

Wickhambrook Parish Council

Estates Committee Minutes

Of an ordinary meeting of the Estates Committee held on

Thursday 3rd October 2019

Page |
281

Present: Cllrs J Barton, K Merritt, J Norton

Attending: Lay Members: M Jolland, R Medley, R Merry
Clerk Hilary Workman; Cllr Sandy Thwaite (part).

19.10.01 **Noted:**

Apologies were received from P Couzens.
Cllr J Barton took the Chair for the meeting.

19.10.02 **Noted:**

There were no Members' Declarations of Local Non-Pecuniary Interests and/or Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in subsequent Agenda items and no additions and/or deletions to the Council's Register of Interests.

19.10.03 Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15th August were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

19.10.04 **Open Session:** 7:32pm

Noted:

That when public comment or question was invited on any Agenda item, there was none.

Session closed

19.10.05 **Noted:**

The appointment of Mrs Mary Jolland who was welcomed as a lay member on the Estates Committee with responsibility for Environment and Sustainability.

19.10.06 **Noted:**

6.1 Request from a parishioner that the Parish Council consider setting aside a specific area on the recreation ground for people to play, exercise and train their dogs (*circulated*). The meeting considered the request and a number of issues were raised:

- Would the creation of a fenced off area be likely to result in an expectation that dogs were only exercised in that area?
- Ownership of Six Acres would need to be clearly established before any further consideration by the Parish Council.
- Cost implications of fencing off a designated area and the risk that dog excrement accumulate in this area.

The meeting asked the Clerk to investigate Parish and Land Registry records and forward a copy of the request to the Memorial Social Centre asking them to express their views on the request.

Signed: Paul Couzens

Date: 3rd Oct '19

19.10.07 **Noted:** Decisions of the Parish Council at its August and September meetings.

7.1 **August**

7.1.1 To note that the Parish Council resolved to establish a working group to research and consider viable options for resolving access and congestion issues in the vicinity of Wickhambrook Primary Academy (**Min. 19.10.7.2** refers).

7.1.2 To note that the Parish Council resolved to adopt NALC Model Financial Regulations (July 2019) (**Min. 19.10.9.2** refers).

7.2 **September**

7.2.1 To note that Mrs Sandy Thwaite has been co-opted onto Wickhambrook Parish Council (**Min 19.09.05** refers)

7.2.2 To note that the Parish Council resolved to move its bank accounts from Nat West to Unity Trust (**Min. 19.09.11** refers).

7.2.3 To note that the proposed refurbishment of the Fort Area was approved, authorising Playforce to complete the work as specified in report **WPC.19.09.03** at a cost of £3716.22 plus VAT (**Min. 19.09.15** refers)

7.2.4 To note the approved dates for Estates Committee meetings in 2020 as: 6th Feb; 2nd April; 4th June; 6th Aug; 1st Oct; and 3rd Dec 2020 (**Min. 19.09.17** refers).

7.2.5 To note that a proposal to invite former Councillor Kate Sammons to lay a wreath at the Commemoration of Armistice Day on Sunday 10th November and to then formally open the Wickhambrook Memorial Garden (marked by the planting of spring and autumn bulbs) was approved (**Min.19.09.19** refers).

19.10.08 **Noted:**

Reports to this meeting from Portfolio Holders or other agencies as summarised below:

8.1 Parish Assets (defibrillator) - deferred to next meeting **Mr P Couzens**

8.2 An oral report from Mary Jolland, Environment & Sustainability officer, who confirmed:

1. the next Litter Pick was scheduled for Sunday 17th November;
2. that bulbs would be purchased for the opening of the Memorial Garden on Sunday 10th November

The meeting asked the Clerk to add an item to the next meeting of the Parish Council to authorise room hire and cost of refreshments, and prepare an item about the opening for the School, website and The Scene.

8.3 An oral report from Mr Roger Medley, Footpaths officer who advised that:

1. The mid-section of footpath 16 (Cloak Lane to Atterton Green), which had not been cut in spring (fallen tree, now cleared) had also not been cut in late summer. It was noted that this was a very difficult section to cut. Roger Medley had sent a note to the SCC Footpaths officer and would follow this up.
2. Farmers have cut sides and tops of hedges bounding footpaths and byeways and asked the Clerk to extend thanks to them for this. However, cutting of hedges on the footpath side was not being carried out and this was restricting access on a number of footpaths (e.g. Old Green Lane) and it was difficult to get either landowners or SCC to take responsibility for this work.

