

MINUTES of a meeting of the COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY held in the Board Room, Council Offices, Coalville on THURSDAY, 7 JULY 2016

Present: Councillor J Geary (Chairman)

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

Officers: Mr J Knight, Mr G Lewis, Mr J Richardson and Mrs R Wallace

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR ENSUING YEAR

Councillor M Specht moved that Councillor J Geary be appointed as Chairman for the ensuing year. It was seconded by Councillor J Legrys.

At his request for an individual recorded vote, Councillor M B Wyatt voted against the motion.

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor J Geary be appointed as the Chairman for the ensuing year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN FOR ENSUING YEAR

Councillor J Legrys moved that Councillor R Adams be appointed as Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year. It was seconded by Councillor J Cotterill.

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor R Adams be appointed as the Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P Purver as she was at another meeting. She would however try to attend once it had concluded.

The Chairman announced that it was the Cultural Services Team Manager's last meeting as he was leaving the authority due to retirement; he thanked him for all of his hard work over the years and wished him well in the future. All Members concurred.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor J Geary declared a non pecuniary interest in item 7 – Capital Projects update as a regular supporter of Coalville Town FC and a founder member of Mantle Lane Arts.

Councillor J Legrys declared a non pecuniary interest in any reference to Hermitage FM due to his involvement with the organisation.

Councillor M B Wyatt declared a non pecuniary interest in any matter relating to the town centre as an owner of two businesses.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2016.

Chairman's initials

On behalf of Councillor P Purver, Councillor M Specht referred to page 8 of the minutes in respect of Grass and verge maintenance in Coalville. He reported that the map outlining the areas that Leicestershire County Council was responsible for had not been sent to Members as agreed. The Head of Community Services apologised and agreed to send this information to Members the following day.

It was moved by Councillor Specht, seconded by Councillor Adams and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2016 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Councillor R Adams thanked Councillor M B Wyatt for organising the visit to Broom Leys Allotments that the working party attending earlier in the evening as he very much enjoyed it. Councillor M Specht also put forward his thanks and wished Councillor M B Wyatt every success with the future plans. Councillor M B Wyatt thanked the working group for attending as it taken a long time to arrange and he was pleased that Members enjoyed it.

6. 2016/17 EVENTS UPDATE

The Cultural Services Team Manager presented the report to Members and provided an update on each event.

Proms/Picnic in the Park

The two day event took place in Coalville on 11 and 12 June. It was very successful with lots of local entertainment and activities. The Cultural Services Team Manager referred to the positive feedback received which was detailed within the report.

Councillor J Legrys referred to the giant art boards from local schools that were on display and asked if photographs had been taken as they were very good. The Cultural Services Team Manager explained that as the art boards were going back to the schools, photographs were taken to be kept as part of a record of the event. He also thanked Angela Bexton and Julia Harley for their hard work undertaken on the event.

In response to a question from Councillor M Specht, the Cultural Services Team Manager reported that there were more stalls at the event than previous years as the layout plan had been changed to accommodate more. Councillor M Specht felt that despite the weather it was a good event with a very good turn out from local people.

Councillor M B Wyatt reported that he had received mostly positive comments for the event. The only criticism being the positioning of the stage was not as good as previous years. He added that he attended and he believed it was a good and well organised event.

Councillor J Legrys praised both days of the event and reported that he had received no negative comments. He felt it was a great event and congratulated officers.

Councillor R Adams commented that he thoroughly enjoyed the event but there was some confusion with the signage on the gates. The Cultural Services Manager agreed that there was some confusion but the mistake had been realised quickly in the morning and rectified. Officers had learnt from it for future years.

Chairman's initials

The Chairman asked if the event had come under budget. The Cultural Services Team Manager responded that he was still working on the figures and it would be reported at the next meeting.

Coalville by the Sea

The popular event will take place at Needhams Walk grassed area on 19 August and would be complimented by a children's fairground. Other events including a petting zoo and two smaller events would be taking place on Fridays in August also.

Remembrance Day 2016

As an update to the report, Members were informed that the remembrance event would be held on 13 November.

Christmas Lights Switch On

Cabinet supported the group's proposal to move the event on to 3 December and to compliment it with free parking on all Saturdays in December.

In response to a question from Councillor M B Wyatt, the Cultural Services Team Manager confirmed that there would be a Christmas tree erected again at Marlborough Square and it was included within the budget.

