

ASSET & SERVICES COMMITTEE
SAFFRON WALDEN TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the ASSETS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING held remotely via the online platform “Zoom” and in accordance with the Coronavirus Act, C 7, Part 1 Local Authority Meetings, Section 78. This Act allows members to be present and attend a meeting without being present in the Council Chamber or together in the same place.

Date of meeting: **Monday 26th October 2020** at 7.30pm

Present: Councillors Asker, Freeman (Chair), Frost, Gadd, Light, McLellan, Millward (substitute for Cllr Coote), Porch and Roberts

Officers: Lisa Courtney, Town Clerk and Terry Frostick, Operations Manager

Also Present: Louise Dunderdale, The Reporter
Mr Matt Claire (re Min Ref A & S 112-20 and A & S 113-20)

A & S 108-20	Apologies for absence Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Coote, noting that Cllr Millward was in attendance as his substitute
A & S 109-20	Declarations of Interest Cllrs Asker, Freeman and Light declared generic non-pecuniary interests as members of Uttlesford District Council.
A & S 110-20	Minutes of the last meeting of the Assets & Services Committee The minutes of the Assets & Services Committee meeting held on 28 th September 2020 were accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.
A & S 111-20	Public Speaking Time There were no questions or matters arising from the public with the Chair allowing Mr Matt Clare to address Committee at the appropriate times in relation to his comments and queries
	With the permission of the Committee, the Chair brought forward agenda items 9, Herbert’s Farm and 12, Lime Avenue
A & S 112-20	Herbert’s Farm - Pitch Levelling Mr Matt Clare was present on behalf of SW Community Football Club and spoke further to the proposals for disposal of 4,000m ³ (not 3,000m ³ as originally advised) soil arising from works associated with the installation of an artificial grass pitch at SW County High School. The proposal being for this soil to be disposed of at Herbert’s Farm which would help to create level playing fields (the site is on a slope).

	<p>Committee noted the need for appropriate licences and planning permission to be obtained from the Local Planning Authority but noted that SWTC was being asked as the landowner of Herbert's Farm. Members queried the route of vehicles, noting that any negative impact on roads should be avoided or mitigated against at all costs.</p> <p>It was Resolved:</p> <p>Subject to approval of all appropriate licences and compliance of all and any conditions Imposed by the Local Planning Authority, to allow the disposal of soil at Herbert's Farm Football site, on the basis that the soil is clean and inert. This permission is granted to SW Community Football Club.</p>
A & S 113-20	<p>Lime Avenue / Tudor Park Lease</p> <p>Committee noted and received the report as presented. The Clerk provided further information, noting the hundreds of hours spent in communicating with Persimmon Homes and the copious amount of correspondence and communications over the past 5 years. It was noted that Persimmon often did not engage with the Town Council, its solicitors or UDC and that most communication had been one-sided with little, if any, response from Persimmon Homes.</p> <p>There followed considerable discussion regarding further action which could be taken, including representation to shareholders and local/national press. Any legal redress would need to be taken by UDC who had previously (2015 and 2018) explicitly advised they would not undertake legal action.</p> <p>It was noted that a letter had been drafted to the Chairman, Chief Executive, Directors and non-Executive Directors of Persimmon Homes to summarise the present situation and request their intervention. It was agreed that a copy of this letter be sent to Kemi Badenoch MP and Nigel Huddleston MP, Minister for Sport, Tourism and Heritage. This letter would be sent with urgency to those as noted.</p>
A & S 114-20	<p>SW Retail and Market Plans during Covid-19</p> <p>Committee received the report as presented and Officers spoke further to the information therein.</p> <p>It was Resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) To receive and note the report as presented. (b) To note a market will be held on Christmas Eve and will likely be for pre-booked food orders only; this to prevent crowds or gatherings on Christmas Eve at the market and noting the limited take-up from market traders (c) That no additional markets will be held at the present time due to Covid-19 restrictions, noting that the Town Council did not wish to actively encourage group gatherings or events at this time. The existing Tuesday and Saturday markets continue to operate under safe and appropriate Covid-19 rules and regulations (d) The Committee noted the positive opportunities for the hosting of additional markets but that equally, now was not an appropriate time to progress with this initiative. It was agreed that a press release be issued to note the opportunities of

	<p>additional markets and that SWTC would provide same once it was safe and appropriate to do so.</p> <p>(e) Thanks were given to all staff involved in the smooth operation and management of the market</p>
A & S 115-20	<p>Pricing Structure</p> <p>It was Resolved:</p> <p>To implement a zero-percentage increase those town council services as included within the report for 2021/22. This may not apply to the market and a separate report and recommendation regarding a future charging structure for the market will be presented to the November A & S Committee meeting. It was noted that allotment fees had already been determined for 2021/22</p>
A & S 116-20	<p>Play Area Working Group</p> <p>Committee agreed that the establishment of a Working Group (WG) would be a sound mechanism for progressing the installation of any new play equipment at existing sites. There followed discussion regarding the priority of works with Members wishing to commit to upgrading all existing sites but noting the limitations of the current budget. It was Resolved:</p> <p>(a) To establish a Working Group whose remit is to invite tenders for the refurbishment of the Golden Acre Play Area, off Ross Close within a budget of £75,000 to £100,000</p> <p>(b) That once the tender for the Golden Acre site was awarded, the WG would investigate any works required and refurbishment opportunities at both Anglo-American Play Area and Little Walden</p> <p>(c) Membership to the WG was agreed as: Cllrs Richard Freeman, Paul Gadd, Louise Milward, Kirstie Frost, Arthur Coote</p> <p>(d) That where possible, works at Golden Acre would be initiated by April 2021 - this may include the removal of existing play equipment and/or installation of wet pour for any new installation but would likely exclude actual installation of new equipment</p> <p>(e) That the contract awarding process and public consultation as followed for The Common play areas had been very successful and had delivered excellent results. This same process would be initiated for further play area refurbishments.</p>
A & S 117-20	<p>Tree Planting Initiative</p> <p>Cllr Gadd reported on the WG meeting held earlier that day. Subject to receipt of the ordered trees, a community tree planting day would be held in November/December. The precise location of new tree planting is yet to be determined and the following restrictions/limitations were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity of existing utilities, including the gas pipe • Areas commonly used for play (ie, flat areas, informally used by children)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Herbert's Farm (acknowledging that the possible location of new trees would be the area now granted permission for the disposal of top soil) <p>It was noted that trees could be planted on grass verges, some verges are in the ownership of ECC and UDC.</p>
A & S 118-20	<p>Town Council Vacancy on the Little Walden Village Hall Committee</p> <p>It was Resolved:</p> <p>That Cllr Coote be nominated as the Town Council rep on this Committee, having advised of his acceptance of the nomination.</p>
A & S 119-20	<p>Use of Jubilee Gardens</p> <p>Committee noted the report as provided, it was</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To confirm an in-principle agreement for the use of Jubilee Gardens for the placement of tables and chairs. It is likely that a request will be made by a new tea shop wishing to utilise the space That staff be authorised to negotiate prices, licences, conditions of use and any other associated matters on behalf of the Town Council That staff be authorised to prepare land as appropriate for the placing of any new tables and chairs in the Gardens That exclusivity would not be granted for the use of Jubilee Gardens during any time when the area would ordinarily be open to the public and used as right of access (it was noted that the Gardens are currently locked in the evening/night time for security purposes)
A & S 120-20	<p>Hill Street Toilets</p> <p>Committee noted the awarding of "Platinum" standard from the operators of "Loo of the Year" award. Committee noted this should be communicated via a press release, to market traders and thanks should be given to Kenzies, the cleaning contractor</p>
A & S 121-20	<p>Urgent Information Items</p> <p>There were no matters for reporting</p>
A & S 122-20	<p>Date and time of Next Meeting</p> <p>Noted and agreed as being Monday 23rd November at 7.30pm (via Zoom)</p>
A & S 123-20	<p>Confidential Item</p> <p>It was resolved that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public and accredited representatives of newspapers be excluded from the meeting for the following items of</p>

	business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972
A & S 124-20	Town Hall The Operations Manager provided an update on works carried out to date and that most works had been addressed and completed. A final risk assessment is awaited from the Council's contracted party. Town Council staff were thanked for their hard work and efforts in addressing the works required, noting the Council had a team of multi-disciplined Operatives with abilities to carry out a wide range and variety of duties; thereby saving considerable sums of money in the hiring of outside contractors

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10pm