

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GREENING THE BOROUGH WORKING GROUP HELD
AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON ON THURSDAY, 7 JULY 2016
COMMENCING AT 6.30 PM**

<u>IN ATTENDANCE:</u>		
Chair - Councillor D M Carter		
COUNCILLORS (4):		
Miss A R Bond	M H Charlesworth	
G A Boulter	R H Thakor	
OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE (5):		
B Kew (BK)	H Pearson (HP)	Ms M Smith (MS)
Ms A Lennox (AL)	Mrs J Smith (JS)	

Min Ref.	Narrative	Officer Resp.
1.	<p><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></p> <p>An apology of absence was received from Councillors J W Boyce and F S Broadley.</p>	
2.	<p><u>NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2016</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 February 2016 were agreed as an accurate record.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</u></p> <p>Master Gardeners:</p> <p>Produce being grown was not being picked; Elizabeth Court – produce was left over winter months. Different crops had been planted this year which are being picked now, however it needs to be monitored. The Chair advised that if crops were not being picked then an email should be sent to Jane Morris who is responsible for Elizabeth Court, Boulter Crescent and Junction Road.</p> <p>Impermeable Driveways:</p> <p>Response is still outstanding from Adrian Thorpe/John Boyce.</p> <p>Cedar Tree Stump:</p> <p>This should have gone to PFD on 29 March for approval. AL to follow up with Nick Hague and report back.</p>	AL
3.	<p><u>GREENING OF THE BOROUGH MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE</u></p> <p>AL presented Nick Hague's report and updated the group on the major projects currently underway.</p> <p>Communication Plan</p>	

- There had been regular media releases with TV coverage by BBC East Midlands Today of the WW1 event at the weekend.
- Social media is increasing marketing reach.
- Events and activities continue to be promoted via Letterbox.

Projects

South Wigston:

- Pochins Bridge – bird survey is underway; there was an evening bat walk in May.
- Discussion is underway with Voluntary Action linking this site to the South Wigston Environmental Action Group.

Wigston:

- Clifton Bridge – there has been grass cutting to reduce invasive plants; a new footpath access is being created June-October to allow pedestrian entrance from the canal towpath.

Oadby:

- Fludes Lane – a number of wildlife surveys have been carried out with volunteers along with footpath clearance and litter picking activities.

Brocks Hill:

- Conservation management of site taking place, including footpath work, grass management and general site maintenance. The site has had a full Green flag inspection – confirmation has not yet been received due to problems with accessing the internet site.

Country Park:

- Volunteers have replaced the fencing around the den building.
- A new story telling throne has been built and installed within the amphitheatre with financial support from the Oadby and Wigston Lions.

School Visits & Events:

- Income generated from school visits will be £4,200. Over 1,200 pupils have visited Brocks Hill from 1st April with 16 schools from outside the borough visiting. The most popular activity is pond dipping and shelter building.
- Events were planned over the school holidays, to include Grow your own Tomatoes, Salad Garden in a Pot and Bug Wind Chimes.

AL

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride of the Borough were invited to the Super Sunny Sunflowers event on 6 April to launch their Britain in Bloom flower competitions. • The number of visitors to the Centre since January 2016 = 44,362. • The number of visitors for the year 2015/16 = 146,444. <p>Stepping Stones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A decision was made to remove support for this project this year based on the amount of funding needed to partake (£3,300 per year) and the amount of revenue received back. This has been due to: • no funding has been allocated to the project this year • the project was not seen as being value for money • A review will be taken in subsequent years. <p>Cllr Charlesworth asked if Pocket Park was being regularly maintained as there was a VC memorial event being held there on 14 July.</p>	
4.	<p><u>VOLUNTEERING UPDATE</u></p> <p>Volunteer Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AL presented Nick Hague's Report. • The Chair referred to the previous minutes where comment was raised by Cllr Boyce regarding sustainability. • AL advised that there are currently 4 super volunteers who are trained in leadership, first aid and management and are currently aiming for 12 over the life of the project. • There are 50 volunteers with the aim to get this number to 100 over the life of the project. <p>Insurance for Volunteers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AL to check that volunteers are covered under the Council's insurance. • The Chair advised that he was aware of a database where volunteers details were held and that a full safety briefing is given by a Ranger to volunteers for any task they undertake. • It was suggested that there was a Volunteering Policy but never finalised. 	<p>AL</p> <p>AL</p>
5.	<p><u>ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS</u></p> <p>JS presented her report.</p> <p>Stationery:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since changing the stationery provider, we have purchased 711 items, 86% of which have some green credentials. • Cllr Charlesworth asked if the paper we use is recycled but was advised that although it is not recycled, it is responsibly sourced. <p>Energy Conservation Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JS advised that the draft Energy Conservation strategy was approved by the Service Delivery Committee on 5 July. • The report shows that the authority is in good shape to meet Government targets and that priority should be given to tackling the worst performing properties to help reduce fuel poverty amongst our tenants. • There are 425 homes that currently do not meet the Government's 2030 target, of which 148 solid wall properties are the worst performing. It is proposed to carry out external wall insulation to these properties as part of this year's capital programme which will lever in around £85K in terms of external funding. • The remaining 277 homes which do not meet the Government's 2030 target consist of properties which are in need of a new A rated central heating boiler to bring them up to modern day standards. 100 of these are being addressed through this year's central heating programme and the remainder will be scheduled in the next 2/3 years. <p>Cycle to Work Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR are launching some employee initiatives; one of which is a Cycle to Work Scheme which is being introduced in August 2016. Staff will be encouraged to purchase a bike for commuting to work rather than using a car. • Employee benefits would be savings on their tax and national insurance • Environmental benefits would be less cars on the road • The Chair commented that it was good to hear that we are well placed regarding energy efficiencies in the workplace. 	
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>REFURBISHMENT AND POTENTIAL SPONSORSHIP OF BOROUGH ENTRY SIGNS</u></p> <p>MS presented her report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 9 cast iron entry signs which are in need of refurbishment. The cost of refurbishing each sign will be £950 however a small discount will be applied if multiple signs are refurbished at the same time. • It is proposed that a 3 year plan is implemented and that sponsorship of the signs should be sought at £400 per year for 5 years for each sign. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first 3 signs to be refurbished, with £2,850 allocated from Greening of the Borough reserves, would be Crow Mill Blue Bridge (Aylestone Lane) Kilby Bridge Pride of the Borough expressed hope that we would continue to recognise East Midlands in Bloom/Britain in Bloom. It is, however, the sticky labels which is causing the damage to the signs. It is proposed that a strip is put on saying “Proud Winners of Britain in Bloom” and “East Midlands in Bloom” however this would cover the “twinning” information. As it is unclear if the “twinning” information is current, a plate could be made up in the same style and colouring as the entry sign to cover the twinning information or, if this is not a possibility, a similarly worded plate could be made to attach underneath the current entry signs. It was recommended that MS’s report was submitted to PFD for decision so that this project could be progressed. 	MS
7.	<p><u>OPERATIONAL SERVICES UPDATE</u></p> <p>BW presented his report.</p> <p>Waste and Recycling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LCC is proposing changes to the recycling credit scheme which will be effective from April 2018. A Waste Seminar has been arranged for members to attend on 11 July where Officers will give an overview of the position with waste and recycling collections. AB commented that the bins in Oadby are smaller and are often overflowing after a Friday night. BK advised that they are emptied on a normal routine every week day, including on a Sunday. Cllr Charlesworth asked for a map of the locations of dog bins which was submitted as a member enquiry. There is also road closure on Station Road for 6 weeks from 18 July. Cllr Charlesworth had concerns on how the refuse trucks would get into Clarks Road. BK advised that it would be possible with a 7.5tonne vehicle. Junction Road Car Park – it was noted that cars were seen coming in/out from places other than the exits. MS will investigate. 	MS
8.	<p><u>VERBAL UPDATES</u></p> <p>Sustainable Food Production (Projects and Partnerships)</p>	

