

Environment and Recreation Committee Meeting held at the John Clements Sports & Community Centre on Tuesday 4th June 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr C Argent (Chair), Cllr M Kane, Cllr J Bundy & Cllr A South

In Attendance: The clerk, Mr Simon Crosier and two members of the public

2024/25/001 To receive apologies and approval for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Bexton, Cllr Gilbert, Cllr Mayger, Cllr Green & Cllr Walker, these were noted and unanimously **approved**.

2024/25/002 Chair's Remarks

None.

2024/25/003 Public Participation

003.1. Codicote Rewilding Group to address Council on spring projects.

Ayfer Karakus, representing the Codicote Rewilding Group (CRG), addressed Council. Ayfer briefly confirmed that the CRG had provided the clerk with details of their proposals for the Pound. Although there are proposals for other areas of Parish Council owned land Cllr Argent stated that Council would like to concentrate on the Pound at this time. Cllr Argent will look at the possibilities available for the area and report back at the next Environment and Recreation Committee meeting in July. Cllr Argent also confirmed that any maintenance work on the trees will be the remit of the Parish Council. **Action:** - Cllr Argent to scope the possibilities available for the Pound and report back.

One member of the public left the meeting.

003.2. Environment Agency to address Council on Giant Hogweed.

John Thurlow from the Environment Agency addressed Council. John explained that Giant Hogweed is becoming a problem along rivers and a close eye is being kept on the river Mimram and Singlers Marsh for any signs that the plant exists in this location. The plant has been spotted and dealt with in numerous areas in Codicote, but John urged all landowners to be vigilant to its presence. Cllr Kane suggested that a piece on its existence be added to the Parish Council's Parish Magazine article and that allotment holders and the contractor for grass cutting, Richard Dawes, be asked to keep a vigil. **Action:** - The clerk will add a piece on Giant Hogweed to the Parish Council's Parish Magazine article in July's edition and speak to both Richard Dawes and the allotment holders about keeping a vigil.

One member of the public left the meeting.

003.3. Allotment holders to address Council concerning permission to allow sheds on allotment plots.

Although no allotment holders were present at the meeting, this is addressed under item 2024/25/014 of the minutes.

2024/25/004 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2024

The minutes were unanimously **approved** by council and signed by the chair.

2024/25/005 To discuss the renewal of the energy contract for the pavilion with EDF Energy and approve any actions

The clerk confirmed that he had spoken to the broker the Parish Council had previously used and they were going to provide a comparison of quotes in time for the meeting. Unfortunately, no quotes have been received. Council unanimously **resolved** to move this item to the full Council meeting agenda on Tuesday 25th June. **Action:** - The clerk will chase for the quotes in time for the full Council meeting.

2024/25/006 To consider regular inspection of the allotment plots and approve any actions

The clerk explained that it would be useful if a councillor/s could conduct regular checks on the allotment plots/area and report any concerns to the clerk. Council unanimously **agreed** that Cllr Bundy (who agreed to the proposal), and Cllr Green be given this task. **Action:** - The clerk will contact Cllr Green to see if he is willing to carry out this task.

2024/25/007 To discuss replacement planter lamps at the John Clements Sports & Social Club and approve any actions

Now that the car park lighting is working ok via the App Council unanimously **resolved** that the planter lighting should be replaced. A quote has previously been provided and Council are happy that the clerk pursues the contractor concerned to arrange for the replacement of the planter lamps. **Action:** The clerk will arrange for the planter lighting to be replaced.

2024/25/008 To discuss the removal of plot 11A as a viable plot and approve any actions

The clerk explained that a new tenant had taken on this plot, but due to a maple tree and an apple tree on the plot it wasn't viable. Council unanimously **resolved** that the clerk should seek quotes for the removal of both trees. **Action:** - The clerk will obtain quotes for the removal of both trees.

2024/25/009 To discuss and approve any actions for tidying up the Parish Council owned bus stops in Codicote

Council unanimously **resolved** to engage Andy Nolan to carry out the work as and when necessary. **Action:** - The clerk will confirm the agreement for the maintenance of the bus shelters to Andy Nolan.

2024/25/010 To discuss cleaning the pathway opposite the Church, removing overhanging branches and approve any actions

Council is disappointed that the refurbished footpath opposite the Church does not provide an ideal surface for those with mobility issues. Council unanimously **resolved** that the clerk should seek quotes for the tarmacking, or a suitable alternative, of the surface and report back to Council. Council also unanimously **resolved** that the overhanging branches should be pruned, and the clerk was asked to obtain quotes for this work. **Action:** The clerk will obtain quotes for tarmacking the path and pruning the overhanging branches for the pathway opposite the church and report back to Council.

2024/25/011 To consider tidying up the wooded area in the corner of the sports field and approve any actions

Cllr Argent stated that this area should be inspected by a tree surgeon to maintain the well-being of anyone using the area. Council unanimously **resolved** to agree that the clerk should seek advice from a tree surgeon on the work that needs to be carried out, including a quote and report back to Council. **Action:** - The clerk will arrange for a tree surgeon to look at the wooded area with a view to offering advice and costings on what work needs to be carried out.

