

**STRATFORD-UPON-AVON TOWN COUNCIL**  
**GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING**

**11 JULY, 2017**

**TOWN CLERK'S OPEN REPORT**

1) Rubbish Friends

- **To receive information and consider the best course of action moving forward**

Becky Reynolds from the community group 'Rubbish Friends' will make a verbal presentation regarding how the voluntary group tackles the issue of litter within the town and how the Town Council can be involved.

2) Banners in Stratford-upon-Avon

- **To consider the options available to manage the issue**

Councillor Jenny Fradgley will make a verbal presentation on the current state of advertising banners attached to railings within the town and what can be done to manage this.

3) Closing times of the Cemetery

- **To agree, retrospectively, the closing times of the Cemetery**

At the Cemetery Working Party Meeting, held on 14 November, 2016, it was agreed to change the cemetery closing time to 'dusk', as previously there had been four different closing times depending on the sunset.

Unfortunately it had been wrongly assumed that this new closing arrangement would be less restrictive for the people who close the cemetery gates each evening.

Instead, they informed the Town Clerk that if the closing time was to be dusk, they would not be able to continue with the duties of closing the gates. Following a discussion with the Town Clerk, they suggested closing times of 7:30pm (1 March-30 September) and

4:30pm (1 October-28 February), which they would be happy to do. If this was not agreed then they would unfortunately have to relinquish the duty of opening and closing the gates.

Finding a replacement for this role is extremely difficult as the cemetery is open every day of the year and operatives are expected to open the cemetery at 8:00am (when the Open Spaces Team are not working) and close it again at night, once they have checked that no members of the public are on the premises.

Mr Tom Clifford, who lives directly opposite the cemetery is currently proud to be employed as 'Keeper of the Keys' and he undertakes this task most diligently and responsibly. However, Mr Clifford needs to have very precise and clear cut instructions in order to carry out his duties, and as 'dusk' is somewhat nebulous and open to interpretation, both he and his parents, who often assist Tom, particularly in the dark winters months, have requested that the closing times should be 7:30pm in the summer and 4:30pm in the winter.

Mrs Clifford has, for a number of consecutive months, kept a careful note of cemetery visiting and has confirmed that the cemetery is only very, very rarely visited after 7:30pm at night and as members are aware, it is dark by 4:30pm in the winter when the cemetery should be closed to the public anyway, primarily for health and safety reasons.

Members are therefore requested to agree, retrospectively, the change in closing times of the cemetery gates.

#### 4) Sports Club Update

- **To note the report**

The following email update was provided by Peter Coote on 26 April, 2017:

*'At our last meeting, on March 21, we discussed that a critical next step was to review our outline plans with the Environment Agency to assess the acceptability of establishing hockey pitches, tennis courts and potentially other facilities on raised areas in the area of the 'two football pitches'. This has now been completed and Ian has had a follow up discussion with them. Unfortunately, the news is not good. Because it is a flood plain, they will only support development at ground level. This will leave any potential facilities liable to flooding with the related potential damage and costs, as*

*well as loss of use. This effectively removes two critical 'anchors' from the development that we were starting to consider.*

*This is clearly very disappointing but, looking to the positive, over the past few months we have:*

*\* Confirmed that there is the opportunity, need, and support for the development of Sports, Health and Wellbeing facilities and services on the Rec;*

*\* Confirmed that there is the opportunity, need, and support for a more joined up approach to the provision of Sports, Health and Wellbeing facilities and services in Stratford.*

*Therefore, before we go forward, and start to consider a 'plan B' to realise these opportunities, I would ask that you review this status with your respective organisations and confirm if you wish to continue to be involved in this initiative.'*

## 5) Milestone Project Update

- **To note the report**

At the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 23 February 2016, it was agreed to provide a letter of support to the Milestone Society for their work in preserving the milestone markers and finger posts in the local area. Below is an update email received on 18 April from Mr Benford:

*'I append below the latest progress report on this significant heritage restoration project now going ahead following the success of our Heritage Lottery Fund bid. We remain grateful to the Council for its original letter of support:*

*"All six of the unique A34 mileposts being restored by the Warwickshire branch of the Milestone Society (reg. charity 1105688) have now been collected and taken to Leander in Buxton for restoration. We look to these distinctive heritage items returning in their full original glory as the summer passes. Yesterday the final two were removed- Little Wolford's and Long Compton's- not without considerable difficulty as the Victorians had embedded them deep and secure with a mix of soil and stone and the surrounding land had risen considerably in the Long Compton example. They were the last because they were too close to the highway and needed traffic light protection.*

*A passing local resident stopped as she was concerned they were being scrapped and she had noticed them for 15 years with some pleasure. She was re-assured, as the many Facebook users were who realised that the Shipston post had gone in the first stage of removals last week. The public can look forward in due course to a particularly rich example- daily for locals- of road heritage restoration using the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund's grant."*

*We remain happy to respond to comments or questions and we hope you will all be delighted with what you see emerging on that stretch of the A3400 later this year. Our website [www.milestonesociety.co.uk](http://www.milestonesociety.co.uk) and our "Finding the Way" awareness-raising project reflects the Lottery Fund's need for their involvement and the value of our work to become more widely known.'*

Town Clerk  
5 July, 2017