

# WHITTLESEY TOWN COUNCIL – Community Projects Committee

## Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023 at 6.00pm at Peel House, 8 Queen Street, Whittlesey, PE7 1AY.

**Present:** Cllr Mockett, Mayor, Black, Dickinson, Gerstner

**Officer in Attendance:** Sue Piergianni – Town Clerk

**Recording:** the recording is made as an aide memoir for the Clerk

### **CP33/2023. To receive apologies for absence from members.**

There were no apologies.

### **CP34/2023. To confirm and sign minutes from the last meeting of the Community Projects Committee held on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023.**

**Ratified:** The minutes were approved and signed as a true record.

### **CP35/2023. To receive members' declarations of disclosable pecuniary, non-disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in relation to any agenda item.**

### **CP36/2023. Public Forum.** - To allow members of the public to address the Council. Time Allowed 15 mins total.

3 Members of the public were present.

Mr Robert Windle advised the Big Bash 2024 will be 23<sup>rd</sup> June. He is hoping to arrange a team event day on the 22<sup>nd</sup> to include tag rugby, mini soccer, table tennis and be more of a formal session instead of just taster sessions.

Mr Windle advised members of a new fund 'Branching Out' who were accepting applications for the winter planting season for trees and hedges, the fund offers between £250.00 and £2500.00.

Cllr Eamonn Dorling requested a response from the committee for the following:

The planting and maintenance of 85 hanging baskets requested for tenders be withdrawn, and the maintenance of planters on the marketplace is also halted.

This will reduce the carbon footprint of Whittlesey Town Council (WTC).

WTC could use the budget allocated to hanging baskets and their maintenance (£7,357 in 2023/2024) for other purposes to benefit our community.

#### **Background:**

By the end of July, it was apparent that 18% of the baskets were not hanging and that a high proportion of the remaining 70 were tired and featureless.

The planters have been overrun by Stonecrop weeds with the appearance of Broccoli (Brassica oleracea). These planters continue to be watered using potable water.

Watering plants suspended in mid-air is no longer a sensible use of fresh water. The plants cannot sustain themselves even during wet weather, and in dry periods they require thousands of litres to be delivered early every morning.

The cost of professional watering is no longer a good value for ratepayers, and voluntary help can no longer be relied on.

Even if the discovery of a 'free' water supply becomes available, it is not morally suitable to use it, and the utilisation of potable water will not be sustainable. If the intention is to provide a visual attraction to the town centre – we need to be more creative than the annual use of plants for about three months, which could cost ratepayers over £40,000 in the next five years.

**CP37/2032. Agenda items for discussion.**

1. Community Projects remit – this will be discussed further at the September meeting.
2. Benches at the Manor – Mr Alan Hobbs had been invited to show members the damage that is being caused to the recycled benches at the Manor. He has suggested that the benches are reinforced with additional recycle plastic blocks, this would require an additional 112 holes being drilled, (56 in concrete and 56 in the plastic), the cost of these repairs would be £600.00, and they could still be damaged further. Members discussed this in depth, Cllr Mrs Mayor proposed that if benches are beyond economic repair they are removed and not replaced. This was seconded by Cllr Mockett with a vote of 4 in favour and 1 abstention. Cllr Black advised members he has enquired about benches made from metal or concrete. Cllr Mockett proposed this item be discussed at the F& P meeting as there will be cost implications and requested this be on the next F & P meeting.
3. Allotment Update – Cllr Mrs Mayor advised following the recent inspection, the Clerk was asked to send out eviction letters (17), from these 2 have already handed back their allotments. As eviction letters have specific timings that must be adhered to, the next inspection will be 10<sup>th</sup> August 2023 at 12.00 and be carried out by Cllrs Mayor and Black.
4. Heritage Project (Deferred from May meeting) – Cllr Black advised he has meetings and discussions, it is progressing but there is no agreement, and it is slightly delicate at the moment, he does not want to waste the committee's time until he has more. Can he defer this to the next CP meeting.
5. Hanging Basket Planting and colour scheme – Members suggested Purple, Gold and Green. Proposed by Cllr Mayor, seconded Cllr Mockett, with a unanimous vote in favour.
6. Planters Market Place (FDC) – Cllr Mayor advised members the planters were installed when the buses were moved. This year they have not looked good. FDC have put bark in them and a few plants. Cllr Mayor has met with Gemma from Parks and Open Spaces team who would be happy to put the plants in, but not maintain them. Cllr Mrs Mayor suggested that as we have less hanging baskets the watering contractor could water these, she also advised there is a tap on the marketplace, it does need some repairs. Cllr Mayor suggested a hardy fuchsia, in the centre with bulbs around the outside. Cllr Mockett advised in principle we can go with this but requested it be deferred to the next CP meeting.
7. Jubilee Wood – Cllr Gerstner, all but 4 trees have taken, they will be replaced in Nove 2023, the plaques have been completed. One does have a mistake, but a disclaimer was on all forms, so this is down to the individual. If anyone wishes alterations to their plaque, these will be chargeable. The 26<sup>th</sup> of August at 12.00 will the dedication ceremony with all sponsors invited. Cllr Dorling has installed a bee sanctuary. Cllr Gerstner, this year they would like to install a further 18 to 20 trees from the funds.
8. Music Events 2024 – Cllr Mockett advised this will be deferred to the next meeting.
9. Bus Shelter inspections – Cllr Mockett advised he would inspect the bus shelter at Pondersbridge.
10. Continental Market (deferred from May) – Cllr Mockett has spoken to a few people about this and has concerns how this could be laid out. Cllr Black has discussed with FDC Street Scene who advise the people that usually organise this wish to be on site for 2 days, so has suggested the marketplace and the area to St Mary's gardens. Reverend Emily needs to be consulted. Cllr Mockett and Black will discuss this further.

**CP38/2023 Date of next meeting: 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023**



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Cllr Jason Mockett  
Chairman  
Community Projects Committee