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MINUTES of the MEETING of PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held on 5 March 2020 at 7.00 pm at Park Hall, Whitwick Park, off North Street, Whitwick

Present: Councillor A Barker (Chairman)

Cllrs P Moulton, J Straw, R Woodward and

Mrs. A Barker, Ms S Colledge

In Attendance:

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

2 members of the public [Items 2134-2142 only]

2134. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None. The Chairman welcomed Mrs. Barker to her first meeting.

2135. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Ms Colledge declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in any planning matter that affected the Green Wedge as a member of Whitwick Action Group and any matter regarding the Hermitage Leisure Centre as a neighbour and Woodstock in Whitwick as a member.

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.

Cllr P Moulton declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in matters regarding the Bowls Club as a member; a non-pecuniary interest in matters affecting Whitwick Historical Group as the Link Councillor and a non-pecuniary interest in matters affecting Whitwick Royal British Legion as the Link Councillor and a member.

2136. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION

The Chairman, having explained that public participation was only allowed during this time limited item and not during the other parts of the meeting, invited questions. A representative of the U3A explained for their National Project Day they wished to plant trees in Whitwick and asked if the parish council would consider accommodating this on parish land, happily working jointly with other groups (eg schools) helping U3A members to plant them. Discussions ensued to clarify the helpful details they had researched: provision of 400 free trees by the Woodland Trust, size and scale (105 needing space of 4 tennis courts, 30 fitting on 1 tennis court). The Chairman welcomed the Voluntary Tree Warden to the meeting and members thanked her for taking on this new role. The Tree Warden asked

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why the parish council wanted to spend money on trees when there were free sources available - she was already exploring these so the parish didn't have to pay? She added that small trees were better to root and get established and that stakes, ties, rabbit guards etc would need to be purchased. Members confirmed the Committee were fully in support of planting trees, as records showed, but disagreed with the decision to pay £5000 as 50% contribution to a scheme for trees for just one ward.

2137. MINUTES

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

2138. PARISH PROJECTS – WORKING PARTY/LINK COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Resolved: That the following actions be taken/noted:

- a) Playground Working Party Report:** noted the arrangements for the new roundabout to be installed.
- b) Bowls Link Councillor:** No report. Cllr Moulton had attended a pre-season meeting, as a member of the club but had not spoken as a representative of the parish council.
- c) Allotments Link Councillor – Thornborough Road:** No report.
- d) Allotments Link Councillor – Walkers Flats:** No report.

2139. FUTURE MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

Resolved to change the date of the next meeting only to be held on Wednesday 1 April at the Pavilion.

2140. STREET FURNITURE

Following a request for local knowledge and understanding, **resolved to invite the County Council to a site meeting at the top of Dumps Road following a request to them by a resident to install a handrail for pedestrians.** Members were unclear about why any future ownership would be the responsibility of the parish council but felt that a viable solution may not be found at this difficult location.

2141. TREE MATTERS

Resolved: That the following actions be taken/noted:

- a) the draft Tree Management Strategy was still being revised and was deferred. Support was fully given to apply for Tree Charter Champion or a Tree Charter Branch status which reflected the commitment of the parish council priority for the environment and could be incorporated into the new Strategy document; draft Charter wording was approved to recommend to council;**
- b) considered the written clarification from the County Council that their 'Licence to Cultivate' did not normally cover trees; although the county could look into new tree planting on verges with the help of parishes (funding and watering) it could also be considered as part of their own county planting program; confirming that trees would become the default property of the county who would then decide maintenance and

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- felling; having to be mindful when planting of choosing the right species, size at maturity, visibility splays, width of verge, consideration of adjacent landowners and maintenance of their property (e.g. hedge cutting) and importantly the checks and restrictions to planting with overhead/underground services (needing searches with around 15 different service providers to locate utility runs (gas, water, electric, telecoms)); willingness to investigate further;
- c) Confirmation that there is likely to be a big drive on tree planting over the next few years, especially around the National Forest, **resolved to affirm to the county the full parish support to provide space for planting on WPC land; to accept a community orchard if funding was available and to accept individual trees and/or wooded plots if the funding was available; to accept the offer to meet the new Tree Officer with responsibility for Whitwick and explore options;**
 - d) **not to support paying £5000 to plant trees on verges that would be handed over to the County Council on verges because it was felt to be a waste of parishioner's money;**
 - e) **to further explore a community planting scheme as suggested by a local resident in conjunction with a local school but at an alternative location where it was a priority to replace felled trees and enhance that open space;**
 - f) **to accept in principle the offer by the U3A to undertake a project by members to obtain and plant free trees on parish land in the autumn;**
 - g) to note with thanks the appointment of a voluntary Parish Tree Warden and the opportunities that might be available (after training) for sharing information that would lead to improvements.

