

**Minutes of the Property and Amenities Committee Meeting held at
Corsham Town Hall on Wednesday 19 July 2023**

Present Councillor T Ellis (Chair)
Councillors S Abbott, N Brakspear, J Brook, G McCaffrey,
J Robertson and R Williams.

In Attendance J Whittleton (Head of Technical Services).

P&A 13/23 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors H Belcher OBE and G Ward.

P&A 14/23 Public Question Time and Petitions

There were none.

P&A 15/23 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

**P&A 16/23 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Property & Amenities Committee
meeting held on 23 May 2023**

Minute P&A 10/23 – Requests for Highways Improvements and Traffic Surveys -
The Committee noted that the action relating to refuse lorries parking in the High Street had yet to be completed.

P&A 17/23 Public Realm RIBA Stage 2 (*Minute P&A 05/23 and others*)

Consideration was given to the Concept Design Report, produced at the end of RIBA Stage 2. The Town Council had always anticipated pausing at this stage and investigating what funding opportunities might be available. The Head of Technical Services reported that he had written to Wiltshire Council's Economic Regeneration Team to assist with this. Consideration was also given to recommendations from the Public Realm Working Group who had identified four elements in the Concept Design Report that could be taken forward now, without significant input from consultants or Wiltshire Highways. These elements were: the Moxhams/Wyvern House wall and hedge, the pocket park and coach parking area in the long stay car park, the frontage of the short stay car park and the area to the side of Hong Kong House.

Issues discussed included:

- How the coach parking area would be used – whether it would be used for long stay parking or as a drop off/pick up point;
- The loss of car parking spaces that would arise from the proposed works at the short stay and long stay car parks;
- That pocket parks would serve to improve the feel of the town; and
- The potential cost of taking forward the four areas.

Resolved:

To proceed with the following elements of the Concept Design Report: Moxhams/Wyvern House wall/hedge and the pocket park and coach parking area in the long stay car park.

P&A 18/23 Biodiversity Action Plan (*Minute P&A 07/23 and others*)

Consideration was given to the Biodiversity Action Plan which had been produced with ecologists at Johns Associates. The Plan had been commissioned in order to provide the Town Council with a guide on the management of its open spaces with biodiversity/nature recovery in mind. The Plan provided site specific advice, general advice on managing certain types of habitat e.g. woodland, grasslands or ponds and also a suggested schedule for grounds maintenance that would inform the Town Council's grounds maintenance contract which was due to go out to tender later in the year.

Issues discussed included:

- That the Plan was a guide only and that the Town Council was not obliged to implement every element of the Plan.

Resolved:

To approve the Biodiversity Action Plan and to use it as a guide in the management of the Town Council's open spaces.

P&A 19/23 Consultation on 20mph Limits in Corsham Town Centre (*Minute P&A 06/23 and others*)

Consideration was given to a recommendation from the 20mph Working Group to introduce a limited town centre 20mph area consisting of Newlands Road (from the Priory Street junction to the Pickwick Road junction), Pickwick Road (from the junction with The Tynings to the War Memorial), Pound Pill (from the War Memorial to the Great Western) and Station Road (from the Pickwick Road junction to its junction with Williams Grove). The Head of Technical Services had prepared a draft consultation document which he proposed to publish on Survey Monkey in August.

Issues discussed included:

- That having a small concise 20mph area covering locations where pedestrian movements were at their highest represented a sensible approach.

Resolved:

- 1) To approve the 20mph Working Group's recommendation for a concise town centre 20mph area based on Newlands Road and parts of Pickwick Road, Station Road and Pound Pill.
- 2) To approve the consultation document and to carry out consultation with local residents in August.

P&A 20/23 Springfield Skate Park (*Minute P&A 34/22 and others*)

The Committee received an update on the Springfield Skatepark project. The Head of Technical Services recommended that the Town Council undertakes a 'tender up front' to select a specialist skatepark contractor at the beginning of the project. This contractor would be appointed as a speculative partner and would be responsible for working with the Town Council and a group of local skaters (user group) to draw up a design, assisting in grant applications to outside organisation such as Sport England or the National Lottery and managing the planning application stage. Only when the design, funding and planning permission were in place would the Town Council enter into a contract to construct the skatepark. It was also noted that the first meeting of the user group (made up of local skaters) had taken place the previous week. The meeting had been really positive, and the group had come up with lots of ideas. The group had decided that their next meeting would focus on fundraising.

Issues discussed included:

- The possibility of local businesses sponsoring the skatepark; and
- Whether a role could be played by the Youth Council.

Resolved:

To note the update and to approve the 'tender up front' process.

P&A 21/23 Arnold House Maintenance

Consideration was given to two elements in the Asset Management Plan pertaining to Arnold House. The Plan identified 39 tasks relating to the internal fabric of the building (a large amount of this was lath & plaster work in Flat 2). The Head of Technical Services had obtained an initial quote for this work which had come in at £33,430 plus VAT, though there was scope for this to rise as seven of the tasks were to inspect certain features and costs could increase if faults were found.

The second element related to the damp issue which affected the entrance to Flat 2. A quote had been received to lower the outside ground level, install a French drain, replace the concrete path with natural stone paving (with gaps in-between for water to soak through) and the re-plaster the foyer with lime-based

plaster. The quote for this work had come in at £18,518 plus VAT. Listed Building Consent would have to be obtained before these works were carried out. The Committee was asked whether it wished to approve these two elements of work.

