

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4

Minutes of a meeting of the Asset Development Committee held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on 3rd July 2017 at 4:00pm.

P R E S E N T

Councillor Bill Hunt (Chairman)
Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith
Councillor Paul Cox
Councillor Lorna Dupré
Councillor Mathew Shuter
Councillor Lisa Stubbs

OTHERS

Spencer Clark – Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
John Hill – Chief Executive
Maison Mokoena – East Cambs Trading Company
Phil Rose – East Cambs Trading Company
Adrian Scaites-Stokes – Democratic Services Officer

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

4. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Maggie Camp, Legal Services Manager.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

6. MINUTES

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the Asset Development Committee meetings held on 27th March 2017 and 25th May 2017 be confirmed as correct records and be signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Lisa Stubbs noted that Councillor Coralie Green had queried how the Needs Assessment for traveller pitches would work within the Local Plan and that further information was going to be provided.

The Chief Executive confirmed that work on this was ongoing and this would be checked.

7. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- Further to Mepal Outdoor Centre, the facility belonged to this Council and had been leased to a Trust. However, following a fire it had been returned to the Council. An inspection had taken place and it had been found in a bad state. Since then miscreants had broken into the facility to steal copper piping, which had resulted in significant damage. A lot of people had contacted the Council to find out what it was doing about the situation. The Council wanted the facility to be available for use, particularly for youth groups, but did not want it to be a burden. The financial issue was only one aspect amongst others in deciding the best use of the site. Revised recommendations for Agenda Item 6 were tabled to set up a Working Party to decide on the site priorities, sift out the best suggestions and make a recommendation back to this Committee.
- Emergency action had been completed to place concrete barriers in the Angel Drove car park, to combat the reports of noise and anti-social behaviour. So the barriers, which were removable, had been placed in the car park with no loss of car parking spaces.
- Work had started on The Dock car park with the car park in Littleport to commence in the autumn. Usage of the disabled spaces in the Dock would be monitored, to ensure that adequate and proper access provision was made for the disabled.
- A meeting had been held with Ely Museum on their plans for improvement, as it had secured a significant grant for the work. The Museum was on a long lease from the Council, which had responsibility for its repairs. A report would be presented at the October meeting of this Committee.
- Cambridgeshire County Council's Registry Office was expected to go into the same building as its Archives Service. A small garden would be provided and it would deal with basic weddings 5 days per week. The design of The Dock car park would take account of this.
- The Chief Executive had talked to East Cambs Trading Company about disposal of the Burwell public toilets. It was likely that they would go to public auction.
- The quest to discover additional car parking spaces within Ely had produced another 5, this time in Newnham Street.
- The Council's Open Spaces and Parks department had not been involved with the development of the new Leisure Centre. The aim was to secure that involvement, to provide some input into the final design before it was handed over to the Council.

8. ASSET MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2017/18

The Committee considered a report, reference S36, previously circulated, that updated Members on the Asset Management Planned Maintenance Programme for 2017/18 including spend to date.

The Open Spaces & Facilities Manager advised the Committee that extra security measures had been installed at the Mepal Outdoor Centre for public safety reasons, including cameras. A lot of equipment had been removed from that site and the buildings cleared and boarded up. All the licences were now in place at the Wentworth traveller site and installation works had started. The Council was working closely with Ely Museum on their plans with the aim of protecting the Council's asset. A few risk assessments about asbestos, as well as fire risk, in The Grange had been completed with some remedial work expected.

Councillor Lisa Stubbs offered congratulations to the department on its meeting with the Museum, which was good for both organisations. It was good for the Council to be pro-active.

Councillor Bill Hunt then proposed setting up the Working Party in accordance with the terms of reference shown, with Councillor Lorna Dupre as the third Member.

Councillor Lorna Dupre proposed a minor amendment to the terms, to replace the words 'comprise of Chairman...' with 'comprise the Chairman...' and this was agreed. Concern was raised that the terms of reference did not specify any limits as to what could be considered, therefore nothing could be ruled out. The objectives in the terms of reference did not give a steer on what options should be looked at. This could mean that developing the site for housing might be suggested. With nothing 'off the table' this could be a big job to undertake. How would any criteria be set? That should not be the role of the Working Party, as it was the responsibility of this Committee.

