

Environment and Recreation Committee Meeting held at the John Clements Sports & Community Centre on Tuesday 22nd July 2025 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllr C Argent (Chair), Cllr M Kane, Cllr J Bundy, Cllr G Gilbert, Cllr R Walker, Cllr M Walby, Cllr P Grey and Cllr E Sell

In Attendance: The clerk, Mr Simon Crosier

2025/26/003 To receive apologies and approval for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Unwin, the reason for which was noted and unanimously **approved**.

2025/26/004 Chair's Remarks

None.

2025/26/005 Public Participation

None.

2025/26/006 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18th March 2025

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

2025/26/007 To consider the allotment shed rules document and approve any actions

Council unanimously **resolved** the adoption of the shed rules document. **Action:** - The clerk will issue the document with all future shed requests from allotment tenants.

2025/26/008 To provide an update on the regular inspections of the allotment plots and approve any actions. Cllr Gilbert to update the committee

Cllr Gilbert stated that the new numbering system was ready to be implemented and confirmed that a number of allotment plots continue to remain overgrown. Council unanimously **resolved** that the new numbers be installed by the allotment group working party and that overgrown plots be reported to the clerk, so that the relevant tenants can be contacted in writing and asked to tidy their plot. The initial letter should specify a 4-week period in which to bring the plot back to a good state of cultivation and if no response is received the chase letter should give a 2-week period. If no response is received the plot will be moved on to the next person on the waiting list. **Action:** - The clerk will write to those tenants whose plots have been identified as being in an overgrown state.

2025/26/009 To consider a request from an allotment plot holder to pay the shed deposit in instalments and approve any actions

The clerk explained that an allotment plot holder has requested to pay the shed deposit in two monthly instalments. Council unanimously **resolved** that this request would be acceptable, providing the deposit is paid over two consecutive months. **Action:** - The clerk will inform the allotment plot holder of the Council's decision.

2025/26/010 To consider a request from an allotment plot holder to allow hosepipe usage at the allotments along Bury Lane and approve any actions

Council considered the request and unanimously **resolved** not to allow the usage of hosepipes at the allotments along Bury Lane. Council was concerned about the increase in water usage, a reduction in water pressure the fact that the hosepipe would present a trip hazard and the fact that it is impossible to prevent any malicious usage of the hosepipe by non-plot holders. **Action:** - The clerk will confirm the Council's stance to the plot holder.

2025/26/011 A member of the public to address Council on a request to allow croquet on the sports field at the John Clements Sports & Community Centre and approve any actions

Cllr Kane stated that although there had been a practice session involving croquet no further request for a regular slot to the Parish Council had been made. Unless a further request was forthcoming no action is required at this stage.

2025/26/012 To consider the pruning of the Community Orchard and approve any actions

Cllr Walby explained to Council that a member of the public is willing to donate his gardener free of charge to prune the Community Orchard during the period November 2025 to March 2026. The offer does not include the removal of cuttings. The clerk also confirmed that there is a Risk Assessment in place for the pruning to be carried out without any liability falling on the Parish Council. Council considered the proposal and unanimously **resolved** that the work can be carried out during the specified time. **Action:** - Cllr Walby will arrange for the work to be done and the clerk will arrange for the Risk Assessment to be signed by the gardener.

2025/26/013 To consider arrangements for fireworks night and approve any actions

Cllr Argent confirmed that the fireworks event will be held on Wednesday 5th November. The clerk stated that the two individuals running the display have been booked in with Fantastic Fireworks for the appropriate training to comply with insurance requirements. The clerk asked Council if they are happy for James Howe to arrange a burger van, sweet stall and stick/wands stall. Council unanimously **resolved** that the clerk should ask James to arrange these, providing that each donates to a local charity. **Action:** - The clerk will relay the information to James Howe and check to ensure that all requirements of the Parish Council Insurance have been met to hold the event.

2025/26/014 To consider a request from a member of the public to hold a stall at the fireworks display and approve any actions

The clerk confirmed that a member of the public has requested to hold a stall selling light wands, multi coloured sticks and character shaped wands at the fireworks event. Council considered the request and resolved not to allow this, as there is a stall already selling these items at the event. **Action:** - The clerk will relay the Council's decision to the member of the public.

