

Wheathampstead Parish Council

Maintenance Committee

8 January 2018- 19:30

Present: Councillors T Reason Chairman
G Clark
E Habib
L Halford
S Haynes
P Woodhams

J Warren Clerk to the Council
Press 0
Public 0

5422-18 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor D Johnston (personal).

5423-18 Public Speaking

None.

5424-18 Specific Declarations of Interest & Dispensations

None.

5425-18 Minutes of the Maintenance Committee of 20 November

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2017 be approved.

Resolved:

To confirm the Minutes of the meetings held on 20 November 2017 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

5426-18 Katherine Warrington School consultation: Plan 5/2107/2733

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed that the consultation response as circulated and amended be sent to Hertfordshire County Council with copies to St Albans District Council, Bim Afolami MP and County Councillors David Williams and Annie Brewster.

Resolved:

To submit the consultation response as circulated and amended to Hertfordshire County Council with copies to St Albans District Council, Bim Afolami MP and County Councillors David Williams and Annie Brewster.

5427-18 Report of the Maintenance Contractor

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

Snow clearance at Memorial Hall – snow plough used
Gritted paths to office and doctors' surgery
Gritted path to village through Marford Field
Cleared fallen tree at forge

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Removed snowmen from 3G pitch
Clearance around the ant hills at Marshalls Heath was underway

Outstanding jobs included:

Loosefill top up for play areas

ELCP kerb

Bench and seat repairs

Installation of the sign by the Crinkle Crankle Wall and Folly allotment noticeboard (work planned following day).

Clearing debris of cedar tree branches at Rectory Meadow (planned for when the ground was firmer for vehicle access).

He recommended that the bin on the Hill near Walnut Court/ Four Limes, which had been lost, be replaced. He reported that he had locked the 3G pitch after the recent snowfall to prevent trampling and displacement of the rubber crumb with snowballs, but this had caused discontent with those wanting access. He sought guidance on future procedure for locking the 3G pitch during snow and heavy frost/ice to protect the playing surface.

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Haynes, and it was agreed that the Maintenance Contractor be thanked for his clear and concise report, and that the 3G pitch be locked when snow or ice were on the ground to prevent damage to its surface.

Resolved:

- **To thank the Maintenance Contractor for his clear and concise report**
- **That the Maintenance Contractor lock the 3G pitch when snow or ice were on the ground to prevent damage to its surface.**

5428-18 Work of Rangers, open spaces management

Concerns were raised regarding the damage by vehicle tyre tracks accessing the small holding/ horse field across the Meads. There had been fairly significant rainfall and the grass had become deeply rutted. Whilst councillors appreciated the need for access the damage was not acceptable. The Chairman proposed and it was agreed that the Clerk write asking that damage be reinstated and that access trips across the field be restricted during wet weather.

The Meads Ranger reported that most of the newly planted willows in the western plantation had survived the dry summer. Trial pollarding had proved that the techniques could readily be undertaken by volunteers thus providing material for the spiling works. A number of litter picking exercises had been carried out, rubbish emerging from the vegetation which had died back in the winter months. The stolen oak support from the river footbridge had been temporarily replaced with a softwood block held in stock. It, along with the stolen picnic table planks would be replaced later in the new year.

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Environment Agency Fisheries staff had undertaken routine checks on 28 November. Separately Affinity Water looked at water quality and flow, the latter showed a below average flow which correlated with Thames Water's statistics of 62% of the 131 year average rainfall November 2016 – November 2017.

It was anticipated that Environment Agency consent for the river bank erosion project, conceived and agreed almost three years previously, was imminent. Once the permit was issued volunteers including from the Wheathampstead Open Spaces Volunteers, Environment Agency, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and Verulam angling Club were eager to start the willow spiling and coir roll installation. Maydencroft had been offered the contract to construct access points. Notices explaining the planned works would be installed on site and an article be included in the next Pump.

The Environment Agency had responded quickly to two separate calls of large logs becoming stuck at the Mill. The newly appointed Watercourses Officer had arranged to meet both the river warden and Clerk to look at the local stretch of the River Lea.

The Rectory Copse Ranger had requested to purchase Geranium rozanne to plant between the snowdrops. In addition it was agreed that some ferns tolerant of dry and shade be purchased, proposed by Councillor Woodhams, seconded by Councillors Haynes, budget up to £150.

Resolved:

- **To note the reports.**
- **Clerk to write to small holding tenants regarding damage to the Marford Field.**
- **To purchase Geranium rozanne, Dryopteris affinis Cristata the King and Polypodium vulgare for the Rectory Copse, budget £150.**

5429-18 Treework and vegetation management.

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed that Mr Carter be asked to undertake a parish wide tree survey.

A request had been received that the footpath across Rectory Meadow be sided out to remove turf which had grown over the tarmac significantly reducing its width (FP65). Clerk to contact HCC.

The Chairman reported on a meeting with the HCC footpaths officer and manager of King Edward Place, and subsequent meeting with a tree contractor. Plans were to remove the chain-link fence adjacent to the bridleway and then hedge-lay many of the bushes. This would present opportunities for Countryside Management Service volunteers as well as wider community involvement, budget provision of £500 was approved to support this project.

Resolved:

- **To note the reports**
- **Clerk to contact HCC about siding out FP65**

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- **That a budget provision of £500 be made towards volunteer input including hedge laying for HCC's works to the bridleway by King Edward Place.**

5430-18 Heritage Trail leaflets

Further to Minute 5371-17 it was reported that amendments had been sent and a final proof awaited

Resolved:

To note the report.

5431-18 Memorial Hall maintenance

Further to Minute 5372-17 quotations had been requested. Councillor Haynes proposed, seconded by Councillor Clark and it was agreed that Ambush Security Systems quotation be accepted. It was suggested that the positioning of the camera on the north wall more readily include the area used to clamber to the roof (*post meeting note, after discussion it was agreed an additional camera be installed to 'look both ways'. This increased the price by £200 to £4,800*).

Resolved:

- **To note the reports.**
- **Ambush Security Systems to install CCTV at the Memorial Hall.**

5432-18 Budget report

The budget monitoring report was noted. The Chairman proposed and it was agreed that a VAT report be commissioned as in previous years.

Resolved:

- **To note the reports.**
- **To commission a VAT report.**

5433-18 Budget items for 2018-19

Further to Minute 5375-17 a discussion of possible projects for budget consideration ensued including works to the Crinkle Crankle Garden, Tithe barn and adjacent area, impacts of the General Data Protection Regulations, desire to keep the High Street tidy and the Memorial Hall refurbishment.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 21:20

Dated this day of 2018

Chairman