

**MEETING OF THE PARKS AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE (ESTIMATES)  
HELD ON MONDAY 6 JANUARY 2020 AT 7.00PM IN THE TRAINING ROOM, TRURO  
COMMUNITY LIBRARY, UNION PLACE, TRURO**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Ms Southcombe (Chairman), Allen, Biscoe, Mrs Eathorne-Gibbons, Ellis, Mrs Neale, Smith, Tamblyn and Wells.

**APOLOGIES:** Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs Butler and Mrs Callen.

Also in attendance: Roger Gazzard - Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer  
Richard Budge - Parks and Amenities Manager

**294 DISCLOSURE OR DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures or declarations of interest reported.

**295 PUBLIC CONVENIENCES**

**Working Group**

Appendix A

A report by the Compliance Officer was tabled at the meeting and presented by the Parks and Amenities Manager. The Parks and Amenities Manager reported detailed cost estimates for work following the redesign of the Green Street toilets were not forthcoming from the quantity surveyor, so an alternative course of action was suggested. A typographical error was corrected to indicate Boscawen Park toilets had been shut from 31 December 2019 to 1 January 2020 due to staff illness. The urinal at Boscawen Park would be replaced later in the New Year. It was also reported former Toilet Team member of staff, Mr Paul Trevaskis, had sadly passed away during the Christmas break.

During discussion, a few matters were raised including:

- i. In response to a query raised by a Member, the Parks and Amenities Manager clarified design Option 2 for the Green Street toilets included doors to the gentleman's facility opening the opposite way to that currently.
- ii. A member expressed concern ventilation appeared not to have been addressed in the new design options and suggested this be included. In response, the Parks and Amenities Manager commented the design of the current urinals exacerbated the issue of foul odours. He agreed to include this factor in a revised design.
- iii. Members preferred a public noticeboard rather than a mural be installed on the exterior of the building. The Town Clerk also suggested an external drinking fountain be included in a revised Option 2 design.
- iv. In response to a query about project funding strategy, the Town Clerk agreed to include an explanatory paragraph in the final draft Estimates report to be considered by Council on 27 January.

It was moved by Councillor Ellis, seconded by Councillor Biscoe, and

**RECOMMENDED** that the Parks and Amenities Manager:

- a) Meet with Cornwall Council to discuss the detailed redesign plans for the Green Street toilets, proposed parking for disabled people and security etc;
- b) Include improved ventilation, a public noticeboard and external drinking fountain in a revised Option 2 design for the Green Street toilets;
- c) Arrange for full plans for revised Option 2 to be drawn up by the Council's contracted architects;
- d) Update disabled public convenience users with progress;
- e) Conduct a tender exercise for design Option 2 for the Green Street toilets;
- f) Produce a project plan for the works (referred to above); and
- g) Report back to a future meeting of the Parks and Amenities Committee.

**296 ESTIMATES 2020/2021**

The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer reported on the draft Estimates, having been previously circulated. He pointed out the draft estimates resulted in a 6.9% increase in the Precept for 2020 – 2021 over the 2019 - 2020 charge. The Taxbase had increased from 6,963 in 2019 – 2020 to 7,090 for 2020 – 2021. He explained the resultant increase to the public was 4.9%. The overall summary of net revenue expenditure was set out on page 15.

**Parks and Amenities Committee Estimates**

The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer drew attention to paragraph 3 page 29 and the staffing structure for the Parks and Amenities Department and clarified the PA to the Parks and Amenities Manager and Administrative Assistant both continued to be line-managed by the Town Clerk.

**Summary of Net Revenue Spending**

He reported, with reference to page 30 paragraph 6, the reasons for changes to Net Revenue Spending including: There was slippage in the receipt of interest on S106 planning agreements. Cornwall Council would not be transferring allocated funding of £309K until the land at Newbridge Lane field had been registered in the name of the City Council at the Land Registry, and this had been delayed. Income generated from the sponsorship of highways was anticipated to commence in January following the sponsorship of Tregolls Roundabout and Waterloo Bank and Tesco roundabout (report to be considered by the Parks and Amenities Committee at its next meeting on 10 February). Public Cemetery fee income had been reduced following a reduction in the number of burials over recent years. Referring to page 29 paragraph 4, although Central Government had previously expressed its commitment to the removal of business rates on public conveniences the relevant legislation had been delayed. He anticipated this change was likely to come into effect by 1 April, so this had been reflected in the draft Estimates; however, he acknowledged this was a risk. Staff cost savings had been made in the Café in the Park; however, a reduction in sales of £15k this year and £6k next year was anticipated. The Café was due to be relocated when work to redevelop the tennis pavilion took place (hopefully later on in 2020) and this might also have an impact on income. Finally, in relation to pay awards, he reported staff on the National Living Wage would be uprated from £9.00 to £9.30 per hour from 1 April. Following the recent General Election, negotiations on the Green Book Pay Award (affecting other staff) were currently delayed until the Autumn but would be backdated.

