



WETHERBY TOWN COUNCIL PROPERTY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date: Monday 5th February 2024
Time: 5.30 pm
Location: Bramham Room, Wetherby Town Hall, Market Place, Wetherby, LS22 6LP

Present: Councillor Bradley
Councillor Chapman
Councillor Frame
Councillor Moss
Councillor Mulhall (Chair and Deputy Mayor)
Councillor Payne (Mayor)

In attendance: Iona Taylor, Clerk
Rowann Fitzpatrick, Assistant Clerk
Councillor Kazia Knight

MINUTES

1. **Apologies.**

Local Government Act 1972, s 85 (3)

It was **RESOLVED** that apologies be received, and reasons for absence accepted, from Councillor O'Byrne.

2. **Declarations of interests and requests for dispensations** – None.

Localism Act 2011, s31

Members' Code of Conduct, para. 13-18, 19-20

3. **Public participation** – None.

Public bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, s 1 (3)

4. **Minutes.**

Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, para. 41 (1)

The minutes of the last Property Committee meeting, held on the *Tuesday 28th November 2023*, and approved at Full Council on *Tuesday 12th December 2023*, were **RECEIVED**.

5. **Matters arising from the last meeting.**

5.1 **Bath House Improvements.**

The committee received a verbal update on making improvements to the Bath House. It was **AGREED**, as per the action plan, that it is not an immediate priority however the project has been provisionally scheduled for 2027/28.

6. **Facilities report.**

The Committee were updated on the management of Wetherby Town Council's property. Notable mentions include:

Bridgefoot Gardens

The Council is waiting on quotations to remove the tree at Bridgefoot gardens. Due to the busy traffic in that area, the removal of the tree may be more difficult and costly.

Young Offenders Institute

It was **NOTED** that the Clerk has continued communications with the Young Offenders Institute to identify suitable and safe Wetherby Town Council sites for young Duke of Edinburgh scheme volunteers to work on. The following sites were suggested:

- Clearance around graves and paths in the Cemetery
- Scaur Bank (Himalayan balsam picking).
- Shaw Barn Croft (general maintenance).
- Garden of Rest (weeding and gardening).
- Bridgefoot Gardens

Mason Field.

Tree number 281 is leaning heavily to one side. It was noted that the council's usual arboriculturist has been asked to look at it next time they are in Wetherby, but no immediate concerns have been identified by the usual ground's maintenance contractor.

Scaur Bank.

It was noted that there has been reports from the public of damage to the roundabout track play equipment. Largely that the play equipment's concrete feet have begun to come out of the ground, creating a tripping hazard. It was **NOTED** that at the time of installation, this equipment had been correctly installed however additional bark chippings are required to remove the tripping hazard.

Jubilee Gardens.

The Facilities Caretaker noted that some subsidence may have created a small dip in the path by the river of Jubilee Gardens. It was understood that this is a longstanding issue, and that further erosion should be monitored in that area.

Cemetery.

It was **NOTED** that tree works within the Cemetery have been completed.

Millenium Field.

The Clerk has requested that crushed limestone be used to restore entrances and muddy sections of the paths at this location. This is as a temporary repair until the future management of the site has been determined.

Raby Park.

It was noted that previously, part of the fence alongside Raby Park Road had been repainted however it has since rotted. The council's grounds maintenance contractor has replaced the damaged fencing and removed any ivy from the wall along Westgate Road.

Nidd Approach.

Some areas of fencing around Nidd Approach have begun to show signs of rot. The Clerk has asked for a quotation to replace the damaged fence.

Sandringham Park.

Debris around the park was cleared in early January. Wicksteed has been commissioned to carry out inspections on all Council owned parks, bike tracks and fitness equipment in early March, including the playground at Sandringham Park.

Walton Road.

Tree planting along Walton Road has had positive progression. The Council is now waiting on the grant offer to come through prior to ordering the trees required for planting. Once the grant offer has been received the order will be placed and neighbours will be updated on the plans.

Tree Survey.

Following the tree survey completed last year, a quotation for all recommended tree work costs has been requested from the council's grounds maintenance contractor.

The Clerk requested that an update on the tree works is added to the agenda for the next meeting.

7. Sandringham Park playground.

After a lengthy discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that Eibe be appointed as the council's preferred supplier for this project.

Comments from the public highlighted that the tender was well designed for young children which was one of the main aims for the playground. This notion was mirrored by a representative of the Friends of Sandringham Park, who agreed that the park should be intended towards a younger audience.

While KOMPAN received the highest number of public votes and was the third preferred tender for the committee, the committee was of the mind that this tender did not make the best use of the site or funds.

The current estimated cost for Eibe's tender is £157,683. While the Council has already secured some funding, grants and external funding sources will need to be identified for the remaining deficit. The Clerk requested that Committee members aid in applying for grant funding where possible.

It was proposed by Councillor Moss and seconded by Councillor Chapman that Eibe's tender is progressed. A new quotation will be received once the tender is reviewed, and any proposed changes are made.

8. Ecological enhancement proposal.

As proposed by Councillor Chapman and Seconded by Councillor Frame, the committee **AGREED** to progress with the Middleton Bell Ecology's third suggestion of developing a meadow on the south side of Sandringham Park to help offset ecological impacts of building proposal development 23/02860/FU.

It was understood that the initial development and planting would be paid for by the developer, however maintenance of the site would be Wetherby Town Council's responsibility.

It was **NOTED** that a representative of the Friends of Sandringham Park stated they were happy with the proposal.

9. Garden of Rest proposal.

A proposal from St James Parish was received to plant up to 6 defensive trees on the Garden of Rest's border with Tetley Field, with the aim to help reduce trespass.

It was understood that St James's would pay for the costs of the trees, at £35 per tree.

It was proposed by Councillor Moss and seconded by Councillor Bradley that the committee are pleased to accept this proposal with the caveat that the defensive trees are a native species such as Hawthorn or Blackthorn, in line with our biodiversity aims, and that the trees are sourced through our maintenance contractor for the Garden of Rest.

10. Removal of Railings.

The Committee was informed of need to remove corroded metal railings at Scaur Bank. The Facilities Caretaker has attached wooden boards around corroded ends as a temporary solution to remove the risk of injury to the public.

Following a proposal by Councillor Moss, seconded by Councillor Frame, it was **RESOLVED** that the corroded railings be removed.

11. Changes to the new section of the Cemetery.

The Committee received a report on the proposed changes to the sizing of interment plots in the new section of the Cemetery.

The proposed changes were **APPROVED**.

12. Action plan.

Local Government Act, Section 144

12.1 Action Plan.

The contents and adoption of action plan by Full Council approved on *Tuesday 12th December 2023* was **NOTED**.

12.2 Action and development plan.

Actions within the action and development plan were **RECEIVED** and **NOTED**.

13. Property budget.

13.1 To consider performance against budget for 2023/24 financial year.

It was **NOTED** that the Property cost centre was underbudget part way through the financial year, however it is expected to be on budget by the end of financial year due to a number of significant expenditures, such as playground repairs after vandalism, which were not reflected in the mid-year monitoring report.

The Committee was also informed that tool costs were over budget by approximately £500. These costs include the purchase of new tools required for the facilities caretaker. However, this overspend was covered by the income produced through the sale of surplus tools used by the previous cemetery superintendent.

13.2 To consider budget requirement for 2024/35.

It was **AGREED** that the budget for the 2024/25 financial year will be drawn up based on continuing current existing arrangements for the next financial year, including:

- The ongoing use of the Town Council van.
- Existing grounds maintenance arrangements.
- Allowing for additional tree works.
- Ongoing grass cuttings, including an expected 5% increase in costs.

14. Items for information.

14.1 Hedgehog Highway project.

Information on the Hedgehog Highway project by Hedgehogs R Us was **RECEIVED** and **NOTED** by the committee.

14.2 Bridge lights.

A request to remove the lights on Wetherby Bridge in order to complete an inspection of the bridge was received on *Tuesday 30th January 2024* however it was **NOTED** that this was not within the responsibility of the Wetherby Town Council.

15. Next meeting.

The next meeting of the Property Committee will take place on *Monday 4th March 2024* at 5:30pm in the Wetherby Town Hall.

The meeting closed at 6:38pm.

These minutes were recorded and prepared by Rowann Fitzpatrick, Assistant Clerk.