

**MAGHULL TOWN COUNCIL**  
**AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**HELD 24<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2021**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM**

**PRESENT** - Councillor Y. Sayers (In the Chair) and Councillors (Cllrs): Carr, Desmond, K. Hughes, McKinley and J. Sayers.

**ALSO PRESENT** – A. Spencer (Amenities Manager) and S. Larking (Minutes)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – None received.
2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS** – None received.
3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – None received.
4. **MINUTES OF AMENITIES COMMITTEE 18<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2020.**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of Amenities Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020 were approved as a correct record. Note: Minutes to be signed at the next opportunity.

**5. AMENITIES MANAGER UPDATE – COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS**

The Amenities Manager reported on resolutions in progress (highlighted in grey in report) as follows:

- Coaching on Whinneybrook Playing Field: Amenities Manager has visited on two separate occasions. Pitch was not being used due to lockdown restrictions. When restrictions are lifted will revisit the site and speak to the Coach.
- Glen Park: Play area reseeded following refurbishment to play area. Park remains closed. Potential re-opening on Agenda for later in meeting
- Financial refresh: Discussed at Full Council on 27<sup>th</sup> January as part of Budget process. Will report to next Full Council in April 2021
- Asset Plan: Full Council agreed £100,000 of reserves for asset improvement. A revised and costed plan to be presented to Full Council in April 2021

**RESOLVED that**

1. **The report be noted**

**6. REVIEW OF 2020/21 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS AND PROPOSED 2021/22 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS**

The Amenities Manager reported that the Grounds Maintenance Team are back on track and have surpassed pre-Covid standards. They are doing fantastic work and are working through all weather conditions. It has been a challenging year but there is a strong foothold for 2021/22. Proposed tweaks to “Needs based” working model as follows:

- A numbered system for parks will be introduced to support a “one visit do it all” approach. There will be a clear check list of actions. Once all actions completed the team will move to the next park
- Ride-on Mowers will have a set schedule for cutting grass. This will some overlap with team working in park, but this should complement the work in parks

45

- Standards for the seasons set out in the report

#### Proposed further works

- There will be a focus on entrances to parks and play areas
- Continue to develop "Friends Of" groups
- Pursue Green Flag status for KGV Park
- Commission a tree survey to ensure trees are healthy and present no danger to the public
- Finalise asset maintenance plans
- Work with the Police and Sefton Council to reduce Anti-Social Behaviour
- Work with Knowsley Council to procure a new vehicle fleet

The Amenities Manager drew attention to the Appendices to the report which showed what had been achieved in 2020/21. Positive feedback had been received, particularly for works in Balls Wood

#### Key points made by Cllrs in discussion

- Visited Balls Wood, impressed by work
- Welcome work by Friends of Maghull and District, led by Cllr Sharp. Need to look at projects in a structured way – there's a Manifesto for Maghull and a Business Plan need to draw together into a Strategy which recognises the contributions of others. Helpful to know what is being developed and who is involved. There's a request for s106 funding for Deyes Lane, this needs to be joined up with other works. Would welcome a more structured approach to reporting on projects across Maghull
- Disappointed at the state of Council notice boards. In a poor state of repair and information out of date. There should be a schedule to replenish and refresh information in notice boards once a month

In response the Amenities Manager noted the following:

- Will get reports on who is doing what and how they are supporting Council operations. Need to recognise the contribution from a range of groups including Maghull in Bloom, Groups in Dodds Park and Balls Wood who are doing litter picking and planting wildflowers. Also need to reflect informal work done by residents e.g. litter picking while out dog walking
- Agree that out of date information in notice boards should be removed promptly and that they should be kept clean and in working order. G4S put information in notice boards.

#### **RESOLVED that**

- 1. 2020/21 Grounds Maintenance Operations noted**
- 2. 2021/22 Grounds Maintenance Operations Approved**
- 3. Works to be joined up to reflect Manifesto and Business Plan and more structured reporting to be introduced**
- 4. Information in notice boards to be updated regularly**
- 5. Verbal report be noted**

#### 7. MANAGEMENT OF PLAY AREAS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

It was noted that the report had been issued before the Government's announcement about the Road Map out of Covid. The Amenities Manager reported that there had been criticism of guidance about play grounds. All had been closed at the start of the pandemic due to the risk of transmission and the resources needed to sanitise play equipment. In Maghull, two playgrounds had re-opened – KGV and Glen Park. When Glen Park closed for refurbishment Moss Park re-opened. Council has been doing what it can in line with guidance and advice from Insurers. The

GS

two parks that are open are regularly sanitised. Unofficially, play areas are being used. There have been complaints about playgrounds not being open. The proposal is to open 3 more parks – Glenn Park, Mersey Avenue and Round Meade. It will require 15 hours of operational time a week to sanitise 5 parks.

