



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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AMENITIES COMMITTEE

MINUTES: of the Proceedings of the Meeting of the Amenities Committee held on 19th March 2018 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

PRESENT: Councillors R McElroy (Chairman), D Shah, S Toney (Vice Chairman) and S Wilkinson

Assistant Clerk to the Council, Tracy Khoo

OTHERS PRESENT: Richard Akhurst and David Beale

The meeting opened at 19:00hrs.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and went through the usual points of protocol. Cllrs Wilkinson and Shah had agreed to join the committee for this meeting.

185/18 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

An apology and reason for absence had been received from Cllr Gale due to illness. These were accepted by the Committee.

186/18 PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

Cllr McElroy declared a Personal Interest in regard to Agenda Items 8 and 9 due to his son being disabled.

187/18 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chairman invited members of the public to speak on any matters relating to the agenda. He made them aware their names would be published in the Minutes unless they specifically requested for them not to be.

Mr Akhurst asked the Committee whether it had received a letter from residents regarding the Outdoor Table Tennis Table. The Committee confirmed it had and the matter had been included on the agenda.

Mr Akhurst asked about the Committee's current policy on the beach access project at the end of Sea Road. The Chairman confirmed the Committee's continued support of this project but explained it had been held up whilst the Council looked into the legalities of land ownership and the registration of the land as a public right of way. Mr Akhurst said he was aware that Cllr McElroy objected to the original plan which was submitted for a new beach access. Cllr McElroy responded that although he objected for his own reasons originally, it was a Council decision and any decision would be made by the Council as a whole. Cllr McElroy said he supported better access onto the beach as a whole for disabled and buggy users, not just a viewing platform.

Cllr Shah joined the meeting at 7.08pm.

Mr Akhurst said the temporary beach path created last Summer had proved successful with the public but had shown that the area onto the beach did dip slightly and would need levelling off.

Mr Akhurst mentioned the spoil which had been dumped alongside the caravan park boundary fence on the eastern side of the beach access and said the Council should ask the caravan park to remove this.

188/18 MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES MEETING HELD ON 15TH JANUARY 2018

The Minutes were accepted by the Committee as a true record of the Meeting held on 15th January 2018 and were duly signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman took the opportunity to say how saddened he was about the recent sudden death of Cllr Tester. Cllr Tester had often attended Amenities Meetings in her role as Vice Chairman of the Council.

189/18 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES MEETING HELD ON 15TH JANUARY 2018 & PREVIOUS PENDING MATTERS ARISING

The Committee NOTED a Matters Arising report produced by the Assistant Clerk.

Amenities, 19th March 2018, Agenda Item 5

Matters Arising from previous Minutes and not covered on this Agenda

Matters Arising from 17th July 2017

Minute 532/17 – WRG – Telescopic Posts – These have now been ordered and delivered. The Council's handyman advised me on the type to purchase. These will be fitted when the weather improves and the current older ones, which are still serviceable, will be stored in the Council's garage as back up.

Minute 536/17 – Trafalgar Planter – This item will be noted by the Committee once the sponsorship detail has been finalised.

Matters Arising from 20th November 2017

Minute 845/17 – New MUGA Lashmar Road – The new MUGA has now been completed and is already being well used. There has been a few youngsters taking bikes into the MUGA and riding around inside on the tarmac. ADC has agreed to put up some new signage for the skate park and MUGA to try and address this with rules of use outlined. It is hoped this will deter youngsters from taking their bikes inside, before the graphics go down, as this could mark the surfacing.

Minute 847/17 – Outdoor Football Table – Paul Amoo, Chairman of the East Preston Film Society has now ordered the Outdoor Football Table and it will be sited by the end of March. This will be located in the north east corner of the Village Green and will be monitored for the first few months to check the table does not attract any anti-social behaviour from youngsters which will cause a nuisance to residents. This will be reviewed at the July Amenities meeting.

Minute 848/17 – Wildflower Meadow Planting – Following the Committee's decision to carry out the Meadow Planting again in the Spring of 2018, the meadow planting specialists, ISS Landscapes will start to prepare the beds shortly. A few ex councillors have already made a contribution towards one of the wildflower meadows on the Village Green in memory of former Amenities Chairman, Mrs Anne Harberson who passed away at the end of the Summer 2017.

Matters Arising from 15th January 2018

There are no additional matters arising which are not on the March agenda.

Tracy Khoo – Assistant Clerk to the Council

13th March 2018

Cllr Shah asked about sponsorship of the Trafalgar Planter. The Assistant Clerk explained this matter was still pending and she would follow it up.

190/18 VILLAGE GREEN CAR PARKING

The Assistant Clerk updated the Committee with a total income from the new parking scheme received to date. This amounted to £505.83 (after VAT) which covered the period from the start of the scheme in mid October through until 6th March 2018. The Committee noted this covered the Winter period and was hopeful the Summer period should bring a greater return with more visitors to the village.

