

RAUNDS TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT LEISURE AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

Minutes: 17th October 2017: Start Time 7.30pm.

PRESENT

Cllr L Wilkes (Chair), Cllr D Hughes, Cllr B Tyman, Cllr N Beck and Cllr R Levell.

347.17 To Receive Apologies For Absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr D Jones and Cllr B Tirebuck
RESOLVED to note the apologies

**348.17 Notification of requests from members of the public to address the meeting in compliance with adopted protocol.
NONE RECEIVED**

**349.17 Notification of members questions in compliance with the council's standing orders.
NONE RECEIVED**

350.17 Declarations of Interest.

COUNCILLORS ARE REMINDED THAT IF THEY HAVE EITHER A DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST OR OTHER INTEREST IN ANY ITEM THEN THEY SHOULD DECLARE THE INTEREST AND IN THE CASE OF A PECUNIARY ITEM LEAVE THE MEETING FOR THAT ITEM.

Cllr Levell declared a personal interest in item 352.17

351.17 Minutes: confirm the minutes of the Environment, Leisure and Recreation Committee meeting held 28 September 2017.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Environment, Leisure and Recreation Committee meeting held 28 September 2017 be confirmed as a true record.

352.17 Land at Sheffield Court: To consider a report from East Northamptonshire Council regarding the future maintenance of land at Sheffield Court.

Members considered the report of Sue Scott as detailed in appendix 1.

A discussion regarding the future maintenance of the land. Generally members felt that the Town Council should take over the land and future maintenance, it was agreed that the grass cutting but obviously need Mr Laurence to bring it up to standard first. And of course it is only prudent for the council to explore the possibility of any possible financial contribution

RESOLVED that:

- a) Mr Laurence be asked to clear the land as detailed in the report.
- b) Mr Laurence should pay all legal fees associated with any transfer

c) **The Environment Leisure and Recreation Committee recommend to the Full Council that the Town Council take ownership of the land and responsibility for future maintenance subject to officers at ENC clarifying the extent of any financial contribution as referred to in the email from Sue Scott of 17th July 2017**

353.17 Budget 2018/19: To consider the budget for the Environment Leisure and Recreation Committee for 2018/19.

Members considered the draft budget and a number of amendments were made. A number of capital were considered and it was agreed that there was merit in all, it was agreed that

Higher priority projects for delivery in 2018/19 were:

- New Play Equipment at Amos Lawrence / The Market
- Improvements to the Church Steps
- Cleaning of the War Memorial
- Lighting at St Peters
- Services for Older people

Lower priority projects or projects with a longer delivery timescale were:

- Replacement of "Welcome to Raunds Signs"
- Refurbishment or new skate park
- Creation of a museum

RESOLVED that the Environment Leisure and Recreation Committee submit the revised draft budget to the Finance Committee as shown in Appendix 2.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 9.30pm

Approved: (Town Mayor)

Meeting date: 14 November 2017..... (Council)

Approved: (Chairman)

Meeting date:23 November 2017..... (Committee)

Appendix 1

**Environment Leisure and Recreation Committee
Tuesday 17 October 2017
Briefing Note: Land north of Sheffield Court Raunds**

Dear Councillors

I was asked to provide a brief for the Committee explaining the present situation with this land, in order to provide proposals for future maintenance. No formal maintenance has taken place on the site since 1994 and the area is very overgrown and is subject to fly tipping. A map is attached at Appendix A and photographs at Appendix B

Due to the passage of time which has elapsed since the properties in Sheffield Court were built, many people involved are no longer with us, or have only scant memories of events which took place at the time. I have therefore split this briefing note into facts, recollections and the legal position regarding potential enforcement action.

Facts

(a) Planning

Planning permission for 25 dwellings at Land off Titty Ho Raunds was granted on 8 September 1994 under reference 94/00419/FUL. Further 1994 applications relate to additional properties in Sheffield Court however, the area of land in question is covered in this main application. The plan for the open space submitted at the time is drawing number 4-078-P2A is attached at Appendix C. I apologise for the quality but the original file is no longer available.

This application was not subject to a S106 agreement so there was no commuted sum.

Despite this plan being submitted along with the application conditions were attached to the planning permission requiring the following:

Condition 8

No development shall take place until a comprehensive landscaping scheme for the site has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. This landscaping scheme shall be implemented strictly in accordance with the approved details in the first planting season following the occupation of the development. Any trees or plants which within a period of five years of planting die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure a reasonable standard of development and visual amenity for the area and to take account of Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Condition 9

No more than 16 of the dwellings shown on drawing No. 4-078-P2B shall be occupied before the public open space shown on that drawing has been laid out and landscaped in accordance with the details required by condition 8 hereof. A scheme for the future management and maintenance of the open space shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority prior to the commencement of development.

