



BUNGAY TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the Grounds, Properties and Amenities Extraordinary Committee Meeting held on Thursday 10th September 2020 at 7.00 p.m. As permitted by the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392 this meeting was conducted “online”.

Members:

Cllr. M Lincoln (ML) -Chair Cllr. J Adams (JA) Cllr. J. Blowers O’Neill (JBO’N) Cllr. S Collins (SC) – Deputy Chair
Cllr. M Atterwill (MA) Cllr. P Love (PL) Cllr. B. Prior (BP) Cllr. A. Dawes (AD)

Also present were Eddie Rosier (ER) Temporary Assistant Town Clerk, Cllr DO’N and eight members of the public.

GPAC-035 **Apologies for absence:** To receive any apologies for absence.
2020/2021 There were no apologies. **Noted.**

GPAC- 036 **Declaration of Interest & Requests for Dispensations:** Councillors to declare any Pecuniary or Non-
2020/2021 Pecuniary Interests. Notwithstanding this item, Members may subsequently declare an interest at
any point in the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest, or requests for dispensations. **Noted.**

GPAC-037 **Minutes of the previous meeting:** To approve the minutes of the Grounds, Properties & Amenities
2020/2021 Committee Extraordinary Meeting held on 27th August: for consideration.

The minutes of the Grounds, Properties & Amenities Committee Extraordinary Meeting of 27th August were presented for approval. **It was proposed by BP, seconded by SC and unanimously RESOLVED to accept the minutes, and these were duly signed by the Chairman (ML).**

GPAC-038 **Public Forum:** Members of the public are invited to give their views on issues on this agenda, or raise
2020/2021 issues for future consideration, at the discretion of the Chair, for no more than 15 minutes. Members
of the public may not take part in the Committee meeting itself.

It was proposed by SC, seconded by MA and unanimously RESOLVED to suspend standing orders to enable members of the public and councillors to continue discussions beyond this agenda item.

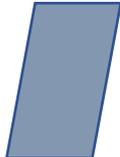
GPAC-039 **The Staithe area:** to present a draft plan, having reviewed the survey by Alan Keely, Suffolk Police –
2020/2021 for Consideration.

ML. Referred to a proposed plan for taking things forward and agreed to elaborate as most of the members of the public would not have seen this. He thanked the assistant clerk for the work undertaken to establish costings, and possibilities of what might be done at The Staithe and commended him for this.

The purpose of this meeting was to come up with a proposal, to be discussed and hopefully agreed at the full council meeting on 19th September. Once agreed by the whole council the items proposed

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Date _____



could then be implemented. Once the council owned the land this would then put the council in a much stronger position to be able to do things, and that they intended to start immediately.

JA. Confirmed that the transfer of property was shortly to take place, and whilst it may take about three months to pass through the land registry system, Bungay Town Council would have the deeds, and would therefore own the land and property.

ML. The proposed plan was divided between the short-term, those immediate Items that could be underway or completed by January 2021, medium term items be started or completed by May 2021, and longer term which went beyond that.

Short-term

1) To consider expanding and developing the lighting from The Riverside Centre. A survey would need to be undertaken to consider the impact on bats and wildlife. The purpose was to make the car park more visible, and safer for users of the Riverside Centre, and to discourage anti-social and criminal behaviour.

JBO'N. Raised concerns about the impact of lights being on all the time, and the resulting impact on many forms of wildlife habitat, and light pollution, suggesting that it would be better for lights that came on with movement rather than all of the time.

ER. Alan Keely's (Police) report referred to dusk to dawn lighting, and the variety of ways of controlling LED lighting such as microwave movement control, low level lighting that increases with movement. The first of a two-phase proposal would be a single 100watt led floodlight positioned on the building and angled down towards the car park, in order to minimise light pollution, both in the micro sense (near neighbours), and in the macro sense (the night sky). The second phase would involve trunking around the car park to support proposed two lamp posts with lights facing towards the Staithe and positioned to cover the car park, possibly supported by solar powered bollards.

BP. Reminded the committee of the need to progress the bat survey, and asked about costings for the lighting scheme, which ML. confirmed would form part of a competitive tendering process in due course.

2) ML. CCTV was currently of poor quality. The proposal was to upgrade this to a similar quality to that installed in other parts of the town, with the possibility of an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera, and clear signage, both as a deterrent and for evidence gathering, and that this would be particularly relevant if the car park was to remain unsecured. Various discussions took place to consider a complete upgrade including ANPR, increased recording capacity (duration), and remote interrogation using monitors at Broad St.

BP. Advised that access to CCTV footage was currently restricted to the town clerk and the police, and it would be reasonable to assume this would be the case with The Riverside Centre CCTV. A discussion took place about criminal and civil enforcement, and what constituted a criminal act.



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It was proposed by JBO'N, seconded by MA and unanimously RESOLVED to put forward a proposal to the Full Council meeting on 17th September 2020, to adopt items 1. Lighting provision outside the Riverside Centre and in the car park. 2. Upgrading CCTV to include an ANPR camera.