2024/25/012 To provide an update on the disposal of the contents of the Parish Council storage container and approve any actions

The clerk asked whether any items had been disposed of, as he hadn't received any update. Cllr Bundy confirmed that items had been disposed of but wasn't aware of which items. The clerk will contact Cllr Mayger to seek clarification, as this information will be required to update the Asset Register. Council unanimously **resolved** that any remaining items for disposal should be removed by Herts SDS. **Action:** - The clerk will contact Cllr Mayger for a list of items disposed and arrange for SDS Herts to dispose of remaining items.

2024/25/013 To discuss a request to allow a bench at the sports field and another at the St Albans Road play area and approve any actions

Council **agreed** that any proposal for a bench at the St Albans Road play area should include a location, details of the bench proposed and that it should be properly fixed to the ground. Council **resolved** that they are happy to allow a bench at the sports field, but it must be of good quality, maintained at the expense of the proposer and properly fixed to the ground. The bench can be either located in front of the pavilion or replace any rotten bench that is in front of the JC. **Action:** - The clerk will relay the information to Jon Gillard and the resident.

2024/25/014 To consider allowing sheds on allotment plots and approve any actions

Cllr Argent has had a look at allotment agreements for neighbouring parishes and Council. Any that allow sheds on the plot usually specify a maximum size, that the sheds' location must be within the plot, it must have a solid base that is easily removable, it also needs to be easily removable at the end of the tenancy, a list of what can be stored is specified and the material used to construct the shed is also specified. Cllr Argent thought it a good idea to begin the process by consulting all plot holders on whether they are happy to allow sheds, and if so, whether they are prepared to make a deposit to the Parish Council, which would be refundable at the end of the tenancy, provided it doesn't fall on the Parish Council to remove a shed left on a plot. Council unanimously **resolved** for the clerk to draw up the appropriate questionnaire and seek authorisation from Cllr Argent to issue this to allotment holders. **Action:** - The clerk will draw up the questionnaire and issue this to Cllr Argent for approval.

2024/25/015 To consider the pruning of a tree at Old School Close play area and approve any actions

The clerk explained that as the tree is in a conservation area an application will need to be made to North Herts Council to prune the tree. Council unanimously **resolved** for the clerk to complete the necessary application seeking permission for the work to be carried out. **Action:** - The clerk will submit the application form to North Herts Council.

2024/25/016 To discuss overflowing bins at the John Clements Sports & Community Centre and approve any actions

It has been brought to the attention of the clerk by a resident that the bins at the John Clements Sports & Community Centre are regularly overflowing. The clerk stated that part of the problem is related to the fact that proper metal bin liners are not present and, as a result, plastic liners are not sitting in the bins properly making the bins smaller as a result. Council unanimously **resolved** that the clerk should purchase replacement metal bin liners. **Action:** - The clerk will arrange the purchase of appropriate metal bin liners.

2024/25/017 To discuss the issues raised concerning the Pound, including tree pruning, and approve any actions

See minute 2024/25/003.1.

2024/25/018 To consider a request to extend the litter picking arrangements to include Rabley Heath Road and approve any actions

During the recent Annual Parish Meeting, a resident raised the issue of litter along Rabley Heath Road and wondered whether the Parish Council could help in any way to keep this tidy. Council unanimously **resolved** that the village litter picking conducted by Andy Nolan should be extended to include Rabley Heath Road and that the additional cost of the service was acceptable. Council would however insist that Andy Nolan wear a high viz jacket when conducting litter picking along this road. **Action:** - The clerk will contact Andy Nolan to arrange the additional litter pick and put together a risk assessment.

2024/25/019 To consider submitting a request for s106 monies in respect of the play area at Bury Lane sports field and approve any actions

Cllr Kane confirmed that submission of a request for the s106 monies in respect of the play area is not subject to a pedestrianised path being allowed between the new Wyevale housing estate and the sports field. Council unanimously **resolved** that Cllr Argent, and the clerk will draw up a plan for the refurbishment of the play area, including a disabled friendly roundabout, based upon North Herts Council confirmation that the s106 monies are likely to total around £70k. **Action:** - Cllr Argent and the clerk will draw up a plan and bring this back to Council for approval.

2024/25/020 To consider the submitted tender responses for the planter contract and approve any actions

The clerk confirmed that no responses had been received in respect of the tender. Cllr Argent asked Ayfer Karakus of the Codicote Rewilding Group, whether they would consider taking up the maintenance of the planters. Ayfer will speak to the group and get back to the clerk with an answer. **Action** – The clerk will update Council on the response received from the Codicote Rewilding Group.

2024/25/021 To consider quotes from Lamps & Tubes and Sparkxs for remedial work to facilitate a stage 2 licence for the Christmas lighting and approve any actions

The clerk had circulated quotes received from both Lamps & Tubes and Sparkxs prior to the meeting detailing the remedial work required. It was hoped that a third supplier could provide a quote, but after extensive research, one could not be found. Lamps & Tubes are the current

contractor used by the Parish Council for Christmas lighting and provided a more cost-effective quote for the remedial work. Council unanimously **resolved** that Lamps and Tubes carry out the necessary remedial work. **Action:** - The clerk will contact Lamps & Tubes to arrange for the work to be carried out.

2024/25/022 Matters for consideration at future meetings

None.

Meeting closed at 20.55pm

The date of the next Environment/Recreation committee meeting is 23rd July 2024.

Signed.....

Date: 4th June 2024