

**Estates Committee Minutes**

Of an ordinary meeting of the Estates Committee held on  
**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

**Present:** Cllrs P Couzens, and K Merritt,  
Lay Members, J Norton and M Jolland

**Attending:** Clerk Hilary Workman, Cllr T Turner

21.08.01 **Noted:**

Apologies for absence to be noted or approved: Roger Merry; Roger Medley

21.08.02 **Noted:**

That when any Members' Declarations of Local Non-Pecuniary Interests and/or Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in subsequent Agenda items and any additions and/or deletions to the Council's Register of Interests were invited, there were none.

**21.08.03 Resolved**

**That the Minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2021, as tabled, be agreed as a true record.**

21.08.04 **Noted:**

Public comment or question invited on any Agenda item (**Open Session**). **7:32pm**  
Cllr Turner raised concerns reported to her by a number of residents with respect to overhanging vegetation and overgrown hedges encroaching both onto footpaths and roads in the parish and the safety issues that arise from this, particularly, that vehicles are having to move into the centre of the carriageway and pedestrians have limited safe passageway on the footpaths, or escape from the carriageway onto verges.  
The meeting asked the clerk to convey their concerns to Suffolk County Council Highways.

**Session closed at 7:36pm.**

21.08.05 **Noted:**

The following no correspondence received to this meeting not dealt with as an Agenda item or in the Clerk's report.

- 5.1 Local Resident - query regarding bench sited at Coltsfoot Green
- 5.2 Local Resident - upkeep of land behind Croft Close
- 5.3 Local Resident - infestation of mole hills at Attleton Green - next agenda
- 5.4 Local Resident - praise for grounds contracts works and request for more bench seating on six acres.

The meeting asked the clerk to include items 5.3 & 5.4 as items on the next agenda.

21.08.06 **Noted:** The following decisions of the Parish Council at its March and May meetings:

**July - Resolved**

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| 11.3.1 | The parish council authorise a sustainable memorial bench and base at a cost of not more than £450.00 plus VAT. The clerk be delegated to undertake arrangements for purchase and to site the bench on Coltsfoot Green between the two Cherry Trees in place of the existing bench (to be returned to the bereaved family) and invite the bereaved family to arrange for a memorial plaque consistent with the current published memorial policy. ( <a href="#">WPC.21.07.01</a> ) |
| 11.3.2 | To authorise the cost of work to the Coltsfoot Green culvert (Invoice 1137) at £105.00 plus VAT. ( <a href="#">WPC.21.07.01</a> )  |
| 12.6   | To move the funds allocated to Recreation Ground, Six Acres, Greens & Cemetery & Churchyard, to a total of £11,922 to a single budget line for the purposes of the Grounds Contract ( <a href="#">WPC.21.07.02</a> )   |

**Signed:** Paul Couzens

**Dated:** 7/10/2021

- 13.1 To adopt the policy set out as Appendix 1 to report [WPC.21.07.03](#) for dealing with requests for dispensation of S.106 agreement restricting housing allocations to individuals residing in the parish.
- 18.1 To authorise the cost of delivery of Housing Needs Surveys in the Parish of Wickhambrook at a cost of £75.00 plus VAT. ([WPC.21.07.05](#))
- 19.1.1 Appoint two councillors to the Neighbourhood Plan steering group; Cllrs Thwaite & Turner ([WPC.21.07.06](#))
- 19.1.2 Authorise unspent £200 plus VAT allocated under Minute ref 21.03.6.1 for professional support to Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group from Plans4People until a Neighbourhood Planning Consultant is appointed by the parish council ([WPC.21.07.06](#));
- 19.1.3 Delegate authority to clerk to submit a grant application to Locality for Neighbourhood Planning financial and technical support ([WPC.21.07.06](#))
- 20.1.1 The parish council notify Quiet Lanes Suffolk of those routes identified by the meeting (from report WPC.21.07.07) for designation as Quiet Lanes; ([WPC.21.07.07](#))
- 20.1.2 The parish council authorise the cost of delivery of covering letters and maps to all residential and business properties on each route at £75 plus VAT. ([WPC.21.07.07](#))

