

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 3rd July 2024 at 7.00pm in the Forest Suite, The Gateway, Ringwood

PRESENT: Cllr Andrew Briers (Chair)
Cllr Becci Windsor (Vice Chair)
Cllr Philip Day
Cllr Gareth DeBoos
Cllr Mary DeBoos
Cllr Janet Georgiou
Cllr John Haywood
Cllr Peter Kelleher
Cllr James Swyer
Cllr Glenys Turner

IN ATTENDANCE: Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk
Nicola Vodden, Office Manager

ABSENT: Cllr Rae Frederick

**OS/6375
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no members of the public present.

**OS/6376
APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Frederick.

**OS/6377
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**OS/6378
MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 5th June 2024, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

**OS/6379
PLAY AREAS WORKING GROUP**

It was noted that there were several possible recommendations included in the notes of the meeting of 13th June 2024 but further costing information was being sought and when this is available, a fully-costed range of options will be brought forward for consideration by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the notes of the meeting (*Annex A*) held on 13th June 2024 be received.

ACTION J Hurd

OS/6380



OPEN SPACES MANAGEMENT REVIEW

The Town Clerk highlighted an action in the Council's Strategic Plan to undertake a review of how various public open spaces are used and managed. This is a good time for this to be brought forward as aspects will tie in with the budget review and review of the operation of grounds management.

He expected this to be a reasonably substantial piece of work, the extent of which has been captured in the draft terms of reference (*Annex B*). This review will not cover finances and with reference to 1c., a more in-depth review of the use of some open spaces will be required compared with others.

The website has a basic level of information on land ownership, but the review will identify sites and produce a summary of this and include how or why land was acquired, whether there is a lease or transfer deed, if it can only be used for a particular purpose, any associated legal powers or restrictions of use and how best to maintain and manage it. Other aspects to be considered include licensing, access, bookings, repairs, etc.

Care will be taken not to duplicate work already in progress, for example, Carvers Masterplan, Greenways / 92, Southampton Road and the Thriving Market Place project. Outcome of the review will assist in prioritisation and allocation of funding.

It was suggested and agreed that membership of the Task and Finish Group be deferred to Full Council to enable any Councillor to put themselves forward. The Town Clerk would add some detail to explain expectations of those appointed.

RESOLVED: 1) That an Open Spaces Management Review Task and Finish Group be formed; and
2) That the Terms of Reference be approved.

RECOMMENDED: That four or five members be appointed to the Open Spaces Management Review Task and Finish Group.

ACTION C Wilkins

OS/6381

PROJECTS (current and proposed)

RLOS5 Cemetery development – The Town Clerk reported that further information had been received from one of the tendering parties which is being considered, however this remains way more than the budget for this project. Further time is required for officers to assess the project as a whole. To allow for this, further space has been identified and added to the garden of rest, which means that an additional 48 ashes plots have been allocated, allowing for approximately 4 years' worth of interments. The project will also be considered in light of the cemetery finance review.

RLOS21 Poulner Lakes track maintenance – A meeting has been arranged with NFDC design team at the end of the month.

RESOLVED: That the updated projects report (*Annex C*) be received.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7:31pm.

Note: The text in the Action Boxes above does not form part of these minutes.



RECEIVED
31st July 2024

APPROVED
4th September 2024

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Play Area Working Group

Notes of meeting held oat 11.30am on Thursday 13 June 2024

Present: Jo Hurd and Cllrs M DeBoos, Frederick and Windsor

Some play equipment and surfacing had been identified for repair or replacement, and quotes had been received from three companies. Each item was discussed and the following recommendations were made:

Carvers Play Area

Inground trampoline – this is currently broken, out of use and beyond repair. Officers had recommended not to replace on a like-for-like basis as it was thought the reason for it failing was that it was used by older children for tricks. However, Cllr Windsor cautioned against this and said that it was one of the most popular features in the play area.

RECOMMENDED: To look at alternative bouncing options such as an s-shaped trampoline or one that was designed for small feet only.

Safety Surfacing under See-Saw – the surfacing is damaged and requires repair, which could either be a patch repair or on overlay of the whole area. A patch repair would create new joins that may split in future following shrinkage. An overlay of the whole area would include covering the concrete edges, reducing future maintenance. It was noted that this item was less popular as it was not suitable for younger children.

RECOMMENDED: That a patch repair be carried out.

Springer See-Saw – the spring rotates on the base and it is not possible to fix it in place, and there is some damage to safety surfacing. This is an old item of equipment and it doesn't meet current safety standards.

RECOMMENDED: To replace on a like-for-like basis.

