

**Minutes of the meeting of the  
Playing Fields, Allotments and Amenities Committee  
held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023 - 7pm at Diamond Jubilee Lodge**

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

**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.  
Cllr Franklin declared an interest in matters relating to Hellesdon Horticultural Association.

**3. To Approve the Minutes of the Meeting 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

The Minutes had been circulated from the meeting of 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022. These were **AGREED** after a proposal from Cllr Avenell and a second from Cllr Franklin.

**4. Public Participation**

A member of the public requested that he be permitted to speak after item 5h. This was denied as, under Council Standing Orders, the only time allocated for public speaking is under item 4. The member of the public was invited to raise any matters but declined the invitation and wished for his objections to not being able to speak after item 5h to be recorded.

**5. Allotments**

**a. To Consider External Socket to Allotment Building for use by HAHA.**

Further to decisions that prevented the Allotment Association from burning waste vegetation onsite, a request has been received from HAHA for an external socket on the allotment toilet building to allow for an electricity supply to power a garden shredder.

The socket would be weather proof and lockable, with keys only available to nominated members of HAHA.

There is also the option to meter the supply so that the charge for any electricity supplied can be levied to HAHA, as opposed to having the cost placed on the current electricity supply and going on the general precept.

A quote had been received for the installation, as follows:

The cost for a lockable waterproof socket will be £300.00 plus VAT

The cost to meter this supply would be an additional £195.00 plus VAT

Having discussed this further with the community centre electricians, there is an opportunity to have this cost reduced in exchange for adjustment works to the pendoc profiling in the community centre being done by the caretakers.

It was **AGREED** to proceed with having the socket and meter installed after a proposal from Cllr Douglass and a second from Cllr Franklin.

**b. To Consider request from HAHA for Commemorating Coronation of King Charles III**

HAHA has been working with a local business in the form of a donation to help commemorate the Coronation of King Charles III. They were hoping is to plant a tree, along with maybe a bench near the Orchard and tying the bench and Orchard in together and naming them Coronation Orchard.

It was **AGREED**, that HAHA be permitted to plant a tree, subject to variety and siting being agreed with the Clerk and Facilities Manager, and subject to agreement by the landowner.

It was further **AGREED** that HAHA be permitted to install a bench, subject to design and siting being agreed with the Clerk and Facilities Manager. And that any proposed changes in name be put forward for consideration by Full Council.

**c. To Consider HAHA Request for Storage Area for Regular Manure Deliveries**

Correspondence has been received from HAHA about having regular manure deliveries and they would like an area to store it, prior to distribution. Plot 57 where the HAHA shed is stored was suggested.

Subsequent queries had been put to HAHA about pest control and risk of anti-social smells, all of which were answered satisfactorily. HAHA will construct a pallet housing area and turn regularly.

It was **AGREED**, subject to there being no adverse impact on local residents and plot holders, HAHA be permitted to have regular manure deliveries and storage be permitted on plot 57. Consideration should be given to HAHA taking over this plot in support of their activities to assist with plot maintenance.

**d. To Consider Liaison with HAHA over Allotment Produce and the Community Fridge**

With all funding now being in place for the Community Fridge, the Clerk is now in a position to order the equipment and begin liaison with FARESHARE and other external suppliers. There was previous talk of excess allotment produce being donated to foodbanks, so the Community Fridge project may appeal to the allotment holders.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk should open a dialogue with HAHA about the project and whether there would be opportunity to contribute.

**e. To Consider Request for an Allotment from a Person Residing Outside the Parish**

The Clerk reported that a request has been made by a resident from outside the Hellesdon area for an allotment as there are none available in their parish. The allotment rules currently state that they are only for residents of Hellesdon, however the Parish Council has 14 vacant plots and there is a loss of opportunity for income by not letting these, a discussion which was had in the budget meetings. The Clerk read the law relating to parish residents and allotments based on the 1908 Act and overridden by the 1922 Act.

It was **AGREED** that the best way for allotment income to be maximised, but to give priority to Hellesdon residents, would be to amend the rules to allow non-residents to become tenants, but to operate a cascade system should a waiting list occur. This waiting list would give priority to Hellesdon residents over non- residents. The cascade for the waiting list would be as follows:

Should a plot become vacant and there is a waiting list, the following priority cascade shall be used:

- 1) In the event of the death of a plot holder, priority for the same plot will be given to the partner or family member (in accordance with rule 8.6).
- 2) Residents of Hellesdon

3) Non residents of Hellesdon

**f. To Consider the Partitioning of Plot 19 to Smaller Plots for Better Community Use.**

It had been previously agreed that plot 19 should be subdivided to assist those who cannot commit the time to full allotment plot. With the assistance of a member of the Hellesdon Horticultural Association, an initial design had been created. It was **AGREED** that the Facilities Manager should review the plan in detail to establish the feasibility, and look to cost up the project if feasible, and bring back to council.

**g. To Receive Update Report on Planning Application for Parking at the Allotment Extension.**

The Clerk reported that Planning application 20221635 was validated in November 2022, to convert plot 97 into a car parking area to service the extension to the allotment site. The plot can accommodate 5 spaces, two of which can be disabled spaces.

Broadland Council has yet to determine the application. Despite having time extensions to 11th January, 27th January and then 28th February a decision has yet to be made.

Broadland Council is conflicted between trying to support the needs of allotment holders, particularly those with limited mobility, improving existing facilities and the suggestion that this might fall under the Department for Communities and Local Government's policy on Disposal of Allotments.

