

Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 6th November 2023 at 7.00pm, the Loft, Dersingham Village Centre

Present: Cllr R Frost (Chair), Cllr C Shepherd, Cllr J Stokes, Cllr T Bubb, Cllr B Anderson and Cllr A Watkins

In Attendance: Karen Orgill - Business Manager and Minute Taker

1. **To consider apologies for absence** – None
2. **Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations by councillors in any agenda item** – none received
3. **Public Participation** – one parishioner present introduced himself, gave a brief overview of his work and informed the meeting that he would like to join as a parish councillor and hoped to be helpful to the village.
4. **Minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting 2nd October 2023**
 - (a) Cllr C Shepherd asked for Minute 4(k) to read three worst bins to be replaced – work to be discussed in November.
Cllr B Anderson proposed and Cllr C Shepherd seconded the minutes. **The minutes were approved as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.**
 - (b) Action points were discussed and those completed will be removed.

Business Manager

- (a) To complete the specification and arrange for further quotations - split into 3 sections (1) Two new goal posts with or without nets, (2) Removal of old goal posts – cut down to ground level and made good and (3) a second basketball hoop - still outstanding and the specification will be emailed out to all councillors
- (b) To check the brickwork on the Village Sign for the for two plaques for the beech and oak trees – The Business Manager had checked and measured the brickwork – 23cm x 6.5cm – but raised concerns that the proposed screw holes might split the narrow brick. A decision was made for the Business Manager to source metal to brick adhesive. Cllr T Bubb asked for the wording to be changed from This beech tree to The beech tree.
- (c) To contact the sponsors in November/December to ascertain continued interest in sponsoring the dog bins – The Business Manager confirmed all sponsors had been contacted and Coastal Veterinary Group had confirmed they wanted to continue to sponsor their 15 no. dog bins. R&B Groundcare had declined the sponsorship this year and the Business Manager was asked to contact Dersingham Vets and offer the extra 2 dog bins to them.
Cllr J Stokes had previously presented his dog bin report which identified 3 dog bins requiring replacement, this matched Cllr M Shepherd’s list and a decision was made to purchase 3 dog bins in April 2024, to replace DW21, DW28 and DW31.
The Business Manager informed the meeting that the new directive from Kings Lynn Borough Council meant that only 25 litre bins could now be purchased.
- (d) To purchase 3 no. combination locks from code 5025 – the Business Manager provided pictures and prices of combination locks with the combination lock at the side and underneath of the lock. Concerns were given about the quality, without seeing the lock first, and a decision was made to physically view the locks. Cllr R Frost offered to make the purchase.

- (e) To carry out the preparations for a new tree survey (including the trees in the recreation ground) to be commissioned – work outstanding
- (f) To chase up K & M Lighting Services Ltd and ask for completion dates to allow the grant money to be reclaimed. The Business Manager informed the meeting that she had emailed and phoned K & M Lighting Services Ltd and had stressed the importance of completion of the project. The Business Manager had also emailed and phoned UKPN asking for a disconnection and re-connection date and was still waiting for a reply.
- (g) To check the contract end dates and prepare a renewal specification for the Grass Cutting Contract – The Business Manager informed the meeting that the end date for the Recreation Ground was to the end of the cutting season this year. A discussion took place and a decision was made to extend this contract by one year, this would now ensure that both grass cutting contracts had the same date which was the end of the cutting season 2024. The Business Manager was asked to inform the Grass Cutting Contractor of the extension of one year and to check if there would be a price increase. The Business Manager will now prepare a combined contract/specification in readiness for new tenders end of 2024.
- (h) To check the contract end dates and prepare a renewal specification for the Cleaning Contract – The Business Manager informed the meeting that the end date was March 2024. The Business Manager will now prepare an updated specification in readiness for new tenders for 2024. Councillors to advise BM of any suitable contractors.
- (i) To check with NCC Highways whether that the owner of the hedge on Manor Road, which is obscuring the highway and visibility, had been notified to prune it. The Business Manager confirmed the hedge had now been pruned.
- (j) To place a 'No Dog' sign on the gate leading from the play area to the main part of the recreation ground – work completed.
- (k) To write up the items which require attention from the RoSPA Annual Inspection of Recreation Ground and Skate Park – written list completed see item 8(c).
- (l) To arrange a meeting at the War Memorial for all Environment Committee Councillors including Cllr V Brundle and Cllr J Houston to review the growth of the tree roots on the block paving. A meeting was arranged for Wednesday 8th November.
- (m) To place a warning sign of 'Trip Hazard – Uneven Paving' on the War Memorial gates – the Business Manager confirmed the new sign had been placed on the gate leading into the War Memorial. Cllr C Shepherd informed the meeting that the service will take place at the War Memorial at 10.50am on Saturday 11th November and Cllr J Stokes was asked to place this on the village Facebook.
- (n) To inform Cllr T Bubb that there is a blocked drain opposite no. 31 Hawthorne Drive – Cllr T Bubb was informed and after discussion Cllr B Anderson said the blocked drain was opposite 31 Hunstanton Road. The Business Manager was asked to go online to NCC Highways Report a Problem.