Councillor M Specht asked on behalf of Councillor P Purver if there could be more small external Christmas trees with lights outside the shops in Coalville. The Head of Community Services responded that it was something that the Business Focus Team was working on currently; he would get an update for the next meeting. The Chairman commented that he was aware that some of the tree brackets on the buildings were no longer fit for purpose and requested a costing for new brackets as well as the fitting of the trees, broken down to a price per unit due to not all businesses wanting a tree. The Head of Community Services agreed. Councillor M B Wyatt commented that not all of the businesses on High Street were invited to apply for a tree which was why there were shops without one last year. He requested that the contractors contact all business owners. The Cultural Services Team Manager explained that this costing had been undertaken in the past and it was approximately £8,000. The Head of Community Services agreed to provide an update at the next meeting.

Councillor J Legrys commented that he believed the Coalville Project Team were currently looking into this and they had money in the budget, he asked for this to be checked as he was concerned that work would be duplicated unnecessarily.

Councillor M B Wyatt reported that residents had requested more visible lights on the clock tower, similar to the ones outside the Council Offices which wrap around horizontally rather than hang vertically. The Head of Community Services explained that there was a contractor that dealt with the lights and each year more lights could be added to the current stock. He agreed to speak to the contractors to gain some ideas for the clock tower and he would report back to the next meeting. The Chairman agreed that as it had been identified as an improvement he would like it to be looked into.

RESOLVED THAT:

The progress update on 2016/17 events be noted.

Chairman's initials

7. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

The Leisure Services Team Manager presented the report to Members and provided an update on each of the ongoing projects.

Owen Street Recreation Ground – Changing Room Development

Building works on the new changing pavilion was almost finished and it was anticipated that completion would be in late June with a handover to the football club in July. Once the handover was completed then officers would arrange a visit for the group. It was anticipated that a formal opening would take place in August and would hopefully be marked by a marquee game for the football club which was in the process of being arranged. Members would be invited to this event.

Some discussion was had as to when would be the appropriate time to hold the visit with the initial conclusion being to go on the same date as the next meeting. After further discussion of other visits later in the meeting it was decided to leave it to officers to arrange an appropriate date.

Thringstone Miners Social Centre – Training Ground Development

Further to the report, the Leisure Services Team Manager informed Members that he had been misled regarding the planning permissions and contrary to the report only had approval for fencing and not the footpath. Work was still being undertaken on the footpath diversion and once it had been given approval, work would continue.

Cropston Drive BMX Track and Wheeled Sports Facility

As previously agreed by the working party, improvements would be focused on the surrounds to the main car park area, the pedestrian entrance, the hard court basketball area and the hedge line. Works were programmed for commencement in July/August.

Urban Forest Park, Coalville – Site Improvements

There was still an outstanding amount of Section 106 funding and officers were seeking costs for boundary improvements. Following the working party's recommendations, Cabinet approved the potential renaming of the Urban Forest Park through a community consultation exercise to seek preferred names. The Community Focus Team would support the process.

Councillor M B Wyatt asked about the annual cost and whether officers had investigated the site being managed by the National Forest as previously discussed. The Head of Community Services confirmed that it had been looked at but not progressed as yet. He agreed to provide an update at the next meeting, along with a discussion regarding the provision of toilet and running water facilities.

Thringstone Bowls Club Toilet Block

The project was now complete and officers would arrange a site visit for any interested Members of the working party.

Bench in Thringstone

Cabinet had approved the working party's recommendation for the location of the bench and the Grounds Maintenance Team would arrange for the installation in the next few weeks. The Leisure Services Team Manager circulated a map identifying the location as agreed.

After a comment made by Councillor M Specht regarding the correct positioning of the bench, a discussion was had and it was decided that the bench would be installed facing

Chairman's initials

towards the footpath but set further back so that the legroom was not impeding the footpath for health and safety reasons.

Thringstone Miners Social Centre Training Pitch

Cabinet had agreed the allocation of £5,000 to the project and officers would now work with the football club to submit a funding application to the BIFFA Main Grants Scheme.

Memorial Trees

A plan of the proposed design was circulated to members, the idea being that the trees would be positioned to read '100' from an aerial view. The reasoning behind the proposal was to do something a little different and original; there would also be an illustration board on the site to explain the significance of the design. There would also be benches in between the trees for reflection purposes. He believed it would provide a lasting legacy.

The chairman was unsure of the idea for a number of reasons. The aerial view would only be understandable if you were flying in a particular direction and also the type of tree used would need to be seriously considered as trees with a large canopy would ruin the display as they grew larger. He also commented on the current condition of the trees already in the area as they do not seem to be that healthy, he was concerned that there was contaminates in the soil. The Leisure Services Team Manager assured Members that regular testing had not identified any contaminates in the soil and the type of tree to be used had not been decided as yet but he understood that it was a crucial decision.