Reason: In the interest of visual and residential amenity.

Due to the limited scanned documents still available to me I am unable to prove whether a scheme of maintenance was ever approved however there are no enforcement records in existence relating to the open space prior to 2015 when my complaint was received.

(b) Land ownership

Land Registry details show the owner as Mr RF Laurence, who was the original developer of the site. Mr Laurence retired 20 years ago and when I finally tracked him down he understood that this land had been maintained by him for one year after the completion of the development after which it had been passed to Raunds Town Council. (See part 2(a)).

(c) Additional information

My complainant informed me that he had been complaining about this land for over 15 years. As I could find no records of enforcement action in this Council's records I then visited Raunds Town

Council to see if there was any mention in their minutes. The relevant records were located separately from their normal storage place and it appeared that someone else had researched this matter as minutes from the then Open Space Committee had been marked with post it notes. These minutes were dated 21 November 1994 and 16 March 1995. Copies are at Appendix D. The tubular rails referred to in minute 320 are actually in situ.

RECOLLECTIONS

(a) Mr and Mrs Laurence

Mrs Laurence worked as her husband's PA at the time of this development. She remembered several meetings with a gentleman who was clerk at the time. I understand that during this time a Mr Dean acted as clerk to the Town Council. She remembered a final meeting when it was agreed that the works were now acceptable and that Raunds Town Council would take over the land after a period of one year. The solicitor they used at the time was no longer contactable and this is the first contact they had had about the land since they retired.

The Laurences had a similar recollection regarding another development they built in Mountbatten Way. I have checked on Land Registry and the open space at the top of Kingsmith Drive is still shown as owned by RF Laurence although ENC have maintained it for 30 years.

(b) Local resident

My complainant remembers being informed by Mr Laurence's son that money was available for maintenance for the first year and that after that the land would be regularly maintained. Mr Stephen Laurence has been contacted and does remember vaguely about the one year period but nothing else.

ENFORCEMENT

Should East Northamptonshire Council take formal enforcement action to get this land tidied it would use a notice under S215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This section of the legislation is unusual as any appeal is not made to the Planning Inspectorate but to the local Magistrates Court. Therefore a decision would be made by the magistrate and I have serious concerns that the fact that Mr Laurence has had no contact about the land for almost 23 years would make an appeal likely to succeed and the land would remain in its present state or action could be taken against anyone with interest in the land.

Mr Laurence now accepts that the land belongs to him and has obtained a quote of £3,500 + 20% VAT for the following works:

- Clear brambles back to the tubed knee rail running along the rear of the site
- Fell and remove all the self-set trees within the area
- Grub out stumps left from bramble and tree removal
- Cultivate the land and sow a grass seed mix to turn area back to grass
- Dispose of all bramble, brushwood, timber and stump from the site to tip.

He is happy to get these works completed but is concerned that by doing so he is accepting liability for all future maintenance which he is not prepared to do having been under the impression that the Town Council had taken over the land. He is still prepared to pay for the works if a future maintenance plan is agreed.

SUMMARY

I would ask the Committee to investigate any further records they may have available regarding land transfer or if anyone can still remember anything about this particular site or Mr Dean. I would also ask the Committee to consider if, with the works detailed above completed, they could envisage any future use of the land which would make it useful to the Town Council.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me with this matter

Sue Scott
 Planning Enforcement Officer
 East Northamptonshire Council
 01832 742149, sscott@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk

APPENDIX 2

Major / Small	Funding Agreed	Minute	Resolution	Action/Progress	Complete	Notes
S	Y	43.15	Annual tour of inspection	Date set for 2017 Report at this meeting.	Ongoing	Annual Inspection date is 4th July 2017
S	Y	186.15	Promote use of parks	Through social media and events	Ongoing	Ongoing
S	Y	291.15	Survey of Cemetery Chapel	Completed no urgent works	Ongoing	
S	Y	440.15	Street Furniture	Consider replacing bins in town? Poor state of repair	ongoing	quotes received
S	Y		Bench at Saxon Hall gardens / Webb Road and Dog Park	Wooden picnic benches have been ordered x 2	ongoing	
S	Y		Bye-laws / (Include provision to deter travellers	Members of ELR to feed any comments back to P&R	ongoing	KH to circulate to members of ELR
S	Y		Public Space Protection Orders	Information received from ENC too late for this meeting	ONGOING	
S	Y	45.15	Land at Rear of Cemetery	Creation of Dog Park	ongoing	Brambles to be removed. Bench has been ordered. Consider water trough
S	Y	439.15	Youth Work	JAM in the Hood to commence soon On agenda for meeting	ongoing	
S	Y	599.16	Autumn Litter Pick	Date set: 30 September 2017	ongoing	Should this include daffodil planting
S	Y	605.16	London Road Opposite ASDA/Highways verge	Replanting	ongoing	Clerk to chase Turneys
S	Y	603.16	PR consultant	Considering doing this in-house On agenda for this meeting	ongoing	Clerk is meeting with local PR specialist to discuss training.
S	Y	600.16	Light at Red Row - to liaise with resident to change lighting		ongoing	
S	Y	42.15	Playground Inspections	Completed for 2016	Done	To be arranged for 2017

