

## **REPORT OF THE INFORMAL PARKS AND AMENITIES INSPECTION OF VICTORIA AND WATERFALL GARDENS AND BOSCAWEN PARK ON MONDAY 4 JULY 2022 AT 6.30 PM**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Biscoe, Green, Roby, Rabey, Roden (Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee) and Webb (Mayor).

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillors Mrs Carlyon and La Borde.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Mrs Eathorne-Gibbons, Sealy, Southcombe, Swain (Deputy Mayor) and Wilkins.

**Also in attendance:** Richard Budge – Parks, Amenities and Facilities Officer.  
Barry Cooper – Head Gardener (Victoria Gardens).  
Craig Bradwell – Nursery Supervisor (Boscawen Park).  
Daryl Hood – Park Attendant.

### **1 INTRODUCTION:**

The Parks, Amenities and Facilities Officer welcomed everyone to the Committee's annual Inspection which was an opportunity for Members to walk round the Council's main parks and gardens

### **2 VICTORIA GARDENS:**

#### **Bed below Bandstand**

The heather and conifers which had been planted in the 1970s /1980s had recently been removed from around the fountain and the area replanted. The benches had been purchased for the 1998 centenary celebrations. Benches of a similar design were purchased from time to time, including provision for memorial benches. A couple more benches were due to be installed in due course and some space was available for future requests. Space was not currently available at Boscawen Park and Riverside Walk.

[Councillor Mrs Carlyon joined the Inspection.]

#### **Trees**

Some trees had received works to lift their crowns since the last inspection and this had improved the various viewing points within and looking out of the gardens. Ash die-back had recently been identified through regular monitoring and the report of the Council's new contracted tree surveyor would be considered shortly.

#### **Bandstand**

Works required to refurbish the bandstand were outlined and it was noted this work was currently being tendered. The Council's contracted project manager Ward Associates was due to commence work on this project in September 2022.

#### **Pollen in the Park**

This facility had hosted South West in Bloom judges at the end of their tour of Truro on 1 July. Following the projected completion of the new café facility at Boscawen Park it was planned to relocate the Café in the Park building from Boscawen Park to Victoria Gardens, to replace the existing tea hut.

#### **Flower Beds**

The planted spitfire which had been planted by Parks Department Administrative Assistant Sarah-Jane Jeffs in her own time was pointed out to Members.

## **Shelter**

The works required to refurbish the shelter were described.

## **Fishpond**

The Parks, Amenities and Facilities Officer highlighted the history to the pond's development and outlined work to fix the leaks. The shrubbery surrounding the pond would also be dealt with by the Council's contracted project manager in the autumn. The pond was filled by the RAM, which was currently out of action. In addition to works to the fabric of the pond, it was planned to install a secondary pipe from the Leat to feed the pond. The pond had last been mended about 5 years' ago by the Maintenance Team. Members then walked down through the lower gardens to the Hendra Play Park.

## **Hendra Playpark**

Councillors noted the play equipment was currently in a good condition, but the safety surfacing required replacement due to normal wear and tear. The surface of the 5-a-side kickabout area also required replacement. Other work planned for August 2022 was the regular retarmacking works required to the Council's parks, gardens and open spaces. It was more economic to group these works together as one order.

[The Mayor left the inspection at this point. Councillor Mrs Carlyon temporarily left, planning to re-join the Inspection at Boscawen Park.]

It was noted ROSPA rules required that play equipment of a certain height required safety surfacing and grass was inadequate. The sandpit was tested every 6 months for toxicara contamination (caused by dogs and cats) and the sand was due to be replaced shortly. Any weeds in this area were hand-pulled.

## **The Leats**

A tour of the Leats was planned for Monday 5 September 2022, during which the history and workings would be explained. This would take place before the formal Committee meeting scheduled to start at 7pm that evening.

## **Hendra Skate Park**

New rubbish bins were due to be installed shortly.

## **Railway Viaduct Area**

The Parks, Amenities and Facilities Officer noted the logs currently stored by the viaduct were no longer required for cladding the new café facility being built at Boscawen Park.

