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## COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 1 March 2023 from 7.00 pm - 8.00 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Lloyd Bowen, Steve Davey, Mike Dendor, Oliver Eakin, Tim Gibson, Alastair Gould, Nicholas Hampshire, James Hunt, Peter Macdonald, Richard Palmer (Chair), Hannah Perkin, Ken Rowles and Julian Saunders.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Kellie MacKenzie, Graeme Tuff and Emma Wiggins.

**OFFICERS PRESENT (Virtually):** Jay Jenkins, Jo Millard and Larissa Reed.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillor Simon Clark.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE (Virtually):** Councillor Angela Harrison.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors James Hall and Elliott Jayes (Vice-Chair).

### 744 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

### 745 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 January 2023 (Minute Nos. 559 – 564) were taken as read, agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

### 746 **Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

### 747 **Change to the order of business**

The Chair altered the order of business as minuted.

### **Part B Minutes for Information**

### 748 **Tennis Court Improvement Project**

The Greenspaces Manager introduced the report which set out the current usage and condition of the tennis court provision in Sittingbourne, and details of the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) proposal for an £112,000 project to improve tennis facilities at King George's Playing Field and Milton Recreation Ground.

The Greenspaces Manager explained that to allow the project to progress Members agreement was sought for designation of the current multi-use court at Milton to be tennis only, and 15 years of future maintenance to be funded by the Council from a sinking fund. He reported that the Sittingbourne Area Committee had supported the proposed project at their meeting in December 2022. The Greenspaces Manager said that if the scheme was supported, the improvements would take place over the next six to eight months.

The Chair invited Members to ask questions and make comments and these included:

- Welcomed the report;
- what was the current usage at Milton Recreation ground?
- would other sports currently played at Milton Recreation ground be driven away?
- there was a significant lack of football pitches within Swale, could the Committee explore that going forward?;
- was the proposed ball court set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report just an aspiration, or was it likely to be developed and had a site been identified?;
- how would the development be managed?;
- improved facilities would definitely increase usage;
- what was defined as a season ticket?;
- supported the project but considered that multi-use game areas were needed in Swale;
- concerned about the lack of sports facilities at The Meads, Sittingbourne;
- the Council needed to improve the promotion of the sports facilities it had;
- considered that the Council needed to be pro-active in ensuring that the Section 106 funding outlined paragraph 3.7 of the report came forward; and
- fully supported the proposed use and considered the new facilities would be an asset to Swale.

In response the Greenspaces Manager said that currently Sittingbourne Tennis Club (STC) used the site for 30% of the time. He said there was a small amount of usage by a running club and that would continue, but no other groups currently used the site, and it was hoped that this project would increase the use of the site. The Greenspaces Manager advised that officers were currently working on a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) which would consider future needs of pitches within the borough. With regard to the opportunity to install a ball court, the Greenspaces Manager advised that a substantial sum of money had been allocated for this via the Section 106 contributions for sport improvements at either Milton Recreation Ground or Kemsley Recreation Ground.

The Greenspaces Manager advised that whilst the detail of any improvements was currently unknown the LTA's specialist contractor would be used and suspected they would fully close sites for the works. He confirmed that season tickets were for a year.

Councillor Mike Dendor proposed the recommendations in the report, which were seconded by Councillor Steve Davey.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the designated usage of courts from multi-use to tennis only at Milton Recreation Ground be agreed.**
- (2) That a sinking fund commitment and ongoing maintenance responsibility as part of the bid for funding from the LTA be agreed.**
- (3) That the Council applied for improvement funding from the LTA and that any subsequent funding agreement be signed by the Head of Environment and Leisure.**
- (4) That it be recommended to the Policy and Resources Committee, and then Council that the relevant fees were included in the Council's fees and charges document.**

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods introduced the report which set out the Council's intention to consult on an off-street parking order for the Ship on Shore car park, Sheerness and to trial coach parking at a new site in Minster. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods outlined the five recommendations in the report, and said that relevant Ward Members and Parish/Town Councils had been consulted on the proposals. She reported that Minster Parish Council supported the proposed location of the coach park set out in Appendix II of the report. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods further reported that the Section 151 Officer had confirmed that the £35,000 required for preparation of the site for the coach park was available from the Kent Pool Economic Development Business Rates Reserve.

The Chair invited Members to ask questions and make comments and these included:

- Delighted to see the report and the proposals for the Ship on Shore car park and aware that if it had not been for the Covid-19 Pandemic the report would have been presented sooner;
- would the Ship on Shore be a long-stay car park?;
- referred to recommendation (3) and clarified that the Council would not be paying for the paid coach parking in Minster but those parking in the car park;
- how many coaches would fit into the proposed coach park?;
- concerned about how the car parking would be enforced;
- would the proposal qualify for any UK Shared Prosperity (UKSPF) funding as a town centre development under the TAG scheme?;
- would there be safe facilities to drop-off the coach passengers in Sheerness?;
- concerned that local residents who currently parked in the Ship on Shore car park would start parking on the main road and officers should explore whether it would be possible to have free parking after 6 pm to resolve that issue;
- considered that the recommended two-year trial for the proposed coach park should be increased to three years;
- camper vans could be encouraged to use the coach park overnight; and
- suggested that residents parking be allocated near the Ship on Shore car park possibly by the sea wall.

Councillor Lloyd Bowen moved the following motion: That the Ship on Shore car park be designated as a long-stay car park and recommendation (3) be re-worded to make it clear that the paid coach parking would not be paid by the Council but those that used the coach service. This was seconded by Councillor James Hunt. This was agreed by Members.

In response to questions, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods agreed to explore whether any funding could be secured from the UKSPF. There would be no additional resources for parking enforcement of the car parks, and she noted the point about safe drop-off in Sheerness.

Councillor James Hunt moved the following amendment: That a three-year trial was undertaken for providing paid coach parking in Minster rather than two-years as set out in the report. This was seconded by Councillor Lloyd Bowen. The amendment was agreed by Members.

Councillor Lloyd Bowen moved the recommendations in the report, which were seconded by Councillor James Hunt.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the Off-Street Parking Places Order process, specifically to formalise parking in the Ship on Shore car park and to start operating as pay and display car park be undertaken.**
- (2) That if the consultation was positive, that Policy and Resources Committee and Council add the Ship on Shore car park into the fees and charges document.**
- (3) That a three-year trial be undertaken for providing chargeable coach parking in Minster at the location shown in Appendix II of the report, and the off-street parking places order process be followed.**
- (4) That due to the project's links in supporting economic development and encouraging visitors, the Policy and Resources committee be recommended to allocate funding of £35,000 for the preparation of the site for the coach park from Kent Pool Economic Development Business Rates Reserve.**
- (5) That delegated authority be given to the Head of Environment and Leisure to complete the relevant paperwork for the off-street parking orders.**
- (6) That the Ship on Shore car park, Sheerness be designated as a long-stay car park.**

**750 Trinity Road Car Park Concession**

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods introduced the report which provided details of a recent investigation into the eligibility of residents of Trinity Road, Sheerness, for concession for permits in Trinity Road car park, and suggested the formalisation of the current arrangements. She referred to a recent Sheppey Area Committee meeting and local residents had been ticketed. The parking team had investigated the issue and in terms of the permits, the proposal was to allow persons that had historically owned properties to keep permits but once they moved, the new property owners would no longer be issued with permits.

The Chair invited Members to ask questions and make comments and these included:

- Clarified that the residents after the year 2000 could still apply for overnight parking permits;
- the proposal was a pragmatic and common-sense approach;
- referred to paragraph 3.3 of the report and offices needed to consider persons renting any of the properties; and
- permits should clearly state that they were non-transferable.

In response to questions, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods confirmed that households were restricted to one permit only. She confirmed that all the incorrect fines issued would be cancelled.

The Chair said that the Head of Environment and Leisure would ensure that permits were issued to the correct people.

Councillor Mike Dendor moved the following amendment to the recommendation: That "...in 2000" be added between the word 'works', and 'should'. This was seconded by Councillor Lloyd Bowen. The amendment was agreed by Members.

**Resolved:**

**(1) That those residents who lived in the affected properties at the time of the highway works in the year 2000, should be eligible for a parking permit in the Trinity Road Car Park at all times and on all days of the week.**

751 **Forward Decisions Plan**

The Chair invited comments from Members and points raised included:

- Welcomed the review of the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) review;
- any new approach to car parking would need to be considered by the Community Committee;
- with regard to the PPS officers needed to consider Kemsley Recreation ground as they had two pitches; and
- welcomed the update on Closed Church Yards and War Memorials.

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods agreed to liaise with the Head of Environment and Leisure and the Parking Services Manager about whether consideration of any new approach to parking could be considered with the Parking Services Annual Report in September 2023.

**Resolved:**

**(1) That the report be noted.**

Chair

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All minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel