

Wheathampstead Parish Council

Maintenance Committee

19 June 2017- 19:30

Present: Councillors D Johnston Chairman
E Habib
T Reason
J Shardlow
P Woodhams

J Warren Clerk to the Council

Press 0
Public 2

5160-17 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors G Clark and L Halford (personal).

5161-17 Public Speaking

Taylor-Wimpey had intended to give a short informative presentation on a possible development south of Hilldyke Road which they hoped might also fit the Neighbourhood Plan process. It was likely to be for a mix of home sizes to include 40% 'affordable' dwellings. Key company representatives were delayed because of severe traffic problems on the M25/A12 so no plans were available to view. Councillors at this point were unable to comment, however they observed that the development size may be beyond local council consideration, and be suitable only for the local planning authority. The Chairman explained progress to date on the Neighbourhood Plan process and prioritisation of 'Brownfield' sites over 'Greenfield' sites. The Parish Council was working with St Albans District Council to determine site assessment criteria.

5162-17 Specific Declarations of Interest & Dispensations

Councillor Reason declared an interest in Minute 5165-17 being land owner and took no part in discussions.

5163-17 Minutes of the Maintenance Committee of 11 April

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2017 be approved.

Resolved:

To confirm the Minutes of the meetings held on 11 April 2017 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

5164-17 Report of the Maintenance Contractor

The Maintenance Contractor had reported that the following maintenance jobs had been completed:

Installation of sign at Marford play area

Posts installation at Folly Fields

Roof repairs at Butterfield road pavilion

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Brash removed from The Hill following volunteer work
Dumped Brash at Maltings Drive (removed)
Hedge cutting had started
Fertiliser had been applied to the football pitches
Verti-draining was complete

Outstanding jobs included:

Weed killing football pitches (too dry)
Signs installation at other play areas
Commemorative Bench installation at Folly Fields
Cannons/ Rectory Meadow play area fence removal
Public car park kerb removal (East Lane)
Correx replacement at Butterfield noticeboard
Pothole repair East Lane Car Park.

The bins on the Meads were reported to be constantly over filled way beyond capacity. A quote from the current refuse collection operative for a 1100litre roll top bin had been obtained. Councillor Shardlow proposed, seconded by Councillor Johnston and it was agreed that this be installed, cost £26.44 per lift plus daily charge amounting to about £70 pa.

Consideration was also given to restricting access to Council's open spaces, in the form of a ditch or bollards. Agreed that quotes be sought.

Resolved:

- 1. To note the report**
- 2. To install a 1100litre roll top bin on the North Meads near the Forge in addition to the current bins.**

5165-17 Work of Rangers, open spaces management

The ranger for Rectory Copse reported on the planting of grape hyacinths and narcissi bulbs; and removal of Spanish bluebells (to encourage the growth of native bluebells), and of large logs from the clearing. Watering was undertaken by himself and a local resident.

He had also rounded the edges of the signage at Butterfield Road Play Area, yet to be handed to the Council and currently still managed by Persimmon.

The River Ranger had sought advice from the HMWT Hertfordshire Living Rivers Officer regarding the single willow tree which had collapsed in the River Lea falling north towards Melissa Field. Advice was that the tree provided a direct benefit to wildlife and should be left, albeit checked periodically to ensure any additional build-up of

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organic material did not completely block the channel. If this were to occur the tree should remain but the debris be removed.

The Meads Ranger had trampled down nettles encroaching the bench on the North Meads.

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, not to remove the portion of willow tree on Wheathampstead Parish Council's riparian land at Melissa Field, but to maintain river access and to ask the River Warden to monitor debris build up, liaise with the land owner, and remove materials as required. Two access paths to the river would be mown.

Resolved:

- 1. To note the advice of the Living Rivers Officer and ask that this be included on the Council's website.**
- 2. Not to remove the portion of willow tree on Wheathampstead Parish Council's riparian land.**
- 3. To ask the River Warden to monitor debris build up and liaise with the land owner prior to removal as required of materials.**
- 4. To arrange for two access paths to be mown to the River on Melissa Field.**

5166-17 Treework and vegetation management.

It was reported that the Environment Agency would be undertaking their annual fish population survey on 13 July.