Cllr T Bubb

- (a) To select the type of very long bolts to hold the bench in place on the grassed area within the children's play area and inform the Business Manager so they can be ordered. A discussion took place and a decision was made to purchase 4 no. 30mm thick x 440mm for 340kg weight long bolts was made. The Business Manager was asked to prepare the order using the code: 5025 Recreation Ground Maintenance.

Cllr R Frost

- (a) To have a look at the bench on the corner of Hawthorne Drive/Hunstanton Road B1440 which is starting to blister and report back in November's meeting. Cllr C Shepherd informed the meeting that she had been to look at the bench which was a memorial to Parish Councillor Malcolm Nurse. Cllr C Shepherd explained that Cllr M Shepherd had

prepared a list of all parish council owed seats, benches and picnic tables which identified 12 seats. Cllr M Shepherd had offered to prepare a map to match the list. This list will be divided between councillors and they will ascertain the condition and whether the seats require painting.

- (b) To have a look at the six trees over the footpath off Burma Close which require pruning up to a height of 2.1 metres and report back in November's meeting. Cllr R Frost confirmed he hadn't been able to view the trees. Cllr C Shepherd asked the Business Manager to obtain quotations to have the lower canopy lifted to a clearance of 3 metres for those branches over the path.

Cllr A Watkins

- (a) To inform the parishioner who had reported concerns over the tree roots under the pavement on the corner of Pansy Drive (Station Road end) that this concern should be passed to NCC Highways – task completed.

(c) To consider matters arising – none

5. Current Financial Position

Cllr C Shepherd informed the meeting that the grass cutting budget will be overspent and the grass cutting contractor has sent in his second to last invoice for the year with the last cut carried out last week. Streetlighting should just be within budget but the bus shelters budget will be over budget due to a spend of £25 for cutting back nettles at the side of the bus shelter. Concern was raised that the tree survey work carried out 5/6 years ago will be more expensive and the budgets will require increasing at the Budget Meeting.

6. Reserves

Cllr C Shepherd informed the meeting that the project reserve contained just under £30,000. Once the outstanding street light work is completed the contractor will be submitting a further invoice for removal of the old columns but a claim for the grant money from the Borough Council can be made and this will be returned to the project Reserve.

7. Areas of responsibility

- (a) Bus shelters/stops – The BM handed the Councillors the 'before and after' photos of the completed painting of the two bus shelters on Manor Road and Chapel Road. The BM explained that the painting contractor had received comments asking whether a new seat/bench could be placed inside the bus shelters. Cllr C Shepherd confirmed that benches/seats will be discussed at the budget setting meeting on Tuesday 7th November.
- (b) Streetlights – Cllr B Anderson informed the meeting that he will be investigating the benefits of red streetlights for bats and will bring a report to the December meeting.
- (c) Grass Cutting – Cllr C Shepherd informed the meeting that if a cut was made in March, the invoice would be charged to the new financial year. Cllr R Frost asked the BM to check the grass cutting contract to ensure the area between the Village Sign and the land belonging to United Charities is cut, and Cllr Bubb requested that this to include cutting back the brambles.
- (d) Cleaning – The BM will be preparing the specification for a new cleaning contract.
- (e) Litter Bins – No issues
- (f) Seats and Benches – see item 7(a)
- (g) Children's Playground Inspection Form – see item 8(c)
- (h) Dog Bins and Sponsorship – The BM informed the meeting that BCKLWN had circulated an email informing all parish councils that any new or replacement dog bin will now need to have a maximum capacity of 25 litres. All Dersingham Parish

Councils dog bins are currently 45 litres. Also, see item 4 (c) and a decision was made to purchase 3 new 25 litre dog bins in April, budget code 4005.

