

Wheathampstead Parish Council

Community Involvement Committee

21 May 2018 19:30

Present: Councillors L Halford Chairman
G Clark
D Davies
T Reason
P Woodhams
J Warren Clerk to the Council
Press 0
Public 0

5642-18 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors E Habib, S Haynes and D Johnston (personal reasons).

5643-18 Public Speaking

None.

5644-18 Specific Declarations of Interest & Dispensations

None.

5645-18 Minutes of Community Involvement Committee of 9 April

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Davies, and it was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 April 2018 be approved.

Resolved:

To confirm the Minutes of the meetings held on 9 April 2018 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

5646-18 Allotment issues

It was reported that a number of complaints had been received regarding the welfare of livestock on Glebe 31. Chickens regularly 'escaped' and there had been reports of sightings of a large number of rats 'who open the feed bags'. Wheathampstead Parish Council livestock guidelines clearly state that livestock/ poultry be visited daily and that food be in vermin proof containers etc. A letter was sent on 29 March drawing attention to the rules, also to DEFRA guidance on poultry especially in relation to avian flu. The tenant had been asked to deal with the matter by the end of April or risked revocation of his tenancy. A follow up letter was sent in May. The tenant appeared to have ignored all letters and had not paid his tenancy rent, the invoice and tenancy agreement were posted on 3 April. He had responded to at least one call to rescue an escaped hen. Photographs were circulated on the chicken enclosure which did not meet specifications. A number of the committee had also undertaken a site visit.

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Councillors had significant concerns for welfare of the chickens and vermin. With regret Councillor Davies proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed that the tenancy be terminated with one month notice. The tenant to be advised that Wheathampstead Parish Council had given significant leeway for the tenant to put in place acceptable processes for the care of his livestock. This had not occurred. The hens should be rehomed and the site cleared, at the tenant's expense within the month. Notification to be sent by recorded post.

A number of complaints had been received about bonfires on Hitchen and Glebe allotment fields. Complaints included smoke smuts on washing, in homes and effects on breathing. Bonfire rules permitted the burning of organic and dry vegetable matter grown on an individual's plot Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings 8am until noon.

The Clerk reported that a significant residue of melted/burnt plastic had been removed by the Council's contractor from Glebe field to avoid contamination following rain.

Bonfires outside permitted hours were regularly reported as causing a nuisance to neighbours. Councillors noted that locally some places permitted bonfires only in the autumn/ winter and in some places bonfires were forbidden. Local rules were generous and tenants should be aware of the nuisance factor of disregarding them

Councillor Clark proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed to contact the allotment representatives; to reproduce new brightly coloured bonfire guidance/ rules posters to replace those currently on allotment noticeboards; to notify all Glebe and Hitchens tenants of the rules and that non – compliance may lead to a review of the rules.

Tenancy agreements were renewed on 1 April annually. A number of allotments had become overgrown. Strimming by the Maintenance Contractor to avoid spread of seeds was a possibility. It was noted that some tenants had given up their allotments, some had yet to pay. The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that the Maintenance Contractor be asked to strim untenanted plots at the end of May. Outstanding invoices to be chased with a 7 day deadline or assumption that the tenancy became void. Any plots not paid for by end of May would be strimmed.

Resolved:

- **Regretfully to terminate the tenancy for Glebe 31 as the tenant had not followed the livestock guidance nor responded to requests to do so within a period of at least 2 months. A month's notice to be given for the plot to be cleared and hens rehomed**

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- **To note that quantities of plastic residue resulting from unauthorised burning had been removed from Glebe Field to avoid contamination following rainfall.**
- **To write to all tenants of Glebe and Hitchens Fields reminding them of the bonfire regulations and advising that these may be reviewed if the regulations were not adhered to.**
- **To produce new brightly coloured posters to remind tenants of bonfire regulations.**
- **To chase all outstanding allotment invoices with a final 7 day period to pay and renew the tenancy agreement.**
- **All untenanted plots at the end of May to be strimmed by the Council's Maintenance Contractor**

5647-18 Nomansland Nature Quest

In 2012 Wheathampstead and Sandridge parish councils accessed a grant to run Nomansland Nature Quest events for young people. These fun, educational activities proved popular and subsequently the parishes provided funding for local schools to access the events and learn more about their local Common. Beech Hyde School enjoyed the activities so much in 2017 that five sessions had been requested in 2018. Funding for sessions included toilet hire and 'tutor' for sessions on plant and animal identification, 'orienteeing' and den building. The children walked from school to Nomansland so no transport costs were incurred. Specific budget provision of £830 had been made, estimated costs for five sessions were £1,350. It was agreed that this expenditure improved local appreciation of the parish and potentially lifelong enjoyment. Money to be vired from the youth budget or reserves.

Councillor Reason proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed that five sessions be funded. Beech Hyde was to be asked to ensure parents were aware that this was sponsored by Wheathampstead Parish Council. A report for the Pump etc would be required. This could be in the form of a brief write up with photos and drawings.

Resolved:

To sponsor the five Nomansland Nature Quest events requested by Beech Hyde School.

5648-18 Bus report

Further to Minute 5590-18 the inter-parish bus group had met with St Albans District Council portfolio holder Councillor Beric Read on 18 May. He had agreed to meet with officers to look for a funding source to retain the Sunday bus subsidy for an additional year, allowing buses to run between the villages of Sandridge, Wheathampstead and Redbourn. A response was promised within a month.

Resolved:

To note the report.

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5649-18 Crinkle Crankle Garden and Tithe Barn Yard Update

It was reported that work on the garage had been delayed because of other contracts but was scheduled to begin in June.

A draft consultation design for the Crinkle Crankle Garden had been revealed at the Annual Parish Meeting on 16 May and minor amendments suggested. Indicative costs for landscape gardening had also been received.

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Reason, and it was agreed, that Jackie Gough be asked to draw up detailed plans as discussed suitable for public review at Village Weekend (8 July), and with time for a pre consultation view by local residents.

Resolved:

- **To note the report.**
- **To ask Jackie Gough to draw up detailed plans for public review at Village Weekend.**

5650-18 Commemorative Bench

Work on the WWI commemorative bench from the felled red oak had been delayed and the chain saw contractor had pulled out. Some concern as to the condition of the oak tree has been expressed.

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed that the office take over the administration and ask Dave Flemons, who carved George Bernard Shaw, to assess the tree for rot and potential transformation into benches.

Resolved:

Office to ask Dave Flemons to assess the tree for rot and potential transformation into benches.

5651-18 Youth and sports update

The draft response to the consultation on remodelling Hertfordshire's youth service provision was discussed, proposed by the Chairman and agreed. Youth Connexions currently ran a youth club (Youth Project) supported by the Parish Council out of the Memorial Hall. Councillors wished to continue to support this.

Resolved:

To approve the consultation response and Wheathampstead Parish Council's support for youth provision in the Village.

5652-18 Budget report

Resolved:

To note the report.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 21:05

Dated this day of 2018
Chairman