

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 5 November 2020 at 7.10 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, R Woodward and

Mrs. A Barker,

In Attendance:

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

The Parish Manager apologised for the technical problems that delayed the start of the meeting. The Parish Manager would sign the attendance register on their behalf.

**2297. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Ms S Colledge.

**2298. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

Cllr J Straw declared a non-pecuniary interest in Whitwick Historical Group as a member and a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in any planning matter that affected the Green Wedge as a member of Whitwick Action Group.

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

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

NB See also Item 2301 (3) when Cllr Moulton later declared a non pecuniary interest in item 3 as he knew one of the contractors and would abstain from the vote.

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## **2299. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION**

None.

## **2300. MINUTES**

**Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2020 be approved and would be signed as a correct record when a date could be arranged at the Office.**

## **2301. PARISH PROJECTS – WORKING PARTY/LINK COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

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

- a) Playground Working Party Report:** no meetings had taken place during the coronavirus pandemic;
- b) Bowls Link Councillor:** Cllr Moulton reported, as previously, that the season was over and there were no winter events taking place due to coronavirus.
- c) Allotments Link Councillor – Thornborough Road:** Cllr Moulton reported the Society had now ceased rental of the nature site at the rear of the allotments. 2 plots were currently not being worked and there were 24 names on the waiting list so the site would be full again soon. The Chairman reported that the footpath at the rear of the allotments had now been cleared by the County Council and was accessible again (in addition to the path from Hall Lane to Green Lane that was previously overgrown and reported several times by him to County).
- d) Allotments Link Councillor – Walkers Flats:** A report had been sent by Ian Gregory detailing the work being done to create a disabled plot. As some plot holders used mobility scooters, he asked that the potholes on the access drive from George Street be filled in. The Allotment Society wished to apply for grant funding to extend the access for disabled members, possibly requiring an additional gate. An infestation problem was thought to be coming from the adjacent public footpath and help was requested with this. A copy of the report would be sent to Cllr L Gillard, as the Link Councillor.

## **PROJECTS**

Cllr Moulton declared a non pecuniary interest in item 3 as he knew one of the contractors and would therefore abstain from the vote.

1. Whitwick Park Entrance Gates–access issue had been highlighted and members discussed potential solutions to reduce this problem; **Parish Manager delegated to take the agreed action;**
2. Whitwick Park Entrance improvements – **deferred to seek the additional quotations still required;**
3. Park Hall Fire Exit disabled access improvement: 3 quotations had been received and circulated (one verbally), **resolved that the contractor C as the lowest price be accepted in principle, subject to a second site meeting to clarify design and the council requiring slabs instead of sleepers for the steps to the grass;**

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4. New Signage for the Pavilion/Green/Parking/Tennis Courts – the Parish Manager not yet verified the wording due to remote working;
5. Installation of Benches throughout the Village – additional information was required by the County Council (clarifying the width of the footpath at Loughborough Road and the direction the bench would be facing at Perran Avenue (for Hall Lane); the Parish Manager to arrange for the information request to be sent to the Chairman who would visit the sites again; 3 new benches now installed in the park and the vandalised bench from the tennis courts was to be stripped for spare parts (instead of refurbishment);
6. Repairs to the Old Station Building – the boiler had been replaced and repair work mostly completed and invoices awaited; two areas of wall in the media room and by boiler had been partly replastered;
7. Installation of the Miners Memorial Seat in front of the Wheel – members felt that a display lecturn was not necessary as there was an alternative means of mounting an information board so the licence application would be for a replacement bench only (nearly finalised and to be sent to LCC); shrubs at the Wheel had been reduced by volunteers to improve visibility;
8. Park Hall Heating – the new company had still not provided a date to undertake the service due to heavy workload but were being chased regularly;
9. Grit Bins – the date for unlocking, checking and re-filling by volunteers was being circulated; members asked if the grit bin promised by LCC for Clarke Close had been provided;
10. New Flag Pole – the base plate had been delivered and the installation site confirmed with JR Landscaping who would create a square slab base, delivery of the pole was expected before the end of the month and the draft flag flying policy would be placed on the next council agenda; the Parish Manager still to contact neighbouring Environment Agency;
11. Memorial Garden in Whitwick Park – the three designs had been circulated to the delight of members, who asked for a letter of thanks to go to Jenny Williams for her hard work, thoughtful input and brilliant designs; it had been discussed further with the Royal British Legion and **two separate site meetings would be held (due to lockdown) for the Legion and for the designer; it was hoped that schools and nurseries and young park visitors could be involved and make their own suggestions;**
12. Play Areas at Holly Hayes and Hilary Crescent - **aging equipment needed review and replacement, with some bench provision that met accessibility needs and the council asked to release capital reserves to fund this;** the Parish Manager was asked to investigate a fallen gate at the boundary with Holly Hayes wood and if possible reinstatement;
13. Fencing for Car Hill Rock – **to arrange a site meeting for further quotes for the safety fence that was needed and then for picnic benches, including some accessibility provision.**

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### **2302. ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR – DISCUSSION REPORT**

Following the resolutions at the previous Committee meeting, an update was given: the bodycam for the Parish Manager as a lone worker had arrived that day and when set-up would be worn to deter/record abuse when making onsite visits; success noted that the regular voluntary repairs to gaps in the fencing were reducing out of hours trespass; the draft extension to the complaints policy would be on the next council agenda to protect the parish council from reputational damage; that timely reporting of incidents to the police by phoning 101 was helping, with police attending an incident at Whitwick Park the previous Saturday evening; security access measures for the police to be extended; awaiting training date from the police for Rangers and Parish Manager; no request made by the Committee to refer these issues to full council; to continue with proactive ideas that would improve safety and relationships in Whitwick Park and the parish.

