

N.B. All Minutes are deemed as draft until formally approved and signed.

MINUTES of the MEETING of PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held VIRTUALLY ONLINE (via Zoom) on 6 May 2021 at 7.00 pm under Local Authorities (Coronavirus) Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings (England) Regulation effective 04.04.2020

Present: Councillor A Barker (Chairman)

Cllrs P Moulton, J Straw and R Woodward

Mrs. A Barker, Ms S Colledge

In Attendance:

Mrs. C Tibbles PSLCC, Parish Manager/Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

Members of the public: None.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was being held virtually due to the coronavirus pandemic. This was a public meeting and there was a statutory right for anyone to record it (as detailed on the agenda with other important information). For the benefit of the attendance register, members verbally confirmed their attendance and the Parish Manager signed the register on their behalf.

Before the meeting started, the Chairman sadly reported that Mr Andy Dyke has died the previous day. Mr. Dyke had been a keen supporter of the work of the parish council and worked tirelessly since the Community Speedwatch project to campaign to the County Council for the Vehicle Activated Signs now in operation by the parish council. A moment of silence was observed and a collection would be arranged for any donations by councillors/staff to a charity of the family's choice.

2514. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Resolved that Cllr Barker be elected as Committee Chairman for the Civic Year 2021-2022. The Parish Manager thanked Cllr Barker for his helpful support over the past year, particularly being 'onsite' when she had to work remotely from home.

2515. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2516. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr A Barker declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in Whitwick Historical Group as a member and a non-pecuniary interest in Walkers Flats Allotment Society as a signatory on some transactions.

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Cllr J Straw declared a pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 2522f [Parish Manager's note: renumbered in these minutes to Item 2522m] and would leave the meeting for that decision; a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in matters affecting the Green Wedge as a member of Whitwick Action Group; a disclosable non-pecuniary interest as a member of Whitwick Historical Group.

Ms S Colledge declared a non-pecuniary interest in matters connected to Whitwick Historical Group as a member, to Whitwick Action Group as a member and Woodstock in Whitwick as a member; there were no planning issues so no other interests declared regarding the old Hermitage Leisure Centre site or the Green Wedge

Mrs A Barker declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest as a member of Whitwick Historical Group.

Cllr P Moulton declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in matters affecting Belton and Whitwick Royal British Legion as the Link Councillor and a member; a non-pecuniary interest in matters affecting Whitwick Historical Group as the Link Councillor and a member; a non-pecuniary interest in matters regarding the Bowls Club as a member and Link Councillor; a non-pecuniary interest as Link Councillor for Thornborough Road Allotment Society and a non-pecuniary interest as a representative member of Leisure Centre Steering Group.

2517. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION

None.

2518. MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2021 be approved and would be signed as a correct record when a date could be arranged at the Office.

2519. PARISH PROJECTS – WORKING PARTY/LINK COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Resolved: That the following **actions be taken/noted:**

- a) **Playground Working Party:** following consideration of the research and site reviews of the working party, quotations for new play equipment at Hilary Crescent were now complete and carefully considered. **Resolved to accept the quote from Company B – Play and Leisure – for £25,000 plus VAT which was chosen for the amount of equipment provided and the design of inclusive items which gave better provision when compared to Company C, £25,000 and Company D £24,995;** the Parish Manager would provisionally order the equipment from Play and Leisure to secure an installation date, subject to any improvements that might be suggested during a further 3-week consultation period inviting residents views (signs on site, parish noticeboard, design display on office window and website); companies C & D to be thanked for their quotations and Company A had declined to quote;

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- b) Bowls Link Councillor:** Cllr Moulton reported the season had started with social distancing restrictions still in place; the Green was playing very well and directly linked to the maintenance that the Club commended the contractors for their work and continued endeavours to improve; although some members had retired due to precautionary restrictions there were new members joining the club and recruitment was going well;
- c) Allotments Link Councillor – Thornborough Road:** Cllr Moulton reported there were plans to submit a grant funding application;
- d) Allotments Link Councillor – Walkers Flats:** no report received;