- (i) Footpaths/Walkways – Cllr T Bubb explained to the meeting that the footpath between Centre Vale to the Pastures was muddy and required top dressing with gravel. He had spoken to NCC's Cllr S Dark who had offered to purchase and arrange for the top dressing. Cllr T Bubb to send the BM co-ordinates so she can pass the information to Cllr S Dark.
- (j) Tree Warden and Tree Survey – No issues except for those already mentioned. The BM to ask Cllr M Shepherd for a list and map of all Dersingham Parish Council owned trees.
- (k) General Village Environment – The BM informed the meeting that she had been told that two bushes on DPC land on Mountbatten Road next to the electrical substation and Co-op had been cut back and the cuttings were left on the floor by the fence. A discussion took place and the decision was to leave the cuttings by the hedge as this supported wildlife in particular hedgehogs and insects.
The BM informed the meeting that she was aware of a rough sleeper utilising the bus shelter on Manor Road. The BM was asked to contact BCKLWN to see if they could offer emergency help and support to the individual.

8. Recreation Ground

- (a) Five-Year Plan – No issues
- (b) Update on Skate Park – Cllr C Shepherd informed the meeting that she had rung the contractor again but had still not received a reply. A decision was made that if the contractor doesn't return her call, DPC will send a letter stating that the contractor has forfeited their retention and DPC will have no option other than to seek another contractor to carry out the remedial repairs.
- (c) RoSPA Annual Inspection of Recreation Ground and Skate Park – Updates on work to be carried out:
 - A2 – Adjust gate action between Bank Road and children's playground – Cllr R Frost
 - P5 – Zip Wire – worn ground – grass matting already in place, no action required
 - P7 – Carousel – remove weeds and soil underneath edges – Cllr R Frost and Cllr C Shepherd
 - P8 – Carousel – fill with soil - no action required
 - P16 – Multiplay – tighten fixing – completed 2/10 by Cllr M Shepherd
 - P18 – Multiplay – new backboard to be fitted: Decision made to ask the BM to obtain quotations for a replacement plus installation. However, if the costs are too prohibitive the councillors agreed to carry out this work.
 - P25 and P26 – Replace Runway – A decision was made to ask the BM to obtain quotations for a replacement Runway plus bolt and to include installation.
 - P30 – 2 swings to be installed – replacement swings already purchased Cllr R Frost and Cllr C Shepherd to have a look to see if contractor needed for installation due to height.
 - P33 – Swing – Mixed – Basket – New ropes were fitted in September 2023
 - P39 – Basketball post warning notice – No action required as there is a warning on the skatepark already
- (d) Condition of Electric Box and water tap – Cllr C Shepherd informed the meeting that the electric box was very rusty underneath but solid. Cllr T Bubb recommended using a wire brush to remove the flaking rust and paint with a special paint for rust before painting a final coat. Cllrs R Frost, C Shepherd and Cllr T Bubb will review the electric box during the visit to review the flooring at the War Memorial.

Water Tap – A decision was made to ask the BM to obtain quotations for a plumber to look at the water tap.

- (e) Painting of benches on Children’s Play Area – These benches have been included in the Seats, Benches and Picnic Table List – see item 7(a).