## **Cycle Racks**

New cycle racks were due to be installed as part of the Towns Fund Scheme.

The Inspection then left Victoria Gardens at 7pm and travelled to Boscawen Park car park arriving at 7.11pm.

## **3 BOSCAWEN PARK:**

### **New Café and Tennis Pavilion Building**

Building works were currently 5 weeks behind the original schedule. The original roof timbers supplied had to be set back to the manufacturer following remeasurement. The new development included new tennis changing facilities, public toilets, a Changing Places facility, a larger café facility (36 covers) and a room for the Loops Project which might be used for cycle hire in the future. Timber arising from the Macrocarpa trees adjacent to the car park had been milled on site and would be used to clad the new building. The Loops Project also linked to the Towns Fund Board scheme.

[Councillor Mrs Carlyon re-joined at 7.14pm.]

### **Café in the Park**

The temporary shelter installed opposite the kiosk was viewed. It had been installed during one of the Covid-19 lockdowns to provide some shelter to customers during inclement weather. The current building was planned for relocation to Victoria Gardens as described above. It would replace the old tea hut which was not large enough for the current refreshment provider. It was intended to locate the building side-on with the entrance door between the shrubs to the side. The exterior would be painted suitably. The new building would be provided seating indoors as well as seating outdoors, under a canopy. The Inspection then moved to the Depot.

### **Depot**

The Parks, Amenities and Facilities Officer pointed out the 3 new petrol-powered vehicles which had been purchased. Supervisor Craig Bradwell was on-site with 4 mowers on display also. Battery powered equipment currently used in the Parks Department included trimmers, strimmers and blowers which were plugged in overnight for charging prior to use. Mowers were changed on average every 2/3 years. The compost bin and machinery store were viewed before moving on to view the garage where the salt spreaders were stored. Salt was spread following requests by members of the public. Cornwall Council no longer provided this service on minor and estate roads. Enquiries about the proposed footprint for the potential redevelopment of the nursery site as part of the Towns Fund Scheme bid for funding were referred to the Town Clerk by the Parks, Amenities and Facilities Officer. The health of a tree located by the public conveniences was being monitored due to the effect of fungus.

### **Nursery**

The Parks, Amenities and Facilities Officer reported there was a surplus of plants which he was planning to advertise to other town and parish councils via the Cornwall Association of Local Councils (CALC). The temporary cold frame was pointed out.

[Councillor Roden arrived at the Inspection at 7.37pm.]

The Inspection then moved to Truro Cricket Club for an informal meeting. It was reported the Honorary Secretary to Truro Cricket Club, Roger Heayn had recently become unwell.

Matter raised at this meeting relevant to the Parks and Amenities Committee included:

- a. The current lack of a view from the shelter across and beyond the fishpond was highlighted by Councillors.
- b. Councillor La Borde requested a visit to the new Nursery at Idless in the autumn.
- c. It was commented how quiet the playpark and tennis courts were that evening. It was noted that the Wimbledon Tennis Championships were currently being televised and the weather was a little damp that evening.
- d. The Parks, Amenities and Facilities Officer reported the tree on the roundabout at the junction of Morlaix Avenue and Fairmantle Street was affected by ash die back and was being monitored.
- e. A new Parks Department staffing structure was being drawn up by the Parks, Amenities and Facilities Officer and was due to be reported to the Committee in September following the current organisation restructure. On-going Parks Department staff pressures and potential mitigation was highlighted. The provision for seasonal staff had been cut earlier in the year. Overall, the year had been very challenging, and he paid tribute to the hard work and commitment of staff.
- f. Longer term plans to develop the contract side of the Department's work were outlined. The Parks, Amenities and Facilities Officer agreed to check with the Town Clerk whether the new Nursery at Idless would be charged business rates would be raised
- g. The history to the current verge cutting work along Morlaix Avenue and future maintenance of the Treffry Road area was highlighted.

The Inspection and Informal meeting concluded at 8.30pm.