



HATFIELD BROAD OAK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL, CAGE END, HATFIELD BROAD OAK

8.15 PM ON TUESDAY 22nd NOVEMBER 2022

PRESENT: Cllrs Alan Fisher, Terry Marsh, Tracy Marsh, Tessa Pemberton (chair), Mark Strutt, Chris Webb.
In attendance Locum Clerk Allison Ward, 2 residents leaving after item 486.c.1.

482 CHAIR'S WELCOME AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The chair opened the meeting. There were no questions from the public.

483 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Received from Cllr Susan Smith and accepted by the meeting.

484 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Cllr Strutt proposed an amendment to the minutes of 23rd August 2022 to record his attendance having arrived part way through the meeting at item 474.

Cllr Terry Marsh proposed the minutes as a correct record after the amendment above, this was seconded by Cllr Webb with all in agreement.

485 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Strutt declared a personal interest in agenda item 486 as a result of his involvement with the following groups who all use the facility, trustee of Hatfield Broad Oak Sports and Community Club, head coach and chair of Hatfield Broad Oak Youth Football Club and secretary of the cricket club.

486 VILLAGE GREEN

486.a Grass cutting schedule

Cllr Strutt shared a summary of grass cutting to date which confirmed costs are below budget. The meeting was asked to consider how many further cuts would be necessary to the end of the financial year. The key points discussed were,

- i. Difficult to determine number of cuts as it is dependent on weather conditions.
- ii. Cllr Pemberton had obtained data from other parish councils with the majority cutting grass between 15 and 20 times between April and October, this compares to the 36 budgeted by HBO.
- iii. Cllr Strutt noted cuts are significantly below the budget and added he was unclear why a decision on limiting cuts was necessary. Cllr Pemberton responded that following the decision to not charge the clubs for use, there is an income loss that needs to be managed. Cllr Strutt confirmed he did not agree with the suggested financial impact following the parish council decision.
- iv. Cllr Fisher noted the data obtained was primarily for recreation grounds rather than football pitches. HBO have 11 teams playing on their pitches, making comparisons difficult.
- v. The parish council should set a budget for cuts paid from precept similar to other parish councils and give the football teams the option to agree any additional cuts at their expense with the groundsman.
- vi. Period to cover is to end December, not end of financial year.

RESOLVED the parish council will pay for a maximum of 2 further cuts to the end of December. (Proposed Cllr Pemberton, seconded Cllr Tracy Marsh, the vote was 5 in favour and 1 against.)

486.b Financial implications of council decision to let the clubs use the pitches for free

In addition to cutting the grass, Cllr Pemberton requested it be recorded that the parish council provides financial support to the football clubs by covering general maintenance, insurance, water rates, maintenance of containers, electricity, use of slitter.

486.c Trees

486.c.1 To receive a report re: tree maintenance

Cllr Pemberton thanked Cllr Fisher for his detailed report which was accepted by the meeting.

2 members of the public leave the meeting

486.c.2 To receive an update on quotes received for tree maintenance.

Two quotes had been received for maintenance.

RESOLVED to accept a quote of £1,670+vat from John Kenny to carry out works. (Proposed Cllr Pemberton, seconded Cllr Terry Marsh with all in agreement).

ACTION, Cllr Fisher to liaise with contractor and arrange any TPOs for trees.

Cllr Fisher suggested whilst there is traffic management further works should be considered to clear the stretch along the Dunmow Road of self-seeding saplings and other overgrown vegetation. Suggested costs are in the region of £5.8k. It was noted this committee only has authority to spend £3k and any decision for this scale of works would need to go to full council. Cllr Webb asked whether clearing the area would undermine the bank, the meeting suggested this was a question for the contractors to respond to. Cllr Strutt suggested the council obtains environmental advice given the proposed scale of works and Cllr Webb noted the importance of doing works at the right time of year so as not to impact wildlife.

RESOLVED to get further advice on most suitable works considering the points raised by Cllrs and seek the views of residents along this stretch before a proposal is formed and decision is taken to full council.

ACTION, Cllr Fisher to progress.

486.c.3 To receive an update on the Jubilee Oak to be planted on the Village Green.

No update available, see 488.c.

486.c.4 To agree to replace the Village Green Memorial Plaque.

RESOLVED to accept the quote of £60 inc VAT. (Proposed by Cllr Terry Marsh, seconded Cllr Strutt with all in agreement).

ACTION, Cllr Pemberton to progress.

486.d Pitches

486.d.1 To receive the report from Agrostis re: the pitches.