- Edible Food Trail – project bid progressing. The project is for existing and new community food groups which aim to start in September. There should be enough funding for an officer for 2/3 years.
- South Wigston and Wigston group formed to encourage sustainable food growth. A meeting on 13 June was held to bring the groups together.
- In Wigston there was a planting day on 9 June.
- Bassett Street, South Wigston – date to be confirmed for the planting of the vegetable beds.
- Oadby – the plan is to set up a similar group, however a date has not yet been agreed. There is also a need to identify places for new beds.
- Incredible Edible is to be rolled out across the borough with links to master gardener scheme to encourage people to grow their own food.
- The greenhouses at Bushloe House are not used – the view is that they are not safe and have been assessed by Council staff. They were closed because of lack of funding, not due to health and safety issues.
- The view of the group is that they would like the green houses to be re-visited. To be referred to the Asset Management Group.
- Cllr Thakor will pass on information re. veganism to Avril Lennox or Jane Morris.

Future Direction of Brocks Hill / Cafe Update

- Interim arrangements are in place and updates will be provided at a later date.

Grass Verges

- It was agreed that we will pay for an extra cut.

Chicken Alley

- MS advised that it was resurfaced during the last week of May. No complaints on the resurfacing work, however one complaint was received on the name which is being taken to the Civic Society. 2 compliments were received re water run-off.

Tree Officer (Arboriculturist) Update

- The Chair welcomed Henry Pearson to the meeting and Henry gave an overview of some of the projects he had been undertaking in the short time that he has been with the Council.
- Tree Survey – once the relevant software has been received, he will

AL

	<p>be doing a full survey of the trees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks and Open spaces – risk survey being undertaken to identify where new planting would be beneficial. • Developing roadsides and green spaces with tree cover. • He advised that there 2 TPOs had been issued – one in response to an application at the Grand Hotel and one in Saffron Road which was following a request from the resident. • OWBC will be taking over the TPOs which County have in the Borough in the next few months. There are no fees or money involved in this exercise and it was reported that County has done all of the leg work. • Looking to find funding for new ways of planting outside of Section 106's. Looking to use money for "new planting budget". If successful, this will go into the Local Plan. • A meeting was held with the Environment Agency regarding flood issues to see if they can help with funding. • Oadby Grange – working on taking over this soon. • Launceston Road – there is a large maple flagged for felling. Due to it having a split stem it is very precarious. Consideration was taken to see if there was a possibility of saving the tree however it is not feasible as it has a big cavity. The felled tree will be replaced though. • Projects are commencing with schools to include students collecting tree seeds (acorns and conkers) with an aim of having a Council tree nursery. The children will grow them and then plant them out in the borough - it keeps them engaged and involved with conservation and it means free trees for the borough. • The Chair advised that the Manor School headmaster may be interested in this venture in partnership with other schools. • Tree Strategy – waiting on Tony Boswell for rewording of this document. • Beaufort Spinney – this was brought at auction and the owner is seeking planning permission to fell the trees in the woodland. As the trees are quite valuable, he has been advised that he will not be given permission. The owner has stated that he will be taking the matter to the Secretary of State. This will be closely monitored. • One prosecution for violation of a TPO in Ladysmith, South Wigston is being pursued where branches had been cut off a protected tree. 	TB
9.	<p><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u></p> <p>21 September 2016 at 6.30 pm</p>	

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.10 PM



CHAIR

WEDNESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2016