group.

The consensus of Members was to arrange for a sub group to be established to deal with this issue in advance of the next full meeting of the Working Party. It was agreed that Councillors R Adams, J Cotterill, J Legrys and M Specht would sit on the sub group.

It was moved by Councillor J Legrys, seconded by Councillor N Clarke and

RESOLVED THAT:

the minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2015 be approved.

6. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

The Leisure Services Team Manager presented the report to Members.

He provided the Working Party with an update on each of the ongoing projects.

Coalville Park Improvements

It was confirmed that orders had now been placed for the mosaics, decorative metal panels and plants to be installed in the Peace Garden. It was anticipated that installation of these items would be completed by the end of August and that further work would then be undertaken in September so that the project was completed well in advance of Remembrance Day.

Councillor J Legrys enquired whether it could be arranged for the Chairman of the District to formally open the Peace Garden once it had been completed. The Leisure Services Team Manager confirmed that this would be arranged.

Owen Street Recreation Ground

Electricity Upgrade

It was confirmed that Homebrook had now visited the site and had provided costed proposals to upgrade the floodlighting lux levels to satisfy the Football Association's (FA) Ground Grading Requirements. It was noted that the club currently play at Step 4 of the non-league pyramid and that the existing lux levels would be satisfactory for the club to play at Step 3 but no higher.

It was stated that Homebrook had presented three different options for the club to consider. The first option was costed at approximately £17,000 and would see all existing fittings replaced with alternatives that omitted lux levels suitable for Step 2 football. The second option was costed at approximately £22,500 and would see all existing fittings replaced as well as an additional fitting being added to each lighting column. This option would be suitable for Step 1 football. The final option was to initially complete Option 1 and then progress with Option 2 at a later date if it became necessary. This option was costed at approximately £25,000.

It was noted that there were no allocated resources to undertake these works at present and that, whilst the Football Stadia Improvement Fund (FSIF) did offer match funding capped at £150,000 to Step 4 clubs for such projects, the club had already accessed this amount in order to develop their changing rooms. Consequently, the club would not be able access any further funding from the FSIF for five years or until they were promoted to Step 2 where the cap was increased to £250,000.

Councillor M B Wyatt stated that he firmly believed that the project should not be solely funded by the tax payer and that it should be established how much money the club was intending to contribute to the project itself. He stated that he believed a decision as to how to proceed with the project should be deferred until the club earned promotion.

Councillor P Purver enquired whether the costs for Option 3 would increase should the second stage of the project not be needed for a significant amount of time. The Leisure Services Team Manager responded that Options 1 and 2 were firm quotes but that Option 3 was not.

Councillor N Clarke stated that it would be a shame to dismiss the project at this point. He stated that the management board at the club had shown ambition and that the Working Party therefore should as well.

Councillor D Everitt enquired whether postponing the project would have an impact upon the club. The Leisure Services Team Manager responded that the club had anticipated being promoted for the last two seasons but that it had not materialised. As such, it was difficult to predict at what point the poor lux levels would become relevant.

Councillor J Geary stated that the poor floodlights were already a pertinent issue for the club. He explained that the club had already had to abandon one game as a consequence of the floodlights and that doing so had led to a fine from the FA. He stated that his view was that the Council had originally installed the floodlights and that it was therefore their responsibility to maintain them. He continued to say that if the floodlights needed improvement as a consequence of the club being successful on the pitch that the club should then contribute.

The consensus of Members was to approach the club to establish if they would be contributing any finance to the project.

Changing Room Development

It was confirmed that the funding application that had been made to the FSIF had been successful on the condition that the club satisfied the FA with regards to their transfer to a club limited by shares.

It was stated that the long term lease and funding agreement had been signed by both the Council and the football club and that as soon as approval had been received from the FA, the building of the pavilion could commence. It was anticipated that this would be in August.

Following on from the Working Party's recommendation at its last meeting, Cabinet had now agreed to fund the reduction in size of the trees that lined the entrance to the recreation ground.

Thringstone Miners Social Centre

It was confirmed that the centre's trustees, alongside the Council, were still identifying potential sources of funding in order to convert the former Clover Place play area into a training pitch. The project had been split into three phases with the remaining balance being directed towards the first phase, namely obtaining planning permission and diverting the footpath.

Councillor D Everitt stated that this project would be welcomed by the community once it had been completed. He stated that the area had previously become neglected and that he hoped progress on the project would be swift as it would tidy up the area.

Councillor M B Wyatt stated the County Council would be running a grants scheme specifically for children's facilities in the next financial year running from April 2016. He stated that it may be worth establishing whether this could be a possible source of funding for the project.

Cropston Drive BMX Track and Wheeled Sports Facility

It was confirmed that the BMX track had now been completed and that more regular patrols were now being conducted by the Parks Warden to ensure standards were maintained. A fire retardant bin had now been installed at the site and grass seeding was being undertaken. Consultation with key stakeholders was continuing and it was anticipated that further improvements would be undertaken in the autumn.

Councillor M B Wyatt asked Officers to consider tidying the area around the entrance by the bookmaker on Cropston Drive. The Leisure Services Team Manager confirmed that this would be looked at.

Urban Forest Park

It was stated that work had commenced at the site with the installation of the boardwalk. A third quote was currently being obtained for the drainage and pathway works and it was anticipated that this work would be completed during the summer.

Scotland Playing Fields

It was confirmed that a location had been identified for the relocation of the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) that was currently situated on Lillehammer Drive and that local

residents had been consulted on the recommendation. Planning consent had been given for the change of use in the area where the MUGA was currently located and the Council's Legal Services team were currently finalising the Deed of Variation to the Section 106 agreement with Barratts.

Councillor J Legrys stated that he was aware of the legal issues involved but that he was nonetheless disappointed that the local children would have nowhere suitable to play in the school holidays. He implored Officers to find a solution to the impasse that was currently in place, even if it cost money to do so.

Highway Verge Improvements

It was stated that the one off improvement works at Phoenix Green, Bardon Road and Ashby Road had been completed. The recommendation from the Working Party at its last meeting to fund the works had now been approved by Cabinet. Consequently, an application to the Council's Environmental Improvement Grant scheme would now be submitted and, if successful, works would be undertaken this summer.

Councillor N Clarke enquired whether Officers could investigate expanding the number of cuts funded by the Working Party. He stated that a couple of extra cuts a year would significantly improve the look of the area.

Councillor J Geary asked whether, if the Working Party agreed to fund extra cuts, they would be forced to use the County Council's contractors. He stated that firm costs would need to be established before a decision was made.

Councillor J Legrys stated that the County Council had made it clear that they were keen for Parish Councils to help and that, as such, costings should be established. He stated that the Working Party should be provided with costings for all possible options before a decision was made.

Councillor M B Wyatt reiterated that the Council should investigate whether it would be plausible for flowerbeds to be sponsored in order to cover the costs of the extra work. He stated that the Working Party should only take on extra work if it was cost neutral to do so. The Leisure Services Team Manager stated that sponsorship could be considered but that there may be insufficient resources to manage the sponsorship process. He stated that the Grounds Maintenance Team would be more than able to undertake the work but that there were question marks as to who would manage the sales process.

Councillor P Purver stated that her understanding was that some areas were maintained by the District Council and some by the County Council. She asked whether it would be possible for Officers to provide a map showing which authority was responsible for each area. The Leisure Services Team Manager confirmed that he would do this.

The consensus of Members was for Officers to establish costings for the Working Party to permanently fund extra grass cuts throughout the Special Expenses area before a decision was made at a future meeting as to how to progress.

Warden Presence

It was confirmed that a new Parks Warden had now been appointed for 16 hours per week until October. The role predominantly covers the after school period from

Monday to Friday and focuses on the areas around Cropston Drive Recreation Ground, Scotlands Recreation Ground and Staples Drive Play Area. The position would also cover Lillehammer Drive and Adam Morris Way once the MUGA transfer had taken place.

Councillor R Adams asked whether the warden's working pattern would differ during the school holidays given that they currently focus on the after school period. The Leisure Services Team Manager commented that reviewing the warden's working hours would take considerable time and that the school holidays would be over in all likelihood before any changes could come into effect.

Thringstone Bowls Club Toilet Block

It was confirmed that the Working Party's recommendation to fund this work had now been approved by Cabinet. Officers would now liaise with the bowls club to support their funding application.

Memorial Trees

It was stated that Members had asked Officers to consider planting trees in various locations throughout the Special Expenses area in the run up to the one hundredth anniversary of the end of the First World War in 2018. This would be funded by a combination of both the Working Party and external funding and would be marked by a ceremony to commemorate the occasion. It was understood that a number of poplar trees had been planted in the past to commemorate the war and that efforts would be made to obtain further information regarding where these trees were initially planted.

Councillor J Legrys stated that he had had several conversations with the Royal British Legion regarding this project. He stated that they were keen to be involved and suggested that all stakeholders arrange a meeting in the imminent future to finalise plans.

Councillor M B Wyatt enquired whether the National Forest would be involved given the proposed location of the trees within the area covered by the forest.

Councillor J Legrys confirmed that the National Forest had been approached. He stated that the project should create a new plantation rather than attempt a like for like replacement of historical locations.

RESOLVED THAT:

the Working Party notes the progress update on 2015/16 capital projects.

7. 2015/16 EVENTS UPDATE

The Cultural Services Team Manager presented the report to Members.

He provided Members with an update on each event.

Picnic and Proms in the Park

It was confirmed that the Picnic in the Park event had been very well supported with an estimated 7,000 attendees. The feedback that had been received had been very positive with the High Sheriff of Leicestershire being particularly complimentary. As

well as several live music acts, the First World War themed area had proved to be particularly popular.