2142. LAND MATTERS – EXCEPT KGV LAND

Resolved: That the following actions be taken/noted:

ALLOTMENTS

- a) comparisons were made between the two management agreements in use and the Parish Manager to follow up on two minor matters before further consideration by the Committee;

RECREATION/OPEN SPACES

- b) noted that the licence application for some new benches had not yet been submitted to the County Council and a further explanatory letter to some residents was also required;
- c) no other grounds maintenance matters from/undertaken by JR Landscaping were raised;
- d) no update available on riparian responsibility for the parish but members noted the underground culvert installed by the old Urban District Council was being checked for ownership;
- e) noted that a new company had been sourced for any potential environmental survey that the parish might be required to undertake by the brook;

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- f) **thanks to the vigilance of the Chairman, a potential boundary infringement was being urgently investigated by the Parish Manager, with clear and unanimous instructions by members on how to proceed;**
- g) noted the discounted picnic benches often available at this time of year and of potential interest in 2021; that residents had volunteered to be monitors for the parish grit bins; that the work by Severn Trent to a water pipe under the footbridge at land adjacent to Holly Hayes Road had been agreed and provisionally scheduled;

2143. BUILDINGS MANAGEMENT

Resolved: That the following actions be taken/noted:

PARK HALL -

- a) that a date/quotes was awaited by the new company willing to undertake the annual service and maintenance of the heating system;
- b) reminder notices about handwashing had been put up in parish buildings and **additional cleaning of all handles and switches would be instigated as a precautionary measure;**
- c) no matters raised for external areas;
- d) the new rating notice had been received and invoicing was awaited from the District Council before calculating the difficulty this would cause;

COMMUNITY OFFICE

- e) water ingress had been noted under the front door of the community office and would be monitored during any future heavy rain;
- f) the windows had not yet been cleaned, although agreed (contact information required);

PAVILION/TOILETS, OUTBUILDINGS AND OTHER BUILDINGS

- g) changes discussed to the licence agreement for the Pavilion which would be drafted by the Parish Manager; decorating consent had been sought and given to the Bowls Club; **repairs to the roof and investigation of chimney breast damp was needed at the Station;**

2144. LAND MATTERS – KING GEORGES V FIELD

As trustee of the Whitwick Park (King Georges Field) Charity, members resolved that the following actions be taken/noted:

WHITWICK PARK

- a) Cllr Moulton, as Link Councillor for improvements to Park grounds, had found quotes were not forthcoming and after checking financial regulations, **agreed to pursue for a final time before presenting what was available to the next meeting;**
- b) **to invite a resident to help with ideas/designs for the new memorial garden within Whitwick Park and designs were shown for a commemorative memorial bench and other items;**
- c) consent had been granted to the TPO application for works to the protected lime tree within Whitwick Park that needed crown lifting and

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- some crown reduction;
- d) essential tree work was delayed to Friday 6 March, with temporary partial closure of the entrance driveway when removal of major limbs was taking place [Parish Manager’s note: this was rescheduled to Tuesday 9 March, delayed due to high winds and rescheduled again to Sunday 15 March];
- e) confirmation of arrangements for removal of old climbing frame by JR Landscaping by 10 March;
- f) forthcoming site visit by contract manager for the new roundabout on 11 March, with installation and surfacing dates soon to be confirmed;
- g) quote now accepted for repairs to the main entrance gates;

PARSONWOOD HILL

- h) no new matters for consideration;

OTHER MATTERS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

- i) no new suggestions.

Full signature of Chairman: **Date:**

The meeting terminated at 9.28 pm.

*Date of the next meeting: changed to **Wednesday 1 April 2020 at 7 pm**
in the Sports Pavilion*