

Swaffham Town Council

Minutes of the Assets & Open Spaces Committee meeting held on Monday 26 September 2022 in the Town Hall

Councillors: Mrs J Anscombe (Chair), Mr S Bell, Mr P Darby,
Mr G Edwards and Mrs J Skinner

Deputy Clerk: Mrs H Carrier

Office Administrator: Mrs N Forrest

1. **Apologies received for absence**

Cllr L Scott.

Claire Peak, Escape Project, on annual leave

Absent

Cllr W Bensley

Cllr K Oliver

2. **Declarations of interest**

Cllr Darby declared a non-pecuniary interest at Item 9.2

3. **Public Open Forum**

No members of the public present

4. **Minutes**

The minutes of the Assets and Open Spaces Committee, held on 27 July 2022, were agreed, and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record

5. **Outstanding actions agreed at previous meetings**

Northwell Pool

The meeting received a report from the Deputy Clerk on Northwell Pool, we are still awaiting a formal response from Anglian Water

Street Light – Church Walk

The Deputy Clerk had requested a survey of the area where the light is to be installed and will report back to the next meeting

6. **Assets & Open Spaces issue from Non-Member Councillors**

None received

7. **Allotments**

7.1. **Management report of the allotments**

The meeting received an Allotment Report from the Deputy Clerk

7.2. **To review and update the Allotment Rules and Regulations**

It was proposed to change the tenant cancellations from three months to one month and one month notice if the allotment is not worked to the standard laid out in the Rules and Regulations

Initials: _____

All agreed to the changes to the Allotment Rules & Regulations

7.3. SCALGA

Cllr Edwards provided a brief update on SCALGA and was pleased to note there were no issues at present, but believed the allotments needed to be inspected

7.4. Escape Project

None received

8. Orford Road

8.1. Preventative Measures

Quotes had been received from the Works Manager for bollards and concrete boxes. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the preferred option would be concrete planters.

The Works Manager to provide more quotes for concrete planters to be discussed

9. Town Centre

9.1. Update on Litter bins/benches

Benches

It was discussed that positive feedback had received for the new benches; the old benches are at the Cemetery ready for collection

9.2. Bins/Bus Stop

Quotes had been received for installation of 16 new litter bins.

It was proposed by Cllr Anscombe that we apply for a grant of £6950, not to include VAT, and seconded by Cllr Bell. It was agreed that the quotes received for the bus stop rejuvenation was too expensive. The Deputy Clerk will ask the Works Manager to provide a cost for refreshing the bus stops.

Cllr Darby had declared an interest so took no part in this item.

It was agreed to submit a grant to the Town Estates Charity for £6950.

9.3. Consideration for trees in the War Memorial Garden

Cllr Anscombe read an update from the Town Clerk regarding the trees in Swaffham Town Centre.

It was proposed to plant two new trees at the War Memorial to commemorate the late Queen Elizabeth II and Duke of Edinburgh. A third tree, which is already planted, would be to commemorate Howard Carter.

It was agreed to obtain quotes for two trees which would be discussed at the next meeting.

9.4. Update from Breckland Council

The Deputy Clerk reported that the Breckland Dog Warden will be replacing the dog fouling signs with signs stating the new legislation. Cllr Skinner asked if more litter signs could be installed around the town.

It was agreed that the Deputy Clerk would investigate litter signs

10. Public Open Spaces & Play Areas

The meeting received the RoSPA reports for all five recreation areas and noted the findings. Cllr Darby will investigate funding options for improvements at the Rec.

It was agreed the Deputy Clerk would ask the Works Manager to look at the concrete edging on the skate park that had been highlighted in the report.

11. Cemetery

11.1. To consider quotes received for the removal of hedge

Councillors were presented with one quote. It was agreed that more quotes were needed before any decisions could be made.

It was agreed that the Deputy Clerk get more quotes from local landscapers.

12. Policies:

12.1. TC 104 Metal Detector Policy and application form

It was agreed to investigate a revised policy.

13. Late or urgent matters at the Chairman's discretion

13.1. Grave Digging Policy

The Works Manager had shown the new policy to a local grave digger who reported on the policy:

Item 6 – Tracking boards must be used at all times when manoeuvring an excavator or any other wheeled or tracked vehicle, from the road to the grave.

The excavator has rubber tracks, they use heavy duty rubber mats when the excavator changes direction and the excavator stands on a heavy duty rubber mat while digging the grave. The grave digger made me aware that the stability/levelling blade is always in the ground and not on the mat, as it's designed to be. This morning's ground conditions were wet and there were no marks left on the grass from her excavator.

Item 7 – Plywood sheets or similar must be placed on the ground and raised over any adjoining grave before excavated soil is deposited.

The grave digger uses heavy duty tarpaulins to put the excavated soil onto. they do this everywhere they go and have never had any previous problems. they haven't got the space or weight allowance in their van to carry any additional boards and a larger vehicle would restrict her access to several cemeteries and churchyards. As they regularly dig's three graves a day, this could mean as many as another twelve sheets of plywood are required.

To install a raised platform over an existing grave, would require some serious sized timbers to ensure sinkage doesn't occur, on average, there's two and a half, to three and a half tons of soil dug out of each grave, depending on grave size and soil conditions. To put all this weight on a raised platform, with the leg supports or timbers onto the virgin soil between the existing graves, for two, perhaps three days, would likely result in a grave wall collapse. They pointed out that they have never had a complaint while working at Swaffham and always leaves each grave neat and tidy.

After a policy review, it was agreed to revisit when the Works Manager had spoken with the local grave digger to discuss what would work best for all

14. Date of the next meeting and future agenda items

Monday 28 November 2022

Agenda

Revaluation of Assets quote

Meeting closed 7.25pm

Chairman.....