RECREATION / LEISURE COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY, 18TH MARCH 2013

Present: Cllr D. Linney (Chair), Cllr P. Allen, Cllr D. Bain, Cllr J. Godwin, Cllr J. Lynch, Cllr D. Tarbun

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr M. Johns, Cllr D. Wardle

2. Election of Chair

Proposal
Cllr Lynch proposed that Cllr M. Johns be elected Chair of the Recreation/Leisure Committee; seconded by Cllr Allen; all in favour

Election of Vice-Chair
Cllr Lynch proposed that Cllr P. Allen be elected Vice-Chair of the Recreation/Leisure Committee; seconded by Cllr Godwin; all in favour

Cllr Allen took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

None

4. Open to the Public

No members of the public were present.

5. Towcester WI

Presentation of proposals for Sawpitts Green, Towcester

Sue Hamilton and Val Runnacles of Towcester WI gave background information on the organisation’s proposals for Sawpitts Green. Sue confirmed the WI was part of the Diamond Jubilee Steering Group for Towcester’s “Picnic in the Park” and has been agreed that surplus funds from the event should be set aside to create a garden to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

At a meeting on 25th February, involving representatives of the TC, WI and Towcester & District Local History Society, it was agreed the bottom corner of Sawpitts Green (opposite to the Meeting Lane entrance) would be a suitable location. The WI put forward proposals for a Hornton Ironstone rough boulder approximately 24” x 30” in size with stone cut lettering to be varnished and accompanying planting. The stone will be placed on a plinth, as stipulated by the History Society. The History Society has agreed to separately fund a plaque at the foot of the stone giving historic information on Sawpitts Green. The proposed wording on the stone is “To commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II 1952 – 2012”. The WI has secured additional funding to meet the cost of the project via grants from the WI Gardening Project and South Northants Homes.

The WI is awaiting a written quotation from Stonemason, Les Finn, and 3 further comparable quotations. It is anticipated the stone will be sited for a small ceremony on 2nd June, the 60th Anniversary of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth. Cllr Linney thanked the representatives of the WI for their hard work in putting together the scheme.

Proposal
Cllr Linney proposed the TC gives permission for the WI to proceed with its project on Sawpitts Green to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II; seconded by Cllr Lynch; all in favour
6. **Towcester Youth & Community Centre**

a) **Drain Surveys**

The Clerk confirmed there have been ongoing problems with blocked drains at the Community Centre for the past few months with contractors being called out to unblock the drains on 4-5 occasions already this year. A CCTV drain survey has now been carried out; the resulting report recommends the drains be remodelled to cope with the increased use of the Community Centre. The estimated cost of the remodelling works is £600.00. Cllr Bain advised recent changes have seen Anglian Water become responsible for all external drain repairs. He suggested the Clerk makes enquires to ascertain whether it should be Anglian Water carrying out these works.

b) **Financial Update**

The Clerk confirmed the balance of the Community Centre account currently stands at £27,462.00. This balance will reduce once the TC makes its recharge for invoices paid on behalf of the centre. Paul Brown has been instructed to carry out a survey of the Community Centre roof and will forward an estimate for the specification and cost of repairs once this has been completed.

7. **Health & Safety Inspections**

The Clerk confirmed no problems have been reported by TC contractor from inspections of the play areas.

8. **Recreation Ground Shrubbed Areas**

At the Annual Meeting of the Town, a resident of Meadow Court made a complaint regarding the shrubbed area at the top corner of the Recreation Ground. The Clerk has inspected the area and agreed it is untidy. The gorse bushes cut back last year have failed to re-grow. The Clerk suggested the TC could introduce a low-level planting scheme on this corner or grass it over entirely. It was agreed to write out to the residents of Meadow Court, whose property's face onto the Recreation Ground, to ask their opinion. The outcome will be reported back at the next RL Meeting.

9. **Nicholas Hawksmoor Primary School**

Correspondence from NHPS details forthcoming events at the school. The Clerk confirmed the meeting of the Nicholas Hawksmoor Pocket Park Committee had been rescheduled to this evening; Cllr Holder will be in attendance to report back. The application to Froglife for funding to refurbish the Pocket Park was submitted too late and the committee will make a new application at the earliest opportunity. In the meantime the committee intends to proceed with a scaled down refurbishment of the Pocket Park. The school will be holding a Wildlife Action Fun Day and have invited representatives of the TC to attend.

10. **Window Box / Christmas Tree Schemes 2013**

The Clerk gave details of the quotation from 24/7 UK Maintenance to put up / take down the window boxes and Christmas trees in 2013, as follows:-

Window Boxes – £4512.00  
Christmas Trees – £7160.00 (an increase of £500.00 on 2012)  
Total = £11,672.00  

The Clerk confirmed no increase was made to the budget for 2013. It was agreed for the Clerk to negotiate with the contractor with a view to the quotation being revised down to a maximum increase of £250.00.

11. **South Northamptonshire Council**

Correspondence from SNC confirms it has secured external funding to run Play Ranger activities across the district. This will allow for the employment of Play Rangers to visit local parks and run free, open access play sessions. Town & Parish Councils interested in having Play Rangers or SPLAT activities visit are asked to complete the attached Expression of Interest form. The committee agreed to support the Play Ranger scheme and complete the Expression of Interest form accordingly.