

Environment and Recreation Committee Meeting held at the John Clements Sports and Social Club on 21st June 2022 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr Colin Argent (chair), Cllr Jim Bundy, Cllr G Gilbert and Cllr C Mayger

In Attendance: The clerk, Mr Simon Crosier

2022/01 To receive apologies and approval for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Kane, Cllr Green, Cllr Bexton, Cllr Fothergill and Cllr South and were noted and **approved**.

2022/02 Chair's Remarks

None.

2022/03 Public Participation

No members of the public present.

2022/04 To discuss issues concerning the allotments

04.1. Action to be taken against overgrown plots. There are currently seven plots that are overgrown. All holders of these plots have paid the annual rent. **Action:** - Clerk to write to these plot holders reminding them of clause 2 in the Tenancy Agreement and giving them until the end of August 2022 to tidy the plot. Clerk to also investigate the legalities of taking a deposit from plot holders to cover the costs of returning plots to a good state, should the Tenancy Agreement be broken. The clerk confirmed that plot 21A is completely overgrown. Council agreed that the plot could be offered free of charge this year if the new plot holder is prepared to clear the plot and return it to good condition.

04.2. Water troughs leaking. Finsbury builders have now fixed the leaking water troughs.

04.3. Allotment security. With a rise in items being stolen from the allotments the committee recommended that a chain and combination padlock be fitted to the main allotment gate. The code will be disseminated to all plot holders by Debbie Skeggs and the chain and padlock provided by Cllr Bundy. **Action:** - Upon renewal of rent in April the clerk will ask for each plot holders' email and/or telephone number to keep allotment holders up to date with any changes to the padlock combination. The combination is likely to be changed at the end of April each year.

2022/05 To discuss litter picking including street and the John Clements

The clerk confirmed that there is a contract being drawn up for Andy Nolan in respect of the street litter picking. The litter picking at the John Clements is undertaken by James Howe and as the parish council are responsible for its disposal James hires a skip. A lockable bin has been requested from North Herts Council for the site by District Councillor Ian Moody. **Action:** - Clerk to check how often James Howe employees a skip to remove rubbish from the John Clements. If we have a bin from North Herts Council, it may reduce the requirement for a skip.

2022/06 To provide an update on dog bins

The clerk met with Tom Ayres from North Herts Council to discuss the location of proposed dog bins on Bury Land and corner of Newtown/High Street. Tom was happy that both locations are accessible for collecting waste. The clerk has contacted Highways to move the process of installing dog bins forward but hasn't yet received a response.

2022/07 To consider the maintenance of Parish assets

Cllr Argent is in the process of putting together an asset list for the Parish, including details on benches, bus shelters, dog bins, fences, notice boards, gates, mile posts, planters, the beacon, play equipment and information boards. **Action:** - Cllr Argent, with the help of Cllr Bundy, will put together a priorities list to get these assets into a good condition. Once a list has been drawn up the work required will go out to tender.

2022/08 To consider a Parish gardening club

The clerk has received an email from a parishioner suggesting the establishment of a gardening club for the parish. **Action:** - Cllr Argent to invite the proposer to the next Environment and Recreation committee meeting to discuss the scope of such a club.

2022/09 To consider a schedule for the Christmas light display

The committee unanimously approved Sunday 4th December as the day for the Christmas light switch on day. **Action:** - The clerk will ask the contractor, Lamps & Tubes, for a choice of designs and whether Lamps & Tubes are still in possession of the council's Christmas tree lights from last year. Clerk will also approach James Howe to see if he is willing to arrange the tree and also run the mulled wine/mince pies for the switch-on event.

2022/10 To provide an update on the pavilion maintenance work

So far three quotes have been received for the pavilion maintenance work and Cllr Bundy is meeting other contractors this week to obtain further quotes. There is a cut off date for quotes to be received of this week and full council will decide at the meeting on June 28th which contractor to go with.

2022/11 To discuss the budget for the maintenance of the sports pitches

The budget for the maintenance of the sports pitches has previously been set at £4,000 for this financial year. The latest quote received for this year's work totals £4,292.00 + VAT. It might be that not all the work quoted for needs to be carried out.

2022/12 To discuss any issues with play equipment

It was noted by the committee that the Old School Close play area could do with smartening up as could the St Albans Road play area. This has not been budgeted for during this financial year but will be considered when the budget is set for next year.

2022/13 To provide an update on the installation of the height barrier at the John Clements Sports and Social Club

The clerk confirmed that an order had been placed with Flow Plates for the manufacturer of the component parts. **Action:** - The clerk will chase Flow Plates for an update and put together

a list of people/contractors who will need to access the site with vehicles likely to be taller than the level of the barrier.

2022/14 To provide an update on the car park lighting to be installed at the John Clements Sports and Social Club

The clerk confirmed that the bat survey had taken place recently, but no report had yet been received. **Action:** - Clerk to chase bat survey company for the report and update the lighting contractor, Mark Wilmot, on progress.

2022/15 To provide an update on tree planting

There is a silver birch tree that has been donated to the council for planting. The committee agreed to plant the tree over the back of the tennis courts and behind the containers at the John Clements Sports and Social Club. **Action:** - Cllr Argent will arrange for the tree to be planted.

2022/16 To consider a beacon plaque to commemorate the lighting of the beacon during the Queen's Jubilee

It has been tradition to add a commemorative plaque to the beacon signifying each time it has been lit. As part of the review of council assets, this item will likely be on the priorities list.

2022/17 To consider checking the defibrillator outside the PMH to ensure that it is in good working order

Action: - The clerk will add this as an agenda item to the full council meeting.

2022/18 Matters for consideration at future meetings

To discuss the re-marking of the car park at the John Clements Sports and Social Club.

Meeting closed at 8.40pm