

Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Monday 3rd March 2024 at 7.00pm, the Loft, Dersingham Village Centre

Present: Cllr R Frost (Chairman), Cllr C Shepherd, Cllr B Anderson (left at 20:54), Cllr J Stokes, Cllr M Ward, Cllr A Watkins and Cllr T Bubb (Vice-Chairman).

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** – none present
4. **Minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting 5th February 2024.**
The minutes were proposed by Cllr C Shepherd and seconded by Cllr B Anderson and were approved as a correct record and duly signed by Cllr T Bubb (Vice-Chairman).

(b) Action points were discussed and those completed will be removed.

Business Manager

- (a) Currently on hold - 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 to email the specification to all environment committee councillors – The Business Manager had previously circulated the specification asking for a decision on certain elements to allow her to complete the specification.
- (b) To prepare a combined contract/specification for Grass Cutting 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. To be reviewed in March after clarification on certain areas. To be discussed under Item 7(c).
- (c) To obtain quotations to have the trees lower canopies lifted to a clearance of 3 metres for those branches over the footpath off Burma Close. To be discussed under Item 19.
- (d) To obtain quotations for a replacement Multiplay backboard plus installation on the children's playground
- (e) To obtain quotations for a replacement Runway plus bolt plus installation on children's playground
- (f) To arrange for quotations to repaint 3 benches (BE06, BE07 and BE17). To be discussed under Item 7(f).
- (g) To add photos of each apparatus to the Children's Playground Inspection Form – work completed and a copy placed on SharePoint and will now be used for the weekly inspections.
- (h) To contact NCC if no reply was received from the owner of the tree on Manor Road – The BM informed the meeting that the owner had removed the branch.
- (i) To prepare an advert in respect of village cleaning contract, send it to all councillors and when agreed place it on all parish council noticeboards. Work completed and a copy placed on noticeboards and on SharePoint.
- (j) To take photos of the dropped kerb next to the substation on Old Hall Drive and report to NCC Highways. To be discussed under Item 11.

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 – Now Cllr R Frost has returned this will be carried out shortly.
- (b) The Skateboard Contractor had promised to visit the site in two weeks to carry out the work. Cllr C Shepherd informed the meeting that the Skateboard Contractor had not replied to emails. Cllr C Shepherd informed the meeting that additional topsoil is required and quotations will be obtained.
- (c) To contact the gardener for the War Memorial Gardens and ask about plants this financial year – see item 9.
- (d) To take photos of the gate leading to A149 off Station Road – Work completed and see item 11.

Councillor R Frost

- (a) To purchase 3 no. combination locks
- (b) To replace the spring on the gate 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

Councillor T Bubb

- (a) To source quotations to angle grind the goal posts and install them by dropping a pipe into concrete and dropping the goal posts into the pipe – see item 8(a).

Councillor B Anderson

- (a) To ask the local Bat Group regarding which bats are in the village – work completed and a report will be received shortly.

(c) To consider matters arising

Cllr Tony Bubb asked the Business Manager to arrange for further quotations for the Village Sign to be painted.

5. Current Financial Position

Cllr C Shepherd informed the meeting that BCKLYN's Dog Bin invoice was yet to be received. There is an overspend on Bus Shelters but this is due to the decorating of two bus shelters. Committee budgets are otherwise within amounts set.

- 6. **Reserves** – Cllr C Shepherd informed the meeting that £18,562 was left in The Warren reserve and she will put forward a suggestion to potentially reduce expenditure as part of the review of the grass cutting contract – see item 7(c).

Cllr T Bubb recommended placing the Reserves in a higher interest account and Cllr C Shepherd confirmed that we have a savings account with Barclays which is giving a reasonable level of interest, but there are no savings accounts suitable for Parish Councils.

7. Areas of responsibility

- (a) Bus shelters/stops – No update
- (b) Streetlights – Cllr C Shepherd informed the meeting that once the clocks go forward, she will revisit the streetlight survey and identify the streetlights that require repainting or replacing.
- (c) Grass Cutting - Review of Contract. The existing grass cutting schedule had been placed on SharePoint and previously sent to all Councillors. A discussion took place

and it was agreed to increase cuts at selected areas and to include 6 cuts per year on the land next to the Electricity Substation. To increase the firebreak on The Warren to include land to the rear of properties in Philip Nurse Road, continue cutting the paths and to stop cutting the remainder of The Warren. The Business Manager was asked to prepare the final specification in preparation for new quotations.