Ash Grove Play Area

Rope Swing – the rope is damaged and has not been in place for some time. It was felt that this item offered little play value.

RECOMMENDED: That the grounds team consider whether the timber could be re-purposed to create a new play feature, such as log stepping stones.

Springer – this was removed some time ago due to damage to the spring, and as it was worn and showing its age, it was recommended for replacement.

RECOMMENDED: That the springer be replaced with another springer, and that residents/users be given the option of either a chicken, tractor or bee.

RINGWOOD TOWN COUNCIL**OPEN SPACES MANAGEMENT REVIEW TASK AND FINISH GROUP****TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. The primary functions of the Open Spaces Management Review Task and Finish Group shall be:
 - a. To identify and list every parcel of land which is owned, leased or managed by the Town Council and has not been built upon (“the Open Spaces”)
 - b. To identify for each Open Space the purpose to which it has been appropriated or for which it is currently used
 - c. To investigate how each Open Space is currently maintained and managed and how these might be changed to secure ecological or public amenity benefits or reduce the workloads of Council staff (provided that other possible financial benefits from changes are outside the remit of this review and shall not be considered)
 - d. To make such recommendations to the Town Council or a relevant committee as are thought fit for the following:-
 - i) changes to the basis on which any Open Space is owned, leased or managed,
 - ii) the formal appropriation of an Open Space to a defined use or purpose
 - iii) informal changes to the use or purpose of an Open Space (not amounting to an appropriation);
 - iv) changes to the arrangements for the management or maintenance of any Open Space; and
 - v) the preparation and adoption of a written management plan for any Open Space.
2. The voting members of this Group shall be the Town Clerk, the Grounds Manager and such councillors as shall be appointed to voting membership of it by the Council. The quorum for meetings of the Group shall be three voting members.

DELEGATED POWERS

1. To co-opt additional, non-voting members to itself as it shall deem expedient.

Approved:

Current Projects Update



No.	Name	Status	Recent developments	Description and notes	Lead Officer/Member	Financing
Full Council						
FC1	Long Lane Football Facilities Development	In progress (scheduled for completion in 2024)	The artificial turf pitch has been completed and is now in use. Building of the new pavilion has paused pending utility works by statutory undertakers. The new building is expected to be ready for occupation in Summer 2024.	A joint venture with Ringwood Town Football Club and AFC Bournemouth Community Sports Trust to improve the football facilities for shared use by them and the community.	Town Clerk	The current expectation is that the Council's contribution to the project will, in effect, be limited to a modest loss of income from the site (but over a long term).
Planning Town & Environment Committee						
PTE1	Neighbourhood Plan	In progress	Referendum will take place on 04/07/2024, on the same day as the General Election. If the majority of residents vote "yes", the Plan must be adopted (made) by NFDC and NFNPA by 29/08/2024.	To prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the civil parish of Ringwood but limited in scope to a few specified themes.	Deputy Town Clerk	Spent £25,282.42 (£18,000 funded from Locality grants, £3,650 additional budget agreed for SPUD youth engagement work (F/6061)). £3,167.58 unspent of original RTC budget.
PTE2	Human Sundial	Complete, with exception of interpretation board	Work to refurbish human sundial and install surrounding benches now complete. Time capsule cover stone replaced on 21/07/2023. Interpretation board with details of sundial, Jubilee Lamp etc. to be designed and costed.	Replacement of damaged sundial and surrounding paviers; installation of removable benches to protect it for the future.	Deputy Town Clerk	£10,659.15 spent funded from CIL and contributon from Carnival. Additional £580 for repair of cover funded from CIL (C/6957).
PTE3	Crow Stream Maintenance	Annual recurrent	Spraying of stream banks undertaken 19/06/24, annual flail to be carried out in August and stream clearance by volunteers in September.	Annual maintenance of Crow Ditch and Stream in order to keep it flowing and alleviate flooding	Deputy Town Clerk	Budget of £1,000 funded by transfer from earmarked reserve
PTE6	Shared Space Concept - Thriving Market Place	In progress	£10,000 released by NFDC from UKSPF to undertake options appraisal/feasibility study. Project Brief agreed and HCC instructed to carry out work outlined in Brief. Next meeting of Working Group scheduled for 09/07/2024.	Concept for town centre shared space identified through work on the Neighbourhood Plan. Working in partnership with NFDC and HCC.	Deputy Town Clerk	HCC funded survey work. £10,000 grant from UKSPF (via NFDC).
	Greening Ringwood	In progress	Official launch of Phase 2 held on 20/04/2024 in Gateway Square. Numerous activities taking place.	Greening Campaign Phase 2 to run from Sept 2023 to July 2024, focussing on making space for nature; energy efficient greener homes; climate impacts on health and wellbeing; waste prevention; and cycle of the seed.		£50 signing up fee funded from General Reserve.
	Bus Shelters	In progress	HCC framework contractor has completed survey of shelters free of charge. Action Plan prepared and being worked though with intention of bringing report with recommendations to cttee in next two months.	Review of Council owned bus shelters.		No agreed budget
Projects being delivered by others which are monitored by the Deputy Clerk and reported to this committee:						
	Crow Lane Footpath	In progress	Developers' contributions paid to HCC to implement. Additional funds required to progress and approved by NFDC Cabinet on 02/11/2022 - report indicates delivery in 2024/25. HCC working on design.	New footpath to link Beaumont Park with Hightown Road, alongside west of Crow Lane	Hampshire CC	Developers contributions
	Railway Corner	In progress	Project supported by RTC. Planning application approved (23/11081).	Project to improve and promote historical significance of triangle of land at junction of Hightown Road and Castleman Way.	Ringwood Society	No financial implications.
	Memorial Bench for Michael Lingam-Willgoss	In progress	Consent to install bench has been granted by HCC. Legal fees covered by County Cllr Thierry. Date for installation yet to be agreed.	Provision of memorial bench in Market Place in memory of Michael Lingam-Willgoss.	Ringwood Carnival / Ringwood Rotary	No financial implications.
Policy & Finance Committee						
PF5	Poulner Lakes Lease	On hold	Awaiting track maintenance solution - see Recreation Leisure & Open Spaces Committee item RLOS21.	Negotiating a lease from Ringwood & District Anglers' Association of the part of the site not owned by the Council	Town Clerk	Some provision for legal advice or assistance may be needed eventually.
PF11	92 Southampton Road	In progress (commenced March 2023)	Urgent repairs have been completed. Vacant possession has been recovered. The agents have been asked to advise on re-letting options.	Reviewing the letting of this council-owned house	Town Clerk	Rent receipts and other financial implications of any changes are unclear at present but will be considered as part of the review.