2025/26/015 To consider questions from the solicitor concerning the Cricket Club Lease and approve any actions

The clerk confirmed that the first questions concerning a portion of land that is used by the Cricket and Football clubs and stated that the land demised in the CCC lease cannot overlap with the land demised in the CFC lease. Council considered the issue and **agreed** that Cllr Sell should look at the leases and the paperwork from the Solicitor to draw up the appropriate

wording for both leases that can then be relayed to the Solicitor giving appropriate wording to allow both clubs to use the land during the overlap period. **Action:** - The clerk will provide a copy of both leases to Cllr Sell along with the question from the Solicitor and carry out the action prescribed by Council.

The second question relates to the underletting of the cricket pitch. Council unanimously **resolved** that the cricket pitch should not be underlet. **Action:** - The clerk will relay the Council's decision to the solicitor.

2025/26/016 To consider the lease for Codicote Football Club in terms of adding a clause concerning the use of the artificial pitch and approve any actions

Council considered the request and **resolved** that a clause should be added to the Cricket Club lease detailing usage of the artificial pitch. **Action:** - The clerk will relay the information to the Solicitor.

Cllr Bundy highlighted the fact that there is currently no reason for the Football Club floodlights to be removed from the playing area used by the Cricket Club during the summer months. The Cricket Club are happy for these to remain in place all year round. Council considered the arrangement and unanimously **resolved** that the Football Club lease be amended to reflect the fact that the floodlighting can remain in place all year round. **Action:** - The clerk will relay the information to the Solicitor.

2025/26/017 To consider the quarterly play area inspection reports, as per the Internal Auditor's recommendation and approve any actions

Cllr Argent stated that he, Cllr Unwin and the clerk had visited all four play areas in Codicote recently to assess the work required to make the areas safer. Some work had been carried out during the visit to ensure safety and consisted largely of tightening play structures. There were areas of work identified for each of the four play areas and the clerk stated that some of these had already been addressed. The play area of most immediate concern was Valley Road. The clerk asked CPM Playgrounds Ltd to provide a quote for the replacement of swings and the repair of the wet pour in a couple of areas. The clerk calculated that the swing parts alone would cost £960. CPM Playgrounds Ltd have quoted £985 + VAT for the supply and fitting of the swing parts and £120 + VAT for the repair of the wet pour. In the interest of health and safety the clerk has instructed CPM Playgrounds Ltd to carry out the work. The clerk will continue to obtain quotes for other work identified and bring these back to Council as and when necessary. Council unanimously **resolved** that the clerk should carry on with the work. **Action:** - The clerk will carry out the action as prescribed by Council.

2025/26/018 To consider an email from a member of the public concerning the upgrading of dog signage at the St Albans Road Recreation Ground to remind dog owners not to exercise their dogs off lead and approve any actions

The clerk informed Council that although dogs can transit the park on a lead, they are not allowed to be exercised off lead. Dogs being exercised off lead in the park is becoming an increasing issue for users of the facility. The clerk suggested that each of the three entrances to the park has a sign erected reminding owners of the rules and to absolve the Council of any risk concerning the loose dogs. Council unanimously **resolved** that the clerk should investigate legal signage both reminding dog owners of their responsibilities and absolving the Parish

Council of any risk and bring suggestions to the next Environment and Recreation meeting in September. **Action:** - The clerk will carry out the action prescribed by Council.

2025/26/019 To consider grouting the patio outside the pavilion to stop weed growth and approve any actions

Council considered the proposal and unanimously **resolved** for the patio area to first be weeded and then grout applied to prevent further weed growth and would like Andy Nolan to carry out the work. This will negate the need for weeding the area going forward and remove that cost from the budget. **Action:** - The clerk will contact Andy Nolan and arrange for the work to be carried out.

2025/26/020 Cllr Argent and Bundy to update Council on the pavilion project, including quotations for upgrading the electrics, hot water systems and kitchen refurbishment and approve any actions

The clerk confirmed that there are no further updates at this stage as he is awaiting approval from North Herts Council for the work to be completed using s106 monies. Council unanimously **resolved** that the clerk should chase for permissions from North Herts Council and copy in district Councillor Ralph Muncer to the correspondence. **Action:** - The clerk will carry out the action as prescribed by Council.

