

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES AND SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 11TH FEBRUARY 2010

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs L Bossons
C Nield
D A Parker
Mrs J Whitehurst
G Baxendale
D Martin
Miss R K Williams

N Bayley (Leader)
E Clarke (Mayor)

Also present D Murphy

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G. R. Edwards and D.T. Brown (Deputy Mayor).

2. **MINUTES**

AAS/31/0910 RESOLVED:- That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 19th November 2009 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were requested to declare both "personal" and "personal & prejudicial" interests as early in the meeting as they become known.

Councillor G Baxendale declared a personal interest in item 6 by virtue of being a Cheshire East Councillor.

4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Min No AAS/6/0910 Speed Display Units

Prices to purchase a Speed Display Unit have been obtained, they are about £3000.

AAS/32/0910 RESOLVED:- That the police are contacted with a view to borrowing and trialling a unit for a short period of time.

Item 9 (2) Re-opening of Timbersbrook Toilets

The members debated the merits of re-opening the Timbersbrook Toilets, it was agreed that this item would be dealt with under the discussion concerning the Devolution of Services.

5. **CONGLETON IN BLOOM SUB COMMITTEE MINUTES**

AAS/32/0910 RESOLVED:- That the Minutes of the meetings held on 10th December 2009 and 21st January 2010 be received and the recommendations therein be adopted.

6. **CAR PARKING**

The committee expressed some concern at how Cheshire East are handling the Chapel Street car park which is owned by St. Peters Church but rented to Cheshire East Borough Council. It was noted that the Cheshire Diocese have had no response from Cheshire East Borough Council concerning how their designated 4 car parking spaces would be managed or how they would cope with weddings and funerals.

There was also a discussion about the times designated for on Street Parking.

AAS/33/0910 RESOLVED:- That Cheshire East be requested to consider amending the On Street Parking times from 8.00am – 7.00pm to 8.00am – 6.00pm.

7. **ANCIENT RECORDS & CHARTERS**

The committee considered a report on the Action Plan relating to improving the safe keeping and accessibility of the Ancient Records and Charters.

AAS/34/0910 RESOLVED:- That

1. To immediately transfer the 3 most fragile books to be stored at the Museum in a controlled environment, and in the longer term to obtain advice on their restoration.
2. To provide a proper storage cabinet to enable the Museum to store the remainder of the records in a controlled environment.
3. To transfer the remaining 4 charters for storage at the Museum, and to provide glass covers for the drawers in the Museum's existing cabinet, to be funded from the Ear Marked Reserve.
4. If the 1st floor extension of the Museum goes ahead in the future, to agree to the Ancient Records and Charter being permanently displayed there, in a controlled environment. The ownership of all records and charters would of course remain with Congleton Town Council.
5. To recommend Finance and Policy Committee to allocate £3000 for a storage cabinet from the Town Hall capital budget.

8. PLAY AREAS AND PLAY BUILDER SCHEME

A report on Play areas and the status of the Play Builder Scheme was presented to the committee for consideration. It was noted that the Bromley Farm Play area Scheme has been approved by Cheshire East Borough Council and this scheme will receive funding. The bid for Astbury though was unsuccessful.

AAS/35/0910 RESOLVED:-

1. To undertake with Cheshire East Borough Council a survey of residents to ascertain the requirements for a play scheme in the Astbury Lane Ends Area.
2. To produce the supporting evidence for such a scheme so that if additional finance becomes available the documentation is already prepared.

9. REPORT FROM ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTANT

A report from the Architectural Consultant relating to Public Realm Inspections, Hillary Avenue allotments, dropped kerb improvements, the footpath from Congleton Park Wood, and the Children's Paddling Pool was considered.

AAS/36/0910 RESOLVED:- That the report be received.

10. HILLARY AVENUE ALLOTMENTS

Councillor L. Bossons reported on a committee meeting she attended of the Hillary Avenue Allotment Association and commented that the association have a web site.

No vandalism has been reported, but, the association passed on their thanks to the Council for carrying out the tree pruning on site, but, would like assistance with further pruning on plot 11. They will be taking a stall at the Food and Drink Festival on the 20th June to display their produce. They expressed some concern at security as they had given out a number of keys to people to get into the allotments some of which have been further duplicated. The AGM it was noted is on 26th April at Bromley Community Centre.

AAS/37/0910 RESOLVED:-

1. That the report be received.
2. That the Town Council assist in pruning the trees on plot 11.

11. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS (IF NECESSARY)

AAS/38/0910 RESOLVED:-

That the committee resolve to exclude the press and public under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, from the matter set out below on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of private and confidential information on staff matters.

12. DEVOLVED SERVICES

A report on the current status of discussion with Cheshire East on the Devolution of Services was considered by the committee.

The members once again made comments about the state of the toilets and expressed a view that they must be brought up to a good standard and consideration to re-opening Timbersbrook should also be on the agenda. But, the cost of refurbishing the toilets should be identified.

It was noted that no service should be devolved unless it meets the following simple criteria:-

The same service can be provided at a lower cost or an improved service can be provided at the same cost.

AAS/39/0910 RESOLVED:- To authorise the Town Clerk to continue negotiations on devolved services with Cheshire East Council as set out in the reports. The Clerk to report back progress on a regular basis.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Murphy raised some concern relating to the ownership of Hankinson's Field adjacent to the Leisure Centre, and requested whether it was possible to ascertain whether any covenants were in place on the field or whether it was possible to make it common land to give it some protection for the town.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Clerk determine whether any covenants exist and identify how and if it is possible to make an area 'Common Land'.

D Martin
Chairman