**MEETING OF THE RECREATION, PARKS & PROPERTY COMMITTEE**

**HELD ON 7TH JULY 2025 AT 7.00PM**

**Present:**

Cllr U Arnold Cllr H Mills-Brown

Cllr S Brooke Cllr L Robillard Webb

Cllr M Evans Cllr C West

Cllr E Kelly

**In attendance:**

Mr M Wells – Town Clerk

One member of the Neighbourhood Watch Association

One member of the public

**RP&P.25/31 Apologies for Absence**:

None.

**RP&P.25/32 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations:**

There were no declarations of interest or requests for dispensations received.

**\*\*Public Participation:**

A member of the Neighbourhood Watch Association thanked the Town Council for the recent prompt handling of the unauthorised encampment in Mill Marsh Park.

Further, unrelated comments were made about noise and anti-social behaviour in and around the park area. Cllr Brooke (Town Council Police Advocate) advised that a meeting was recently held with the Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager at Teignbridge District Council to discuss these concerns and a further meeting is being held with Sargeant Cooke to take advice and to ensure any approach is collaborative, working with the expert authorities.

A member of the public from the local Romany community spoke in relation to the unauthorised encampment in Mill Marsh Park and explained that she wished she could have offered help to the Council at the outset. Multiple racial comments were made on social media and these have been reported. The Police Diversity team have also been contacted. A ‘Pyramid of Hate’ was circulated to all members and an explanation provided around the bottom two tiers, advising that if biased attitudes and acts of bias were removed, discrimination, bias motivated violence and genocide would not happen. The transient community are being pushed from site to site as there are insufficient registered sites. Suggestions for the Council to consider might include: information leaflets, progress and lobby the current shortage of registered sites within the District and additional training.

**RP&P.25/33 Minutes**:

i) The minutes of the meeting of 27th May 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and approved (*\*copy previously circulated*).

ii) The following updates were provided:

RP&P.25/17 – The storage facility at the Riverside Community Centre has now been installed.

RP&P.25/19 – The Town Clerk is still awaiting a date from the Bowling Club for the proposed car boot sale at the Recreation Ground.

RP&P.25/28 – Cllr Brooke advised members that a decision is due to be made shortly on the preferred contractor for the exercise trail redevelopment.

RP&P.25/30 – The Town Clerk advised that quotations were due to be received for repairing failed memorials, following the recent testing that took place in May.

**RP&P.25/34 Standing Item – Climate and Ecology Emergencies:**

Members noted the Council Declaration and embedded the climate emergency declaration across all Council services, activities, plans and other relevant work, considering the environmental impact of decisions, ensuring a fully integrated approach to mitigating the impact of climate change.

**RP&P.25/35 Friends of Mill Marsh Park (FoMMP):**

Members received and noted minutes of the meetings held on 06.05.25 and 01.07.25 (*\*copies previously circulated*). Cllr Brooke advised members that the green sections within the action plan have been completed. An update was provided in relation to the exercise equipment redevelopment in Mill Marsh Park. Furthermore, a project is being progressed to consider the current waste receptacles in the park and discussions will progress with the Grounds Maintenance Officers and Climate Action group. A further report will be prepared for a future committee.

**RP&P.25/36 Recreation Ground – Tennis/Cricket and Parking Development – Joint Stakeholder Group:**

1. Members received and noted an update from the meeting held between the clubs on 25th June around progress to date. The Town Clerk advised that the survey results and design will be shared with a ground works contractor who will provide a detailed breakdown of the various elements required to deliver the scheme. The next step is to contact local contractors with a breakdown of the works to obtain quotations.
2. Members considered re-appointing group representatives to represent the Council at the stakeholder group.

**Resolved:** To re-appoint Cllr Arnold and appoint Cllr Evans as representatives.

**RP&P.25/37 Charity Day – Mill Marsh Park – Devon & Cornwall Transporters:**

Members received and considered approving a request on behalf of the Devon and Cornwall Transporters Club, to hire Mill Marsh Park for a Charity Day on Saturday 9th August 2025.

**Resolved:** To approve the request, subject to the standard liability forms being submitted and subject to ground conditions allowing safe access.

**RP&P.25/38 Matters brought forward by the Town Clerk & Councillors**: (*for information)*

**Cllr Arnold** proposed a future agenda item to consider costs associated with enhanced security of Town Council assets following the recent unauthorised encampment.

**Cllr Robillard Webb** thanked all personnel involved with handling the unauthorised encampment in Mill Marsh Park last week.

**Cllr Robillard Webb** thanked all those who attended the community litter pick in Heathfield on 5th July. 19 people attended and 9 bags of rubbish were collected. Another litter pick will be scheduled for the autumn.

**The Town Clerk** referred to Cllr Burton’s email to committee members in relation to the tone of recent social media activity throughout the unauthorised encampment in Mill Marsh Park. The Town Clerk advised members that the Town Council unfortunately has no authority over the moderation or content of external community facebook groups, however it was noted that comments should perhaps be disabled as appropriate going forward on future posts.

Meeting Closed: 7:36pm