

WESTERLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE
20th FEBRUARY 2017
HELD AT MANOR HALL, COALPIT HEATH

Present: Councillors: Cllrs B Taylor, J Butler, A Fay, M Crumpton, A Gibb

Officer – V Anderson – Interim Clerk/RFO

46. Apologies for absence

Cllrs King, Clark

47. Declarations of Interest under The Localism Act 2011

None

48. To approve Minutes of the meeting held 17th October 2016

Minute 37, 1st paragraph, 2nd line – amend Cllr J Butler to read Cllr B Taylor.

Decision: proposed by Cllr B Taylor and seconded by Cllr A Fay, agreed by all that the Minutes of 19th December 2016 be accepted.

49. To consider improving the drainage on Westerleigh Playing Field

Cllr Taylor reported that the drainage for the Westerleigh playing field, at the lower level, is inadequate and needs remedial attention. It was recognised that the culvert had been cleared in the past but this appears to have been unsuccessful. It was thought that there are many blockages possibly arising from a collapsed drain.

It was recommended that the culvert/drain be professionally assessed again and that remedial repairs are carried out once an estimate of costs are known.

Decision: Proposed by Cllr B Taylor, seconded by Cllr M Crumpton and agreed by all that Cllr Taylor approaches South Gloucestershire Council to identify a list of potential companies that can carry out a professional inspection and quotation.

50. To consider a request to hold a private family day on Newman's Field 10th June

A request was made by a local parishioner, Mrs Alex Brown, to use Newman's Field to host a 40th birthday event for her husband. Mrs Brown wishes to invite a group of family and friends along to enjoy an outdoor family picnic day and rounders' match. Mrs Brown has a provisional booking for the Hall on the 10th June.

Mrs Brown has also stated that she will only be erecting pop-up gazebos for the day which will be quick to erect and dismantle.

Decision: Proposed by Cllr A Fay, seconded by Cllr B Taylor and unanimously agreed that Mrs Brown be permitted use of the field for a private family day subject to her signing the relevant booking form and complying with its conditions. No cost is to be applied.

51. To consider a request to erect a memorial bench at Bitterwell Lake.

Ms Jemma Masters requested to erect a memorial bench at Bitterwell Lake in memory of her late father. On examining the current policy the Interim Clerk noted that there appeared to be no policy wording regarding ongoing maintenance and repair or recommended siting's.

During discussion it was identified that more detail is required before permission is granted. The additional information should include:

Proposed siting – Bitterwell Lake or Newman Field
Information regarding future maintenance and care
Wording of the proposed plaque

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Size, style and construction material of the bench

It was reported that there is an existing bench of wooden construction which is in poor condition so it was suggested that a new bench could replace this.

It was agreed that the Clerk is to approach the applicant for further information before a firm decision is made.

52. To consider the condition of the picnic bench at Bitterwell Lake

Cllr Fay reports that the only table in use is in a dilapidated condition and could be a danger to the public. There are also remains of a picnic table in the rubbish at the end of the car park which presumably was once in use. Suggestions included having more than one table and that they could be sited at the upper level of the Lake so there are reasonable views to be had by visitors.

It was agreed that the Clerk is to investigate table options (of recycled material), reporting back to this committee at the earliest opportunity for decision.

53. To consider a quotation for tree works at Bitterwell Lake.

A quote has been received from CPS Grounds Ltd for the removal of a dead oak tree located in the car park area at Bitterwell Lake. The quotation includes the grinding of the stump and removal of all debris from the site.

Members were concerned that they could not identify correctly the tree in question but after some debate regarding other trees and taking into consideration the following agenda item regarding tree works to trees in Ivory Wood it was agreed to commission a full tree survey.

54. To consider a parishioner's request for the Council to carry out tree maintenance work at Ivory Wood.

Mrs Julie Wilkins of No.2 Park Lane, land bordering Ivory Wood, has reported that the trees bordering her property are in some cases causing damage to their dry walls and are overshadowing the outbuildings to the left of the property.

