

GENERAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the General Services Committee held at 6.30pm on Tuesday, 22 March 2022 in the Town Hall, Banbury.

Present: Councillor Colegrave (Chairman)
Councillors: Ahmed, Bunce, Cherry, Dalton, Donaldson, Kilsby, Mears, Richards, Phillips.

Alternate Members: Councillor Ahmed (for Councillor Powell)

Officers: Mark Recchia (Town Clerk)
Mark Hassall (Deputy Town Clerk & RFO)
Paul Almond (Operations Manager)
Martyn Surfleet (Executive Officer)

GS.33/21 Apologies for Absence
Councillor Powell.

GS.34/21 Declarations of Interest
None.

GS.35/21 Minutes of the Last Meeting
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 January 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

GS.36/21 Income & Expenditure Report
The Committee considered a report prepared by the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO comparing year-to-date income and expenditure with the projected annual budget for the financial year. The report showed all expenditure incurred up to 14 March 2022.

Officers responded to a range of questions from Members relating to various budget codes and financial procedures. Members' attention was drawn to the fact that overall the Committee's expenditure was within forecast versus the phased YTD budget.

General Services variances were principally

- Cleansing contract costs for Litter Control which fell payable in March 22.
- Salaries and grounds maintenance costs impacted by vacancies and the remaining costs for the year across Cemeteries, Parks and Football pitches. Purchase of BBQ units and wood chipper were completed. Arboriculture works were currently being completed ahead of bird nesting season (4500/110). Lower spend expenditure against Playground maintenance (4501/110) was to be earmarked to protect capacity to continue refurbishment required across the estate, along with computer software for monitoring estate services (4070/110).
- Horton View bowling green costs to repair sprinkler heads would be incurred in Q4.
- Increased expenditure on cleaning across the estate was offset by grant income from the Controlling Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) received into the Resources committee within other income (£110k).
- Timing of capital expenditure invoices for Hill view play area refurbishment to be completed in 2022 (£117k). Works had commenced on the café build

in People's Park, projected to last 33 weeks. Officers are in the process of appointing an agent to engage with potential operators of the future facility.

- Advertising on Bus Shelters was being funded by a grant received from COMF.

IT WAS RESOLVED to receive and note the Income and Expenditure report.

GS.37/21 Parks and Cemeteries Monitoring Report

The Committee considered a report on the condition of the parks, recreation grounds, cemeteries and open spaces in Banbury. The report covered the following areas:

- Parks & Cemeteries Team
- 4th Corner Landscape Contract
- Park Ranger Service
- Spiceball BBQ Area
- Cleansing Service Review
- People's Park Car Park
- Peoples Park Café

Parks & Cemeteries Team Service Update

The team had started mowing, and Health and Safety training was booked in. The Lead Parks and Cemetery Operative and Parks Supervisor roles remained open and had been re-advertised, the closing date was 23rd March 2022. Officers would be researching all options for attracting and retaining staff in these roles and would report back to Members with suggestions.

The teams continued to clear large amount of tree debris, due to recent storms, no damage was caused to people or property.

A Wood Chipper had been procured, to help reduce the volume of green waste skips as the team were now are able to recycle 100% of all plant material. Training for staff was planned for April.

4th Corner Landscape Contract

Contractor ready for the start of the mowing season and the early cuts were going well. Officers had no issues or concerns with the Contractor's performance, service delivery was generally very good and the work programme was being delivered as per the schedules.

Park Ranger Service

The team continued to keep up to date with Health & Safety inspections and the resulting repairs to children's play areas.

Spiceball Park BBQ Area

All of the BBQ area equipment had now been delivered, awaiting installation costs and were looking to be installed in time for use by the public as the weather improved. The costs of creating this additional facility in Spiceball Park had been funded through the successful Town Council bid for COMF (Containing Outbreak Management Fund).

Cleansing Service Review

The Town Council has two arrangements for providing cleansing services across Parks and Cemeteries:

- Outdoor Cleansing, litter picking, litter and dog bin emptying, this was delivered through a SLA with CDC, the current agreement was due to end on 31st March 2022.
- Building and Facility Cleaning, Public Toilets, Sports Pavilions, Halls and Mess rooms, the contract also ends on 31st March 2022.

The Outdoor Cleaning Service delivered by Cherwell District Council had been a success over the last 7 years, and this arrangement provided value for money. Initial discussions with Cherwell District Council was that they were happy to continue providing Banbury Town Council this Service.

Building and Facility Cleaning had been delivered by Goshen Green since 1st April 2020. On reviewing the financial costs and service delivery requirements associated with this contract and the TUPE implications (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment) there was an option to deliver efficiencies and improvements by bringing this service in-house and not retendering.

Peoples Park Car Park – Bath Road

Complaints regarding antisocial behaviour in the Bath Road Car Park were on the increase. Reports had been received of groups gathering in cars engaging in antisocial and illegal behaviour. Significant evidence of this activity had been provided, and although the illegal activity was a matter for the Police and Cherwell District Council Community Safety Team, there was a problem in that this council facility was being abused by non-park users, which deterred genuine users who wished to visit the Park and caused issues for adjoining residents. The Operations Manager had the full support of the Committee to investigate and action a solution regarding the antisocial behaviour in Bath Road carpark, in consultation with the Chairman and to update the committee at the next meeting.

Peoples Park Café – Update

The refurbishment works were well underway, Officers continued to monitor progress and work with the Architects and contractors on the build out. Although some delays on material lead times had been identified, it was not at this stage anticipated the project would overrun past the summer.

Officers were also working with White Commercial with a view to marketing the site as a café opportunity, to attract potential catering operators.

Officers responded to a number of questions raised by Members.

It was then **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) note the Parks and Cemeteries Service Update.
- (2) note the 4th Corner Landscape Contract Update.
- (3) note the Park Ranger Service Update.
- (4) note the progress made on installing the Spiceball BBQ Area.
- (5) approve the recommendations for the Cleansing Service Review.
- (6) approve the recommendations for the People's Park Bath Road Car Park.
- (7) note the People's Park Café update.

The meeting ended at 7.30pm