

Swaffham Town Council

Minutes of the Assets & Open Spaces Committee meeting held on Wednesday 24 May 2023 in the Town Hall

Councillors: Cllr S Bell, Cllr W Bensley, Cllr D Braithwaite, Cllr S Cooper,
and Cllr P Darby

Deputy Clerk: Helen Carrier

Facilities & Operations Manager: Graham West

Office Administrator: Nicola Forrest

Public: One

AO1/23 Election for Chairman

Cllr Bell was nominated by Cllr Darby and seconded by Cllr Bensley. With no further nominations, all agreed to elect Cllr Bell to serve as Chairman for the coming 12 months.

AO2/23 Election of Vice-Chairman

Cllr Darby was nominated by Cllr Bensley and seconded by Cllr Bell. With no further nominations, all agreed to elect Cllr Darby to serve as Vice-Chairman for the coming 12 months.

AO3/23 Apologies

Cllr Edwards – Holiday

Absent

Cllr Ellerbeck

AO4/23 Declarations of Interest

None received.

AO5/23 Public Open Forum

No members of public present.

AO6/23 Minutes

The minutes of the Assets & Open Spaces meeting held on 27 March 2023 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record.

AO7/23 Outstanding actions agreed at previous meetings

Grass Cutting

We are currently some experiencing teething problems with the new arrangements for the transfer from Norfolk County Council of grass cutting of verges and small areas around the Town to a controlled contractor. In order to deal with this problem a decision has been taken to carry out the first cut in-house, and cutting will commence tomorrow, Thursday 25 May 2023, and continue through next week. The contractor will take responsibility from that point on and work the remainder of the cuts into their regular cutting programme.

Tree at the War Memorial

Initials _____

With the recent transfer of the War Memorial to Swaffham Town Council complete, the Council now have ownership of the trees on the War Memorial they will be added to the Tree register and the maintenance schedule. The trees outside Margarets Café and Wellbread Bakers are not being maintained well, Cllr Braithwaite to write to Norfolk County Council for update.

AO8/23 Assets & Open Spaces issues from Non-Member Councillors

None received.

AO9/23 Allotments

Management report of the allotments by the Deputy Town Clerk

The Deputy Clerk provided an update. All allotments are now allocated with four people on the waiting list. Allotment inspections have resumed.

Report from SCALGA representative

The SCALGA representative was not present but sent a report in prior to the meeting. There are no issues currently with most allotments being maintained well. The road to Shouldham Lane is a source of problems but is unsure how it could be resolved at a reasonable cost.

Report from Escape Project representative

The Escape representative was not present. No report received.

AO10/23 Fire Risk Assessment form Icen Partnership

A Fire Risk Assessment received, and recommendations have been noted

AO11/23 Town Centre Update

Public Realm, Breckland Bus stops

The Deputy Clerk gave an update that the new bus stop works will commence shortly, the concrete around the base will need updating.

Update on Assembly Rooms

A report was received prior to the meeting please see Appendix 1.

Raised bed in the garden at the Warm Memorial

A resident along with the backing of Swaffham rotary Club have requested a bed at the War Memorial for a plaque to remembering people who have died in service to their Country but not in a War Zone.

It was unanimously agreed to give a bed at the War Memorial for the plaque.

Wildflower areas around Swaffham

Councillors would like to see if areas can be used as Wildflower beds to increase bio diversity in Swaffham. Councillors will research areas which are best for this project.

Councillors will ascertain which areas are suitable for wildflowers and costing of the project.

Public Toilets

Quote received to change the public toilets to a combined coin and contactless card entry.

**It was agreed to recommend the changes and defer to Full Council.
Four Councillors agreed and one against.**

Bench Donation

A resident would like to donate a bench for Swaffham.

It was agreed for the Facilities and Operations Manager Graham West to allocate a spot for the bench and request the bench be recyclable and made of composite.

AO12/23 To receive and consider issues at Public Open Spaces & Play Areas
Playground inspection report

The deputy Clerk gave a report on the outstanding issues at the Play Parks.

Report on recent travellers

The Deputy Clerk gave a verbal report.

AO13/23 CemeteryCemetery Roads

One quote was received and noted.

Wildflower areas

It was discussed whether to keep the wildflower areas at the Cemetery.

It was unanimously agreed to cut the wildflower areas.

AO14/23 Town Clerk UpdateChurch Wall

No updates have been received from the Town Clerk.

Shambles

No updates have been received from the Town Clerk.

AO15/23 To agree the date of the next meeting for Monday 26 July 2023 at 12.30pm, to be held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall.

Meeting closed 2.10pm

Chairman _____

Initials _____

Appendix 1

HAZ (Heritage Action Zone) Project.

Scope: To remove paint, repair render, replace lead gutters to Regency Room and repair Regency Room roof. Increase capacity of rainwater goods.

Time Frame: Mar - Jul 2023

Contractor: Cliveden

Funding Partners: Historic England / Breckland Council / Swaffham Town Council / Icen Partnership.

Work is progressing well and on target. Paint removal is near completion.

Roof survey has been completed and a recommendation to re felt & re tile the whole Regency Room roof at an additional cost of circa.£3,000. This is offset with the removal in the cost sheet for a temporary roof requirement at £14,000. The contingency funds pledged by STC & IP will ensure the Regency Room roof can be complete.

Next phase of works will include the Regency Room roof aspects, lead lining gutter and rainwater goods.

Ballroom Ceiling

Scope: Re instate ballroom ceiling following collapse in January.

Time Frame: Jan - Jun 2023

Contractor: Various. Project Manager - Claire, Icen Partnership

Funding Partners: Zurich Insurance / Swaffham Town Council / Icen Partnership

Work is near completion on this project. The new suspended ceiling has been installed; new plaster cornice, New electrics, lights and sockets, additional smoke detection and alarm installation is complete. Re decoration is also complete along with a significant investment in sound and visual equipment, including colour changing LED lights, stage lighting, Glitter ball and an ultra 4K 4.5m viewing screen and projector. Hearing loop and omni sound solution (to ensure the same volume is heard no matter where you are in the room).

Re-instatement costs are being met by Zurich insurance and Swaffham Town Council additional audio-visual equipment costs have been met by Icen Partnership.

On going projects in the Ballroom include the final fitting of wall lights, installation of curtains and curtain poles and re sanding/waxing of the floor.

Going forward, Andrew Gayton (Historic Building Officer, BDC) has recommended that the landlord undertakes a quinquennial (every 5 years) survey on the property. Usually, a specific survey carried out on churches or religious buildings, but also applicable to listed and important buildings.

Assembly Rooms Access.

Access to the building has been significantly impaired due to the design and nature of the scaffolding and work outside. The accessible ramp is currently out of action, but arrangements can now be made to access and exit the building via Lynn Street side door if users are unable to manage the steps.

Assembly Rooms Further works

Following the roof survey as part of the HAZ scheme and separate emergency repair work to the Ballroom roof, it has been recommended that new membrane, battens, and tiles are required to the Ballroom. This conclusion also concurred by a second opinion reveal that the tiles have reached the end of their serviceable life (after around 60 years of being in situ) and that there has been degradation to the felt underneath due to the alignment of the tiles. Tiles should have around 6inch overlap, the current system has 1 inch, meaning water capillaries under the tile and sits and saturates the felt causing its demise.

A full report and proposal will be compiled and sent to Swaffham Town Council for consideration when all of the information is available.

Community Centre

Following a Fire Risk Assessment carried out by Norfolk Fire Protection, the recommendations are to instigate a report to survey the fire containment and compartmentalisation of the building into zones. On limited visual inspection by the FRA Assessor, there are currently no fire containment compartments in the building. There is also a recommendation to complete a Fire door survey to ensure the Fire doors are compliant. Other recommendations fall within our tenants' obligations of maintenance and housekeeping and include a Fire Door service and Lightning conductor testing. The full report is available to view, and an updated action list is also available.