PROJECTS

1. Whitwick Park Entrance improvements – **the Chairman undertook to email and inform the contractor that a deadline had been given for completion by end of May (as no reply received to recent requests by the Parish Manager);**
2. Park Hall Fire Exit disabled access improvement: **Park Hall improvements still to be scheduled by the contractor;**
3. New Signage for the Pavilion/Green/Parking/Tennis Courts – no progress by the Parish Manager;
4. Installation of Benches throughout the Village – the long awaited licence had been received from the County Council, and when signed/returned it would be possible to arrange installation dates for 3 locations rescheduled after the latest delay; **resolved to accept donation of memorial plaque to go on the new bench opposite Swannymote Road in tribute to Andy Dyke;** a request to be made if possible for the bench to be installed by the Park Ranger before he left working for JR Landscaping; a collection would be taken for a leaving gift;
5. Repairs to the Old Station Building – Cllr Moulton reported a slight leak was still coming from the chimney and photos would be taken before/after the forecast heavy rain at the weekend for further assessment;
6. Installation of the Miners Memorial Seat in front of the Wheel – **JR Landscaping would now be asked to install this bench; Cllr Moulton to provide wording for the plaque and the narrative for the Wheel to the Parish Manager by 14 May;**
7. Park Hall Heating – deferred as more information awaited;
8. Grit Bins – update awaited on whether the County Council had installed the promised grit bin at Clarke Close; **the Chairman and Cllr Woodward to visit Thornborough ward; the Parish Manager to check the title deeds for the Community Office to potentially site a grit bin there (under CCTV) for use on Skinners Lane;**
9. Memorial Garden in Whitwick Park – members noted an offer to donate a memorial Tommy figure and the person would be asked to contact the Branch of the Royal British Legion; **Cllr Moulton had attended a Branch meeting the previous evening and again asked for details of their plans; no confirmation had yet been provided to the parish council of their ideas and contribution to the project;** the Branch

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had arranged a wreath laying in Whitwick on 7 July to commemorate their 100th anniversary and events at the Clock Tower in Coalville on 11 July; councillors were concerned to hear that publicity had been issued by the Legion for the opening of the Memorial Garden at 3 pm on 11 July; **the Parish Manager had serious concerns that no written proposals had been received for the suggested designs and reminded members that formal arrangements would be need to be planned and assessed by her, once approved by the Committee.** She stressed that greater understanding was required by the Legion for managing work in a public park - volunteers could not just turn up and start work without due measures being put in place with risk assessments, method statements, safety and signage, written access consent, proof of liability insurance, notification to our contractors and scheduling of work between other ground works that were already committed to;

10. Car Hill Rock – no progress by the Parish Manager on the gabion request nor on seeking signage advice from the insurers; the bin had been ordered by JR Landscaping but delivery was still awaited;

2520. LAND MATTERS – KING GEORGES V FIELD

It was noted the action list is awaiting updating. As trustee of the Whitwick Park (King Georges Field) Charity, members **resolved** that the following **actions be taken/noted**:

WHITWICK PARK

- a) that the Parish Manager had contacted the organiser of an outdoor fitness activity being independently arranged for Whitwick Park and has promptly received the requested documents – future plans were not yet clear and no further update;
- b) a new invitation has been extended by the Parish Manager to the Rural Community Council for the return of the Coffee Connect team to the parish and a reply was awaited;
- c) update by the Parish Manager on two new benches being prepared for installation in the parish;

PARSONWOOD HILL (part)

- d) no other new matters for consideration.

2521. LAND MATTERS – EXCEPT KGV LAND

It was noted the action list is awaiting updating. **Resolved: That the following actions be taken/noted:**

ALLOTMENTS

- a) that the insurance claim for the theft of the fencing at Walkers Flats Allotment Society had been cancelled by the Parish Manager as it was not to be replaced; the Parish Manager advised that the remaining stumps should be removed as they could be a hazard;
- b) despite the District Council erroneously denying ownership of the drive

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from George Street, the Parish Manager had again urged that the potholes be repaired;

- c) no other matters requiring attention/action from the management committees for Thornborough Road and Walkers Flats Allotments;

RECREATION/OPEN SPACES;

- d) the Parish Manager would contact the council's solicitor regarding progress on the enforcement action for reinstatement to the grass open space;
- e) further to previous discussions the flower tub at the Swannymote Road Whitwick sign had not been reinstated as a larger clip was on order; flowering bulbs had unfortunately been mowed over by the contractor and members were asked to clarify locations of planting (either by map or photos) at Car Hill Rock, Hilary Crescent and Hermitage Road.
- f) the new bin at Holly Hayes play area was agreed and **to protect the environment at Car Hill Rock a litter bin would be installed by the entrance to help visitors act responsibly;**
- g) routine matters were progressing but other actions were still outstanding.