A number of matters were raised as follows:

- i. In response to a query raised by a member about the cost of equipment of the planned new pavilion, the Town Clerk reported this cost had been built-in to the project specification. He updated the Committee on the planned project budget strategy and agreed to the drafting of an internal project plan document. The Town Clerk also reported he had been advised earlier that Cornwall Council, the Planning Authority, required a further drainage survey as part of the planning application; therefore, it was now anticipated works might not begin until the Autumn.
- ii. The Parks and Amenities Manager advised, following the resignation of the Assistant Countryside Ranger, he was in the process of reviewing and possibly redesigning the countryside ranger service/ role in consultation with the Countryside Ranger.
- iii. A Member suggested, following the successful campaign led by Falmouth Town Council for the abolition of business rates on public conveniences and the continuing high cost of water rates, the Town Clerk be requested to lead a campaign for the provision of a free or discounted water supply to public conveniences and engage with organisations such as South West Water (SWW), OFWAT (economic regulator of the water sector in England and Wales). Local Government Association (LGA), Cornwall Council (CC).

It was moved by Councillor Mrs Eathorne-Gibbons, seconded by Councillor Smith, and

**RECOMMENDED** that, power be delegated to the Town Clerk to lead a campaign for the provision of a free or discounted water supply to public conveniences and engage with organisations such as South West Water (SWW), OFWAT (economic regulator of the water sector in England and Wales), Local Government Association (LGA), Cornwall Council (CC).

#### **Parks Committee Capital Fund**

The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer reported the Vehicle and Plant Capital Fund had been increased with inflation and would be kept under review; however, consideration of a small increase might be required in the future. The allocated figure for resurfacing (the tennis courts) in 10 years' time was a requirement of the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) as part of their grant terms. [An update on the replacement tennis pavilion project is set above.]

#### **Additional Items**

[The first public convenience redevelopment matter was considered separately, prior to this agenda item at Minute 295 above.]

#### **Schedule of Fees and Charges 2020 - 2021**

The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer reported on the schedule of proposed fees and charges on pages 38 - 41. The introduction of the on-line tennis court booking system had been successful and a small increase in annual household membership of £1.00 was recommended; other sports facilities charges remained unchanged. Cemeteries and Churchyard charges were recommended to increase by current inflation. The Parks and Amenities Manager commented the limited changes recommended by the Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer reflected the Council's aim to encourage and increase participation in use of its services and facilities. He acknowledged some services e.g. changing facilities at Boscawen Park were currently poor, but a plan was being developed to improve those facilities.

It was also recommended annual allotment rentals increase by 1p (from £0.30 to £0.31) from 1 April 2021. The Parks and Amenities Manager also reported the charge for tubs would increase from £25.00 to £35.00 to reflect the increased plant capacity (compared to window boxes) and the hire of planted tubs would increase from £30.00 to £35.00 to reflect the costs of the purchase of specialist plants and delivery.

#### Application for the use of Hendra Playing Field

The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer reported since the agenda had been published, an application for the use of Hendra Playing Field for NoFit State Circus (in association with the Hall for Cornwall) from 20 May to 5 June had been received. An early decision was sought by the event organisers (prior to the next scheduled Committee meeting on 10 February). Shows were planned for Tuesdays to Saturdays (not Sundays or Mondays). Work to set up the site would start on 15 May and the site would be cleared by 12 June. Copies of the application form were circulated to the Committee for information. In view of the proposed revised charges for events in parks and gardens (including a charge of £1.00 per ticket sold) the Town Clerk advised he would negotiate an appropriate fee with the event organisers. The views of the Committee were requested.

During discussion:

- i. A Councillor suggested any discounted tickets should be made available to the residents of the Truro City Parish, e.g. determined by postcode.
- ii. Concern was also raised by Members that an approximate event transport plan be provided to the Council in view of the residential location of the playing fields and the on-street residents' parking schemes which limited the availability of parking.

The Town Clerk agreed this document would be required to be provided by the event organiser.

