

OPEN SPACES & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the **OPEN SPACES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE** meeting held on **Tuesday 7th November 2023 at 7.00 p.m.** at the Southborough Civic Centre, 137 London Road Southborough, KENT TN4 0NA.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Lewis (Chair), Kinghorn (Deputy Chair), Elliott, Hill and Stewart.

ALSO PRESENT: Cllr Spickett

OFFICERS PRESENT: Carolyn Ripley (Deputy Town Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Figgett – Another Commitment
Cllr Mrs O Kinghorn – Ill Health
Cllr Opara – Ill Health
Cllr Wharton – Ill Health

2. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND OTHER SIGNIFICANT INTERESTS

The following interests were declared in reference to item 6A (Allotment Increases Only):

Cllr Hill: Allotment Tenant
Cllr Lewis: Allotment Tenant
Cllr Stewart: Allotment Tenant

3. PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Matt Glazier of the LTA was present in reference to item 6B. No members of the public or press were present.

4. MINUTES

Council Members **NOTED** that the minutes of the meeting on 3rd October 2023 were **APPROVED** at Full Council on 26th October 2023.

5. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Council Members **NOTED** the previously supplied income and expenditure reports relating to Open Spaces for the period 1st – 30th September and 1st – 31st October 2023.

6. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

It is proposed that during the consideration of the following items, the public and press shall be temporarily excluded (Standing Order 3 (c): -

“Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, or for other special reasons. The public’s exclusion form part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public’s exclusion.”

These items are considered confidential for the following reasons (s).

Information relating to the financial and personnel affairs of the Council.

a) CHARGES – PROPOSED INCREASES 2024-2025

Cemetery Charges – Council Members **APPROVED** a 6.7% increase to the charges made within Southborough Cemetery from 1st April 2024. There is no VAT applicable.

Football Maintenance Charge – Council Members **APPROVED** a 6.7% increase from 1st April 2024 to the annual costs from each of the Clubs towards the maintenance of the fields as follows, before applicable VAT is added:

- Southborough Football Club £811.60
- Armada £811.60
- Tunbridge Wells Youth Football Club £3794.81

Allotments – Council Members **APPROVED** a 12% increase to allotment rents to cover increasingly high water charges, taking the cost to £7.81 per rod from 1st April 2025. Council Members **NOTED** that allotment rent increases have to be notified to plot holders a year in advance and thus the charges for 1st April 2024 were already agreed upon last year at £6.98 per rod.

Common and Council Land Exercise Groups – Council Members **APPROVED** a 6.7% increase from 1st April 2024, which will be £33.61 plus VAT.

b) TENNIS CHARGES – 2024-2025

Council Members **APPROVED** the introduction of a new annual season ticket option at £40.00 per annum and a pay and play rate of £4 per court per hour from 1st April 2024.

c) FOOTPATHS ON PLAYING FIELDS ADJACENT TO YEW TREE ROAD ALLOTMENTS

Council Members **APPROVED** the quote from Swift Surfacing Ltd.

d) PENNINGTON RECREATION GROUND – SECURITY/CCTV

Council Members **APPROVED** the quote from 1st Ace Security Ltd.

e) PENNINGTON RECREATION GROUND – NEW SWINGS EQUIPMENT

Council Members **APPROVED** the Playdale 2 Bay 4 Flats Swing Set option.

f) HOLDEN POND – STAGE ONE REPORT/STAGE TWO REPORT

Council Members **NOTED** the previously supplied report by the Deputy Town Clerk, plus update and next stage reports from Pete the Pond.

g) WOLDINGHAM HOMES - COMMON LAND AT MODEST CORNER

Council Members **REJECTED** any application for extension of a licence for the hoarding enclosing a portion of Common Land and **AGREED** to request immediate removal.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.07 p.m.

**Miss Carolyn Ripley
Deputy Town Clerk
8th November 2023**