Signed: Paul Couzens

Date: 3rd Oct '19

3. The hedge between Cloak Lane to Wollards Corner towards Malting End on the B1063 was overhanging the road. This was resulting in high sided vehicles veering into the centre of the road, posing a risk to other road users. The Clerk was asked to write to the landowner, Mr G Smister of Bank House and ask that this hedge be cut back.
 4. Hedge from Coltsfoot Green to Meeting Green – a number of requests for this to be cut back have been submitted over the past year, but no action yet by SCC Highways. The meeting asked the Clerk to follow this up as there was concern it was becoming dangerous to pedestrian and other road users.
 5. The footpath on Mr G Simister's land from Coltsfoot Green beyond the large drain pipe had not been cut – this had not been included in this year's cutting schedule. Roger would follow this up.
- 8.4 An oral report from Mr Roger Medley, Tree Warden, summarised below:
1. he and Cllr Merritt had undertaken a recent survey of Parish Trees. A number of trees it had not been possible to identify, and a number had incorrect tags. These matters, together with further advice on identification of tree health would be taken up with the interim Tree inspection to be undertaken by Acacia Trees in mid October.
 2. It was noted that the tree root at the corner of the entrance onto the Recreation Ground required attention and the meeting asked the Clerk to raise this with the Memorial Social Centre who were responsible for this tree
 3. Grass cuttings being left at the base of a trees 80 and 81 at Attleton Green required clearing to avoid risk of damage to the trees.
 4. The hedge bordering Chestnut house required cutting back, Cllr Thwaite kindly offered to mention this to the landowner.
- 8.5 A written report (*previously circulated*) from Mr R Merry, responsible for Youth Facilities who kindly offered to be on site for installation of the replacement play-fort sleepers when the work commenced.
- 8.6 An oral report from Cllr Merritt, with portfolio for Six Acres, summarised below:
1. Five dips in the ground had been identified at Six Acres which required filling. It was suggested that matting left over from the original play fort mound, (believed to be stored in the Chapel of Rest) could be used with infill of soil and re-seeding. The meeting asked the Clerk to obtain a quote from D King.
 2. Cllr Merritt asked the meeting to consider ways in which the Parish Council could work with Memorial Social Centre to protect Six Acres and the Recreation Ground from incursion by trespassers siting vehicles and mobile accommodation on the land. The meeting asked the Clerk to add an item to the agenda of the next meeting of the Parish Council and advise the MSC accordingly.
- 8.7 An oral report from Cllr Norton, with portfolio for Cemetery, Churchyard and Greens, summarised below:
1. A few gravestones in the Cemetery had tilted but were firm. The grave of Robert and Jean Cook had sunk quite a bit. Cllr Norton to send a picture to the Clerk who would follow up.
 2. Three benches in the Memorial Garden would be given a good clean in advance of Remembrance Sunday

Signed: Paul Couzens

Date: 3rd Oct '19

3. The Footpath sign adjacent to the cemetery had not been re-instated by SCC, the meeting asked the Clerk to report again.
4. A number of the stumps bounding the green had become loose and required removal with new ones re-instating. The meeting asked the Clerk to obtain a quote from DR King for all to be replaced.
5. The hedge between the School and D R King's land required siding out – the meeting asked the Clerk to report to SCC.

19.10.09 **Noted:** The Clerk's report advising:

- 9.1 that inputting records using the Cemetery Software was ongoing and an inspection report for recent graves has been produced.
- 9.2 that following the Clerks correspondence with Memorial Social Centre with respect to the tree root, the work remained outstanding.
- 9.3 that following a subscription to Parish On-line the Clerk had used this to map VAS sites, respond to queries from the valuation office, record areas covered under existing ground works contracts and had set up a new layer for recording parish trees.
- 9.4 the following update from SCC regarding reported issues:
Report Number: 244364
Report Location: Wickhambrook BOAT 31
"The Public Rights of Way team have advised that now that bird nesting season is almost over they have contacted the farmers adjacent to the section of the byway north of Australia Farm and asked them to cut back their hedges to ensure the byway is accessible to all users. They have been given a deadline of 24 September to arrange this."
- 9.5 the works to Coltsfoot Green and the Recreation Ground as specified in report **WPC.EC19.08.01** had been completed (**Min.19.08.7.6 refers**).
- 9.6 an interim inspection of the Parish Trees by Acacia Trees had been arranged for 17th October. Mr Medley and Cllr Merritt would join the inspection.
- 9.7 Updated agreements for use of Six Acres, the tennis courts, outdoor bowling green and Chapel of Rest (including privacy notices) had been sent out. The key contacts for the football pitches were asked to submit a risk assessment to the Parish Council prior to making use of any chemical substances on the pitches.

19.10.10 **Noted:**

Update on Suffolk County Council arrangements for supporting parish volunteers in some environmental activities (**WPCE.19.10.01** *previously circulated*).

19.10.11 **Noted:**

The meeting considered the replacement of the old village notice board at Shop Hill (**WPC.EC.19.10.02** *previously circulated*) outlining options. The Clerk reported that the owner of the land on which the existing noticeboard is situated had no objection to replacement on a like for like basis, but would object to a larger noticeboard. The additional Development Management advice which had recently been issued by West Suffolk Council was noted. The meeting asked the Clerk to write to the Chair of the Memorial Social Centre (MSC), Mr Steven Thwaite and ask whether the MSC would be interested in siting a larger 3 bay noticeboard at the MSC.

Signed: Paul Couzens

Date: 3rd Oct '19

19.10.12 Noted:

The meeting considered the purchase of an additional piece of play equipment for children between 8 and 12 at the Bury Road Pocket Park (**WPC.E.19.10.03** *previously circulated*) and agreed the proposal should be tabled at the next meeting of the Parish Council for approval. The meeting asked the Clerk to undertake some initial research into options for fitness equipment on Six Acres to report to a future meeting.

19.10.13 Noted:

The meeting considered establishing a book swap in the old BT Phone Box (**WPC.E.19.10.04** *previously circulated*) and noted that whilst the Parish Council owns the phone box, it does not own the land on which it is situated. The meeting agreed that the proposal was of interest and asked the Clerk to write to the landowner for their views and canvass residents' opinions through the website and The Scene. and take action as appropriate. It was noted the phone box would require re-painting, and some re-glazing.

19.10.14 Noted:

That when any other Council business for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda was invited, the following:

1. The meeting confirmed that the agreement that an old grass roller owned by the Parish Council and currently in a ditch at the bottom of Six Acres (to be removed by a parishioner at their expense in exchange for a small donation to the Parish Council was not that owned by Mr Paul Jolland.
2. The meeting asked the Clerk to contact West Suffolk Council again re the build up of vegetation tipped adjacent to the green.
3. The Clerk was asked to investigate alternative dates for meetings of the Estates Committee.

19.10.15 Noted:

That the scheduled date for the next meeting was Thursday 5th December 2019.

19.10.16 Noted:

The meeting closed at 8:43pm.

Signed: Paul Couzens

Date: 3rd Oct '19