

NORTHLEACH WITH EASTINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Open Spaces & Amenities Committee

(formerly Property, Premises and Maintenance)

Minutes of the meeting held remotely on 8 February 2021 at 7pm

Committee Members Present: Cllrs Andrew Wellman (Chairman), Terry Morley-Blackwell, Brian Hulcup, and Mr Will Rayner.

Officers in Attendance: Ms Pauline Rigby (Clerk) and Ms Mary Cassidy (Admin Officer).

The committee took a moment to reflect on the recent passing of former Committee Chairman Cllr Vicki Hewer. The committee members paid tribute to her contributions not just to this committee but to the Town Council and community as a whole. They fondly remembered her 'green' aspirations and affinity for the living infrastructure that the Council is entrusted to look after, be that trees, grasslands or flower beds.

1. Election of Chairman

It was RESOLVED to elect Cllr Andrew Wellman as Chairman of the Committee, to hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the Town Council.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Tim Barter. Cllr Alan Wellman and Bill White had difficulties connecting to the remote meeting and sent their apologies later.

3. Declarations of Interest

Will Rayner declared an interest in the allotments because he is a tenant.

4. Public participation

There were no members of the public in attendance.

5. Confirmation of Minutes

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Property, Premises and Maintenance Committee held on 10 February 2020 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

6. Action Point Update

The Town Clerk presented a review of the action point update, previously circulated.

It was agreed that members would have a look at the cycle rack purchased, to see if it was suitable, and suggest how the matter could be progressed. Officers will put the rack outside the Westwoods on Monday 15th February to be checked. The Clerk was asked to include the topic on the agenda for the next Full Council meeting.

7. Allotments

The Committee received a report from the Clerk on historical water costs at the allotments, which have been paid by the Trust rather than the Town Council.

It was RESOLVED that the Council reimburse the King George V Playing Field Trust in the sum of £570.44 for water meter installation and water use and will pay for its share of water charges going forward.

A report had been circulated which reviewed comparable allotment rents by local councils in Gloucestershire. The report recommended that water charges are included in the rent as it is impractical to collect excess water charges separately.

The recommendation was to increase rents by £2.25 per plot inclusive of water from September 2022 and revise the tenancy agreement to take this into account. An amendment was proposed to increase rents by 50p rather than £2.25 but the motion failed. Another amendment to increase rents by £1 per plot was carried.

It was RESOLVED that allotment rents be increased by £1 per plot with effect from September 2022 to include the cost of water, and the tenancy agreement be updated in line with the NALC model. The new annual rents will be £11 and £14.

8. Cemetery and Churchyard

The Clerk summarised proposed changes to the Cemetery Rules and Regulations:

- Contact details have been updated.
- Reference to the relevant legislation has been inserted.
- The need to purchase an Exclusive Right of Burial has been made explicit.
- A complex sentence about providing a death certificate has been reworded.
- The previously discussed maximum height for memorials has been included.

It was RESOLVED that the revised Cemetery Rules and Regulations be adopted.

The Clerk confirmed that it was not proposed to review the cemetery charges this year as it did not feel appropriate to increase burial fees during a pandemic.

There was no progress to report on repairs to the cemetery wall. Two quotes have been received but cannot be actioned until ownership has been clarified.

9. 'This Country' Bench

The Committee discussed the location of the bench. It had been previously agreed to install the bench in the KGV playground, but this has not been progressed. The Committee agreed that the playground was still the preferred location because of its links to the filming. They would like to install the bench soon, but accepted that it may not be appropriate to install new benches in lockdown while it is not permitted to socialise outdoors. Officers will seek quotes for the installation.

An alternative location was suggested in the cemetery. The Committee thought it was a good location with a lovely view and should be kept in mind should the Council receive any future requests for memorial benches. Cllr Hulcup offered and it was agreed that he would remove the spoil to level the site.

10. Dog Waste Bin

Residents have complained that the dog waste bin at the top of Antelope Lane is often overflowing and smelly. Cotswold District Council have said they are unable to install a larger bin, but it may be possible to install an extra bin, if the location is approved by their service partner Ubico. Various locations were discussed.

It was RESOLVED to request from Cotswold District Council the installation of a dog waste bin next to the kissing gate outside the cemetery at a cost of £210.

11. Playground Wetpour Defect

The supplier had responded to the complaint, but had not accepted responsibility. Cllr Hulcup met with the Admin Officer to measure the size and depth of the defects and has taken a video to show movement in the wetpour surface. The Committee felt that the matter needs rectifying and that it should be pursued with the supplier. The Clerk was asked to progress the matter. It was also suggested that the Council seek ROSPA's opinion as part of the annual safety inspection.

12. Tree Maintenance

The schedule of recommended works across the cemetery and churchyard, meadow and Westwoods Community Centre had been circulated.

It was RESOLVED to action work as follows:

- T55, to prune the tree with the broken top on Hamilton Meadow, and
- T22, to fell and stump grind the Raywood Ash at the Westwoods Centre.

It was accepted that this was just a start and further work will be required.

13. Items for Future Meetings

The following topics were noted: Churchyard wall, Market Place cycle racks.

14. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the scheduled date fell on Easter Monday.

It was RESOLVED to hold the next meeting on Monday 29 March 2021.

The meeting closed at 8:45 pm

Signature of the Chairman on approval of the minutes: _____