

WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



Clerk to the Council.
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MINUTES of the Open Spaces, Recreation, Allotments, Footpaths and Conservation Committee Meeting held on Monday 17th April 2023 at 7:00pm at Washington Village Hall (Dore Room)

PRESENT: Cllr S Buddell (Chairman), Cllr B Hanvey (BH), Cllr T. Keech (TK) and Cllr J Luckin (JL)

ALSO: Clerk to the Council Ms Z Savill

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 0

The Chairman opened the meeting at 20:00 hours.

1. Receive apologies for absence

None.

2. Declaration of interest and Dispensations.

None declared

3. Public Speaking

None

4. Approval of the Minutes of the last Open Spaces (Recreation, Allotments and Open Spaces meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 20th February 2023 are a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.

5. Allotments.

To Report on the Allotment inspection and Consider any recommended action

- It was reported that during an inspection on the day of the meeting, there were good signs of cultivation on occupied plots as plot holders took advantage of the spells of warm spring weather. The hedge on Plot 11B which had been blocking the pathway had been cut back. The pathway between Plots 11A & 11B and Plots 10A & 10B remained blocked in places; some fencing on the corner of Plot 10B had collapsed and at the rear of Plot 11A. The plot holders would be notified. It was recommended that vacant plots 7 and 11A are strimmed to help suppress the weeds.

A Member commented on the rubbish visible from the gaps in the allotment boundary with the Recreation Ground, following recent tree felling, and the potential dangers. Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** that arrangements are made for strimming the vacant plots,

under the council's scheme of delegation. It was further **RESOLVED** to request that the Stewards take the appropriate action to ensure that dangers are removed from the rear of plots along the site boundary. Clerk to action.

To Agree a tenancy application for Plot 4

Members considered a tenancy application for Plot 4 by Mr R Wood who lives in the parish. A Tenancy Agreement was sent to Mr Wood for his signature subject to the Council's approval. The plot will become vacant on 22nd April. It was noted that Mr Wood has experience of allotment gardening and had visited the site with one of the Stewards who is also the current Tenant. Following a discussion it was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the tenancy subject to the signed tenancy and payment of the £15.42 annual rent invoice.

To Report on the Allotment Waiting List

It was reported that another person in the parish has requested to be added to the waiting list since the last meeting. A total of four people are now on the list, three of whom live in the parish. The report was noted.

To Report on the Allotment 2023 Rent Income

Members noted a report of £333.07 allotment income received in 2022/23.

To Discuss sub-division of Plot 7

Members noted that there had been no interest in vacant Plot 7 from those on the waiting list since January and that tenancy turnover had been high. The Stewards had recommended it is split into two plots to make it more manageable and attractive to new Tenants. Following a discussion it was **RESOLVED** to horizontally split the plot into two with fencing and a gated access. Clerk to action under the council's scheme of delegation.

To Receive an update on measures to help keep allotment access clear.

It was reported that West Sussex Area Highways Manager Adam Bazley, had notified the Clerk that (12th April) there may be funds available in the new financial year for the desired hatchings outside the Allotment access. He would update the Council before its next meeting on 15th May. Members noted that hatchings had been recommended by Mr Bazley following a site meeting last July to discuss the access issues with Council and Allotment representatives but there was no funding available at the time. The Stewards had preferred this option rather than an Access Protection Line. Lockable bollards were ruled out by the Highways Authority because of the emergency access requirement, and parking restrictions along the Old London Road slip road would not be supported by local WSCC ward member Cllr Paul Marshall.

Members welcomed the news from Mr Bazley and **RESOLVED** to agree the option of hatchings subject to the anticipated further information.

6. To Report on Outstanding Actions and Matters Arising from the last meeting.

A report of outstanding actions were previously circulated. It was noted that some were ongoing and others completed. There were no matters arising. The information was noted.

7. First Extension Graveyard

To Report on inspection of the First Extension Graveyard in March and April and Consider any recommended action.

Reports of inspections of the graveyard in March and April were previously circulated. Cllr JL reported that the grass needed cutting but was likely delayed due to the wet weather. There were

no other actions required. The Clerk reported that remaining tree works recommended on the 2022 Tree inspection report were completed in March. **RESOLVED** to note the report. Clerk would contact the groundsman to confirm when he will be cutting the grass.

8.Recreation Ground and Parish Property

To Receive MUGA electricity meter readings for March and April 2023:

The following readings were circulated up to April from the date of the installation of the new meter in July. The energy consumption was largely due to the security light by the light box. Quotations were being sought to replace the MUGA lights with LED units.

2022

1st July: 5957

1st October: 6045

1st November: 6064.

