

COMMITTEE: NORTH LUTON AREA BOARD

DATE: 13th OCTOBER 2016

SUBJECT: PETITION - CORONATION MEADOW ON RIVERSIDE WALK–
FOLLOW UP

REPORT BY: SERVICE DIRECTOR, ENGINEERING AND STREET
SERVICES

CONTACT OFFICER: STEVE BATTLEBURY 01582 - 546761

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL	✓	COMMUNITY SAFETY
EQUALITIES		ENVIRONMENT
FINANCIAL	✓	CONSULTATIONS
STAFFING		OTHER ✓

WARDS AFFECTED: LIMBURY

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this report is for Members to note the actions taken by officers in response to the previous report and to consider closing the item as complete

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. North Luton Area Board is recommended to close this item as complete by instructing the Parks & Cemeteries manager to maintain this area by regular mowing for the foreseeable future.

REPORT

3. At the 3rd March 2016 meeting the following actions were minuted
 - (i) That the follow up report of the Parks and Cemeteries

Manager, on the Coronation Meadow on Riverside Walk – Petition be noted;

(ii) That because of the already known views and strength of feelings of residents who regularly use the meadow, the Parks and Cemeteries Manager, be requested to arrange for the Coronation Meadow on Riverside Walk to be reinstated to its original state, inform the lead petitioner when done and report back to the October 2016 meeting of the Board.

4. At a site meeting between the Parks & Cemeteries manager Barry Timms and Cllrs Lewis and Rowland the following actions were agreed which have been actioned:
 - That the main area of grass be returned to be regular mowing this season.
 - That the coronation meadow shall be restricted to area adjacent to the river.
 - That the coronation meadow sign should be moved to a new position on the corner of area 2.
5. The main area of grass has been returned to the parks regular grass cutting schedule in line with all other areas of parks and open spaces. It has been scheduled to receive between 6 – 8 cuts between March – November as agreed at the Council's Executive Committee at their meeting on the 29th April 2013, in response to the Government's austerity measures.
6. The main area of grass has been cut on the following dates and is scheduled to receive one additional cut before the end of November:
 - 1) 8/4/16
 - 2) 3/5/16
 - 3) 31/5/16
 - 4) 4/7/16
 - 5) 9/8/16
 - 6) 3/10/16
7. We have experienced a prolonged wet/warm periods this year that has increased and sustained the vigour in the grass for a longer period of time. This has increased significantly the time taken to complete grass cuts from the estimated 3 week cutting cycle to between 6-7 weeks resulting in the length of grass being significantly longer throughout the boroughs parks and open spaces this year. This has reduced the ability for passive recreation at this and all other areas of open space across the borough.
8. Regular cutting of the grass in conjunction with the high level of grass growth has enabled the sward to recover significantly thereby reducing the requirement for extensive cultural works as was thought to be the case at the previous meeting. Therefore arrangements for the area to be harrowed will now be scheduled to take place during the winter months when conditions will be more favourable.
9. No cultural works have been undertaken during the summer months due to the vigour in grass growth across the town limiting the availability of resources.

10. The area of coronation meadow adjacent to the river that has remained long through the summer has now received its annual cut and clear and funding is in place for this to be repeated annually each September.
11. The Plan for next year is to continue to maintain the two separate areas as this year in that the main area will continue to be cut between 6-8 times with the area adjacent to the river receiving one annual hey cut in September.

OPTIONS

12. Members are recommended to choose from the options below;
 - (i) To accept the officers recommendation and close this item as complete by instructing the Parks & Cemeteries manager to maintain this area by regular mowing for the foreseeable future.
 - (ii) To continue to monitor this item.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13. Maintenance will be undertaken from within existing resources

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14. This report has no legal implications.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D**

15. The background paper is the North area board report entitled Petition - coronation meadow agreed on the 3rd March 2016.