21.08.07 **Noted:**

The meeting received and discussed reports to this meeting from Portfolio Holders or other agencies:

- 7.1 Parish Assets (defibrillator) – all reported ok **Cllr Couzens**
- 7.2 Environment & Sustainability **Mrs M Jolland**

An oral report that:

- additional bulbs would be purchased for planning in the cemetery this autumn
- the ditch on Back Lane back up to Boyden End (the single track) was in a poor state of repair, with sides of road falling away due to recent flooding
- concern with respect to the lack of hedge trimming in the parish

- 7.3 Footpaths officer report (*previously circulated*) **Mr R. Medley**
- 7.4 Tree Warden's report (*previously circulated*) **Mr R. Medley**
- 7.5 Youth Facilities **Mr R Merry**

7.5.1 Main Playground

7.5.2 Teen Project and Games Area

7.5.3 Zip Wire

7.5.4 Bury Road Playground (*circulated*) **Mr K Grimes**

The clerk advised that a new volunteer, Paul Buckle would be helping out with inspections and maintenance whilst Roger Merry was recuperating. The meeting wished Roger Merry a speedy recovery.

- 7.6 Six Acres **Cllr K Merritt**

An oral report that the Recreation Ground and Six Acres were looking pretty good now, and nicely cut. Some work to hedgerows would be required, and despite the new combined litter and dog waste bins, dog waste was becoming an issue again.

- 7.7 Cemetery and Churchyard Safety Reports **Cllr J Norton**

An oral report that the Cemetery and memorial gardens were looking good. One of the benches from the Memorial Garden had been moved to the entrance of the Chapel of Rest, and there were some chips to the war memorial.

- 7.8 Village Greens Report **Cllr J Norton**  
An oral report that Coltsfoot Green was in order, the grass cutting at Attleton Green was ok, but that the pond was encroaching on the bench. Genesis Green looked ok.

**21.08.08 Noted:** Report from the Parish Clerk summarised below:

- 8.1 The meeting considered an update on current Estates Issues (previously circulated as [WPC.EC.21.08.01](#)) and

**8.2.1 Resolved**

- a) **To authorise the cost of removing vegetation and cleaning the guttering of the Chapel of Rest, at a cost of not more than £170.00 plus VAT. - approved**
  - b) **To authorise the cost taking out on entrance to cemetery (Chapel of Rest entrance), remove Yew trees first on left and first on right to open up for Landscape scenery at a cost of £200.00. - approved**
  - c) **To authorise the cost of purchasing two waterbutts to replace those at the front of the Chapel of Rest, at a cost of not more than £120.00 plus VAT. - approved**
  - d) **To authorise the cost of repointing and work to the War Memorial at a cost of not more than £670 plus VAT. approved**
- 8.2 The fabricated "Willow Heart" to commemorate the kindness of residents of the parish in the pandemic year had been erected on the village sign.
- 8.3 The work to the new railings at the Memorial entrance to the Cemetery had been instructed
- 8.4 The electricity contract falls due for renewal in September, and the supplier had asked that a new smart meter be installed in the Chapel of Rest. This would require some re-organisation of space.

**Resolved**

**The committee delegate to the clerk authority to either renew the existing contract or move to an alternative supplier upon expiry of the existing contract based on quotes available at the time renewal falls due.**

- 8.5 To note that the clerk had visited Bury Archives to obtain information on purchased Grave Spaces and Interments from the parish registers held there.
- 8.6 CAS had advised of COVID Restart Grants for communities for up to £2000. The meeting asked the clerk to apply for funds to cover the cost of an outdoor gazebo and associated equipment, and display boards for community engagement events.