The Committee reviewed Sea Road residents ongoing reports of anti-social parking along the western side of Sea Road but agreed this would be resolved shortly when Summer parking restrictions came into force.

The Committee noted further correspondence from one Sea Road resident who would not agree to closure of his complaint until the Committee had considered his original idea of voucher or permit parking for residents. The Committee agreed this type of scheme was considered early on in the discussions about anti-social parking in the car park but since the matter of recouping some of the costs had also been brought up, this type of scheme was not cost-effective for the parking company to enforce.

The Committee went on to consider the Sea Road resident's additional request for the seasonal yellow line along the western side of Sea Road opposite the village green to be made enforceable all-year-round. Members agreed this was a highways matter and that residents could apply to West Sussex County Council direct for this, although the Committee was not hopeful it would be successful as the County Council was reluctant to process too many applications for new Traffic Regulation Orders due to additional enforcement being needed. The Assistant Clerk was asked by the Committee to send the resident the link to apply for this.

Cllr Toney pointed out East Preston's charge of 50p per hour was significantly lower than other local car parks which were mainly priced at £1.50 per hour. He said there was also a parking disk scheme in Horsham where disks were charged at £12 per annum.

The Committee considered a request for more disabled parking bays in the car park but agreed blue badge users could park virtually anywhere so had more options available to them. The Committee felt the one disabled bay in the car park was proportionate to the car park's size.

The Committee went on to consider a revised parking scheme for the Spring/Summer period. Members had already considered a draft proposal emailed round in advance of the meeting and it was agreed to keep things simple and not cap the cost but to leave the charge at 50p an hour which would give a maximum daily charge of £5 for ten hours daytime parking.

The Committee AGREED a Summer Parking scheme should run from 1st May to 30th September where charges remained the same but just the “three hour no return within an hour” limit lifted for this period during the day, to allow people to park in the car park as long as they wanted.

The Committee then went on to consider charges from One Parking to include a Summer scheme and Members felt these should theoretically only be one-off charges. They queried the Engineer Call Out charge at £180.00 + VAT and asked the Assistant Clerk to check previous correspondence about additional charges and to see whether this could be covered by One Parking.

The Committee considered requests for lighting in the Village Green car park to allow the machine and signage to be read more easily in the dark.

The Committee asked for One Parking to be consulted about lighting the car park and One Parking recommended two solar powered lighting columns at a cost of £542.61+VAT each, which includes supply and installation. One Parking agreed to split the cost 50/50 with the Parish Council.

Cllr Shah asked for the estimated lifetime and guarantee of the proposed lights to be checked.

The Committee AGREED in principle to the lighting, subject to the lifetime and guarantee being checked. It was AGREED the solar lights could be purchased at a cost of £542.61 +VAT to the Council and could be taken from either of the suggested budgets: Village Green Car Park General Budget or the Village Green Enhancements Budget lines.

191/18 YOUTH SHELTER - LASHMAR RECREATION GROUND

The Assistant Clerk explained that at the last meeting of the Amenities Committee there was strong feeling from the public regarding the misuse of the youth shelter by youngsters. At that meeting, the Committee agreed not to re-site the youth shelter on the Lashmar Recreation Ground after the MUGA had been installed and review the situation in September after the schools had returned. This was due to several reports of anti-social behaviour at the shelter, including drug dealing. The public present at the meeting felt if the shelter was removed, it would stop the anti-social behaviour in that area and allow more people to use the facilities on the Lashmar Recreation Ground.

At that same meeting, the Committee was also informed that the youth shelter had been damaged by the contractor when it was taken down temporarily to install the MUGA. Following the meeting, this was checked with Arun District Council and the contractor and the contractor confirmed that when the shelter was dismantled the roof of it was very heavy and collapsed. The contractor said to put it back together again, it would need considerable repair. At this same time, Arun District Council confirmed that it could store the youth shelter for the Parish Council until it

made a decision over whether it should be re-sited after the Summer. Subsequent to this conversation, ADC contacted the Council and said they had been to the site to assess the feasibility of moving the shelter into storage but did not have access to a large enough vehicle to transport the shelter. As such, it would have been necessary to commission an external party to do this which would have incurred an additional cost. Having discussed this further with ADC, ADC advised it would not be worthwhile to reinstall the shelter at a later date, given the extra costs associated with moving the shelter and rectifying the damage, plus the problems with anti-social behaviour it caused.

ADC said that if there was a requirement for another youth shelter at the site in the future they could have that discussion at a later stage. In the meantime they were going to approach the contractor to see if there was any scope to use any remaining funds to supply a bench.

