

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE **OPEN SPACES & AMENITIES** COMMITTEE HELD IN THE **COUNCIL CHAMBER** AT DITTON COMMUNITY CENTRE ON **17th NOVEMBER 2025**

PRESENT: CLLRS A WATERS (CHAIR), J COX (VICE CHAIR) N NEWMAN, D ADLINGTON, MRS M NEWMAN, MRS L COX, MRS A THROSSELL, A MULCUCK
MRS N GREENAWAY (CLERK)
MRS L FITCHETT (ADMIN ASSISTANT)

287 **OPENING OF MEETING**

The meeting was opened by the Chair at 8.17pm.

288. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

289. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interests.

290. **FINANCE**

(a) **Financial analysis – Month 7**

READ. It was **NOTED** that Cllr Newman had raised queries about the Quarry budget and remaining spend; Pitch marking fee's outstanding and it was **NOTED** that these have all been paid and whether the Multi Sports booking numbers are in line with last year. It was confirmed the winter weekday sessions are all fully booked.

(b) **Open Spaces Budget setting 2026**

READ. It was **NOTED** there would be an uplift in the region 6K. Cllr Newman asked if the allotment fee increases were included for next year - these are covered and queried football pitch fees and potential increase percentage amount.

(c) **MUGA Fee's 2026**

It was **NOTED** that a request had been received from a Netball hirer, to consider a lengthy price freeze for hire. Current fees were shared and discussion took place regarding the token fee price and how this measures against actual costs.

RESOLVED to check token fee covers costs bring to full council. MUGA price review delay for 6 months.

291. **TREES & PLANTING**

(a) **Conifers on border of NRRG (page 99 item 248b)**

Admin assistant read out statement from Tree surgeon regarding impact of root cutting and advice to contact resident to discuss removal.

A question was raised regarding the potential to make an insurance claim for damage caused to path. Admin Assistant to investigate feasibility and or recommendations by insurance company. Consideration was given to potential signage.

RESOLVED to advise Full Council of the response from the insurance company.

(b) Dead Sycamore tree removal update (page 99 item 248a)

Confirmed that this boundary fence is not DPC property and that responsibility to replace it belongs with the property/Garage owner. Admin assistant confirmed another resident had raised a complaint regarding the lack of replacement of this fence.

RESOLVED to take further advice from the insurance company in the absence of property owner fulfilling responsibilities.

(c) Replacement Memorial Tree species decision (Page 200 item 475 (d))

This item had been deferred from Spring as the Memorial Trees (Crab Apple & Pear) were showing signs of blight but hadn't died. It had been decided to relook at the type of species suitable for replacement this autumn. It was suggested that the free Crab Apple saplings provided by Woodland trust could be used, this was declined as too susceptible to blight. On review of the budget, it was deemed not appropriate to replace these at this time due to upcoming expense of tree works. The OSA Chairman also wished for consideration of the purchase of root barriers along with new trees.

RESOLVED to defer to Spring, when budgets allow.

292. **ALLOTMENTS**

(a) Request from former tenant to lease ¼ size plot

READ and NOTED. It was concluded that this could be possible should another tenant wish to share a plot.

RESOLVED to trial this with those on the current waiting list.

(b) General update

Admin Assistant shared an update regarding waiting list numbers, rents received to date and new tenancy agreements signed.

293. **QUARRY**

(a) Possibility of a Wild Flower Meadow for Spring

A request to re implement this for next Summer by local nature expert was **NOTED**. The recommended area would be a Maximum 200 Square Metres. It was **NOTED** that wildflower seed, possibly Wiold variety would be more cost effective than Wild Flower turfs.

RESOLVED – For Grounds Supervisor to report back to next meeting in January regarding how this can be managed in terms of planting out and maintaining.

(b) Signage update

It was **NOTED** that two signs for the Quarry had been purchased using a grant from Cllr Andrew Kennedy to update the quarry signage. The Permissive sign has been completed and is being put up soon and the Wildlife sign is in the design process.

294. **PLAYGROUNDS**(a) MUGA Surface/Tree Root Investigation further information (page 100 item 252)

It was **NOTED** that the damage may not be tree root damage. The sports surface company Trevor May, have advised this could be Fungi and would require a fungicide treatment to be applied and followed by a surface repair to make good for £325.00 + VAT.

RESOLVED to approve the treatment.

295. **5 YEAR PLAN**

RESOLVED to accept budget for year 1, which included fencing and playground equipment replacement/repairs and continue to work on years 2-5.

296. **CORRESPONDENCE**(a) For Decision(i) Street lighting request for path through NRRG

A resident had written in requesting additional street lighting to be provided along the NRRG footpath. This was discussed and it was **NOTED** that this had been investigated many years ago and the costs then were over 20k. This was also compared to current lighting provided on other public rights of way and also advice taken at the time that advised that additional lighting to a public recreation area can often encourage rather than discourage anti-social behaviour.

RESOLVED to decline this request as no other public right of way is lit in this way and there are alternative lit routes of access.

(ii) Request to use the Community Centre for 2026 Larkfield 10K Run

A request to hold the 2026 Larkfield 10k run had been received requesting dates for September. No specific details of needs had been received. It was **NOTED** that last year's request had required 250/300 cars to be parked on the field.

RESOLVED to decline this request for September due to this being the football season.

(b) For Noting(i) Magazine's for noting – Kent Countryside Voice & Allotment & Leisure Gardner

297. **CLOSURE**

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Chairman
8th December 2025