5167-17 Willows Project, North Meads

The Meads Ranger gave an update on this project undertaken with the support of Rothamsted Research. Fifty-eight setts comprising eight varieties of willow had been planted as part of a four year arboretum. They were selected to produce a mixture of colour and size/shape. Many of the buds were rubbed off to encourage vigorous growth. The aim was to pollard trees biannually. The initial crop of willow would be used to reinforce the river banks on the Meads.

Resolved:

To note the report and thank the Meads Ranger and Rothamsted Research representative.

5168-17 Memorial Hall maintenance

The continued issue with toilets leaks and flushing was reported, a new 'system' / new toilets were required.

The locksmith had been called and fixed the jammed lock to the Main Hall from the library corridor

There had been an issue with difficulties setting the fire alarm following scheduled weekly check

The setting of the intruder alarm presented ongoing issues with hirers not locking and alarming correctly and triggering the alarm. The Chairman proposed and it was agreed that a revised pictorial

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guide be issued to all with a penalty payable when instructions were not followed. This to be taken from a hire deposit.

Resurfacing work to the Memorial Hall car park had been completed. The contractor's recommendation was that the whole car park be skimmed and budget provision made, a quote was awaited

A bee swarm around the north door had occurred, advice was taken and the area 'roped off' and signed. By the following day most if not all bees appeared to have disappeared. Advice was sought from an apiarist whose recommendation was for the masonry to be sealed in the autumn to discourage reappearance. Bees could not be collected from a home shelter within a confined space – they would need to be killed. They moved on naturally. Signage had been retained in case of reoccurrence

A vehicle was damaged on 7 June in the Memorial Hall car park. CCTV footage (none available) had been requested from car owner.³³

Resolved:

- 1. To note the reports.**
- 2. To look into offering credit card payments in order to hold deposit money for bookings.**

5169-17 Memorial Hall car park signage

Car parking abuse was becoming more prevalent, with both careless and inconsiderate parking and space blocking. Hirers of the Memorial Hall with ever increasing frequency complained of limited parking availability. Consideration was given to signage at all Council owned car parks including the area at Folly Fields used as car parking. Free car parking was available for all at East Lane and for users of the facilities at other sites. The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed that initially signage be ordered for the Memorial Hall car park advising that car parking was for users of onsite facilities only and not overnight. Public car parking was available close by at East Lane car park.

Resolved:

To install signage at the Memorial Hall advising that the car park was for users of onsite facilities only, not overnight; and that alternative public parking was available nearby at East Lane car park.

5170-17 Buildings Valuation Reports

Buildings insurance valuation reports had been received and circulated.

5171-17 Memorial Hall Refurbishment

It was reported that Hertfordshire County Council was consulting on the library move to the Fire Station. This should safeguard the retention of both services but would leave the library space in the Memorial Hall vacant. Councillor Reason proposed, seconded by Councillor Johnston, and it was agreed, that an architect be approached to look at redevelopment/ refurbishment of the Hall.

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Resolved:

To approach an architect to look at redevelopment/ refurbishment of the Memorial Hall.

5172-17 Definitive Map application for a Modification Order for a Right of Way – Holcroft Springs

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that this be referred to Full Council.

Resolved:

To refer to Full Council

5173-17 Football pitch maintenance report

Further to Minute 5096-17 it was reported that the top pitch at Marford had been sanded, vertidraind and seeded.

Resolved:

To note the report.

5174-17 Open spaces noticeboards

A condition report on all community noticeboards had been circulated and was reviewed. It was noted that the consultation on their ongoing requirement undertaken through the Pump newsletter had received zero responses.

Open spaces artwork was awaited from Cityscape.

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Shardlow, and it was agreed that notices be placed on Butterfield Road, Conquerors Hill and The Meadway noticeboards saying that these would be removed in two months. If a significant resident response was so generated the decision would be reviewed.

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Habib, and it was agreed that quotations for replacement boards adjacent to the Memorial Hall and East Lane car park be obtained.

Resolved:

- 1. that notices be placed on Butterfield Road, Conquerors Hill and The Meadway noticeboards saying that these would be removed in two months. If a significant resident response was so generated the decision would be reviewed.**
- 2. that quotations for replacement boards adjacent to the Memorial Hall and East Lane car park be obtained.**

5175-17 Insurance

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Habib, and it was agreed that a three year insurance policy as circulated be taken out with Zurich Insurance.

Resolved:

To take out a 3 year policy, extendable to 5 years with Zurich insurance.

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**5176-17 Budget report
Noted.**

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 21:40h

Dated this day of 2017

Chairman