1st December: 6077

2023

1st January: 6081

1st February:6089

1st March: 6099

1st April: 6113.

The readings were noted.

To Report changes to the business waste terms for the Council's litter bin collection

It was reported that Horsham District Council's 2023/24 charges for the council's litter bin collection would increase 50% per kilogram if the weight exceeds the 150kg limit. The limit had not been exceeded since the contract last year. The Council has agreed a £40 budget for the current charges of £8.60 per lift each quarter, and Direct Debit payments are reported to the monthly meetings. The report was noted.

To Discuss engagement of a handyperson for general maintenance work

Members discussed engagement of a handyperson for general maintenance work and smaller jobs on an ad hoc basis. A decision was deferred at the last meeting pending enquiries about drafting a contract of service. A generic example contract from the SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) was shared with members before the meeting with advice from WSALC (West Sussex Association for Local Councils). The Council's insurer confirmed that its own policy included cover for the storage of materials off-site. It was reported that a skilled tradesman in the community with £10million public liability may be interested in carrying out general works and possibly collect goods and store smaller items for the Council. Members agreed that a formal service agreement would not be necessary at this stage and that the Council could engage services in the usual way as per the terms of its Financial Regulations.

Following a discussion it was **RESOLVED** to contact the tradesman to discuss the Council's requirements and to arrange a site meeting for him to quote on works required: replacement of basketball nets, filling a hole behind one of the benches and sub-dividing Allotment Plot 7. Clerk to action and seek approval of a quotation within the Council's agreed maintenance budget and under its scheme of delegation.

Rampion 2: To Receive any updates on the proposed cable route through the Recreation Ground

It was noted that the Council had agreed at the April meeting to place the agent and solicitor on notice until Rampion's solicitors make a formal approach to negotiate heads of terms to access the Recreation

Ground for part of their preferred inshore cable route. This was in order to avoid a future conflict of interest and not to prejudice the Council's current position of objection to the route. It had been agreed that the 'Early Bird' payment for an early agreement to the Heads of Terms may be a forfeit if the Council was to secure an agreement which was in the best long-term interests of the charity.

To Receive April 2023 football fixtures for the Recreation Ground

It was noted that there was one football fixture scheduled on the grounds on Saturday 22nd April, previously approved by the Committee. None received for May onwards yet. Clerk will be invoicing the club for the 2022/23 fixtures. The information was noted.

9.To Report the following:

It was noted that inspections had been kindly carried out in the Clerk's medical absence by some of the Members. Reports on the following were noted:

Grounds Maintenance: Grass had been cut but there are two deep holes immediately behind the bench nearest to the Play Area. Clerk to arrange for this to be filled and turfed.

The gate latch by the cinder footpath needed adjustment.

Village Hall: The ground at the north end of the building had been water-logged during wet weather. The ground was dry in the last inspection on 17th April prior to the meeting.

Defibrillator at the Village Hall: 75% charged. Currently secured elsewhere pending installation of the new cabinet which is anticipated in May.

Defibrillator at Pixies Corner: 75% charged and in place.

MUGA: One basketball net in place. Clerk to arrange replacement of the other net.

Children's Play Area: Gates self-closing on 13th and 17th April but not on earlier visits in March.

Springs may need adjusting. Clerk to arrange this.

Bus Shelters: No further report.

Vera's Shelter: Fencing from a neighbouring property had collapsed against the rear of the shelter and had been replaced prior to this meeting.

Parish Noticeboards: Two quotations received to replace 4 of the noticeboards. A third quotation is being sought for consideration at the next meeting.

RESOLVED to note the reports and that the Clerk would be making arrangements for necessary repairs.

10.Footpaths and Bridleways

There were no reports.

11.Conservation Issues

There were no reports.

12.Any other urgent Open Space, Recreation & Allotment and Footpaths & Conservation issues that may arise OR items for the next Agenda.

To consider fencing part of the hedge boundary of the Allotment with the Recreation Ground where there are gaps from the recent tree felling. Clerk to seek a quotation from the handyperson for discussion at the next OSRA meeting.

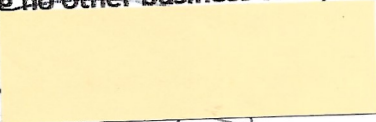
13.Date of the next meetings at the Washington Village Hall

The following dates of the next meetings were noted:

Annual Parish Council Meeting: Monday 15th May 2023, 7:00pm
Parish Council Meeting: Monday 15th May 2023, 7:30pm
Planning & Transport Committee: Monday 22nd May 2023, 7:00pm
Open Spaces Committee: Monday 22nd May 2023, 7:45pm

There being no other business to report, the meeting was closed at 20:50 hrs.

Signed.....



Dated..... 22/5/23