It was stated that the Proms in the Park event had also been a success in its first year. It was estimated that 1,700 people attended and that the mix of entertainment had been well received.

The Cultural Services Team Manager thanked the Cultural Services Team for all their hard work in planning and delivering the events. He also thanked Members for their attendance and support.

Councillor M B Wyatt thanked Officers for the work that had been put in to both the events. He stated that the feedback that he had received was particularly appreciative of the Proms in the Park event as it catered for a different age group. He stated that it was good to see that this event was now established given the uncertainty that had recently surrounded its future.

Councillor M Specht offered his congratulations to Officers for running the event. He stated that he thought the number attending the Proms in the Park event would considerably increase if it was held again next year as word of mouth would spread and raise numbers accordingly.

Councillor J Cotterill stated that he had been particularly impressed with the First World War themed area. He went on to say that the event had been beautifully organised.

Councillor R Adams stated that he had particularly enjoyed the circus tent. He stated that he was disappointed with the lack of public transport on Sundays from the Greenhill area of the town and suggested that this might have meant some people could not have attended. He suggested that this may be an area that could be looked at in future years.

Councillor J Legrys stated that this year's event was one of the strongest yet and that everyone involved should be thanked.

Councillor N Clarke reiterated that the event was brilliant and suggested that it offered fantastic value for money given the relatively small budget involved.

Councillor J Geary stated that he was very impressed with the quality of the Ockbrook Big Band.

Coalville Town Team Summerfest

It was confirmed that this event had been successfully held on the same weekend as the Proms and Picnic in the Park events. Activities had included dancing, singing, musical theatre, stalls and food demonstrations.

Councillor M B Wyatt stated that the area used for the Summerfest had been restricted to the precinct and that he had received feedback from other business owners who had been disappointed by this.

Councillor J Legrys pointed out that the event had been organised by an independent body and that it was therefore not within the Working Party's control. He stated that the Town Team should be made aware of such feedback instead.

Coalville by the Sea

It was confirmed that, following the success of last year's event, a similar one was to be held again this August which would include games, arts and crafts, puppet shows, music and sandpits.

Christmas Lights Switch On Event

It was confirmed that it was again intended to combine this event with the Coalville Town Team's Food and Drink Event on 21 November. It was stated that it had been proposed to make the annual free weekend car parking run for five weekends from this date until 19 December.

Coalville Christmas Decorations

It was confirmed that a tender process had now been completed and that a five year contract had been awarded to a new supplier but within the existing budget.

Councillor P Purver stated that several of the brackets used to hold the lights were now not fit for purpose. She suggested that the Working Party should look at what could be done to rectify this.

Councillor M B Wyatt stated that the cost of providing the electricity for the lights fell to the trader and that this discouraged some from taking part. He suggested that the Working Party consider contributing to these costs to encourage more traders to take part.

Councillor J Legrys stated that parished areas, such as Ashby Town Council, used Section 106 money to fund their Christmas Lights and that this option was not available to the Working Party as they did not receive these funds.

Councillor M Specht stated that it was important for the Working Party to spend money in this area so as to encourage people to come to shop in Coalville rather than other local towns.

The consensus of Members was to ask Officers to provide costings for the replacement of the brackets, the trees and the lights and to then discuss further at the meeting of the sub group.

St George's Day Flags

Councillor N Clarke stated that, unlike in previous years, no flags were erected to commemorate St George's Day this year. He suggested that this be reconsidered for next year.

Councillor M B Wyatt stated that in previous years the flags had been in place for too long and had deteriorated in quality as a result. He suggested that a one day event should be held to celebrate St George's Day instead.

Members agreed to form a sub group consisting of all Members of the Working Party in order to discuss this further.

RESOLVED THAT:

the Working Party notes the progress update on 2015/16 events.

8. COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES 14/15 OUT TURN

The Leisure Services Team Manager presented the report to Members.

It was stated that there was an under spending of £17,600 with a contribution to balances of £15,824 leading to an end of year balance of £96,895 in reserves. It was confirmed that the under spend was primarily due to an increase in burial and monument income of £13,000 and a backdated NNDR refund for Thringstone Bowls Club of £6,700.

Councillor D Everitt referred to the outstanding reserves and stated that he would favour seeing some allocated toward installing gym equipment at a park in Thringstone.

Councillor J Legrys stated that it might be beneficial for all Members of the Working Party to submit to Officers any projects that they had in mind which could then be considered at the next meeting.

Councillor P Purver stated that she believed that the funding given towards Christmas lighting in Coalville was fairly modest and asked whether the Working Party might consider putting more of their budget towards this.

The consensus of Members was to convene a sub group consisting of all Members of the Working Party to discuss future projects in advance of the next meeting.

RESOLVED THAT:

the Working Party notes the report.

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members noted the dates of the future meetings.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, 13 October 2015 at 6.30pm in the Board Room.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.55 pm