Key points made by Cllrs in discussion

- Noted no additional Government funding available to sanitise play equipment and that costs are being met by Maghull Town Council
- Unclear if parks make transmission easier
- Review Covid data for Super Output Areas on Gov.uk to check levels of infections to inform risk assessments before opening parks. Only open parks in areas with low infection levels
- Inform residents of plans and if need to close parks and reasons why

**RESOLVED that**

- 1. Three Additional parks to be opened after further analysis of super output data**
- 2. Inform residents of plans and reasons if parks need to be closed**
- 3. The report be noted**

**8. PROPOSED ROLLOUT OF BIRD BOXES WITHIN PARK AND OPEN SPACES OWNED/MANAGED BY MAGHULL TOWN COUNCIL**

The Amenities Manager reported that Maghull in Bloom had purchased 40 bird boxes from Bootle Tool Shed for Glen Park. They have asked if the Grounds Maintenance Team can install. The plan is to roll out installation of bird boxes across open spaces owned/managed by the Town Council. This will encourage wildlife and support a local charity which has members from the Maghull and Lydiate area. The cost of purchasing 200 bird boxes is £1,000 (£5 each). The costs will be met from the Facilities budget. Trees have been identified to provide an equitable spread across Maghull.

Key points made by Cllrs in discussion:

- Really good idea and a great project. Is this diverse enough in terms of local wildlife. Inspectors report on Land East of Maghull (LEM) Development identified a range of wildlife in the area including voles, natter jack toads and voles. Project should support wildlife displaced by development on LEM
- Consider a range of bird boxes so they are suitable for a range of nesting birds
- Work with schools as they might want to place cameras in boxes to share images with Pupils
- Helpful to have confirmation of timescale

In response the Amenities Manager noted

- Bird boxes to be purchased in the current financial year. No set deadline as depends how quickly Bootle Tool Shed can assemble and deliver bird boxes
- Good idea to work with schools. Hope to connect schools to parks and help reduce ASB if children have an interest in their local park

**RESOLVED that**

- 1. 40 birdboxes already purchased by Maghull in Bloom to be installed in Glenn Park by Grounds Maintenance Operatives.**
- 2. The birdbox project initiated by Maghull in Bloom and Bootle Tool Shed is rolled out across all parks and open spaces owned/managed by Maghull Town Council.**
- 3. A range of 200 bird boxes at cost of £5.00 each be purchased from Bootle Tool Shed.**

US

#### **4. The report be noted**

#### **9. PROPOSED TREE PLANTING SCHEMES AT PIMBLEY PLAYING FIELD AND HALL LANE PARK**

The Amenities Manager updated members on the development of a town wide tree planting scheme following a presentation from Mersey Forest at a meeting last year. Approval sought to progress work and access a grant of £9,300 in the current financial year. The grant is for ground preparation and fencing. In addition, Mersey Forest will provide 1,200 trees free of charge. Consulted with residents on Bridge Road and Fieldway. Letter sent 4 February with deadline of 12 February for comments. 6 responses received – 2 in favour, 2 against and 2 neither for nor against. A resident from Bridge Road, who claimed to represent other residents, objected to trees being planted at the rear of properties and the removal of brambles. No formal petition has been received. Reflected on feedback. Do not want animosity with residents. View is that it would be prudent to move the scheme from the rear of Bridge Road to Hall Lane to expand and build on the existing woodland area. Keen to move forward quickly as it's the right time for planting. A contractor is on standby to install fencing. Grounds Maintenance Team will clear weeds and brambles

Key points made by Cllrs in discussion:

- Put plans on social media, when approved
- Issue a follow up letter to residents
- Need to consider nesting birds and hedgehogs. Important to check for early nesting birds when clearing areas
- Brambles provide security for some residents and they do not want removed. Agreed that brambles will remain if requested by residents

#### **RESOLVED that**

- 1. Approved proposed tree planting scheme to the top of Pimbley Playing Field.**
- 2. Rejected proposed tree planting scheme to the rear of properties on Bridge Road.**
- 3. Approved proposed tree planting scheme at the boundary of Hall Lane Park and the Leeds-Liverpool Canal.**
- 4. Approved proposed tree planting scheme at the boundary of Hall Lane, adjacent to children's play area**
- 5. Approved proposed tree planting scheme at the boundary of Hall Lane, adjacent to park entrance on Old Hall Road.**
- 6. Brambles to remain, if requested by residents**
- 7. The report be noted**

#### **10. CHAIRS REPORT**

The Chair reported on the following:

1. Dennet Close: pleased to report that some wasteland, which has been an eyesore, has been sold
2. Moorhey Shops: parking spaces to be built
3. Land East of Maghull: Inspectors report is on MTC's website

On Land East of Maghull it was noted that this is the biggest building project in Maghull. Unable to stop development due to national planning policy which is weighted in favour of developers. However, the decision to require a haul road, to minimise disruption to Maghull residents, is a success.



It was noted that a living Christmas Tree had been planted on KGV park as requested by Cllrs.

**RESOLVED that**

**1. The report be noted**

  
**CHAIRMAN**