PF12	Base budget review	Commenced Feb. 2024	Inaugural meeting held on 17th April. Workstreams and lead councillors for each agreed.	A review by members and officers of the council's base (revenue) budget, probably focused on a few types of expenditure or areas of activity, to identify possible options for change and/or savings.	Finance Manager	No anticipated costs other than staff time.
------	--------------------	---------------------	---	---	-----------------	---



Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee

RLOS4	Grounds department sheds replacement	In progress (Commenced design work in April 2021.)	Officers have been working with a planning consultant on project design and two rounds of pre-application planning advice have been completed. A planning application has been prepared in draft and is expected to be submitted soon.	A feasibility study into replacing the grounds maintenance team's temporary, dispersed & sub-standard workshop, garaging and storage facilities. Combined with a possible new car park for use by hirers of and visitors to the club-house.	Town Clerk	Revised capital budget of £4,000 (originally £10,000 until virement to RLOS19)
RLOS5	Cemetery development	In progress (Commenced design work in April 2021. Aiming to complete by December 2024.)	Design and funding arrangements for a memorial wall have been agreed in principle. An architect has been instructed. Only two responses to the public tender were received; both considerably in excess of the agreed budget. Officers are considering next steps and a plan to manage cremated remains in the interim.	Planning best use of remaining space, columbarium, etc.	Town Clerk	Capital cost estimated at £37,500 will be met from a combination of earmarked reserves.
RLOS10	Waste bin replacement programme	In progress (Commenced April 2020)	The final replacements in the current programme will be installed this summer. Future needs will then be re-assessed.	Three-year programme to replace worn-out litter and dog-waste bins	Grounds Manager	Budget of £2,000 a year.
RLOS14	Poulner Lakes waste licence	In progress	Surrender requirements and process have been investigated and discussed with Environment Agency and New Forest District Council. Consultants, ACS Testing, have been engaged to provide technical advice and support. Their report on the recent water sampling and advice on the surrender requirements and process are expected soon.	Arranging to surrender our redundant waste licence to avoid annual renewal fees	Town Clerk	
RLOS19	Carvers Strategic Development	Completed May 2024	The Masterplan prepared by landscape designer New Enclosure, after being consulted upon and revised, was formally adopted on 1st May 2024. It will now serve as a vision to guide future planning and developments but since it will remain a living document subject to potential updating, this item will remain open until further notice.	Devising a strategic vision and plan for the future of Carvers Recreation Ground pulling together proposals for additional play equipment and other features	Carvers Manager	Revised budget of £6,000 (virement from RLOS4).
RLOS21	Poulner Lakes track maintenance	In progress (under discussion since Jan. 2021)	NFDC is developing a concept design of an improved access on the basis that RTC will fund essential maintenance/improvements to the vehicular access element and NFDC will fund the rest. Discussions about the design and proposed works are expected to continue through the Summer.	Devising a sustainable regime for maintaining the access tracks at Poulner Lakes to a more acceptable standard.	Town Clerk	Yet to be settled
RLOS23	North Poulner Play Area skate ramp request	In progress (commenced Mar. 2023)	A 'half-pipe' has been identified as a likely cheaper and easier option. The likely costs and wider implications of installing this are being investigated.	A local resident requested provision of a 'quarter-pipe ramp' at this site and has been fund-raising for it	Deputy Town Clerk	Yet to be quantified and agreed
RLOS24	Poulner Lakes Circular Path	Completed May 2024.	The performance of the reduced and landscaped drainage retention pond has been monitored through the winter. It appears both necessary and effective. This project is therefore now complete.	HCC has funded the creation of a circular path for pedestrians and cyclists to improve accessibility and so encourage greater use	Deputy Town Clerk	Staff time only