Major / Small	Funding Agreed	Minute	Resolution	Action/Progress	Complete	Notes
S	Y	298.15	Welcome Pack	In progress -"postcard" to be supplied to new houses	Done	
S	Y	432.15	Budget 2017/8	Done	Done	
S	Y	524.15	McDonalds Love Where you Live	On agenda	Done	
S	Y		Trees (100 trees to be planted in town)	Agree location / Who to plant	Done	Check as part of annual inspection
S	Y		Noticeboard on Coop railing	Requested permission to site noticeboard on coop railings	Done	Done and installed
S	Y	665.15	Community Enhancements Gang	Submit suggestions to NCC	done	
S	N		Market - improving Raunds Market (from Finance committee)		pending	
S	N	191.15	Hanging Baskets	Installed Additional baskets required See agenda item	Ongoing	Review for 2017 adopt a basket
S	N	604.16	Tackling Social Isolation	Link with Oundle Cinema cost £120 per session	ongoing	Set date / choose film
M	Y	241.13 Sept 13	PROVISION OF A PIECE OF PUBLIC ART ADJACENT TO WARTH PARK	Chased D Shaw 11/05/2016 Chased David Shaw 14/07/2016 Left message and sent email Meeting with new sculptor 29/9/16	Ongoing	Email from S Williams 20/3/17
M	Y	44.15	Tree Survey Survey for the Delves being circulated at this meeting	P2 and P3 work underway	Ongoing	Works being completed

Major / Small	Funding Agreed	Minute	Resolution	Action/Progress	Complete	Notes
M	Y	293.15	Improvements to Town Square	Budget approx 45k Suggestions Bandstand/ Electronic noticeboards Floral displays Play equipment	Ongoing	Funding for bandstand part successful Information on electronic noticeboards attached
M	Y		Ada Salter Tribute	to consider a tribute to Ada Salter	ongoing	Draft landscape plan to be supplied to meeting
M	Y	187.16	Community Facilities Fund (Bandstand/Pavilion)	Funding awarded Consider design and next steps	ongoing	On agenda for this meeting
M	Y	49.15	Webb Road Play Area	Equipment being devired week ending 15/7/16	Done	Completed
M	Y	519.15	CCTV	First stage completed Wi-fi link still needed - ongoing	Done	Scorpion appointed Portable camera to be considered / Spire Homes may be interested in working with RTC on mobile option for hotspots
M	Y	189.15	Grounds Maintenance	Turneys have struggled this season in part due to weather	Done	Cllr Tyman to be asked to attend consortium meetings. RT attended will submit a report
M	Y		Appointment of gardenr for Saxon Hall/Various sites throughout the Town	Quotes being sought	Done	Agenda item for Sep ELR
M	N	293.15	Costed schemes for paths at cemetery		pending	
M	N	297.15	Tourism Signage including Welcome to Raunds signs and Twinning	Meeting with Karen Williams 23/2 Funding bid made in association with ENC	pending	
M	N	48.15	Costed schemes for each play area	Better value obtained at Saxon Hall Update on Bassfords recreation ground Still waiting for S106 money for Bassfords.	Ongoing	Plan can be shown to this meeting
M	N	290.15	RPC Open Space Contribution	Money is held in earmarked reserves. Proportion was spent on Saxon Hall play area.	Ongoing	Consider what this could be used for.? Spinney Hill

Major / Small	Funding Agreed	Minute	Resolution	Action/Progress	Complete	Notes
M	N	520.15	Skate Park	Plan for long term regeneration of skate park.	Done	
			Brook Street	ELR to consider how to improve Brook Street	ongoing	Will be considered as part of annual inspection
		662.15	Official Town Map	Done	Done	circulate copies