RESOLVED to note its receipt which has been circulated, no further action. (Proposed by Cllr Pemberton, seconded Cllr Terry Marsh with all in agreement).

486.d.2 To discuss how other Parish Councils maintain areas of recreation and how this Parish Council does now and how it has done in the past.

Cllr Pemberton confirmed the information received had been passed to the budget working group to consider how many cuts, see also 486.a.

Cllr Fisher suggested this committee give an indication of how many cuts per annum would be acceptable for the parish council to pay for.

RESOLVED that 20 cuts per annum would be paid for by the parish council, however the parish council is willing to work with the clubs if additional cuts are needed and provide the use of the

equipment to do so. (Proposed by Cllr Pemberton, seconded Cllr Terry Marsh, 5 in favour and 1 against).

ACTION, Cllr Pemberton to forward decision to budget working group.

486.e Goals

The meeting noted the quarterly goal checks have been received and there are no safety issues.

486.f Entrance gate to Village Green

Cllr Fisher confirmed he had received one quote from the four requested and has begun the process to seek funding. A full report is pending, this will need to go to full council due to the estimated cost of works.

486.g To receive an update on the pond

To carry forward to next meeting.

487 RECREATION GROUND

487.a ROSPA repairs

No further repairs are needed.

487.b Quotes for repairs agreed from RoSPA report

Cllr Fisher noted that one of the goals requires a wedge which will still allow it to be removed if necessary, this could be completed by a Cllr or employee. To ensure any works are covered by insurance, the meeting agreed to verify this solution with the parish council insurers before making a final decision.

ACTION, Cllr Pemberton to check with insurers.

487.c Monthly equipment check

The weekly checks by a volunteer and the monthly checks by Cllr Tracy Marsh had been circulated, there are no matters of concern to discuss.

487.d Hedges in the recreation ground and drive

The laurel hedge that was cut previously has recovered.

The meeting confirmed the parish council owns the driveway and small pathway which give access to the recreation ground. Cllr Pemberton noted the height of the hedge and suggested if it was trimmed it would improve light into the schools outside play area, although could also prompt a security concern.

ACTION, Cllr Pemberton to discuss with the pre-school and school to determine if lowering the hedge height would be beneficial to the children. If there is a benefit, scouts and residents to be made aware of proposals before bringing back to committee for further consideration.

Cllrs noted the hedge at bottom of recreation ground also needs maintenance and whilst this is on parish council land it was planted by the neighbouring resident. Cllr Terry Marsh suggested the meeting obtains further information before bringing back to the next meeting for further consideration as to the appropriate height.

ACTION, Cllr Pemberton to obtain information re the boundary from the land registry.

487.e Platinum jubilee benches

Cllr Tracey Marsh confirmed the iron bench had been received, delivery on the second bench remains pending. No quote has been obtained for installation of the hard base.

ACTION, Cllr Pemberton to obtain a quote for the base and bring back to meeting for decision.

488 OTHER AREAS OF OUTSIDE SPACE

488.a Litter bins

488.a.1 Access to the parking area near the church for emptying the litter bin.

The Diocese has confirmed access will be permitted for emptying bins.

488.a.2 To consider replacing the vandalised bin near the VG entrance.

The meeting considered a more appropriate position.

RESOLVED to move the bin further along the path and attach on new brackets to an existing street sign providing it does not cause any obstructions. (Proposed Cllr Terry Marsh, seconded Cllr Pemberton, all in agreement).

ACTION, Cllr Terry Marsh to arrange.

488.b Anne Lees Path To receive confirmation of work done on the path

Confirmed the path has been cut by the groundsman.

488.c Tree replacement

The meeting noted the grant of £500 for the Jubilee Oak Tree, however, were of the view a Jubilee Copse in memory of the Queen would be more appropriate.

ACTION, Cllr Pemberton to explore with Uttlesford District Council whether it is possible to reassign the grant for the purpose outlined before the meeting considers further.

488.d Bollard on Cage End

Carried forward to next meeting.

488.e Christmas tree

The meeting recorded its thanks to Vanessa Ambler for volunteering to organise the Christmas tree this year.

RESOLVED to purchase a tree up to the value of £500 excluding lights. (Proposed Cllr Pemberton, seconded Cllr Terry Marsh, with all in agreement).

ACTION, Cllr Pemberton to confirm insurance given the tree is being erected on behalf of the parish council by residents. Cllr Fisher to liaise with Vanessa Ambler.

488.f To consider joining Parish on-line.

RESOLVED that this is transferred to the full council for consideration as it is not solely applicable to the Open Spaces committee.

489 ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Nothing in addition

490 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be arranged.

The meeting closed at 10pm