Councillor J Legrys felt that the proposal was a good one. Councillor D Everitt also supported the proposal and believed it would attract people's interest.

Councillor M B Wyatt did not agree with the proposal and believed that officers needed to rethink and come back with a better proposal. He suggested planting the trees in a circle with a commemorative stone in the centre.

Councillor M Specht suggested that work continue on the proposal but to also put together an alternative proposal for comparison. All Members were in agreement.

The Chairman asked if the working party could be provided with the distance between the footpaths so they had an idea of the space available and the appropriate type of trees required. The Head of Community Services agreed to look at Councillor M B Wyatt's suggestion and would report back at the next meeting. He assured Members that there was enough time for further discussions but wanted agreement so that the trees can be planted as soon as possible to allow the trees to mature for the centenary year. He suggested that Members visit the site to gain an idea on the space available. All Members agreed for a meeting to be arranged on the date of the next meeting, immediately prior. This would take the place of the previously agreed Owen Street Recreation Ground visit.

Phoenix Green Bridge Mural

Contractors had been procured for the cleaning and re-painting of the mural and the work would take place in July.

The Leisure Services Team Manager outlined the potential capital projects for 2016/17.

Green Gym at Melrose Road

Indicative costings and illustrations of equipment were circulated at a previous meeting. Whilst prices of equipment varied considerably and a procurement process would need to be followed, it was anticipated that £12,000 would cover four pieces of equipment.

Scotlands Play Hub Development

It had been agreed by the working group to defer any work on identifying improvements to Scotlands Playing Field until the situation regarding the Lillehammer Drive MUGA had been resolved.

Mobile Vehicle Activated Signage

As requested at the last meeting, a presentation was given to Members of the working party on 8 June. The cost of the units was approximately £3,000 with an additional annual fee of £935 for the Grounds Maintenance Team to move the sign every three weeks.

Councillor M B Wyatt felt that the project was a waste of public money and was not in support of it. The Chairman commented that he had similar views until he had attended the presentation that was arranged for Members. He felt it was very interesting and it changed his view. He added that Councillor M Specht had experience of the device through his Parish Council and it had improved driving performance.

Councillor D Everitt believed it was a good investment as people easily drifted over the speed limit. Drivers did travel very fast through the area and he felt that anything they could do to prevent accidents was worth doing.

Councillor J Legrys commented that he initially raised the topic at the working group due to local people's concerns and he was impressed that the devices collected data for the police as he felt that was important. He added that there would always be people who did not agree with money being spent on such things but that as Councillors they would be criticised either way.

Councillor N Clarke reminded Members that the company that gave the presentation on the devices were attempting to make sales so would be promoting the positives of installing them. He felt that it was important to receive professional advice on where to locate them.

Councillor M B Wyatt left the meeting and Councillor P Purver entered the meeting at this point.

Improved Parks Signage

The proposal was for new signage for the Urban Forest Park once it had been renamed and Coalville Park. Leicestershire County Council were currently finalising their signage changes for Coalville and it was proposed to revisit signage later in the year.

Melrose Recreation Ground, Thringstone

Officers had been approached by Friends of Thringstone to consider improvements to Melrose Road Recreation Ground. It had been suggested to develop the area from a recreation ground into a Park for Thringstone. The site would still be usable and maintained for use as a football pitch but the exterior and entrances would be improved to include trees, benches and planted areas. It was not proposed at this point to add equipment as it was felt that the nearby play hub is the preferred location for equipment. It was proposed to bring a scheme of potential improvements to a future meeting if members supported the proposal. Members agreed for officers to start making plans on the project with the Ward Member.

Coalville Market Toilets

A petition was recently presented to Full Council asking for the public toilets next to the Council's Market Hall to be opened on Sundays. Cabinet will consider this proposal at its next meeting on 26 July. The working party were asked if they wished to consider

Chairman's initials

supporting or contributing to the cost of opening the market toilets on Sundays. The Head of Community Services confirmed that if it was to be agreed it could be trialled for a number of months with the opening and closing undertaken by the Park wardens. In order to minimise costs there would be no cleaning or supervision during these opening hours which would leave them open to potential abuse but this could be reviewed weekly in light of operational experience.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Head of Community Services reported that there were a mixture of Council funded and Parish funded toilets around the District. It was confirmed that comments from the working party would be fed back to Cabinet when they considered the report.

Councillor M Specht did not support the proposal as the toilets were already open six days per week. He commented that Whitwick Parish Council had converted their public toilets into an office block due to lack of use. The Chairman reminded Members that they were being asked whether they wanted to make a contribution to the opening costs for Sundays.

