



DRAFT

MINUTES

Meeting: ENVIRONMENTAL
COMMITTEE

Date: 14th June 2017

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: NORTH WEALD LIBRARY, HIGH ROAD, NORTH WEALD

PRESENT:

Councillors (5) G Mulliner (Chairman), C Hawkins, A Buckley, B Eldridge, B Bartram

Also in Attendance (2)

Susan De Luca, Clerk

Joanna Tyler, Senior Administrative Officer

Members of the Public (0)

E17.01 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Eldridge **PROPOSED** Cllr Mulliner as Chairman of the Committee, this proposal was **SECONDED** by Cllr Hawkins. There being no other nominations, Cllr Mulliner was duly elected as Chairman of the Environmental Committee for this municipal year.

E17.02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (5)

NOTED apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Blanks, Clegg, Mrs Godwin Brown, Mrs Jackman MBE and Tyler

E17.03 OTHER ABSENCES (0)

E17.04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NOTED there were no declarations of interest.

E17.05 MINUTES

Members **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting held on 18th January 2017.

E17.06 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

E17.07 TREE SURVEY

The Senior Administrative Officer read out a report from the Parish Council's Principal Financial Officer regarding the tree survey which had been conducted on Thursday, 27th April 2017 by Hallwood Associates. The survey was a Health and Safety requirement to assess the risk status of trees on land owned by the Parish Council. It also covered trees on land that the Parish Council has responsibility for. The areas of land included:-

- Weald Common
- Bluemans End
- Cemetery (active and non active land)
- Hastingwood Allotments (both A and B)
- Thornwood Common
- Area around the Parish Hall in Thornwood

- Thornwood Allotments
- Thornwood Nature Reserve
- Wheelers Farm Gardens Allotments
- Queens Road Allotments
- Pike Way

The report identified the risk from trees in the following format:-

- **Low (L):** Works to be considered as good management if budget exists.
- **Moderate (M):** Works to be undertaken before next identified inspection.
- **High (H):** Works to be undertaken within 6 months.

The report identified seven high priority works, mainly associated with the removal of large diameter deadwood from trees overhanging high occupancy areas, recommending that these works should be completed within six months of the date of the report. One tree was identified as requiring moderate works, with the recommendation that works should be implemented prior to the next full survey date or 36 months, whichever is the sooner. The Committee **NOTED** that there would not be a need to have another tree survey completed until early 2022, as the guidance states a minimum of 5 years.

The Senior Administrative Officer informed Members that the Principal Financial Officer had recommended that the Environmental Committee obtain quotes to have the works identified completed. All Members **AGREED** that quotes should be obtained.

E17.08 PLAY AREAS

The Committee **NOTED** that the play area inspections continue to be carried out on a weekly, monthly and quarterly basis. Any urgent issues identified are reported immediately, via phone or email, to the Principal Financial Officer.

The Chairman confirmed that any issues were indeed dealt with immediately, giving an example of the bins which he had found overflowing at Weald Common play area during the half term holiday. He reported that he contacted the Clerk who in turn made arrangements to have the bins emptied straight away.

E17.09 CEMETERY

The Clerk referred the Committee to the decision made at the Parish Council Meeting held on 3rd April 2017, where it was agreed that a notice regarding excessive ornaments adorning plots would be placed on those relevant plots, referring owners to the Cemetery Rules and Regulations displayed on the Cemetery Notice Board. A copy of a suggested notice was attached to the agenda for Members perusal.

The Clerk read out a couple of grammatical amendments brought to her attention by Cllr Mrs Jackman MBE, which also included the suggestion that the opening times of the Parish Office be added to the notice. All Members **AGREED** to the amendments.

The Clerk reminded Members that the Environmental Sub Committee would need to visit the Cemetery to identify those plots which required a notice. Notices would be

placed in clear plastic sleeves, attached to a stake that would then be placed on the grave for the owner's attention.

Councillor Hawkins informed Members that he had visited the Cemetery on Monday, following a telephone call from a member of the public regarding the standard roses in the Cremated Remains area. The stems had snapped off in the wind. Arrangements had been made to source replacements and they would be planted this week, stronger stakes and ties would be attached to help prevent wind damage. Cllr Buckley asked what colour roses were planted. The Clerk confirmed the colours were according to the season as follows:-

- Spring Yellow
- Summer Red or Pink
- Autumn Orange or Peach
- Winter White

E17.10 ALLOTMENTS

The Clerk reported that Paul Southgate was still awaiting an update from PC Andy Cook regarding the incident which occurred at Wheelers Farm Gardens allotment site. The Clerk informed Members that an 11 year old child had taken over a plot at this site and because of this matter, the parents had been asked to ensure that they currently access the plot via Queens Road only. It was the Clerk's understanding that the 11 year old would not be tending the plot unaccompanied.

E17.11 INCREASE IN CHARGES – EPPING FOREST COUNTRYCARE

Members **NOTED** that the Clerk had received confirmation from the Manager of Epping Forest Countrycare regarding an increase in the daily rate for their services from April 2018. The rate will be £420 which is for two members of staff (plus volunteers) and can be broken down into £70 per hour for two members staff. Members **AGREED** that the increase should be taken into account at the Budget and Precept Meeting, adding that it would be useful to know what the current charge was.

