



Town Development committee minutes

Minutes

From the committee meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 16 January 2024

At St. Margaret's Hall, Bradford on Avon

Decision making

Decisions made by the committee at this meeting are at Minute [44](#) & [49](#).

Present

Councillors:

- Kate Bessant (Vice-Chair)
- Sarah Gibson
- Alex Kay
- Simon McNeil-Ritchie
- Jennie Parker
- Alison Potter (Chairman)
- Tim Trimble
- Katie Vigar

Town Council Officers:

- Ian Brown - Chief Executive & Town Clerk
- Chris Stringer – Deputy Town Clerk
- George Tomlinson – Engagement Officer
- Chris Hogg – Green Spaces Officer

Meeting clerk:

- Sarah Howe – Committee Clerk
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Apologies

From Councillors unable to attend the meeting:

- Dave Garwood
 - Jack Vittles
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43. Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made.

44. Minutes from the previous meeting of the committee

Proposed by Councillor Kate Bessant.

Seconded by Councillor Tim Trimble.

And with all in favour it was **resolved**: that the Minutes of the last committee meeting held on 28 November 2023 be accepted as a true record of the meeting.

45. Matters arising

None

46. Agenda item 6 – Decisions from the Delegated Planning Committee

The minutes and decisions were noted from meetings held on 6 and 20 December 2023 and 10 January 2024.

47. Agenda item 7 – Chair's Update

Councillor Potter gave a verbal update on matters since the last meeting. There had been a good response from the Call for sites for development request made at Full Council in October 2023 with around 10 potential sites to assess and hopefully carry some of those forward.

There will be another meeting on the 17 January to discuss the Culver Close Pavilion regarding the next steps, submission of planning permission and overall business plan.

48. Agenda item 8 – Town Vision

The Deputy Town Clerk thanked the public for all their ideas and comments and referred to his report supplied with the agenda. The draft is ready but if Councillors feel they have anything they wish to add or refine he is happy to make further adjustments.

The Vision is designed to be strategic, aspirational, and last for several years. There is also a supporting document which has ideas and projects to put the vision into practice and this secondary document will be updated and refined more regularly.

The final version of the Town Vision will come to Full Council in March for approval.



The Deputy Town Clerk was then happy to take questions. Councillor Vigar thanked the Deputy Town Clerk for all his work over such a beautifully written, accessible report with a pleasing tone and increased emphasis on the environmental issues. She queried how the council can define being carbon neutral by 2030. Councillor Kay suggested that bringing the date forward from say 2050 to 2030 allowed the current council to own the commitment. The council has done a lot of environmental projects to over the years from a time when it didn't own so many assets to now where it does and so encouraging everyone to be as carbon neutral as possible, leading by example and allowing carbon neutrality to colour as many decisions as possible is probably the way forward rather than trying to assess success quantitatively. Councillor Gibson added that being operationally carbon neutral as far as possible would be something to strive for and hopefully inspirational for other organisations in town.

It was also added that regarding the Town Vision as a strategic document and the accompanying supporting document, the council's Business Plan in any given year could also set out defined projects to illustrate commitment to fulfilling the vision and help to act as a support document.

49. Agenda item 9 – Poulton Park Masterplan

The Deputy Town Clerk referred to his report as supplied with the agenda summarising the two consultations which have taken place recently, the next steps and recommendations emerging as a result. Councillors and Officers have had lots of conversations with park users and residents particularly on the south side of town. An outline strategy or masterplan for the park now needs to be finalised which gives the Green Spaces Officer and his team of town wardens something to work with alongside any partnering contractors and designers. Several ideas from the first consultation in 2021 needed a little more investigation and so were explored during the second consultation. Ideas included the possible addition of paths across and accessing the site, more community events and an outdoor gym. Generally, these ideas were met with positivity, but the Deputy Town Clerk was particularly interested to hear the councillors views on a hard surface path across the meadow as some concerns from the public had been expressed.

In summary: a hard surface path of some description was supported across the meadow for accessibility, providing an improved year-round school route and



as an additional and peaceful linking route for areas of town. There was some concern a path might encourage high speed cyclists.

Details regarding an outdoor gym were also discussed. The current ideas in favour are for features and equipment which are multipurpose in nature and not too specific either in use or age group such as ramps which work well for adults, kids and even dogs. The thinking is to site the gym along a path between the play area and the skate park.

A question was asked around the funding arrangements both for advice and the build. The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the engaged landscape architects – NVB Architects – still owe the council some time which should cover the design element. Some of the ideas are fairly inexpensive so can be tackled straight away, however the construction of paths is more costly and will require some fund raising. Obviously once the plan is agreed the costing out can begin.

Finally, seating was briefly discussed and supported by the councillors if sensitively arranged. Councillor Parker also reminded councillors and officers that the Men's shed would be delighted to help make bug hotels, bat and bird boxes which would also feature in wildlife areas.

It was proposed by Councillor Sarah Gibson

And seconded by Councillor Alex Kay

And with all in favour **resolved** to approve the recommendations set out in the report as follows:

1. Approve the next steps outlined in the Concept Masterplan for Poulton Park report (so officers can work with NVB's landscape architects to draw up the masterplan for Poulton Park).
2. Consider the possibility of a sympathetic hard-surfaced path or paths through the meadow and appropriate routes.

50. Next meeting

The next committee meeting is arranged for Tuesday 26 March 2024.

End of the meeting

The meeting finished at 7.45pm



Appendix A: Comments and questions from the public

There were a few questions and comments from members of the public at the meeting. There was 1 member of the public present.

A couple of questions from one resident

(Q1) the green wall notice board does not list the businesses in Lamb Yard, perhaps the Council could think about adding that list.

A couple of councillors confirmed that a list of businesses had been planned for the notice board but didn't make the cut during negotiations with the Rotary Club, however there is still space so adding the list will be investigated.

(Q2) Bus services have been reduced which is inconvenient – please could the council look into that. Also, local people do not know the bus times for local buses to the surrounding villages and towns, could the bus times be added to the newsletter and be available in the library and so on.

Councillor Trimble agreed that publicising the bus timetables more widely would be an excellent idea alongside improving and cleaning the bus stops.

Finally, the resident remarked that tourists often ask where the centre of town is?

Councillor Gibson confirmed we do have town information stands in the Station and St Margaret's carpark, but the 'centre' is reasonably widely dispersed, and the town doesn't have a large shopping centre which some find disappointing.

A comment regarding Agenda item 8 was emailed in. The Chair read out the comment as follows:

'I was hoping to attend in person but there is a lot of ice created from the water of a broken field drain at the bottom of the steps from my house and didn't want to risk it.

[Another Bradford on Avon resident] and I would like to say how grateful we are for the time that the [Deputy Town Clerk] and the team gave us in a consultation on the Town Vision, and the recognition he gave Climate Friendly



and the Wiltshire Climate Alliance in the write up for tonight's meeting. It is a document that sets the groundwork for a truly sustainable future and we commend it.'