Councillor N Clarke commented that he did not believe that Cabinet would agree to the proposal. He suggested that the working party match the amount of funding that Cabinet decide to allocate.

Councillor J Legrys explained that he had assisted the residents with the petition and it was predominantly pensioners that did their shopping on a Sunday. He felt that the toilets should be open on Sundays but he was unsure as to how they should be funded, he stated that he would go along with the consensus of the working party.

Councillor P Purver supported the proposal in principle. In response to a question the Leisure Services Team Manager confirmed that the toilets at Whitwick Park were open on Sundays and had experienced problems with vandalism.

Councillor J Cotterill did not support the proposal.

In response to a question from Councillor D Everitt, the Head of Community Services explained the costs involved. The cost for the Park Wardens to open the toilets at 10am and close them at 4.00pm would cost £10 per Sunday. If in the future it was to be staffed and cleaned, there would be a substantial increase in costs. There was a 10p charge for using the toilets, which goes back into the General Fund and this would also be a mechanism for monitoring the amount of use. He commented that there was no way of checking safety of the users so there would need to be a sign displaying the Council's out of hours telephone number in case of an emergency. He believed that the only way to test the demand would be to have a trial opening and the suggestion was do this between September and January.

The Chairman expressed concerns that the only way of raising an alarm in the case of an emergency was the out of hours number and if there was no mobile phone available then people were at risk. Councillor D Everitt felt that this should not be a consideration because an incident could occur any day of the week when the toilets were open.

Councillor M Specht raised concerns regarding vandalism as it could go unnoticed for quite some time if the toilets were not monitored. He also asked how long it would take to get major damages fixed. The Head of Community Services explained that the toilets would be locked each night so any issues would be picked up at that point. The Leisure Services Team Manager explained that major damages would take approximately 24 to 48 hours and the toilets would need to be closed during that time.

Chairman's initials

Councillor R Adams moved the earlier suggestion of matching any contributions allocated by Cabinet at their meeting on 26 July. It was seconded by Councillor D Everitt. Members agreed.

The Chairman wanted it to be made clear to Cabinet that the working party supported the local businesses in Coalville and opening the toilets on Sundays could encourage more trade but they did have safety concerns regarding people needing assistance.

Grit Bins

The Chairman referred to a previous discussion regarding the purchase of grit bins for the area, as the deadline had passed last year when the matter was considered he asked for a further update. The Leisure Services Team Manager believed that the deadline was the end of July and agreed to submit an application.

RESOLVED THAT:

- a) The progress update on 2015/16 Capital Projects be noted.
- b) The progress update on 2016/17 Capital Projects be noted.

RECOMMENDED THAT:

- a) The Coalville Special Expenses Working Party match any funds allocated by Cabinet towards the cost of opening the Coalville Market public toilets on Sundays.
- b) Officers move forward with the planning for enhancing Melrose Recreation Ground, Thringstone into a community park.

8. COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES 15/16 OUT TURN

The Head of Community Services presented the report to Members and advised that the outturn confirmed an under spend of £6,639 which had led to an end of year balance of £83,336. Members were advised of the prudent level of reserves to retain and asked if they would like to allocate any funds and if so for what projects.

Regarding the mobile vehicle activated signs, discussion was had as to how many was to be purchased with some Members opting for one and some Members opting for two. After some debate it was agreed for two signs to be purchased. The Head of Community Services explained that the next step would be for Leicestershire County Council to visit the desired sites for location to assess suitability.

Councillor D Everitt put forward his support for the Green Gym project on Melrose Road.

The Chairman commented that he had been approached by a Councillor regarding the state of the grass cutting around the town centre, particularly the top of Owen Street and Margaret Street and the jitty down to the former Arriva garage. He asked Members if they would like to fund a one off cut. Members agreed. The Head of Community Services explained that this was Leicestershire County Council land and unfortunately it did not get cut as regularly as District land nearby.

RESOLVED THAT:

The 2015/16 Outturn be noted.

Chairman's initials

RECOMMENDED THAT:

The progression of the following projects from the use of reserves for capital schemes in 2016/17:

- a) £8,000 for two Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs.
- b) £12,000 for a Green Gym at the existing play hub at Melrose Road, Thringstone.
- c) An initial one off cut be undertaken on the grass areas on Margaret Street and Owen Street and the jitty to the former Arriva garage and then maintained for the financial year.

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED THAT:

The dates for future meetings be noted

Councillor M B Wyatt left the meeting at 7.25pm.

Councillor P Purver arrived at 7.25pm.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.04 pm