**21.08.09 Noted:**

The meeting considered an update and feedback on the new grounds contract, (previously circulated as [WPC.EC.21.08.02](#)) and

**9.1 Resolved**

**9.1.1 To authorise the cost of:**

- i. **Strimming of the outer banks of the recreation ground & six acres a maximum of two times in this current financial year at a cost £220.00 per visit; - approved**
- ii. **To cut the hedges around the bowling green, along the track next to the rec, the beech hedge near the car park and the hedge around the cemetery a maximum of two times in this current financial year at a cost of £395.00 + VAT per cut; and approved**

**9.1.2 To refer an item to the next meeting of the parish council to authorise the anticipated increase on the contract to reflect the changes to cutting frequencies (£1535.00 plus VAT) and adjust the due payments schedule accordingly; and**

**Signed:** Paul Couzens

**Dated:** 7/10/2021

**9.1.3 To approve the proposed revised specification for cuts and proposed areas set out at Appendices A & B, (subject to any changes agreed at the meeting) in advance of quotes being requested for the grounds contract for financial year 2022/23.**

**21.08.10 Noted:**

The meeting considered a proposal for a Tri-annual inspection of the Parish Trees (including two interim inspections (previously circulated as [WPC.EC.21.08.03](#)) and

**10.1 Resolved**

**To authorise the commissioning of a Survey of Parish Trees in 2021 and undertake two walk-round tree inspections in years 2 and 3 (2022 & 2023) at a cost of £500 plus VAT to be carried out by Acacia Tree Surgery.**

**21.08.11 Noted:**

The meeting considered a proposal for a workshop & engagement day at the Skatepark to address the issue of Graffiti and consult on options for additional/replacement equipment (previously circulated as [WPC.EC.21.08.04](#)) and

**11.1 Resolved**

**That the Estates Committee authorise the commissioning of a workshop organised through West Suffolk Families and Communities Team to address Graffiti in the Skatepark and consult with users on new equipment at a cost of £500 plus VAT.**

**21.08.12 Noted:**

The meeting considered a proposal for works to the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) (previously circulated as [WPC.EC.21.08.05](#)) and agreed the following approach:

- The summer could be used to consult with residents of the parish about:
  - the type of equipment that would be best suited for a re-purposing of the area
  - development of a new MUGA and its site (if there was support for it)
  - building engagement and an understanding of costs.
- The September meeting of the parish council could then be used to consider a business case for the proposals and delegate authority to the clerk to apply for grants.
- The October meeting of the Estates Committee could then be used to finalise proposals to be included in a grant application, having considered the responses from consultation questions and the engagement day at the skatepark in September.
- A grant funding bid would therefore be likely to include:
  - Re-purposing the Multi-use games area for outdoor fitness, including:
    - New fitness equipment
    - Re-surfacing if needed
    - Fencing of the area, if not completed in advance
  - New equipment to replace grind rails in the skatepark (and consider replacement of half and quarter pipe surfaces based on professional advice
  - Development of a new Multi-Use Games Area, possibly at a site adjacent to the Tennis Courts

And could also include new bow top fencing for both the cemetery road and bury road play areas.

Additionally, the meeting agreed to set up a working party to take down the existing boarding to the MUGA and clear the site as far as possible, booking a skip from West Suffolk for removal of waste wood, in preparation for fencing in the area with bow top fencing (of a similar style to the skate park), including a self-closing child safe gate for the area.

21.08.14 **Noted:**

The meeting noted an oral update from the clerk on Volunteering in Wickhambrook that:

- She had now recruited two volunteers, one for maintenance & one for the cemetery (tidying, transcription of records) and
- Would be attending a joint meeting of the WI and Horticultural Society with Mary Jolland in October to try to recruit more to the cemetery work.

21.08.15 **Noted:**

Any other Council business for information, to be noted or for inclusion on a future agenda.

- The meeting considered suggestions for future estates projects/work in the next financial year to build into the budget, including:
  - Work to cemetery gates at Chapel of Rest entrance
  - A plan of the cemetery & Gods Own Acre signage for the old cemetery
  - Improvements to the path leading up to chapel of rest & hedging bounding cemetery

21.08.16 **Noted:**

That the scheduled date for the next meeting was Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October in the Dulcie Smith Room, Wickhambrook Memorial Social Centre

21.08.17 **Noted:** Close of meeting – **8:09pm**.