2522. BUILDINGS MANAGEMENT

It was noted the action list is awaiting updating. **Resolved: That the following actions be taken/noted:**

- a) that the Parish Manager chase a quotation from Navas Associates for asbestos surveys for all buildings to identify locations affected;
- b) that the buildings had been successfully re-opened under easing of lockdown restrictions (although Park Hall was closed on the day of the royal funeral);
- c) **lockdown restrictions were due to be reviewed nationally on 21 June and members would consider whether to increase the capacity to 50% (e.g. 30 people at Park Hall) at the next meeting on 3 July 2021;**

PARK HALL:

- d) **the booking from a new hire organisation was welcomed for 2 regular days per week, increasing to 3 days at a later stage;** members felt there were exciting opportunities for partnership working that had potential to benefit park visitors and the wider parish; **to review the arrangements in 12 months and assess availability for other hirers; in addition to staff, Cllr Moulton was happy to liaise with the hirer on parish projects and Ms Colledge would be a reserve contact on this topic;**
- e) further repair to another toilet seat undertaken at Park Hall;
- f) **the cost of business rates had been amended, after the end of the covid relief to zero, from 1 July it had increased to £1110.28;** previous charges were £259 in 19/20, £121 (due to a credit of £990 for

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covid relief) in 20/21 and the current budget was £1221.

g) no further building repairs or maintenance issues;

COMMUNITY OFFICE:

h) equipment had been returned to the Community Office by a member of the VAS working party who had been unable to continue using the software to produce the printouts – the Chairman and Cllr Moulton would seek help from Ms Mabey to establish new procedures;

i) members noted the difficulty in sourcing additional IT equipment under the current system as the provider would not supply without payment in advance by process of pro-forma invoices (contrary to recommended proper practices); a third company had not responded to a request to quote but Supreme Systems had the expertise and, importantly, experience and understanding of parish/town council; **in consideration of the potential risk currently faced with failing equipment, members resolved to accept the 'No Frills' quote from Supreme Systems for IT support for £20 per month, per workstation; additionally delegated for the Parish Manager to source information and equipment through their procurement system which would give comparative quotes/options;** it was anticipated that the enhanced service would reduce the time spent by staff in sourcing and managing technical/communication equipment; members endorsed the benefit and savings by knowing that faults would be identified and fixed before systems failed to improve business continuity;

j) following lockdown guidance, the Parish Manager would aim to reduce working from home to facilitate the Community Office re-opening from 17 May for essential personal visits (potentially with time restrictions) and PPE shields worn by staff if visitors needed to enter;

k) no new building repairs and maintenance issues but **the cost of business rates had been amended, and the current charge was £1447, with a discount of £718 leaving a bill of £729 but no budget had been set after no previous charge** (in 19/20 and no charge nor budget set in 20/21).

PAVILION/TOILETS, OUTBUILDINGS and OLD RAILWAY STATION:

l) the repair/replacement cistern for the gent's toilet in the pavilion had not yet been done and JR Landscaping had been asked to pursue this urgently with the plumber;

[Cllr. J Straw left the meeting at 9.18 pm.]

m) the full re-wire of the Station electrics had uncovered a number of unexpected problems and members realised that with an old building it was not always clear what conditions would be discovered when work commenced; therefore the delay with the anticipated completion date was wholly accepted because the Council priority was to have a thorough and safe installation; the value of the extra work undertaken (with just a £50 charge agreed for an improved PIR security light) would ensure

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the council and the Whitwick Historical Group had a safer future ahead of them when finished; the investment by the council was justified when a fire risk had been discovered with burnt computer cabling located in the power cable trunking; this had been notified to the Group who would be responsible for rectification; the Parish Manager had asked for the handover meeting to take place when she returned from annual leave; the Committee placed their thanks on record to Whitwick Electrical for the extra work and commitment to the job; thanks from Whitwick Historical Group were placed on record to Cllr J Straw for voluntarily cleaning the building in a very thorough manner; requesting a quote for schematics was discussed, although the new system was more straightforward to understand and potentially adapt in the future;

[Cllr. J Straw re-joined the meeting at 9.23 pm.]

n) there were no new building repairs and maintenance issues but members recalled the planning permission for 4 houses near to this site which would have works taking place at some stage;

2523. OTHER MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Election of Vice-Chairman for the Committee.

Full signature of Chairman: Date:

[Cllr. J Straw left the meeting at 9.18 pm.]

[Cllr. J Straw re-joined the meeting at 9.23 pm.]

The meeting terminated at 9.35 pm.

Date of the next **physical** meeting: Thursday 1 July 2021 at 7 pm