The Committee was also invited to consider this work in the context of a decision on the future of Arnold House. It was pointed out that the roof would have to be replaced in the next 5-10 years and that a recent quote for this work had come in at £80,000 plus VAT. The Strategic Planning Working Group was due to meet shortly, and the Committee was asked whether it wished to make a recommendation on the future of Arnold House to the Group.

Issues discussed included:

- What purpose the building served;
- The possibility of increasing the income from the building;
- That the Town Council might receive a better price for the building if the repairs had been carried out; and
- The possibility of making provision for building maintenance via a sinking fund in which 2.5% of the value of the property was put in each year.

Resolved:

To agree to the works taking place subject to the recommendations of the Strategic Planning Working Group.

P&A 22/23 Park Lane Trollies

It was noted that a quote for the concrete base element of the plinth had not been received yet.

Resolved:

To defer consideration of this item to the next meeting, where plans of the trollies and plinths and costed options should be presented.

P&A 23/23 Pockeridge Road Play Areas

The Head of Technical Services presented a way forward for refurbishing the two play areas at Pockeridge Road. The project would be a little different to a normal refurbishment as the presence of a significant slope at Pockeridge A (the larger play area) would mean that the site would require creative thinking to make best use of the space. An initial consultation with residents was planned in order to ascertain the age range that needed to be catered for and whether there were any particular ideas or aspirations local residents had for the spaces. It was proposed that an early engagement would be placed on Contracts Finder with a view to selecting three companies to produce detailed designs that could be consulted upon.

Resolved:

To approve the design and tender process outlined by the Head of Technical Services and to refurbish the play areas.

P&A 24/23 Update on Local Highway Improvement Issues (*Minute P&A 09/23 and others*)

The Head of Technical Services gave an update on the LHFIG meeting that had taken place earlier on 9 July.

Bradford Road Speed Limit – The Senior Traffic Engineer would now be progressing the work (reducing the speed limit to 40mph for a limited length) and expected the TRO advert to be published in early September.

Pool Green/Elley Green Bollard – The bollard had now been installed.

20mph Limits in Neston – The TRO was due to be advertised on 4 August 2023.

20mph Limits in Corsham – There had been some debate as to whether this could be taken forward this financial year or the next. An accurate cost for the Town Council's revised/reduced scheme had not been produced yet.

Lacock Road Verge – The Town Council would be asked to commit funding for this scheme before it went forward for a substantial bid.

Waiting Restrictions – The list of 10 sites (eight in Corsham) would be advertised by mid-September. It was felt that batches should be sent through every two years.

A4, Cross Keys Speed Limit – The Senior Traffic Engineer would now look to progress the reduce speed limit in accordance with the consultant's assessment.

Resolved:

To consider the Town Council contribution to the Lacock Road work at the next Committee meeting.

P&A 25/23 Requests for Highway Improvements and Traffic Surveys (*Minute P&A 10/23 and others*)

- i. Bradford Road, Corsham – Request to reduce the speed limit, cut verge-side vegetation, install a light-controlled crossing and a chicane.

Issues discussed included:

- That the requested lower speed limit would not be permitted as a speed limit assessment had been recently carried out.

Resolved:

To recommend to Wiltshire Council that the crossing element be looked at. The Town Council might be willing to contribute more than the normal 25% parish/town contribution if a beneficial proposal could be developed.

- ii. Hitherspring, Corsham – Request to install better lighting from Hitherspring to the Knowle.

Issues discussed included:

- That the issue was not a high priority improvement; and
- The need to prevent light pollution that would adversely impact on important local bat populations.

Resolved: Not to send the request on to the LHFIG.

- iii. Elley Green, Neston – Request to install a concrete verge opposite the entrance to the Leaffield Industrial Estate.

Resolved:

To support the issue being considered by the LHFIG.

- iv. Westwells Road – Request to extend the proposed 20mph limit to residential areas to the east of Westwells Road.

Issues discussed included:

- That the proposed 20mph area in Neston does cover residential areas to the east of Westwells Road.

Resolved:

To write to the applicant, explaining the extent of the planned Neston 20mph scheme.

P&A 26/23 Update on the Speed Indicator Devices and Autospeedwatch

Since the last Committee meeting, the SIDs had been deployed at:

Cross Keys Road, 15-31 May – average speeds 25.22mph incoming and 25.19 outgoing.

Opposite the Old Post Office Gastard, 15 May – 1 June - average speeds 28.64mph incoming and 31.88 outgoing.

Elley Green, 8-29 June - average speeds 25.52mph incoming and 25.87 outgoing.

Furzehill, 8-30 June - average speeds 25.42mph incoming and 27.47 outgoing.

The Head of Technical Services reported that the Police & Crime Commissioner had developed a new system for towns and parishes to send their SID data to the Police. The Town Council would use this system and send all SID data from August 2023. The Committee also noted that the Town Council had purchased an Autospeedwatch camera, which had been set up at Gastard.

Resolved:

To note the update.

P&A 27/23 Proposed Traffic Regulation Order

Consideration was given to Wiltshire Council's consultation on introducing a Traffic Regulation Order to cover the Springfield Community Campus car park.

Issues discussed included:

- That restricting occupancy to three hours might narrow the use of the car park.

Resolved:

To respond to the consultation stating that the Town Council would prefer that a time restriction was not placed on the car park as it would limit the use of the car park.

The meeting began at 7.30pm and ended at 9.20pm. There was one member of the public present.

CHAIRMAN

DATE