Section 8 of the Allotments Act 1925 states – "Where a local authority has purchased or appropriated land for use as allotments the local authority shall not sell, appropriate, use or dispose of the land for any purpose other than use for allotments without the consent of the Secretary of State"

This guidance was put in place to prevent allotment land being disposed of for housing etc. The Parish Council's project is the changing of one plot, which at any time can be changed back, to improve the allotment site, particularly those with limited mobility.

The planning officer was chased last week, but no response received. The Clerk is to escalate to the Head of Planning.

**h. To Receive Report on Freedom of Information Request**

The Clerk reported to members that a Freedom of Information request has been made for:

'Correspondence between Hellesdon Parish Council and Drayton Farms Ltd for the past 5 years.'

This has been a substantial piece of work involving contacting all councillors and staff to check historical records.

The request was made on 21st February and a response was provided on 20th March, within the statutory deadline.

**6. Tennis Courts**

**a. To Receive Update on Tennis Court Project**

The Clerk reported that

- The grant for the Smartgate has been received and the gate has now been installed.
- The booking software is not quite set up, but the gate is operational and the caretakers have the codes to operate. There is still the option to lock the gate, which will override the code lock in the case of the threat of any antisocial behaviour on the courts.
- The QR code has been agreed and the associated signage is being created by the LTA. This will direct hirers to the online booking system.
- National Tennis have been made aware of the netball fixtures and so will ensure that nothing is booked in their place. The netball club is in contact with National Tennis so that they are able to cancel or amend their bookings on the court system.
- It is hoped that the full system will be up and running soon after Easter. The Parish Council will work with National Tennis to ensure there is PR to promote this, as this is the start of the tennis season.
- There has been an approach by a member of the community to start a Hellesdon Team to enter in the local tennis social leagues.

The Clerk is to speak to National Tennis about the availability of the tennis courts of 24<sup>th</sup> June for the Summer Fayre, where welly wanging will take place on the tennis courts.

## 7. Parks

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

It was previously agreed to replace the signage relating to control of dogs. It was noted that the signage on the recreation ground about dogs being on leads cannot be enforced 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.

It is therefore proposed to change the signage to make it more light touch, but still reminding dog owners of their responsibilities. These are:

- Legal responsibilities, such as being in control of a dog under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- Civil responsibilities, such as cleaning up dog waste under Broadland Council's Public Spaces Protection Order
- Responsibilities of just general etiquette, that will enable a pleasant experience on the recreation ground for both dog walkers and non dog walkers alike.

Draft signage was circulated, and it was **AGREED** to have six signs made up to cover the entrances to the Recreation Ground. If these signs help to alleviate the conflict between dog owners and non dog owners, then the signage can be rolled out to other play areas in the parish.

### b. To Consider Correspondence About Mountfield Park Trees and Impact on Adjoining Property.

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council has received complaints about alleged damage to a property on Coronation Road from trees on Mountfield Park. The damage being alleged is the breakage of greenhouse glass by falling pine cones, and the breaking up of paving by the tree roots.

The Clerk met with a Tree Surgeon on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March to review the trees in question and associated actions.

The current situation was discussed with the tree surgeon:

- That the current trees appear healthy (this has also been confirmed in the Parish Council's annual tree report).
- The current trees have already had significant works done to reduce overhang over Coronation Road. As a result the trees are 'lopsided' due to the weight differential. If the trees were to fall, they would fall into the park.
- The root structure is likely to be quite significant due to the age and size of the trees.
- There is no TPO on the trees.
- The trees are likely to continue to grow as will the associated root structure.

A possible resolution was discussed with the tree surgeon. This was to:

- Remove the two trees. Whilst they are healthy, they will continue to grow and the problem will only exacerbate.
- The main trunk of the trees can be left standing as a habitat for insects. The root structure will not grow any further.
- Chippings can be left onsite for the nutrients to decay back into the ground.
- Discussions can occur with the grounds staff to see if any of the wood can be recycled. If not, it can be removed by the tree surgeon. The committee discussed usage at the allotment site or the council office gardens for wildlife habitats.
- A semi mature tree can be planted as a replacement, further away from the properties. This is more vandal resistant than saplings. This could be an opportunity to purchase a 'Coronation Oak' – as it backs onto Coronation Road.

- The semi-mature tree will need watering by the grounds team until it is established on the site.

A quote for these works is awaited.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk and Facilities Manager should work with the tree surgeon to bring a more detailed plan back to the council, alongside the price.

**8. To Consider Method to Distribute Honey from the Community Apiary**

The Clerk reported that The Parish Council has 23no. 8oz jars of honey harvested from the community apiary. The sale of this honey is contentious given the restrictions placed on allotment holders on the growing of produce for sale and reward.

In the spirit of being fair, but with the intent of keeping the apiary cost neutral to the taxpayer, it is suggested that the honey can be given away but for a suggested donation of £5 per jar. This could be done via the café or, when in place, the Community Fridge.

To encourage the donation, the Parish Council can emphasise what the money is for – for the wellbeing of the bees, which in turn helps the environment. The committee added extra benefits such as using local honey to alleviate the symptoms of hay fever.

This method of distributing the honey was **AGREED**.

**9. To Consider Bowling Green Options for 2024/2025 Budget**

Options for the Bowls Club to take over maintenance of the bowling green had been discussed with the Bowls Club. The Club had taken the decision that they no longer wished this option to be considered and the method for charging the bowls club for their facilities should remain the same.

Therefore no consideration was required by the committee.

**10. Items for the Next Agenda**

Proposed fees for the sports clubs and allotments.

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

To be agreed in the new council term.

**MEETING CLOSED AT 8.02pm**