3) ML. To Install permanent bike racks to encourage cycling to the Staithe. PL. asked if there might be access to external funding, given the government's verbal commitment to encouraging cycling, along with the local partnership board which had cycling as one of its three main priorities.

BP. Stated that our county councillor was pro cycling and sat on several associated committees. JBO'N. felt the provision of cycle racks was an excellent idea, and the more the better to promote people in a socially positive way.

SC. Informed members of the public that the council commenced its budgeting process in November, and it was therefore helpful to be considering these proposals now.

It was proposed by JBO'N, seconded by SC and unanimously RESOLVED to put forward a proposal to the Full Council meeting on 17th September 2020, to adopt item 3. The provision of cycle Racks at The Staithe.

4) ML. referred to the introduction of signage in the form of an information display board, providing details of the local history and natural environment. ER. Stated that Cllr. Richardson has previously suggested an interpretation board and thought such a display might also provide an opportunity when referring to both the country and riverside codes of conduct, as a positive reminder to people.

It was proposed by MA, seconded by SC and unanimously RESOLVED to put forward a proposal to the Full Council meeting on 17th September 2020, for the provision of an interpretation board at The Staithe.

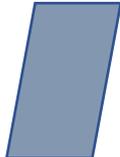
5) ER. Confirmed that ESC had accepted responsibility for the lifesaving equipment located on their land, and that this had subsequently been replaced. The Falcon Meadow Community Trust (FMCT) had been approached to see if they might consider locating similar equipment on the north side of the river. The Environment Agency were also being pursued for further equipment to perhaps be positioned on the west side of the sluice bridge.

One member of the public referred to the repeated offence (damaging of the lifesaving equipment) an extremely dangerous act of vandalism. BP. Referred to the need to gather evidence, and others agreed that the upgrading of the CCTV system should incorporate coverage of this area.

ER. Agreed to contact ESC to both thank them for installing the equipment, and to explore ways of protecting it. AD. Agreed to pursue the requested provision of further lifesaving equipment with FMCT.

6) ML. Referred to the need to establish an oversight group to include councillors, residents and user groups including FMCT. BP. Proposed the expansion of the existing Riverside Working Party for this purpose.

It was proposed by AD, seconded by MA and unanimously RESOLVED to put forward a proposal to the Full Council meeting on 17th September 2020, for the expansion of the existing Riverside Working Party to incorporate The Staithe area.



ML. Proposed the need for a dialogue to begin with the owners of the access road and Millstream bridge, as this was not owned by either BTC or ESC.

Medium-term

1)ML. Stated that the medium-term aim was to have commenced or completed these items by May 2021, although it was acknowledged that this may not be possible for one item (resident's parking).

It was proposed to Install a gate, or some means of controlling the entrance to the car park. This would necessitate a discussion with residents of its potential effects, because without resident's permits it could increase problems with parking in the Staithe area. JBO'N. Said she was concerned about people blocking the access road, where people were unable to get into the car park, and felt that a barrier could present a hazard. One member of the public felt that a barrier might cause more problems early in the morning, with people waiting in their cars for the barrier to open, trying to turn around, or reversing backwards.

BP. Declared their preference for a barrier, both to support existing user groups when accessing the Riverside Centre, Scout group and Canoe club, and because of the limited capacity of the car park. PL. Stated that in principle he was against barriers, but if it was promoted on social media that there was no parking, whilst opportunists might still turn up in the short-term, a barrier would soon make people aware.

JBO'N. Suggested that the 'green' area of the car park could become non-exclusive. BP. Stated that this area was largely used by the Scouts and Canoe Club for boat preparations, and that the space soon filled up, resulting in turning difficulties. JL. Referred to covenants stating that the area must continue to be used as green space. One member of the public suggested better ways of managing the car park, through bay marking and the use of technology, electronic signage telling people when the car park was full in order to discourage people entering the private road bridge.

SC. Stated that on balance she was in favour of a barrier and believed that over time this would reduce volume of cars and help to ensure there was space for the users of the Riverside Centre and other groups.

JBO'N raised the question of where a barrier might be sited, and one member of the public stated that a barrier should not restrict access for pedestrians. ER. Explained that a barrier can be shortened to any length to ensure ample space for pedestrians and wheelchair users. He stated that whilst the main purpose of a barrier might be to secure the car park at night, an electronic fob system might allow certain users access to the car park, and even to the entrance of the Riverside Centre. He referred to paying for the space, and whilst there was favour for this, there was the risk of penalising local people, and if day trippers paid it might empower them to feel they have even more rights to use the space. The difficulty of managing this very limited space between local users, community groups and visitors was a difficult equation to resolve. DO'N. raised the need to ensure that part or all the speed humps were removed to allow cyclists and wheelchair users access, and to reduce the trip hazard at night. MA. Stated that the emergency services would need to have the access code for a barrier. BP. Stated that users of the car park would have contact numbers in the event of a problem, and some systems allow for entry control, with the barrier rising automatically on exit.



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ML. Summarised by stating it had been agreed that there needed to be some method of controlling access to the car park. One way was to have a physical barrier, another was to control it by notices and warnings supported by ANPR supervision, and to look at the range of possibilities that may exist. The residents in the immediate locality should be included to discuss the impact on them. JA. Proposed that the working group should be charged with considering all appropriate options and providing their recommendations to the full council for a decision. BP. Confirmed that the brief should be expanded from the Riverside Centre to the whole area as a major project. The budget process commenced in November and concluded in January, and that any proposals made ahead of the November Full council meeting would enable ample time to slot them into the budget process.

It was proposed by JA, seconded by SC and unanimously RESOLVED to put forward a proposal to the Full Council meeting on 17th September 2020, to expand the Riverside working group to incorporate The Staithe, and for it to be charged with presenting its proposals to a full meeting of the council in November.

2) ML. To consider refurbishing the car park, resurfacing, and resolving problems with loose shingle causing both noise and drainage issues, cutting back vegetation, and looking at low level lighting options for the car park, stating that this would be a large undertaking, and therefore something to plan for. SC. Referred to an awareness from past discussions of the various problems of the surface and condition of the car park, and the need to consider better use of the parking space beyond the gate.

DO'N. Stated that he would like to see the disabled toilets re-opened outside the Riverside Centre. BP. Suggested this item should be added to the Riverside (Staithe) sub-committee and requested that ER. should arrange dates and an invitation to join (the sub-committee), with meetings either by Zoom, or held in a secure meeting environment at the Riverside Centre.

3)ML. Suggested that once BTC owned the land it could then work towards improving the area, including improved signage, the opening of the disabled toilet with time lock, more picnic tables to encourage families, and all sorts of other opportunities, emphasising the need to get on with these things before next summer.

PL. Referred to the Staithe as a marvellous facility, and if promoted and used in the right way, that the antisocial behaviour would diminish. The site could be used more productively, linking up with Falcon Meadow, community engagement, the canoe club, and other opportunities for gainful voluntary work, leaving less opportunity for antisocial behaviour to develop.

SC. Had been engaging with local professionals who were well placed to offer advice on how to cut back hedgerows without adversely affecting wildlife, controlling nettles to provide more green space, etc. The Suffolk Wildlife trust would also advise and help the area as part of their home environment. AD. Confirmed the availability of expertise within FMCT when managing and maintaining Falcon meadow and felt that joining forces would be a positive opportunity.

It was generally acknowledged that improvements to the CCTV system was the way forward when protecting furniture such as picnic tables and lifesaving equipment, and further improvements should be made to actively encourage families, such as cycle racks and toilet facilities, and to form a



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strong alliance on both sides of the river (FMCT). PL. Suggested that we should explore picnic tables made from recycled materials,

ML. Summarised by stating that the key thing was to get on with the project, to Invite people, push forward, and to be inclusive of all local communities. The Staithe was a fantastic space for the town, with the Riverside Centre and Falcon Meadow all there in one, creating an opportunity to host events, and to be ambitious in how the area could be used, and for the council to take the lead in promoting it. BP. Said there was so much talent in the town, musicians, artists, and how there was a desire to find ways of exploring and enjoying it.

GPAC-040
2020/2021

The Riverside Centre: to review the conditions of hire based on a change in the law (social gatherings maximum of 6) – for Consideration.

ER. Advised the committee that the proposed change in the law, due to be implemented on 14th September 2020, had caused some confusion, and although the changes were aimed at individuals rather than commercial / community groups, it would inevitably cause some concern. He stated that it was for councillors to decide, based on the current Covid-19 risk assessments and undertakings in place, if it was the right decision to continue to operate the Riverside Centre. The only additional requirement was that legislation would require the names and contact details of all attendees to be taken, a requirement that was already being satisfied.

There was currently an art class, a yoga group and a knitting group attending, with additional further interest. A local trader had shown an interest in providing classes but had chosen to view on a day where the car park was full, and for this reason had subsequently declined.

PL. Stated they had read the documents and considered them to be succinct and clear, and felt the council should carry on, thus giving people positive encouraging messages, and that it was safe to use the facilities when acting responsibly.

BP. Stated that he absolutely agreed, and how he would like to see the centre packed full every night, as it had been costing a lot of money every year since it was built.

MA. Informed the committee that St. John Ambulance would not be using the Riverside Centre due to the 3,500kg weight restriction on bridge.

It was proposed by SC, seconded by MA and unanimously RESOLVED to put forward a proposal to the Full Council meeting on 17th September 2020, to continue to hire out the Riverside Centre on the recommendation of the assistant clerk, the only additional legal requirement being to record the contact details of all attendees.

ER. Referred to a prepared email that had been circulated to the committee, intended to reassure current users that the Riverside Centre remained open to hire, and was largely unaffected by the change in legislation which applied to private gatherings, rather than commercial and community facilities.

GPAC-041
2020/2021

Date and time of next meeting: Thursday 8th October 2020. – for information.

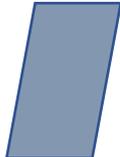
There was no further business and the meeting closed at 8.53pm.

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Date _____



BUNGAY TOWN COUNCIL



10th September 2020

Jeremy Burton
Town Clerk

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