

Minutes of the Recreation and Services Committee Meeting
held on Monday 21 March 2016 at 7:30pm
at the Olney Centre

Present: Councillors Tony Evans, Ben Brock, Deirdre Bethune, Jeremy Rawlings, Joe Stacey, John Boardman, John Sharp, Ron Bull, Sally Pezaro

Also present: Councillors Colin Rodden

In attendance: Liam Costello (Town Clerk)

Public Forum:

- Liz Clewett spoke on behalf of the Allotment Association in support of their request for an additional plot for the Community Allotment. They wished to expand their successful scheme to fulfil their waiting list. She confirmed that they do not sub-let plots.

She also spoke in support of the association's wish to provide a toilet on site. They are looking at two possible alternatives; a composting toilet at a cost of £10K; and an eco-toilet at a cost of £5K

- The Town Clerk read out a note submitted by the Bowls Club regarding the skatepark project. They had no objection to sites A and B, but did object to sites C and D. Their concerns were the visual impact because of the height of the ramps and the relocated zip-wire.
- Stuart spoke in support of the skatepark. He started skating as a 10 year old. The sport appeals to all ages. In the old days there were no facilities, and they skated in car parks and other places. This will benefit Olney now and in the future. The recreation ground is the best place, and Emberton Park is too far away.
- Alex Strickland spoke in support of the skatepark proposal. He started skating a couple of years ago. There was a lack of facilities. The Johnson Field ramp was dangerous because of the surface. A skatepark in Olney would give youngsters something to do.
- Alexander echoed the concerns that the Johnsons Field skatepark was too dangerous. The nearest facility is in Newport Pagnell. He cannot drive and therefore has to rely on parents to taxi him back and forth. Skateparks are also used by BMX, scooters and roller skaters.
- Neil Elliott spoke on behalf of T.O.G. He spoke on behalf of 1,000's who attend their events, and was worried that their concerns were not being addressed. He felt that the zip-wire site was the best location and stressed the importance of consultation to find the best solution.

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Stephen Clark

2. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2016

- Cllr Stacey stated that he was concerned that the decision taken under item 6 regarding the Allotment Field was not made in accordance with the council's standing orders.
- Cllr Rodden felt that the minutes on the public forum did not make it clear that the clubs and TOG had expressed support for the zip wire site as a location for a skatepark.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2016 be approved and signed by the chairman, subject to amending the comments expressed in the public forum.

3. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda

None

4. Skatepark and 5 a side/netball/basketball court

The chairman opened the item by saying that he would allow 10 minutes for the skatepark group to present their report, noting that all members of the committee will have read the document in advance.

Cllr Rodden expressed concern that they had been promised a special meeting to discuss this item, and would have insisted on this if he had known that they would receive only 10 minutes to present their case.

The chairman said that he would be flexible about the time limit, but asked that the presentation focussed on the key points as all members of the committee had read the report prior to the meeting.

Francis, Tom and Barry (members of the skatepark group) presented the key points from the report. They had assessed all potential sites in the town, and drawn up a short list of 5 sites. They had consulted with all the clubs and taken into account the concerns of TOG and the tennis club.

All sites had been evaluated against a scoring matrix, assessing distance from homes and public toilets, power connection, emergency access, risk of anti-social behaviour, public access, impact on other facilities, footfall, cost, size and construction.

The assessment scored site C the highest score, and Phil Snell (MKC) has offered to assist in the relocation of the zip wire, possibly to Emberton Park.

The group therefore asked the council to allocate site C for the skate park.

Cllr Rodden elaborated on the points made by Francis, Tom and Barry. He commented that over 150hrs had been spent by the team in preparing the report, and they had worked with stakeholders and the community. He noted that there had not been any negative feedback on the Olney Notice board.

He felt that the group had fulfilled the remit set by the committee in January to assess all alternative sites and engage with stakeholders and the community, and asked the committee to look positively on the request to allocate site C for a skatepark.

Tony Summerscales, who works as a project manager, supported the project. He felt there was a phenomenal amount of energy put into the project by the youngsters and asked the council to allow the allocation of site C.

Cllr Rodden made reference to the crowdfunding, noting that it hadn't been promoted actively by the group, but that the committee had asked the group at the Jan meeting to raise funds for the project.

The chairman asked the committee if they had any questions to ask the group.

Cllr Bull asked whether the bowls club were in favour of site C. Tony Summerscales answered that their concerns were around the relocation of the zip-wire between the muga and the tennis club, and that consideration is being given to moving the zip-wire to Emberton Park.

Cllr Pezaro asked for clarification about the zip wire being relocated to Emberton Park. Cllr Sharp said the zip-wire could be moved to site A. Cllr Rodden responded that the zip wire in site A would be a distraction to the tennis club and that the cost of relocating the zip wire to Emberton Park would be borne by MKC.

Cllr Brock asked who would be responsible for maintenance of the skatepark. Cllr Rodden replied that this would be for future discussion/agreement with the council.

Cllr Brock said that there would be a need for a fence alongside site C as exists, and that the group need to be aware of the existing storm water drain that runs through site C. Carl Clennett responded that the site tapered and would include a fence of the same height to meet cricket club requirements.

The chairman said that he would be disappointed to see the loss of the zip-wire to Emberton Park and would like to see it relocated to an alternative site in Olney.

Cllr Stacey question how realistic the bowls club's objection was to the zip wire going to site B.

Cllr Bethune suggested relocation the zip-wire to the Nursery Field

The chairman closed the question and answer section by commending the group for their work and thanking them.

The committee then debated the report and recommendation from the group.

RESOLVED: That the committee recommend to the council that site C be allocated for a skatepark, subject to agreement on the relocation of the zip-wire to a suitable site

5. Allotments - Community Association request for additional plot

The committee considered a request from the Allotment Association for an additional plot for the community allotment. Also considered was a request for a composting or eco-toilet at the allotments.

RESOLVED: To arrange a site meeting at the allotments for the committee to meet with the association and consider their requests.

6. Request for Memorial Bench

The committee considered a request from the Colts FC for a memorial bench by the river in memory of one of their coaches who was recently killed in a car accident.

RESOLVED: To agree to the request

7. Circular Walk Update

The committee received an update from Cllr Rodden on the circular walk project. Phil Snell (MKC) was now involved to lend his project management experience, and the museum were keen to link into the project to develop a heritage walk through the town.

The chairman requested that a detailed map be produced showing the route.

RESOLVED:

- To note progress; and
- Detailed map of the route to be produced.

8. East St Play area upgrade

Work is due to be completed by the Easter break. The committee were pleased with work to date.

RESOLVED: To note progress, and to send a letter of thanks to Phil Snell once the works have been completed.

9. Thursday Market

a. Italian Market – Sunday 17th April

The Chairman and Town Clerk met with the organisers last month and agreed a fee of £400. Promotional material has been supplied by the organiser. The market will occupy the top half of the market only.

b. Real Belgium Fries

The committee considered a hot food application for the Thursday market. The committee noted that there were already two hot food traders and, conscious of the impact on local shops, felt that was sufficient.

RESOLVED: to keep the applicant on the waiting list until one of the existing hot-food traders vacates the market.

c. Casual policy

RESOLVED: Item deferred

10. Farmers Market

Barn Bacon Ltd

The committee considered a request for an additional stall from a Farmers Market trader to sell food on the Thursday market.

RESOLVED: That Barn Bacon be allowed to sell home produced hot food on the Thursday market when a space becomes available.