E17.12 THORNWOOD ALLOTMENTS NATURE AREA

The Committee **NOTED** that the Clerk had received correspondence from Epping Forest Countrycare requesting permission to cut the grass at the Thornwood Allotments nature area on Thursday, 20th July. In addition they would like to replace the field gate at the entrance to the Thornwood allotments nature area, at no extra cost to the Parish Council. The proposed work was discussed at the previous Environmental Committee held on the 18th January 2017. Cllr Hawkins asked for confirmation of which gate would be replaced. The Senior Administrative Officer referred Members to the Minutes of the previous meeting, extract **E16.44**, as follows:-

The Clerk advised Members that she had received an email from Epping Forest Countrycare regarding widening the gateway at the entrance to the Thornwood Common Nature Reserve, leading from the far end of the allotments. Countrycare have suggested replacing the existing gate with a 12ft one, there would need to be some construction work carried out on the fence surrounding the allotment site by the water trough, this would be carried out at no extra cost to the Parish Council.

*Countrycare would like to undertake this work during the Spring, as part of the normal maintenance agreement for the Nature Reserve, they have also offered to remove a small fallen tree which is near to the compost bin. The Clerk expressed a concern that if the gateway was widened, gypsies and travellers may try to access the site. Cllr Hawkins stated that they would need to gain access via the entrance from the hall, which would not be wide enough. Members **AGREED** that Epping Forest Countrycare could undertake the proposed work.*

All Members **AGREED** that proposed works could take place on Thursday, 20th July 2017.

E17.13 ALLOTMENT TENANCY AGREEMENT – PROPOSED CHANGES

Members of the Committee **RATIFIED** the changes to the Allotment Tenancy Agreement Rules, Regulations and Codes of Practice, as agreed at the Annual Allotment Meeting held on Sunday, 19th March 2017.

E17.14 BOUNDARY GATES AT WHEELERS FARM GARDENS ALLOTMENT SITE

Councillor Hawkins informed Members that he had attended the site with a contractor to obtain a quote for the installation of gates at the boundary of the Wheelers Farm Gardens and Queens Road allotment sites. The price quoted was £690.00 for metal gates, which covers all materials and labour. All Members **AGREED** to accept the quotation.

Councillor Hawkins asked Members how they wished to approach the matter of access to the site as the contractor would need to enter via Wheelers Farm Gardens. The Chairman suggested that a letter should be sent to Mr Parris, out of courtesy, advising that a contractor would be undertaking works on behalf of the Parish Council and therefore access would be required to the Wheelers Farm Gardens site via the gateway. Following discussion, all Members **AGREED**.

E17.15 GARDEN BY FLAGPOLE

Councillor Buckley reported that he had a meeting with Kevin Hebden to assess the garden by the flagpole. The existing wooden planter has deteriorated and Cllr Buckley has asked Kevin to provide a quotation for a replacement in the same style.

Councillor Buckley expressed concern that the garden is overgrown and no longer appeared to be tended by the member of the public who had volunteered to take care of it. The Committee discussed the matter in depth and Members **AGREED** that the Clerk would send a letter to the volunteer advising that the wooden planter was to be refurbished and that the Parish Council had been approached by a couple of volunteers who would also like to assist with the upkeep of the garden once it had been reinstalled.

Councillor Buckley mentioned that he intended to approach the Preservation Society to ascertain whether the group would like to sponsor this garden. The three metal plates that are currently attached to the wooden planter would be reinstalled on the

replacement.

Members **AGREED** that Cllr Buckley could instruct Kevin to undertake the work if the quote was for £500 or less, without referring back to the Committee.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Buckley for the work he had undertaken so far and **PROPOSED** that Cllr Buckley be nominated for the office of Vice Chairman of this Committee, asking the Clerk if that would be in order. The Clerk confirmed that it would be. The proposal was **SECONDED** by Cllr Hawkins. There being no other nominations, Cllr Buckley was duly elected as Vice Chairman of the Environmental Committee.

E17.16 BULB PLANTING

The Committee **NOTED** that several residents from Hastingwood had expressed an interest in assisting with bulb planting this year and that Mrs Kelly (of Hastingwood Village Hall Committee) would be collecting details to pass on to the Clerk. Cllr Eldridge stated that he would speak to Mrs Kelly about this and would look at suitable areas which could be considered for planting. Cllr Hawkins stated that areas would also need to be identified in Thornwood.

Councillor Buckley reported that on the 22nd May, 150 begonias were planted in the garden by the parade of shops. He asked that thanks be recorded to Mrs Mulliner, Mrs Buckley and Cllr Mulliner for assisting with the planting and to Cllr Spearman for sourcing and delivering the plants. Cllr Buckley confirmed that the five sponsors had agreed to sponsor the garden for another year and that new plaques were in the process of being ordered to acknowledge this.

Councillor Buckley mentioned the wall at the entrance to the parade of shops, informing Members that he had met with a contractor to obtain a quote for cutting back the damaged part of the brickwork, making good the area and installing a metal bollard to mirror the one on the opposite side of the entrance. Cllr Buckley confirmed that, despite numerous telephone calls to the owner of the car park, no response had been received.

Councillor Buckley mentioned the CCTV camera by the parade of shops. The Clerk reported that she had been informed that there had been three statutory enquiries and that she had made two enquiries, making a total of five altogether since the CCTV had been installed.

Meeting closed: 11.16am

Signed

Date