



Soham Town Council
The Walter Gidney Pavilion
Fountain Lane
Soham
Cambridgeshire CB7 5ED
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NOTICE OF MEETING:
Community Amenities Committee
TIME: 7.15pm
DATE: 4th September 2023
VENUE: Walter Gidney Pavilion
Fountain Lane Soham
CB7 5ED

SOHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Soham Town Council Community Amenities Committee Meeting held at the Walter Gidney Pavilion, Fountain Lane, recreation ground, Soham on Monday 4th September 2023.

Present: Cllrs E Johnston (Chairman), D Woricker, R Aitchison and K Horgan.
M Francis, Assistant Town Clerk.

In attendance: There were 4 members of the public present.

The meeting was opened at 7.18pm.

MINUTES

COM05/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Anne Pallett (personal).
Cllr Dyer was absent from the meeting.

COM06/23 COUNCILLORS' DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None.

COM07/23 APPROVAL OF MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING

- a) APPROVED unanimously – minutes of the Community Amenities Committee meeting held on 26th June 2023.

COM08/23 COMMUNITY AMENITIES PROJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

- a) To consider correspondence from Pet Doctors re: repairs to cemetery wall/trees. It was AGREED unanimously to obtain quotations for repairs to the wall for consideration at Full Council in October. Proposed Cllr Aitchison, seconded Cllr Horgan. It was thought that the cost of repairs to the wall had previously been shared between the Council and the veterinary practice. A quotation for the tree works had already been obtained as part of the Council's ongoing maintenance programme and this had been approved by the Finance & Policy Committee.
- b) Cemetery Chapel update – Cllr Woricker said that the scaffolding should have been taken down by now as it is off-hire. It is hoped it will be taken down within the next few weeks. Inside, the plastering has been completed and quotations are being sought for the internal decoration. It was noted that CEL Group Ltd had carried out the work to a very high standard whilst also being approachable and helpful

throughout the project. Cllr Woodbridge was thanked on behalf of the Council for his work in overseeing the project.

- c) Soham to Wicken Cycleway update – Cllr Woricker said that a meeting between all parties, including ECDC, CCC Highways and the Combined Authority, had been very positive, and it is expected that work on the cycleway will begin in January next year and be finished by June. Soham Town Council's role is chief sponsor, with very little input into how the work will be carried out. However, Cllr Woricker said that the Council can have confidence that everything is being done in the correct way. CCC Highways has said they will carry out ongoing maintenance of the cycleway, so these costs will not need to be met by the Town Council. Further consultation with users will take place in the near future.
- d) Allotments update – Cllr Johnston said that quotations for the water connection for the Weatheralls allotments are due to be considered at next week's Full Council meeting.
- e) Purchase and sale of land update – Cllr Johnston reported that the purchase of land at The Butts allotments is progressing, albeit slowly. It was noted that the Council had requested to test the land for burials before proceeding with the purchase, but this request had been denied by the Vendor. Regarding two pieces of land the Council wishes to sell, Cllr Johnston is liaising with the Council's land agent and Cheffins regarding valuation. It is likely the land will be valued below its previous valuation of some years ago. The land has been offered to local housing associations, but it is more likely to be bought by a small developer. The land will be sold at market value in accordance with section 127(2) of the Local Government Act 1972.
- f) Drayton Meadows update – Cllr Johnston reported that a funding bid had been submitted for purchase of a bench, hedging, a sculpture for the wellbeing area, fruit or other trees for planting, a wildlife camera and bee and bug hotels. Cllr Aitchison said that she had ordered 300 small hedge/tree plants for the Meadow (free of charge) which will be planted in a double row. Guards and canes are included. Cllr Horgan suggested asking the Community Payback team to come and plant them. Mr John Aitchison had cut the path again but brambles on the path will need to be sprayed. It was proposed by Cllr Aitchison that Cllr Johnston continue to act on behalf of the Council regarding Drayton Meadows and the proposal was seconded by Cllr Horgan and APPROVED unanimously.
- g) Commons update – Cllr Johnston had met with the owner of the Commons and ECDC's commons manager, Emma Danielsson, to discuss the commons, their protection for the future and possible inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Shade Common, North Fen (Barcham Stephens Commons Land) and Barways Common were also discussed as they are also of interest to both the Council and ECDC.
- h) Churchyard wall update – Cllr Horgan said that the Diocese had asked the Council to engage a surveyor to provide a specification of repair work to the wall, and this had been agreed at the Finance & Policy meeting held earlier today. Following this, a new quotation will be obtained which is likely to be higher than the original. ECDC has confirmed that the grant money it had offered could be increased to cover any extra costs. It was APPROVED unanimously for Cllr Horgan and another Councillor hold a meeting with Geoffrey Hunter (Diocese) to ensure that any other potential issues can be ironed out to allow the work to go ahead as soon as possible. Proposed Cllr Woricker, seconded Cllr Johnston.

- i) Pavilion Phase II – APPROVED unanimously to recommend to Full Council to submit the architect’s plans for Phase II to EDCD for planning permission. Proposed Cllr Aitchison, seconded Cllr Woricker.
- j) Scout Hut Lease – it was AGREED by a majority that, due to the long history of discussions and negotiations, Cllr Johnston will continue to lead on this matter. Cllr Johnston will arrange a meeting with local Scout leaders, the District Scout leader and Cllr Woricker to discuss the future of the lease. Proposed Cllr Woricker, seconded Cllr Aitchison.
- k) Future projects - Youth projects/Connections Bus and crossing over the Lode.

COM09/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

4th December 2023.

The meeting was closed at 8:25pm.