Councillor Bill Hunt did not want anything ruled out but if the Working Party had any doubts it could bring that matter back to this Committee. Meetings would have to be arranged quickly, as the facility was costing £1000 per month. The meetings would be informal and a small group would be of benefit. The Working Party would visit the facility, which was mainly used by youth groups, and ask for any ideas. The Working Party would select the best ones to bring back to the Committee.

When put to the vote, the revised recommendations were agreed.

It was resolved:

- (i) That the Mepal Outdoor Centre Working Party be established as per the terms of reference detailed in Appendix 2;
- (ii) That the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Councillor Lorna Dupre be appointed to the Working Party;
- (iii) That the actual spend (as at 31 May 2017) set out in Appendix 1 be noted.

9. **FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

The Committee considered its forward agenda plan.

Councillor Lisa Stubbs noted that the recommendations of the Mepal Outdoor Centre Working Party were due at the 4th December meeting and questioned whether this matter would be in open public session. The Chief Executive explained that the Working Party would set its own timetable with an end date of December. At this point in time judgement should be reserved as to whether the matter would be open to the public, as there could be some sensitive commercial matters to consider. However, it would have to go to full Council, so that was likely to be in open session.

The forward agenda plan was noted.

10. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRESS**

It was resolved:

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of items 9 to 10 because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item(s) there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Category 3 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

11. **LAND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND ASSET DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE 2017/18**

The Committee considered an Exempt report, reference S36, previously circulated, that provided an update on land development opportunities and the asset development programme.

Councillor Lorna Dupre questioned whether the Chairman ought to chair this item in view of the close proximity of one of his properties to one of the Council's assets to be discussed and thought he should declare an interest.

*The meeting was adjourned at this point to allow the Chairman to seek advice,
4:37pm*

The meeting reconvened at 4:39pm.

The Chairman acknowledged that should the Committee wish to discuss the asset in question he would vacate the room.

The Committee was advised that enabling works at Barton Road, Ely had commenced and the site had been secured with hoardings. These had windows so the public could view the works as they progressed. The works

were underway but far more services had been discovered under the car park than had been anticipated. The archaeological works had completed but, apart from part of a Saxon/early Medieval ditch there had been no significant finds. The site entrance would be re-aligned with a new carriageway and kerbs. The intention was to keep the car park open during the works, where possible, as there might be some minor disruptions. The coach drop off point was being used, though some coaches were dropping their passengers off in Barton Road instead. Liaison with the local community was continuing and meetings had been held with Kings School and the Forum to help minimise impact on the neighbours.

Councillor Bill Hunt thought the information signs at the site were good. Coaches would be able to drop off their passengers there until the Downham Road complex was ready. This would provide more parking for them and good facilities for the drivers.

Planning permission for The Shade site in Soham had been received and a building contractor selected. The intention was to set up the site ready to start the works during the summer months and to ensure the school children's access was appropriate and safe. Communication was being made with the parents to inform them what to expect.

The Dock car park contract had been placed and the work was being prepared ready to start. The Littleport car park was further behind.

At this point the Chairman left the meeting, 4:50pm. Councillor Lisa Stubbs took over the Chair.

The Committee discussed one of the Council's assets and it was revealed that no decisions had yet been taken on it. Potential options were being considered, which would depend on some work being carried out.

At this point the Chairman returned to the meeting and resumed the Chair, 4:54pm.

It was resolved:

That the progress in relation to the Land Development Opportunities and Asset Development Programme be noted.

12. **LAND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY – PARISH OF ELY**

The Committee considered an Exempt report, reference S37, previously circulated, that provided an update on a land development opportunity in the parish of Ely.

The Committee was advised about the suggested details of the development opportunity, the work completed and the further work recommended. Questions from various Members were received and answers given relating to different aspects of the proposed development.

It was resolved:

That the recommendations in the report be authorised and approved.

The meeting concluded at 5:44pm.