The Town Clerk suggested to the Committee that if it was supportive of the application, he would grant permission (subject to the usual terms and conditions) under the power delegated to him under Standing Order 16 b. Matters of Urgency, following consultation with the Mayor and Chairman of the Parks and Amenities Committee. The decision would be reported back to the Committee for information. The Committee expressed its support for the grant of permission, subject to the two points referred to above, in addition to the usual terms and conditions.

#### **Statement of Funds & Reserves- Parks Committee Fund**

The Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer updated Members on the projected Available Resource on 31 March 2021. In response to a query raised by a Member, he advised anticipated operational costs in running the Nursery at its new site at Idless had been built in at the same level as the existing nursery; further, the Nursery needed to be established and working before efficiencies could be assessed. However, he acknowledged potential extra new costs were a risk, but the assumption made was in 2020 – 2021 the same numbers of plants would be grown as in 2019 – 2020; and therefore, operating costs would be the same. The Town Clerk and Parks and Amenities Manager agreed to report back to Finance and General Purposes Committee the assumptions made in drawing up this estimate.

It was moved by Councillor Mrs Eathorne-Gibbons, seconded by Councillor Smith and

#### **RECOMMENDED** that:

1. The Revised Estimates for 2019 – 2020 be approved.
2. The Estimates for 2020 – 2021 be approved.
3. The Financial Forecasts for 2021 - 2022 and 2022 - 2023 be agreed in principle.
4. The contributions to the Capital Funds set out on page 31 be approved.
5. The Schedule of Fees and Charges for set out on pages 38 - 41 be approved, subject to the following amendment: Inclusion of “community groups” and an appropriate definition in the rates for charities set out on pages 40 – 41.

#### **297 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was proposed by the Chairman, and

**RESOLVED** that in accordance with s1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item by reason of its confidential or special nature.

#### **298 NEW STAFF ACCOMMODATION - BOSCAWEN PARK DEPOT/ NURSERY**

The Parks and Amenities Manager, at the request of the Mayor, reported back to the Committee on the result of the tender exercise for works to create new staff accommodation at Boscawen Park Depot/ Nursery. A number of questions were asked by Members and answers provided by the Parks and Amenities Manager. Following due consideration:

#### Return of Press and Public

It was proposed by the Chairman, and

**RESOLVED** that the press and public be invited back into the meeting.

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In accordance with Standing Order 16(b) - Matters of Urgency, and due to the new staff accommodation works due to commence the following week, Councillor Mrs Eathorne-Gibbons proposed, and Councillor Smith seconded, and

**RESOLVED** that the tender from Truro Building Services, for works for New Staff Accommodation - Boscawen Park Depot/ Nursery, be accepted by Truro City Council.

**300 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – PARKS AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE**

The Chairman confirmed the next Committee meeting would be held on Monday 10 February 2020 starting at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm

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CHAIRMAN

## **Public Conveniences**

### **Public Conveniences Working Group**

The Public Conveniences Working Group met on 25 November 2019 to consider the plans drawn up by Lavigne Lonsdale in regard to The Green Toilet. The preference was the Option 2 (attached) design which makes use of the current back of house area. However, this design involves more work and possibly more cost.

Ed Crossley and Associates were asked to prepare a budget estimate but have advised today that they are unable to provide. Therefore, the Committee is requested to consider the following course of action:

- Meet with Cornwall Council to discuss plans, disabled parking, security etc;
- Full plans to be drawn up by architects;
- Update disabled users with progress;
- Conduct a tender exercise for both designs; and
- Produce a project plan for the works.

Discussions extended to the exterior of the building and how it could be used in a way that incorporated local community groups. The suggestion was made that community groups could propose mural designs and the Council could choose from the designs which could be displayed for 6 months.

### **Public Conveniences – Closures**

Boscawen Park (31 January – 1 February) – staff sickness.  
Boscawen Park (3 – 4 January) – Drains blocked.

### **Boscawen Park Toilets**

The Gentleman's urinal facilities will be replaced in the toilets at Boscawen Park as they are no longer fit for purpose. The installation will be done by a plumber, but the Maintenance Team can 'make good' where the old urinal removed. This work will be scheduled in the next 6 weeks.

### **Sad News**

We received some sad news over the Christmas break that a retired member of staff, Paul Trevaskis, had passed away, he was part of the team that came across when Truro City Council took over the public conveniences. Several members of staff will be attending the funeral to pay their respects. Paul was a long-standing member of our Team and he will be missed.

Kate Bell  
Compliance Officer

6 January 2020