

AGENDA ITEM NO. 14

Minutes of a meeting of the Asset Development Sub-Committee held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Wednesday 21st January 2015 at 4:00pm

PRESENT

Councillor Bill Hunt (Chairman)
Councillor Allen Alderson (as Substitute for Councillor Lis Every)
Councillor Sheila Friend-Smith, MBE
Councillor Elaine Griffin-Singh
Councillor Richard Hobbs
Councillor Pauline Wilson

OFFICERS

Maggie Camp – Solicitor
Spencer Clark – Senior Open Spaces & Maintenance Officer
John Hill – Chief Executive
Adrian Scaites-Stokes – Democratic Services Officer

41. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

42. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Councillor Lis Every. Councillor Allen Alderson substituted for her for this meeting.
The absence of Councillor Tony Goodge was noted.

43. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

44. **MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8th December 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

45. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The Sub-Committee was reminded of its decision to consider a benefit to parishes and communities if there was a return on the disposal of land or property in their area. Each item should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

46. **ASSET MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered a report, reference P182, previously circulated, which sought to update Members on the proposed Asset Management Planned Maintenance Programme for 2014/15 (as approved by the Asset Development Committee on 16th April 2014), including spend to date.

The Senior Open Spaces & Maintenance Officer advised the Sub-Committee that the programme had been updated with additional costs incurred for repairs to Littleport church wall due to a falling tree and extra repairs at the Paradise Pool, both which had not been budgeted for. Everything else was on schedule.

Councillor Sheila Friend-Smith noted that £20K expenditure had previously been allocated for public conveniences but that figure was now £1500, none of which had been spent. She was concerned about the state of the toilets on Palace Green in Ely. The area received a big income through tourism and decent toilets were needed for this. Councillor Bill Hunt reminded the Sub-Committee that a review of all the district's public conveniences was being undertaken and that £1500 had been spent on the Palace Green toilets. This was confirmed by the Senior Open Spaces & Maintenance Officer, who stated a 'deep clean' plus some re-decorating and cosmetic repairs had been completed prior to the Apple Fest. This had been paid for out of the general gang budget.

The Chief Executive informed the Sub-Committee that this matter had been reported to the Commercial Services Committee, which had appointed Members to a group to review the issues. Phase 1 of the review had already been agreed and it was planned to report back to Commercial Services Committee on 8th July 2015.

Councillor Richard Hobbs warned that this review would take time to complete. The Palace Green toilets had been tidied up but overall there was still a lot to do. He then asked a question about an installation on the Wentworth travellers' site. The Senior Open Spaces & Maintenance Officer explained that there had been a break in the cable so solar lighting was being tried out, thereby avoiding the need to dig up the site. This would be more efficient, as there would be no more need for the cable.

Councillor Elaine Griffin-Singh questioned why £3K was to be spent on the Council's Reception. Were there jobs to be done or was it just a budget in case? The Senior Open Spaces & Maintenance Officer stated that the Council had to ensure that the Reception area was kept up to standard, as it was the first point of contact for the public. There was work to be done, which would be completed out-of-hours.

Councillor Bill Hunt would be assessing the City of Ely Council offices with the Chief Executive, in anticipation of it moving out. On the issue of toilets, temporary ones were to be placed in Ely Country Park but there was concern that they would only be cleaned once a week. This would be inappropriate and should be done daily, at least initially. It was agreed that this be recommended

to the Commercial Services Committee. Councillor Richard Hobbs, as Chairman of that Committee, acknowledged that those toilets would need to be kept up to standard.

Councillor Sheila Friend-Smith asked a couple of questions; one related to replacing the boilers at The Grange and the other queried why this Council was paying for additional work at the Maltings when that facility had been handed over to the City Council. The Senior Open Spaces & Maintenance Officer stated that along with replacing the boiler, the heating within the building would be controlled better, so savings were expected. There was an issue with the Maltings' roof and the small amount of work required had not been covered in the contract.

It was resolved to RECOMMEND TO COMMERCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE:

- (i) That the temporary toilets in Ely Country Park should be cleaned daily, instead of weekly, at least initially;

It was further resolved:

- (ii) That the Asset Maintenance Programme 2014/15, specifically the actual spend to end December 2014 and urgent works to Littleport church wall as set out in Appendix 2, be noted.

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

It was resolved:

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining item nos. 8 to 11 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 items 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).

48. **LAND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES (PARISHES OF ELY, LITTLEPORT AND SOHAM)**

The Sub-Committee considered an Exempt report, reference P183, previously circulated, which looked at land development opportunities in the parishes of Ely, Littleport and Soham.

The Chief Executive advised the Sub-Committee on the status relating to a number of sites within the three parishes of Ely, Littleport and Soham. There were a few new land opportunities that had come up recently and recommendations were made on how to progress with them.

It was resolved:

- (i) That the Chief Executive and Principal Solicitor be authorised or instructed to act as per the recommendations within the report;
- (ii) That progress in relation to previously identified land opportunities as set out in the report be noted.

49. **ASSET DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE – 2014/15**

The Committee considered an Exempt report, reference P184, previously circulated, which gave an update on the Council's operational and non-operational assets.

The Chief Executive advised the Sub-Committee as to the current status of the assets listed within the development programme and highlighted the recommendation received from the Planning Committee from its 7th January 2015 meeting.

Councillor Bill Hunt had been on the Planning Committee when it made its recommendation and thought that it was clear a planning application had only been submitted due to this open space being available. There would be a cost to this Council to maintain it so it should be offered to Bottisham Parish Council for its use.

It was resolved:

- (i) That the recommendation from Planning Committee (ref: 12 January 2015) to negotiate the transfer of open space at Ancient Meadows, Bottisham, with an appropriate commuted sum to Bottisham Parish Council be agreed in consultation with the Chairman of the Sub Committee;
- (ii) That the Chief Executive be instructed to provide a further programme update to the next meeting.

50. **FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

The Sub-Committee received and noted the Exempt Forward Agenda Plan.

It was resolved:

That the Exempt Forward Agenda Plan be noted.

51. **EXEMPT MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 8th December 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

The meeting concluded at 5:00pm.