The Assistant Clerk had subsequently emailed around the Committee to give them the update and it was agreed by members that given the situation, it would be best to take the opportunity to ask the contractor to dispose of the shelter with their lorry, before the contractor finished and left the site. ADC acknowledged that if there was a need for a youth shelter at a later stage, then possible discussions could be had to replace it. Given local residents and groups were keen to see the youth shelter removed, the Committee felt this was the best course of action at this time.

Since the youth shelter has been removed, reports from local residents and groups have been very positive and the skate park and playground are being more widely used by everyone, as the group using the youth shelter seem to have moved on.

The Committee AGREED the above explanation outlined the reason for the damaged youth shelter being removed off-site and disposed of and that it was happy to review with ADC how things progress over the Summer months.

192/18 PUBLIC TOILETS – SEA ROAD REFURBISHMENT

The Committee was informed an Invitation to Tender for the Sea Road refurbishment work had been placed in local newspapers on 25th January with a closing date to respond by 9th February. Disappointingly, no Interest to Tender had been returned from the newspaper advertising.

An Invitation to Tender was also included in two editions of the Parish Newsletter (Summer 2017 & Autumn 2017) with no response.

The parish office had also contacted local contractors separately, who had agreed to have Tender Packs sent to them (a total of 14 local building contractors were contacted.) The contractors who showed an interest to be sent a Tender Pack were **Cloud 9 Contractors, Kudos Building Ltd, Langham Groundworks and Matticulous Construction.**

Inspired Design confirmed Tender Packs had been sent out on Friday 16th March with a return date of Friday 6th April. A request had been made for the tender price to be held for up to 9 months to allow the work to be carried out at the most suitable time of year.

The Working Party had also agreed for Inspired Design to handle the CDM pre-construction information needed, at an additional cost of £150.00 +VAT and to arrange for an Asbestos Survey of the building to be carried out.

The Committee was pleased to NOTE progress on this project to date.

The Assistant Clerk said she had now had a chance to speak to the Council's legal adviser regarding the letter which was sent about registration of the beach access land through West Sussex County Council (WSCC).

In essence, WSCC has pointed out that in order to continue with the public rights of way application, they would require additional information and forms to be completed by all those who have already submitted qualifying forms. WSCC has also stated that there is a real prospect of the application being referred to a Public Enquiry, which will hear all the evidence and then come to a decision as to whether a right of way exists. This process could take up to 3 years from start to decision. The Council's legal adviser has said that this will incur substantial costs both legally and time spent by the Parish Council with no guaranteed outcome. It is also very hard to quote for costs going forward on this case, as they believe that given the additional requirements now put in the way to register a right of way by West Sussex, this may not be possible and costs could be in excess of £20-30k or more and the case could go on for over 3 years. To quote "it is impossible to discuss exact legal costs at this stage in terms of this matter but to say that it will be very expensive".

As a result of this new information coming to light, the Council's legal adviser has been investigating alternative ways of preserving the beach access as a right of way. "Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, any person is entitled to enter and remain on any access land for the purpose of open area recreation. The definition of access land under the Act was originally open country land. However, under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, the definition of open country land was amended to include coastal land which was further defined as (a) the foreshore (b) land adjacent to the foreshore (including in particular any cliff, bank, barrier, dune, beach or flat which is adjacent to the foreshore)."

The Council's legal adviser considers that the Sea Road beach access could be considered as "land adjacent to the foreshore having regard to its position and nature" and therefore would be protected under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

Regarding the proposed new beach access, the legal adviser stated it is important to remember that the Council do not own the land and therefore advise the Council notifies Natural England and the Environment Agency, as well as obtaining local planning permission and publishing the plans. If this access was then agreed, the Parish Council would then need to accept all public liability on the matter which would include all personal injury claims from the public in terms of this area of land.

The Committee was asked to note the above update and consider how it would like to proceed over protecting this area of land.

After further discussion, the Committee AGREED not to go ahead with the registration of the land as a Public Right of Way with WSCC, given the complexities of the process, high costs and the uncertain outcome. It agreed to discuss with the solicitor for the land to be protected under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and whether the Council could look at putting up signage to say that the area is protected under this Act.

The Committee also AGREED to the suggestion of a letter to be sent by the legal adviser to the two neighbouring properties of the beach access to inform them that this area is protected by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and the Parish Council, as a local governing body and acting in the best interests of the villagers, will have overall control of the area.

The Committee agreed that until the above had been put into place, it would be premature to start looking at the beach access path again.

194/18 PUBLIC TOILETS – SOUTH STRAND

The Committee NOTED the lease for the South Strand toilets was coming to an end on 31st March 2019. The Council had already agreed that the toilets would be handed back to Arun District Council at the end of the lease and Arun District Council had been notified in writing accordingly.

Members were informed the Clerk had recently emailed Arun District Council to confirm future plans for the toilets once they had been handed back. Arun District Council confirmed the South Strand toilets in East Preston would be closed down as part of their public toilets review.

The Committee NOTED the toilets would need to be handed back to Arun District Council in the same condition as when they were taken over. This would probably mean some general painting would be needed on the building prior to handing over.

Cllr Toney suggested putting up some signage at the toilets early in April 2018, which notified the public that the toilets would be closed from 1st April 2019. The Committee AGREED this would be a good idea as it may prompt a local group/s to consider taking them over.

The Assistant Clerk informed members she had arranged for some clearance work to be carried out by the Council's Handyman on the roof of the toilets, as several of the bushes behind the block had started to grow across the roof. She said there were still a couple of areas which needed more specialist attention from a tree surgeon, where the tree limbs had grown into the asphalt on the roof.

The Committee NOTED this information.

195/18 DISABLED PORTALOO

The Committee considered a request for a disabled portaloo for the southern end of the village.

After some discussion, the Committee AGREED not to fund a portaloo for the southern end of the village, partly due to funding and partly due to a suitable location for such an amenity.

The Committee was disappointed the businesses at the southern end of the village could not come up with a solution between them to accommodate the resident's needs as it was whilst visiting one of the businesses that the facility was needed.

196/18 VILLAGE GREEN GATE & MATTING

The Committee AGREED to DEFER this item to the May meeting due to the lack of quotes available received.

197/18 STATION ROAD BUS STOP

The Committee NOTED some local elderly residents near to the Station Road bus stop had requested a viewing hole in the side of the bus stop to enable them to see when the bus was coming.

This had already been arranged with the Council's Handyman and would be done shortly.

198/18 EAST PRESTON PRE-SCHOOL

The Committee NOTED a request by the pre-school, based in the Cricket Pavilion on the Warren Recreation Ground, to install a fence around the paved area outside the pavilion to provide a secure playing environment for the young children.

This had already been taken to March Full Council and had been approved. It was agreed at Full Council that a simple agreement should be drawn up prior to the work going ahead.

199/18 TWO ACRES FENCE

The Committee NOTED this item was still outstanding and no further contact had been made with the Council, despite correspondence being sent to both the resident concerned and her daughter.

The Committee AGREED the resident's new fence at No 10 Oakley Gardens had been sited on Parish Council land and should count as a boundary dispute if the property were to be sold in the future.

The Committee's main concern was that it would set a precedent for others to take Council land if this went unnoticed, even though the strip of land was fairly narrow. Land Registry documents still clearly showed the line of the new fence had been moved onto parish land.

The Committee AGREED to take no further action at this time but to have on file that if the property is sold or a replacement fence is erected in future, then the Council should ensure the new owners of the property are aware of the land dispute or the replacement fence is put back along its original boundary line.

200/18 OUTDOOR TABLE TENNIS TABLE

The Committee NOTED correspondence from residents regarding making the Outdoor Table Tennis Table more accessible for disabled players. It appeared table tennis was very popular in East Preston with several clubs already running at the Village Hall.

The Committee considered a more permanent location for the Outdoor Table Tennis Table on Lashmar Recreation Ground. The Chairman had been to the Lashmar site and said there was an area of tarmac, close to the MUGA, which may be suitable to place the table. The Assistant Clerk said she would check with Arun District Council whether this would be a suitable area to move the table to as it also had easy access by the footpath.

The Chairman said it would be good to publicise the Outdoor Table Tennis Table once re-sited to inform residents with disabilities that it was now more accessible. He suggested maybe this could be tied-in with the MUGA opening ceremony. Cllr Shah said holding the opening ceremony at the end of the Festival procession would be a good idea.

The Assistant Clerk said she would look into this.

201/18 TREE MATTERS

The Committee NOTED the three new Cherry trees, which the Committee had funded, had been planted on the grassy bank along Worthing Road, adjacent to Warren Crescent.

The Committee also NOTED the Annual Tree Survey was booked for July this year.

202/18 2017/18 BUDGET

The Committee NOTED the latest Amenities Income and Expenditure to date and also Income and Expenditure for the Warren Recreation Ground Trust, which is managed by the Amenities Committee.

203/18 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

The Committee NOTED correspondence from Mrs Wood asking the Committee to watch BBC World Service: People Changing the World – The Town that has many toilets. This showed a community who put symbols in shop windows to indicate that their toilet facilities could be used rather than paying for public toilets to be built separately and maintained. In return the businesses would be given funds for janitorial supplies and this would also attract custom to their business.

204/18 URGENT MATTER ARISING (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

There were no urgent matters arising.

205/18 ITEMS TO BE REFERRED TO THE NEXT AMENITIES MEETING

There following items were to be referred to the next meeting:-

- (a) Village Green Gate & Matting

The meeting concluded at 20:30hrs.

Chairman: Date:

Chairman's Initials:

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