Staffing Committee

None

Proposed/Emerging Projects Update

No.	Name	Description	Lead	Recent developments	Progress / Status Stage reached	Estimated cost	Funding sources
Full Council							
	None						
Planning Town & Environment Committee							
	Roundabout under A31	Planting and other environmental enhancements		Area being used by National Highways for storage of materials during works to widen the A31.	Floated as possible future project		
	Lynes Lane re-paving Rear of Southampton Road	Ringwood Society proposal Proposal by Ringwood Society to improve appearance from The Furlong Car Park and approaches			Floated as possible future project Floated as possible future project		
	Dewey's Lane wall	Repair of historic wall		Re-build/repair options and costs are being investigated	Shelved as a TC project		
	Signage Review	Review of signs requiring attention - e.g. Castleman Trailway, Pocket Park, Gateway Square	Cllr Day		Floated as possible future project		
	Crow ditch	Investigate works required to improve capacity and flow of ditch alongside Crow Lane, between Hightown Road and Moortown Lane					Developers contributions
Policy & Finance Committee							
	Paperless office	Increasing efficiency of office space use	Cllr. Heron	Discussions with Town Clerk and Finance Manager			
Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee							
	None	(Current projects expected to absorb available resources for several years)					
Staffing Committee							
	None						

Closed Projects Report

No.	Name	Description	Outcome	Notes
Full Council				
FC2	Strategic Plan	Exploring ideas for medium term planning. Aim to have complete for start of budget-planning in Autumn 2022.	Completed in October 2022	
Planning, Town & Environment Committee				
	Pedestrian Crossings - Christchurch Road	Informal pedestrian crossings to the north and south of roundabout at junction of Christchurch Road with Wellworthy Way (Lidl)	Completed by HCC	
	Cycleway signage and improvements	New signage and minor improvements to cycleway between Forest Gate Business Park and Hightown Road	Completed by HCC	
	Carvers footpath/cycle-way improvement	Creation of shared use path across Carvers between Southampton Road and Mansfield Road	Completed by HCC	
	Replacement Tree - Market Place	New Field Maple tree to replace tree stump in Market Place.	Completed in January 2022 by HCC	
PTe4	Climate Emergency	Funds used to support Greening Campaign, community litter-pick and Flood Action Plan leaflets.	Completed March 2023	
	A31 widening scheme	Widening of A31 westbound carriageway between Ringwood and Verwood off slip to improve traffic flow; associated town centre improvements utilising HE Designated Funds	Scheme completed by National Highways and road re-opened in November 2022.	
	SWW Water Main Diversion (associated with A31 widening scheme)	Diversion of water main that runs along the A31 westbound carriageway. Diversion route included land in RTC's ownership at The Bickerley.	Scheme completed by SWW in 2022.	
	Surfacing of Castleman Trailway	Dedication and surfacing of bridleway between old railway bridge eastwards to join existing surfacing.	Surfacing works completed by HCC early April 2022.	
	Bus Shelter Agreement	Request by ClearChannel in Nov. 2020 for RTC to licence the bus shelters in Meeting House Lane and the advertising on them. Despite various communications, we have had no contact for over a year and therefore regard the original request to be defunct.	Request not followed up by ClearChannel, therefore defunct and removed from project list October 2023.	
PTe5				
Policy & Finance Committee				
PF1	New Council website	Arranging a new website that is more responsive, directly editable by Council staff and compliant with accessibility regulations.	Completed	
PF2	Greenways planning permission	Consideration of applying to renew planning permission for bungalow in garden previously obtained	Decided not to renew	
PF3	Detached youth outreach work	To provide youth workers for trial of detached outreach work	Transferred to Recreation Leisure & Open Spaces Committee (see RLOS20)	
PF4	Review of governance documents	A major overhaul of standing orders, financial regulations, committee terms of reference, delegated powers, etc. Routine periodic reviews will follow completion of this work.	Completed in July 2022	All governance documents will now receive routine annual reviews.