Mrs Wilkins reported that she has received a quotation for remedial work relating to trees within and just outside her boundary which she thought was reasonable.

Referring to the prior agenda item (reference minute 53) it was recognised that a further tree survey would be beneficial as a considerable number of years have passed since the last reports were commissioned.

Decision (taken in conjunction with minute 53): Proposed by Cllr M Crumpton, seconded by Cllr A Fay and agreed by all that the Tree Officer at South Gloucestershire Council be commissioned to carry out a full tree survey on trees at Bitterwell Lake and Ivory Wood.

Mrs Wilkins also requested that a small post with signage for the Frome Valley Walk Way be provided to help users identify which path to take which could include an information board. Members suggested that Mrs Wilkins should approach trustees of the Frome Valley Walk Way (or South Gloucestershire Council if it is their responsibility) for funding.

55. To consider the condition of the car park and land at Henfield Hall leading to Newman's Field.

It has been brought to the Council's attention that there was a recent report of an accident arising from a person tripping and falling in the car park of Henfield Hall. The person concerned reported the matter in the Hall's accident book which highlights the need to act to prevent further accident and or injury.

In the past there has been a question of ownership and responsibility regarding this piece of land and the Land Registry map clearly identifies that the land is not in the ownership of the Parish Council. The trustees of Henfield Hall (present at the meeting) were asked if they had any documentation relating to land ownership? They reported that any deeds had been lost but believe that the Parish Council is responsible for the car park

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as they had it resurfaced when new play facilities were installed in Newman Field some years back (circa 2012).

Members of the committee recognised they may have some partial responsibility as they have rights of way but they remained clear that they do not have full responsibility. Although discussed it was unlikely that the original contractors would be obliged to repair the car park surface as it was a loose fill surface which is prone to wear and tear with weathering and constant vehicular use.

The questions that remained unanswered were:

Who is responsible for the car park (i.e. land owner)?
Would any remedial 'pot hole' repair resolve the issue long term?
What surface would be most suitable if it was to be replaced?
What will the cost be and how would it be apportioned between the Hall trustees and Council?
Would the Hall trustees be eligible for grant funding from other third parties?

Following debate with the Hall trustees and committee members it was agreed that the Clerk should contact South Gloucestershire highways engineers to see if they are able to assist in assessing the best course of action and if possible initiate a quotation based on their recommendations.

56. To consider a second quote for the repair of fencing and replacement of the gate at Newman's Field.

A second quotation has been received from P A Sayer Fencing for taking down the dilapidated chain link fence and gate and removal to a licensed tip. Also to supply and erect approximately 11m of 2.0m high V mesh panel fencing plus a 1.2m wide pedestrian gate to suit. Fence colour will be standard green.

The Interim Clerk reported that he had not had sufficient time to obtain a third quotation but recognised that the work needs to be expedited so recommended that under the circumstances that the committee only consider the two quotes received to date.

Decision: Proposed by Cllr A Fay, seconded by Cllr A Gibbs and agreed by all that P A Sayer be contracted as per the quotation received.

57. Committee to consider a grant application to support the Frampton Festival

Frampton Festival organisers requested a grant of £350 to offset the budgeted cost of £4,800. In November 2015 they received a grant of £300 from Westerleigh Parish Council. A copy of the grant application form was presented at the meeting.

Decision: Proposed by Cllr M Crumpton, seconded by Cllr B Taylor and agreed by all that a grant of £350 be awarded to Frampton Festival organisers to offset the cost of public toilets.

58. Approval of Payments

None presented.

At the Chairman's discretion the remaining agenda was re-arranged to facilitate public access prior to discussing confidential matters in exempt session

59. Date of next meeting – 20th March 2017

60. Exempt Session - To consider confidential matters relating to the Bitterwell Lake license agreement

Due to the sensitive nature (commercial and personal) of the items to be considered Council moved to consider further items in an Exempt Session.

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Signed

Date: