

**Minutes of the meeting of the
Playing Fields, Allotments and Amenities Committee
held on Tuesday 29th November 2022 7pm at Diamond Jubilee Lodge**

Present: Cllr B. Johnson (Chairman)
Cllr K. Avenell
Cllr L. Douglass
Cllr U. Franklin
Cllr D. King

Also in Attendance:

Mrs F LeBon (Clerk), Mr K Sage (Facilities Manager) and 2 members of the public

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and read out the transparency rules to facilitate the recording of the meeting.

1. Apologies and acceptance for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr G. Diffey.

2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Cllr Johnson declared an interest in matters relating to Hellesdon Bowls Club, as a member of the club.

3. To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting 30th August 2022

The Minutes had been circulated from the meeting of 30th August 2022. These were **AGREED**.

4. Public Participation

A member of the public was concerned that a response had not been received from the council regarding queries he had sent, particularly regarding the new allotment rules, application of pesticides and pest control. The Clerk confirmed that a written response had been sent on 9th August 2022 and quoted from the letter. The Facilities Manager advised the process for applying pesticides and the level of qualification required for the strength of pesticides used by the parish council.

A member of the public reported that an animal had been digging along the fence line at the allotment site. That member of the public is to provide more detail of the location and the Facilities Manager will attend site to investigate further.

5. Allotments

a. To Consider Correspondence relating to Donations of Allotment Produce to Food Banks.

A query had been received by Parish Council as follows.

'I am personally trying to put together something to encourage plot holders to donate to food banks , is this acceptable ?'

The Clerk advised that there is a restriction under the Parish Council's allotment rules that produce cannot be sold, but there was no such restriction on a donation at no charge.

Whilst under the Allotment Act 1922, part of the definition of an allotment is 'wholly or mainly cultivated by the occupier for the production of vegetable or fruit crops for consumption by himself or his family', the exceptional economic times were considered. It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council would not intervene if donations of excess produce from allotment plots were made to support the community, as long as there was no commercial benefit.

b. To Consider Correspondence relating to the Placement of a Shed on Plot 56

Correspondence had been received from HAHA about allowing them to place a shed on plot 56. Plot 56 houses a stop cock so it is not on the Parish Council's list to be let. It was **AGREED** that HAHA be permitted to install a shed on plot 56, under the following conditions:

- 1) That the shed be installed in the location as agreed with the Facilities Manager
- 2) The shed should not impede access to, or maintenance for, the stopcock.
- 3) That the shed complies with all prevailing shed rules.
- 4) The shed be removed if such instance occurs that the Parish Council requires the plot to be vacated.
- 5) Only the one shed is to be placed on this plot and nothing else.

c. To Consider Correspondence relating to HAHA Representation of Allotment Holders

The Clerk provided a report on the request from HAHA to represent allotment holders. A request had been made by the council in July for a copy of HAHA's constitution, but to date this had not been received.

There had never been any queries with HAHA bringing generic queries to the Parish Council, particularly those that had been discussed in democratic meetings of HAHA, however the request suggests that HAHA wished to represent allotment holders on individual issues, including those involving contractual matters. It was stressed that the tenancy agreement is between each individual tenant and the Parish Council, and that information under these agreements should not be divulged to HAHA under Data Protection Legislation.

It was **AGREED** to note the correspondence from HAHA but not engage with queries of an individual nature relating to the contracts between the individual tenant and the Parish Council.

d. To Receive Report on Number of Paid / Unpaid Tenancy Renewals

The Clerk reported that there was now only one unpaid tenancy and this was being actively chased to find out whether the tenant wishes to retain their plot.

6. Tennis Courts

a. To Receive Update on Tennis Court Project

The Clerk reported that the agreement with National Tennis has been signed and an open day was held on Saturday 8th October. This was well attended and the children's class has grown by word of mouth. The adult classes have not proved as popular, but it is anticipated that these will grow when tennis is in season.

As per the license agreement, National Tennis will be invoiced quarterly in arrears. This means the Parish Council will receive funding for the tennis courts out of season, which it hasn't done historically. All the funding forms for the SMARTgate have been received and are ready to be sent back to the LTA. There has been a delay as a result of a problem with the electrical feed and the distance from the gate location and the power board that feeds the floodlights. An alternative solution has been sought utilising the router from the community centre and a 4G SIM, which is awaiting contractor sign off.

7. Parks

a. To Alternative Signage for Parks in Relation to Dog Control

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting, a discussion occurred about the signage on the recreation ground about dogs being on leads.

This is something that the Parish Council cannot enforce without a Public Space Protection Order. There is already a Public Spaces Protection Order on the recreation ground, as taken out by Broadland Council, but this only covers dog fouling. A change to Broadland Council’s Public Spaces Protection Order would have to be requested, and this would have to be consulted upon, which could lead to tension with dog owners who use the area.

If the Parish Council wishes for dogs to be kept on leads for the purpose of keeping dogs under control, there is already legislation in place for this purpose under The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (as amended by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014).

Alternative signage was put forward to emphasise the responsibilities of dog owners. Cllrs Avenell and King put forward additional wording which was **AGREED** should be worked into the proposed signs. It was **AGREED** that prices should be obtained for signs for all of the parish owned open spaces and this should be added to the 2023/2024 budget.

8. Budget

a. To Receive Prices for Verge Cutting in 2023/2024

The Clerk reported that prices had been requested from contractors for ten cuts per year (the Norfolk County Council standard is 4 cuts) with an option for more cuts if requested. The specification has requested strimming around street furniture and signs, rather than weedkilling which had been the source of numerous complaints this season.

The specification had been sent to local contractors and also been placed on Contracts Finder for maximum exposure.

Prices received were:

	Contractor 1	Contractor 2
Price for 10 cuts	£11,913.00	£8,910.95
Price for each additional cut	£1,191.00	£731.15
Other Information	Will not provide a strimming service but will weedkill around street furniture and signs	Will incorporate strimming in the price

It was **AGREED** to recommend that the award of contract be to contractor 2, based on value for money and being in line with the specification.

b. To Consider Committee Budget for 2023/2024

All areas of the committee budget were considered:

Allotments: To review allotment uptake. If there are allotments that haven’t been taken up by Hellesdon residents, should these be offered to non-residents to maximise income? Also investigate projects where earmarked reserves could be used rather than precepted for, and options for the apiary.

Bowling Green: A meeting is to be held with the bowls club to discuss options for the cost of maintaining the green.

CCTV/Notice Boards: The Clerk reported on the recent problems with the CCTV. This is to be escalated to PP&R. Also, to see if earmarked reserves could be used for the final noticeboard replacement.

Playing Fields: The cost of verge cutting was discussed under item 8a. The condition of the floodlights was also discussed. A full professional report was required of the floodlights, then a business case put together and budgeted for.

Hard Courts: The replacement of metal signposts on the driveway is to be incorporated into the 2022/23 property maintenance budget where possible and reduce the amount precepted for in 2023/2024. The driveway lighting should be looked into at the same time as the flood lighting. It should also be considered whether the surfacing of the hard courts should be replaced with match funding.

Machinery and Vehicles: Discussions occurred as to the age of the gang mower and of the van. Further information is to be presented to PP&R with options such as trade in and HP, for further consideration.

War Memorial and Rose Garden: As much of the 2022/2023 budget should be used as possible on the war memorial, and the proposed budget for 2023/2024 should be reduced. The budget for roses in 2023/2024 should be reduced, but it should be ensured that there is a memorial rose for Her Late Majesty.

Play Areas: The budget for play equipment repairs in 2023/2024 should be increased as the equipment is aging. Inspections should be made in 2022/2023 to ensure that the 2022/2023 budget is utilised where appropriate.

Stores: Agreed as per officer recommendation.

Tractor Shed: Agreed as per officer recommendation.

Highways: The SAM2 budget should be adjusted for the additional batteries required and chargers, and not for a contractor to move the signs.

Trees: Ensure that the works required for 2022/2023 are instructed for tree work required on the Recreation Ground.

The 2023/2024 recommendations will be put forward to PP&R for further consideration and then to full council for final agreement.

9. Exchange of Information

None raised.

10. To confirm the date, time and venue of the next meeting

To be agreed in the New Year.

MEETING CLOSED AT 9.30pm