

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUILDINGS AND ASSETS COMMITTEE OF
TRING TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, THE MARKET HOUSE,
TRING ON MONDAY 9TH OCTOBER 2023 AT 8.35pm**

Present: Councillors: J. Mottershead (Chair)
R. Farrow
B. Patterson
P. Hearn
N. Nutkins (Ex-officio)

Absent: S. Wilkie

Also present: Mrs L Housden (Town Clerk)
Ms C. Murray (Deputy Town Clerk)

21596. **APOLOGIES**

C. Weston (Prior Engagement) and C. Noxon (Prior Engagement)

RESOLVED: Proposed Cllr Hearn, seconded Farrow. To accept the apologies for the reasons given. Unanimously agreed.

21597. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

21598. **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE BUILDINGS & ASSETS COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD ON 3rd JULY 2023**

RESOLVED: Proposed Cllr Hearn, seconded Cllr Patterson that these Minutes be agreed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed by the Chairman
Unanimously agreed.

21599. **MATTERS OF REPORT FROM THE MINUTES**

Nothing to report.

21600. **CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Clerk reported that an inventory was carried out of the High Street back in July and any repairs required noted, a copy of that inventory has been circulated. Where those repairs were the responsibility of other authorities they have been reported to them accordingly. However there may be items that as a Town Council you may still be willing to fund from CIL (even though it is not on Town Council Land) for example the repair of the benches outside the Forge car park. A request has also been made to the Hertfordshire County Councillor to have a meeting with her and a Highways officer as to the condition of the High Street. A date is currently awaited for this meeting to take place.

21601. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

21602. **TO RECEIVE UPDATES ON PROJECTS INVOLVING COUNCIL PROPERTIES AND TO CONSIDER ANY ISSUES SUCH AS MAINTENANCE WITH REGARD TO COUNCIL PROPERTIES**

- (i) **The Market House**, 61 High Street, Tring HP23 4AB and **Information Centre**
 - The surveyor who assisted the Council with the external works has been consulted again to assist with the internal redecoration and he has made initial enquiries to obtain an idea of the cost involved which is likely to be in the region of £9,000. This will include redecoration of the hallway, landing, council chambers & offices. The new flooring (for the landing, council chambers & offices but not the stairs) will be in the region of £2,000. An asbestos survey will also be needed (this should be in place regardless of the works) a quote is being obtained. These works can either be budgeted for in the 2024/25 budget to take place after April next year or an ear-marked reserve could be created and funds saved up. Alternatively three quotes can be obtained now for a contractor to be selected to carry out the works as soon as practically possible and the costs to be met from general reserves. There will of course be logistical difficulties clearing the furniture out and finding an alternative place for meetings. It may be sensible for these works to take place during the summer recess next year.
 - The Information Centre sign has arrived and will soon be up. The information officer has prepared a report for your information which is enclosed.
- (ii) **Church Square**, High Street, Tring
 - Friday Market and the Farmers Market are continuing to take place as normal.
 - The benches have been repainted and sealed.
 - This land is not currently registered with the Land Registry. Although not legally required, unless triggered by a certain event, it is recommended that the Council does this voluntarily as soon as possible as it gives proof of ownership and helps protect the property from fraud. It is therefore proposed that the Council's usual solicitors firm, Austins Penny & Thorne Solicitors in Berkhamsted, are instructed. They will charge in the region of £750 plus VAT plus the Land Registry fee for each application. A very basic valuation will also be required to determine Land registry fees. Brasier Freeth has provided a quote of £2,000 + VAT to value Market House, Church Square and Mansion Vista. Please note that there is currently a budget left of £3,890 in 'Legal and Professional' for this year's budget so we are likely to exceed the year's budget if these costs are agreed and they will therefore be met by general reserves.
- (iii) **Mansion Vista**, land adj. Memorial Garden, High Street, Tring
 - This land is also not currently registered therefore the same action as in respect of Church Square above is proposed.
- (iv) **Market Place**, Brook Street
 - Farmers Market traders are continuing to use this area to park their vehicles (for free). A hire fee is charged for the use of Church Square.
 - Hedge cutting is being carried out and is ongoing

(v) **Nora Grace Hall**

- The Town Warden has been cutting hedges and keeping the outside tidy.
- Tring Together have highlighted that the exterior of the building is in need of some maintenance and hasn't been painted for years. They would like to see this work done regardless of the replacement proposals given it isn't known if and when this will happen.
- **Nora Grace Hall replacement project** - Please refer to the separate agenda item.

(vi) **Pond Close (North)**

- Regular monitoring of playground equipment.
- Please see the enclosed Green Space Audit recommendations - the suggestion is to enhance the wildflower diversity on the site.

(vii) **New Mill land** off Icknield Way

- Meadow Brook – regular litter pick and routine maintenance. Annual grass cut has taken place. Again recommendations have been made by the Green Space Audit.
- Chapel Meadow – regular monitoring of worn surfaces. Recommendations to improve the site have been made in the Green Space audit.
- The ATC hut - ATC solicitors have reviewed the draft lease prepared by the Council's solicitors and asked for some changes which the Council's solicitors are in the process of reviewing. Please note that as the proposed lease term is greater than 7 years it will be classed as a disposal of land. A local council has a general power (s 127 LGA 1972) to dispose of land which it owns by way of sale, lease or tenancy. Except land cannot be disposed of under that section (except by way of a short tenancy) for a consideration less than the best that can reasonably be obtained, unless the consent of the Secretary of State has been given. However the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 (MHCLG Circular 06/2003) removes the requirement to seek specific consent where the difference between the unrestricted value of the interest and the consideration accepted ('the under value') is £2m or less and where the authority considers that the disposal will help it to secure the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of its area. A professionally qualified valuer has therefore been contacted to ask if they can provide a valuation report in accordance with the advice provided in the Technical Appendix of the Consent (referred to above) to show that the undervalue is less than 2 million pounds. Brasier Freeth has quoted £1,500 + VAT to provide this valuation and the tenant has agreed to cover the cost as part of the transaction.

(viii) Bulbourne Land

- A guideline map has been provided as part of the green space audit which could prove useful should it be decided to proceed with allotments on the site.
- If the site remains the property of Tring Town Council some essential maintenance will be required. In particular cutting the bushes inside and outside on the high street and on the inside along the boundary side (in between the site and the houses). The front part of the accessway to be tarmacked and drain to be cleared out. Costings have already been obtained.
- **Parking area -** Bulbourne Residents can currently apply to the Council for a key to the gate to the Bulbourne site to park one or more cars. They pay a £25 deposit for each key. Each year a letter is sent to the residents confirming the data held i.e name & registration number and to confirm if this isn't correct. This letter will be sent out after this meeting.

(ix) Duckmore Lane land

- Allotments – The Town Warden has been busy clearing allotments for new tenants and building a fence between plot no 2. & the community garden.
- Millennium Wood and meadow – Nothing to report.
- Grass keep – is being grazed under an annual grazing agreement.
- Please note the comments made in the green space audit. There is already a millennium wood management plan in place (2022-2027) created and led by a local arboriculturist and he also helped with the wildflower meadow.

(xi) Old School Yard

- Weeding of the area will be carried out soon.

RESOLVED: Proposed Cllr Farrow, seconded Cllr Mottershead :

- (i) To recommend including the Market House internal decoration works in the 23/34 budget with a view to them being carried out in the 2024 summer recess. To go ahead with the asbestos survey as soon as possible. To note the information officers report.
- (ii) To instruct Austins Penny & Thorne Solicitors in Berkhamsted to carry out the First Registration of both Church Square and Mansion Vista (in the region of £750 each plus Land Registry fee).
- (iii) To instruct Brasier Freeth to carry out a basic valuation of the Market House, Church Square and Manison Vista (£2,000 + VAT).
- (iv) To note the updates given in respect of the Market Place.
- (v) To note the update in respect of the Nora Grace Hall and further thought will be given to the decorations required.
- (vi) To note the update and recommendations made in the Green Space Audit regarding Pond Close but not to move forward with wildflower diversity at this time.

- (vii) To investigate further the recommendations given in the Green Space Audit in respect of the Meadow Brook land. Defer the recommendations in respect of Chapel Meadow until after the flood issues have been resolved. To note and approve the update provided in respect of the ATC lease renewal.
- (viii) Recommend maintenance works for Bulbourne site be included in the 23/24 budget and keep Bulbourne parking as it is but both subject to review again after a decision is made as to the use of the land after the Land East of Tring Appeal decision.
- (ix) To note the updates on Duckmore Lane Land.
- (xi) To note the update on the Old School Yard car park.

Unanimously agreed.

21603. **CIL MONIES**

A report had been circulated ahead of the meeting giving the results of the public consultation regarding expenditure of CIL money and highlighting the current CIL position including the amount available to spend and the deadline to do so.

RESOLVED: Proposed Cllr Hearn, seconded Cllr Nutkins. To create a working party to consider what projects should be prioritised and how to move forwards with them. Members to be Cllrs Hearn, Nutkins and Patterson. Unanimously agreed.

21604. **NORA GRACE HALL REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

The Committee was asked to consider if they wished to go ahead with a parking survey as requested by the DBC planning officer. If so which survey they would like to select a basic survey covering weekdays + Saturday 1-4 pm and 6 - 9 pm or a full week survey 9am - midnight, over 7 days.

RESOLVED: Proposed Cllr Nutkins, seconded Cllr Patterson. To instruct a company to carry out the basic survey (in the region of £2,000). Three quotes should be obtained and the clerk will have delegated authority to select which company to use. It will be paid using CIL monies. Unanimously agreed.

The meeting closed at 9.35p.m.

Chairman