2025/26/021 To consider the repair of one of the planters at the JC and approve any actions

Cllr Kane stated that the planter nearest to the disabled parking bays is rotting, largely because there is no liner present. Cllr Bundy confirmed that there are new railway sleepers on site that can be used to affect the rebuild of the planter. Council unanimously **resolved** that the planter should be rebuilt and must include a liner to help prevent future rotting of the wood and the work is to be carried out by Liam Grey who has previously rebuilt the planter on the edge of the car park. **Action:** - Cllr Bundy will confirm to the clerk that there are sufficient sleepers on site for the work to be undertaken. Once confirmed the clerk will arrange for the work to be undertaken.

2025/26/022 To consider a request for additional dog bins at the JC and approve any actions

Council considered the request for additional dog bins, largely because dog poo bags are being placed in normal rubbish bins which creates an unpleasant smell, especially during hotter weather. Council unanimously **resolved** that stickers should be placed on the relevant bins informing people that no dog waste should be disposed of in the bins. **Action:** - The clerk will inform the JC of the Council's recommendation.

2025/26/023 To receive an update on the litter bin handover from North Herts and approve any actions

The clerk confirmed that there are three bins earmarked for removal within Codicote that the Parish Council wish to take responsibility for and that North Herts Council are aware of the Parish Council's wishes. Despite the clerk chasing for updates on the relevant bins, North Herts Council have not yet authorised the go ahead for the Parish Council to assume responsibility for these. The clerk stated that the agenda for next week's full Council meeting includes a

request under the District Councillors update for Cllr Muncer to provide an update on the situation.

2025/26/024 To consider a request from a resident of Bell Mews to obtain a key to the Pound to clear litter on behalf of the Parish Council and approve any actions

Council considered the request and unanimously **resolved** to allow the resident to hold a key for the Pound for litter clearance purposes. **Action:** - The clerk will arrange for a key to be passed on to the resident in line with the Parish Council's instruction.

2025/26/025 To receive an update from the clerk on the JC car park lighting Shelly box installation and approve any actions

Cllr Argent stated that a new Shelly box has been installed as the previous version could no longer receive firmware updates. Unfortunately, there is currently no signal getting to the Wi-Fi on site to allow for the remote App to be usable. Cllr Argent has the contact details for Current Solutions who installed the box and offered to meet with them to resolve the situation. Council unanimously **resolved** for Cllr Argent to liaise with Current Solutions to fix the connection issue. **Action:** - Cllr Argent will carry out the action prescribed by Council.

2025/26/026 To discuss an overgrown conifer tree from the Wyevale site encroaching on the Scout hut and wire fencing belonging to neighbouring housing along Tower Road being flattened allowing direct access to the sports field and approve any actions

Cllr Kane stated that there is a large conifer tree on the Wyevale site overhanging the boundary fence that is beginning to encroach on the Scout hut. Council unanimously **resolved** that the clerk should contact Taylor Wimpey and ask them to prune the tree. **Action:** - The clerk will carry out the action prescribed by Council.

Cllr Kane also stated that wire fencing belonging to 33 Tower Road has been trampled down allowing direct access from the rear garden to the sports field. Council unanimously **resolved** that the clerk should write to the tenants and ask that the fence is reinstated. **Action:** - The clerk will carry out the action prescribed by Council.

Cllr Kane also raised the issue that trees belonging to 31 and 33 Tower Road are overhanging the boundary fence. Council unanimously **resolved** that the clerk should write to both tenants and ask that the trees are pruned back from the boundaries of both properties. **Action:** - The clerk will carry out the action prescribed by Council.

2025/26/027 Matters for consideration at future meetings

Council would like the following on the agenda for the next Environment and Recreation Committee meeting to be held in September: -

- To discuss what to do with the Pound.
- To decide arrangements in respect of the firework display.

Meeting closed at 20.46 pm

The date of the next Environment/Recreation committee meeting is Tuesday 23rd September 2025.

Signed.....

Date: 22nd July 2025

C. Ayt