- (d) Cleaning – see item 18.
- (e) Litter Bins - No update
- (f) Seats and Benches – The BM had taken photos (including the rusted areas) and prepared a painting schedule for the identified 3 benches (BE06, BE07 and BE17). A decision was made that the benches required a suitable rust paint, primer and a further 2 coats of green paint for each bench. The BM was asked to provide colour charts.
- (g) Children’s Playground Inspection Form – No update
- (h) Dog Bins and Sponsorship – No update
- (i) Footpaths/Walkways – see item 11 and Cllr T Bubb confirmed that the pavement on Centre Vale had been resurfaced.
- (j) Tree Warden and Tree Survey – The BM informed the meeting that the Tree Survey is being carried out on Thursday 7th March 2024.
- (k) General Village Environment – Drainage – Cllr C Shepherd informed the meeting that maps had been placed on SharePoint identifying the two types of flooding (sea/river and surface water flooding) and these maps also showed the risks as being high, medium, or low. It was agreed to recommend to full council that a working group be set up to look at drainage issues in the village and whether Councillors wanted to join a CPRE discussion forum on 22nd May.

8. Recreation Ground

- (a) Specification for goal posts/basketball hoop as part of five-year plan - Cllr T Bubb informed the meeting that he had discussed alterations to the football posts with an engineering company and had received a quotation. The BM was asked to arrange for further quotations as Cllr C Shepherd confirmed that DPC’s Financial Regulations stipulated that because of the costs we must obtain three quotations. The extra basketball hoop was discussed and a decision was made not to continue with the purchase of an additional hoop.
- (b) Update on Skate Park – no further update.

9. **War Memorial and War Memorial Gardens** – Cllr C Shepherd had spoken to the gardener and his preference was for the area where paving needed to be removed due to tree roots, to be covered with either gravel or bark but not to plant under the lime tree. Cllr C Shepherd will now finalise the plan which will include keeping some of the old block paving. Cllr C Shepherd also highlighted that the block paving was looking green as the weather had been too wet for weedkiller to be used.

10. **Climate Change and Biodiversity** – Cllr B Anderson informed the meeting that he had previously been using Simpson’s Diversity Index to correlate the monitoring of butterflies along the transects but he will now be looking for a new index. The monitoring in 2023 had to be reduced because of the construction of the Elizabeth Way along the route.

11. Rangers

The BM informed the meeting that:

11.1 The pavement outside 7 Centre Vale had been repaired.

11.2 The additional part of the pavement on Centre Vale Road had been reported.

- 11.3 The dropped kerb next to the substation on Old Hall Drive has been reported and programmed for work but no date given.
- 11.4 The drainage ditch running alongside the allotments and 25a Station Road had been reported to Dersingham United Charities who were aware of the problems and had been in contact with Cadent Gas regarding the drainage pipe.
- 11.5 A parishioner had informed DPC that the lock on the new gates to the railway track footpath (Elizabeth Way) had been cut and NCC's Norfolk Trails Team have been informed.

12. **Correspondence**

- 12.1 Strip of land to west of Bank Road – a decision was made to wait for the outcome of the tree survey planned for Thursday 7th March and for a further discussion to be made at April's Environment Committee meeting.
- 12.2 Willow on land adjacent to Earl Close – The willow tree was discussed and it was agreed to wait for the outcome of the tree survey as above.

13. **Open the meeting to allow Public Participation - none present**

14. **Items for inclusion on the next agenda**

- 14.1 Notice of the Annual Parish Meeting to be placed in the Village Voice magazine.

15. **Any item for Facebook - none**

16. **Date of next meeting – Monday 8th April 2024 in the Loft**

17. **Exclusion of press and public**

To consider passing the following resolution: "That by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

18. **Quotations for Cleaning Contract starting 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2027.** The BM had previously circulated two quotations and Cllr C Shepherd confirmed that under Financial Regulations three quotations were required. It was agreed to amend the cleaning specification to remove daily tasks. The BM was asked to send out the revised specification to all companies with a deadline prior to the next meeting and to arrange for an Extraordinary Environment Committee meeting on Monday 18th March 2024.

19. **Quotations for branches over the footpath off Burma Close.** The BM had previously circulated three quotations but it was agreed to wait for the outcome of the tree survey which is being carried out on Thursday 7th March 2024.

With no further business the meeting was closed at 21:13

Business Manager

- (a) To obtain quotations for a replacement Multiplay backboard plus installation on the children's playground
- (b) To obtain quotations for a replacement Runway plus bolt plus installation on children's playground
- (c) To arrange for colour charts and the agreed specification to repaint 3 benches (BE06, BE07 and BE17) to be presented to April's meeting.
- (d) To arrange for further quotations for the Village Sign to be repainted

- (e) To prepare the final specification for grass cutting in preparation for new quotations to be sourced
- (f) Ascertain whether Councillors wanted to join a CPRE discussion forum on 22nd May
- (g) To arrange for further quotations from engineering companies for the required alterations to the football posts
- (h) To send out the revised Cleaning Contract specification to all companies and to arrange for an Extraordinary Environment Committee meeting on Monday 18th March 2024.
- (i) To obtain quotations on additional topsoil for next to the Skate Park

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) To revisit the streetlight survey and identify the streetlights that require repainting or replacing
- (c) To finalise the plan for the war memorial gardens and pass to BM to obtain quotes.

Councillor R Frost

- (a) To purchase 3 no. combination locks
- (b) To replace the spring on the gate 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