PF6	Health & Safety Management Support Re-procurement	Re-procuring specialist advice and support for discharge of health and safety duties	Completed in February 2023	
PF7	Financial Procedures Manual	Preparation of a new manual for budget managers and other staff detailing financial roles, responsibilities and procedures	Completed in September 2022	Will be updated by Finance Manager as necessary
PF8	Bickerley Legal Title	An application to remove land from the Council's title was made	Completed in October 2023	Application successfully resisted
PF9	Greenways office leases	The tenant of the first floor suite gave notice and left. The building was re-let as a whole to the tenant of the ground floor suite.	Completed in November 2022	
PF10	Councillors' Email Accounts	Providing councillors with official email accounts (and devices, if required) to facilitate compliance with data protection laws.	Completed in August 2023	
Recreation, Leisure & Open Spaces Committee				
RLOS1	War Memorial Repair	Repair by conservation specialists with Listed Building Consent with a re-dedication ceremony after.	Completed in 2021-22	
RLOS2	Bickerley Tracks Repair	Enhanced repair of tracks to address erosion and potholes (resurfacing is ruled out by town green status) and measures to control parking.	Fresh gravel laid in 2021-22.	No structural change is feasible at present.
RLOS3	Public open spaces security	Review of public open spaces managed by the Council and implementation of measures to protect the highest priority sites from unauthorised encampments and incursions by vehicles	Completed in 2021-22	
RLOS6	Community Allotment	Special arrangement needed for community growing area at Southampton Road	Ongoing processes adapted	Agreed to adopt as informal joint venture with the tenants' association
RLOS7	Bowling Club lease	Renewal of lease that expired in April 2023.	Completed in July 2023	New lease granted for 14 years.
RLOS8	Ringwood Youth Club	Dissolution of redundant Charitable Incorporated Organisation	Completed in July 2023	Charity removed from Register of Charities
RLOS9	Aerator Repair	Major overhaul to extend life of this much-used attachment	Completed in 2021-22	
RLOS11	Ash Grove fence repair	Replacing the worn-out fence around the play area	Completed in 2021-22	
RLOS12	Van replacement	Replacing the grounds department diesel van with an electric vehicle	Suspended in 2023	Van will be replaced in accordance with Vehicle & Machinery replacement plan
RLOS13	Bickerley compensation claim	Statutory compensation claim for access and damage caused by drainage works	Completed March 2022	Settlement achieved with professional advice
RLOS15	Acorn bench at Friday's Cross	Arranging the re-painting of this bespoke art-work	Completed in 2021-22	Labour kindly supplied by Men's Shed
RLOS16	Town Safe	Possible re-paint of this important survival, part of a listed structure	Suspended indefinitely in September 2022	Complexity and cost judged disproportionate to benefit
RLOS17	Crow Arch Lane Allotments Site	The transfer to this Council (pursuant to a s.106 agreement) of a site for new allotments off Crow Arch Lane	Completed in November 2023	
RLOS18	Cemetery Records Upgrade	Creation of interactive digital cemetery map and scanning of cemetery registers as first stage in digitizing all cemetery records to facilitate remote working, greater efficiency and improved public accessibility.	Completed in 2021	Cost £5,467. Further upgrades are needed to digitize the records fully
RLOS20	Detached youth outreach work	Trialling the provision of detached outreach work by specialist youth workers.	Completed in May 2022	
RLOS22	Bickerley parking problem	Unauthorised parking on the tracks crossing the Bickerley is causing damage and obstruction	Closed off in September 2023	Additional signage has been installed. An estimate of £5,510 to move the "dragon's teeth" was judged disproportionate to the problem.
Staffing Committee				
S1	HR support contract renewal	Renewal of contract for the supply to the Council of specialist human resources law and management support	Completed in 2021-22	
S2	Finance Staffing Review	Reassessing staffing requirements and capacity for finance functions and re-negotiating staff terms	Completed in 2021-22	