### **2303. ANNUAL PLAYGROUND INSPECTION REPORTS**

Members noted the comprehensive reports circulated and commended the detailed information that helped protect the council and assess priorities for the future and for JR Landscaping.

### **2304. 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) the "Why I Love My Park" poster competition was underway, involving children and other park visitors; the first 'Park Brew' coffee event had been successfully held in Whitwick Park on Sunday 25 October but a delegated decision taken to cancel the next one on Sunday 29 November; instead all councillors invited to be involved with Cllr Collins from 10 am on Sunday 20 December, possibly having a Community Safety focus with Cllr Woodward as the 'champion' and PCSO if available; a gazebo and sandwich board would be purchased to use/promote future outdoor council events;
- b) update provided by Ms Colledge (via the Parish Manager) that there was support for a further meeting in the Park with Cllr Collins, possibly at the Park Brew event on 31 January to investigate further a possible Street Art project on the skatepark, in conjunction with some of the regular users;
- c) to note the investigation into the serious incident in the park (previously circulated to members) is now closed;
- d) to accept the quote for urgent replacement of a section of the tarmac top driveway of £2900 + VAT;**
- e) noted that insurers required notification if the toilets were closed for any period longer than 30 days as part of the conditions of cover;
- f) being mindful that there were sometimes complaints about the smell

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from bins when placed close to benches, **to install a bin on the bend by the adult keep fit equipment;**

**g) to install a bin in the Jitty, at a midway point between both gates on the grass verge to reduce incidents of bagged dog poo being thrown over the fence into the park;**

h) invoice had been submitted for the insurance claim of the repair to the entrance gates and payment anticipated shortly – concluding this matter after 17 months; an email regarding details of an adder in the park had been sent by the resident in the summer to the District Council and therefore never received;

PARSONWOOD HILL (part)

i) no other new matters for consideration and an update given on the thanks sent by the football coach for understanding shown when the field was used earlier during spring lockdown.

### **2305. 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 no matters had been submitted that required attention/action by the Committee;

#### **RECREATION/OPEN SPACES**

**b) to adopt the Memorial Policy, as circulated, with a view to extend and review this when the Memorial Garden was created, to include donations of trees/plants and possibly baskets/planters;**

c) that a letter had been sent to the resident notifying them that a solicitor had been engaged to establish if an easement existed and take enforcement action over the boundary infringement at one open space;

d) that graffiti had been discovered on a planter basket on a parish entry and temporarily turned round until it could be cleaned;

e) that confirmation had been sent to Play Inspection Company for 5 sites to be checked again in September 2021 at the same cost as this year;

f) that the local Access Representative for the British Mountaineering Council had advised they had links to funding opportunities to help improve locations for hill walkers (as well as climbers and mountaineers) and would remain happy to help explore this; also that should future lockdown create issues the local climbing community would do all they could to ensure the ancient woods were treated with the respect they deserved; the Chairman reported an increase in cyclists had already been noted.

### **2306. BUILDINGS MANAGEMENT**

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

PARK HALL:

a) no date was yet agreed for periodic electrical inspections due to

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- difficulties in getting electricians to quote;
- b) that no building or maintenance issues had been raised;
- c) that no external issues had been raised;

COMMUNITY OFFICE:

- d) that in line with recent guidance the Parish Manager would continue to work mostly from home; the Community Office could not safely accommodate unexpected members of the public due to restricted size, layout and safety considerations but that the trial for visitor appointments to aid safe working for staff would hopefully be offered after lockdown (when dates were known);
- e) that no new building repairs or maintenance issues raised;

PAVILION/TOILETS, OUTBUILDINGS and OLD RAILWAY STATION:

- f) that the store room doors were to be painted soon and new signs produced to go on the toilet doors;

**2307. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Resolved: That having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted and the need to consider advice, publicity in respect of which would be prejudicial to the public interest, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting in pursuance of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended.**

**2308. LAND MATTERS**

Members considered the confidential report and professional advice on the best course of future action in the interest of the council.

**Resolved:**

- a) the potential land risk to the parish council could be met by using existing resources to alternatively accommodate current needs if future changes beyond our control came to fruition;**
- b) that the review of the work of JR Landscaping in fulfilling the grounds maintenance contract was satisfactory and the commitment of their staff was commended; that a recommendation of the committee be made to full council;**

**2309. OTHER MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

No new matters raised.

Full signature of Chairman: ..... Date: .....

The meeting terminated at 9.13 pm.

CLlr Straw left the meeting briefly at 8.48 pm and re-joined again at 8.49 pm on a different device. Discussions were paused by members and no business conducted during this time.

Date of the next meeting: Thursday 3 December 2020 at 7 pm