9. **War Memorial and War Memorial Gardens** - The BM handed the Councillors the before and after photos of the completed painting.
10. **Climate Change and Biodiversity** – Nothing to report
11. **Rangers** – The BM reported that NCC’s Highways had asked each road sign which required cleaning be reported via their <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads/report-a-problem>
Cllr T Bubb requested that the BM report the Village Sign/Road sign on the A149 should be cleaned and will send the co-ordinates to the BM.
12. **Christmas Lights** – Cllr C Shepherd asked the BM to contact a former councillor to ascertain if he would be willing put up the Christmas Lights for 1st December and take down 6th January 2024.
13. **Correspondence** - none
14. **Open the meeting to allow Public Participation** – see item 3.
15. **Items for inclusion on the next agenda** - none
16. **Any item for Facebook** –Cllr J Stokes to place the notification of the Armistice Service at the War Memorial at 10.50am on Saturday 11th November.
17. **Date of next meeting** – Budget Setting 7pm Tuesday 7th November 2023 and monthly meeting Monday 4th December in the Loft
18. **Exclusion of press and public** – not required.

Meeting closed at 8.40pm

Actions Points to be completed:

Business Manager

- (a) To complete the specification and arrange for further quotations - split into 3 sections
(1) Two new goal posts with or without nets, (2) Removal of old goal posts – cut down to ground level and made good and (3) a second basketball hoop - still outstanding and the specification will be emailed out to all councillors
- (b) To source metal to brick adhesive and order the two new tree plaques for the Village Sign
- (c) To contact Dersingham Vets and offer them the extra 2 dog bin sponsorship
- (d) To carry out preparations for a new tree survey (including the trees in the recreation ground) to be commissioned. To ask Cllr M Shepherd for a list and map of all Dersingham Parish Council owned trees – work outstanding
- (e) To inform the Grass Cutting Contractor that the contract had been extended for one year and to check if there would be price increase. To prepare a combined contract/specification in readiness for new tenders for the end of 2024 and to include

ensuring the area between the Village Sign adjacent to the land belonging to United Charities is cut including cutting back the brambles.

- (f) To prepare an updated specification in readiness for new tenders for 2024 for the Cleaning Contract
- (g) To report the blocked drain opposite 31 Hunstanton Road via NCC's Highways Report a Problem
- (h) To order 4 no. 30mm thick x 440mm for 340kg weight long bolts using the code: 5025 Recreation Ground Maintenance
- (i) To circulate the list and map of all benches to councillors so they can ascertain the condition of each bench/seat and whether they require painting. To also obtain a quotation for painting one bench on Hawthorne Drive/Hunstanton Road B1440 for budget setting purposes.
- (j) To obtain quotations to have the lower canopy lifted to a clearance of 3 metres for those branches over the footpath off Burma Close
- (k) To contact Cllr S Dark with the co-ordinates of the footpath between Centre Vale to the Pastures so a top dressing of gravel can be applied
- (l) To contact BCKLWN to see if they could offer emergency help and support to the rough sleeper utilising the bus shelter on Manor Road
- (m) To obtain quotations for a replacement Multiplay backboard plus installation on the children's playground
- (n) To obtain quotations for a replacement Runway plus bolt plus installation on children's playground
- (o) To obtain quotations for a plumber to look at the water tap
- (p) To report the Village Sign/Road sign on the A149 which requires cleaning
- (q) To contact a former councillor to ascertain if he would be willing put up the Christmas Lights for 1st December and take down 6th January 2024

Councillor C Shepherd

- (a) With Cllr R Frost to remove weeds and soil underneath the edges of the carousel children's playground and have a look at the 2 swings to be installed
- (b) With Cllr R Frost and Cllr T Bubb review the electric box
- (c) To send a letter to the Skatepark contractor, if no phone call is received, informing them they have forfeited their retention

Councillor R Frost

- (a) To purchase 3 no. combination locks
- (b) To adjust the gate action between Bank Road and children's playground
- (c) With Cllr C Shepherd to remove weeds and soil underneath the edges of the carousel children's playground and have a look at the 2 swings to be installed
- (d) With Cllr C Shepherd and Cllr T Bubb review the electric box

Councillor T Bubb

- (a) With Cllr C Shepherd and Cllr R Frost review the electric box

Councillor J Stokes

- (a) To place on Facebook the notification of the Armistice Service at the War Memorial at 10.50am on Saturday 11th November

Councillor B Anderson

- (a) To bring a report to December's meeting outlining the benefits of red streetlights for bats