



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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AMENITIES COMMITTEE

MINUTES: of the Proceedings of the Meeting of the Amenities Committee held on 9th July 2018 at East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

PRESENT: Councillors R McElroy (Chairman), D Moore; D Shah and S Toney (Vice Chairman)
Assistant Clerk to the Council, Tracy Khoo

OTHERS PRESENT: None

The meeting opened at 19:00hrs.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and went through the usual points of protocol.

513/18 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

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

514/18 PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

Cllr McElroy declared a Personal Interest in regard to Agenda Items 7 and 8 due to his son being disabled.

515/18 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

516/18 MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES MEETING HELD ON 29TH MAY 2018

The Minutes were accepted by the Committee as a true record of the Meeting held on 29th May 2018 and were duly signed by the Chairman.

517/18 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES MEETING HELD ON 29TH MAY 2018 & PREVIOUS PENDING MATTERS ARISING

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

Amenities, 9th July 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 – This is on the list for the Council's handyman to do but he has various health issues at the moment and is unable to carry out this work at present. The existing posts are perfectly serviceable. The new posts will eventually replace the older ones and these will be stored away in the Council's garage as back up.

Matters Arising from 20th November 2017

Minute 845/17 – New MUGA Lashmar Road – The graphics have now been sprayed on the MUGA. I am just waiting for ADC to confirm whether there is any money left over from the work. Also, they need to confirm whether it is possible to move the Table Tennis table onto the hard surfacing near the MUGA.

A separate opening ceremony still needs to be arranged along with some training on the use of the activities in the MUGA. Will aim to do this over the Summer holidays.

Minute 848/17 – Wildflower Meadow Planting – The meadows are starting to come through but they are a bit behind due to late planting. A plaque still needs to be ordered for Anne Harberson's meadow on the Village Green.

Matters Arising from 19th March 2018

Minute 191/18 – Youth Shelter Lashmar Recreation Ground – The impact of removing the youth shelter from the Lashmar Recreation Ground will be continually reviewed over the Summer months and brought back to Committee in September. There has been the re-occurrence of some anti-social behaviour around the site and this is being monitored both locally and by the police.

Minute 198/18 – East Preston Pre-School – New fencing work has been completed around the pre-school and is sympathetic to its surroundings. This has provided the children with a secure outside area to play in. The Stoolball Bench has been relocated to the northern boundary as agreed.

Minute 200/18 – Outdoor Table Tennis Table – Still waiting for ADC to make a decision over moving this.

Matters Arising from 29th May 2018

Minute 369/18 – Village Green Car Parking – The Summer scheme has now been implemented, signs changed and machine re-programmed. I am waiting for One Parking to send through an appendix to be added to the original Agreement outlining the Summer scheme.

Three solar lights have been installed on existing posts in the car park. Their efficacy has not been evident due to the lighter Summer evenings but I have asked Cllr Shah to have a look out later in the evening to see how bright the lights are.

Minute 373/18 – Flower Planting Contract – Ferring Nurseries has confirmed it is happy to extend the flower planting contract a further year for 2019/20. A revised price still needs to be sent through for this additional year.

Minute 374/18 – Village Green Gate and Matting – A new Village Green gate and matting should all be installed by the end of July as requested by the Community Engagement Committee. Splinters came back with a competitive revised price for an Iroko hardwood gate and posts and so the work was awarded to this contractor, the Committee's preferred contractor at the last meeting.

Minute 376/18 – Fingerpost refurbishment (outside Dizzys) – I have raised an order for this work. The contractor will not be free to carry out the work until late August/early September.

Minute 378/18 – Memorial Benches – The Committee has been emailed various models of bench to consider for Cllr Tester and Mrs Harberson. It was agreed on reflection that a corner bench outside the office would be a bit restrictive and a normal 2000mm bench would be the most practical. A recycled bench with blue plastic slats and black legs seemed to prove the most popular design at a cost of £455 (inc VAT). The Clerk said that if the bench was going to be a memorial to deceased Councillors, there needed to be a point from when this started. It was agreed that a plaque for the late Betty Wagstaff should be also included on this bench. The Assistant Clerk will be ordering the bench shortly due to overall support of the idea.

Tracy Khoo – Assistant Clerk to the Council

2nd July 2018

Minute 369/18 – Village Green Car Parking – Cllr Shah reported two of the new solar lights were not working. The Assistant Clerk said she had reported this to One Parking and they should be coming out to fix them.

Minute 374/18 – Village Green Gate and Matting – The Assistant Clerk informed the Committee that the proposed date to install the new gate had been delayed due to the supplier of the gate increasing his price by £1,000 (inc VAT). The contractor has been trying to source a new supplier and is hoping to be able to start the work shortly. The Assistant Clerk said she would keep the Committee updated but this could also have an impact on the matting being fitted. She was still hopeful the end of July deadline set by the Community Engagement Committee could be met.

Minute 191/18 – Youth Shelter Lashmar Recreation Ground – It had been reported that the anti social group of youngsters occupying the youth shelter prior to its removal had now returned and were occupying the MUGA and children's play area on the Lashmar Recreation Ground. The Committee noted this item was to be put on the September Agenda for review since the removal of the youth shelter. Members said it would be useful if the police could attend the September meeting to feedback on the youth activity over the Summer months. The Committee also asked for the Assistant Clerk to find out the cost of a new Youth Shelter.

Minute 845/17 – New MUGA Lashmar Road – The Committee asked for Arun District Council (ADC) to be chased over the return of the Contingency Deposit now that the MUGA was completed. It also wanted an Opening Ceremony for the MUGA to happen over the Summer months otherwise the opportunity would be lost. The Assistant Clerk said she would chase ADC up again and also try to get the Outdoor Table Tennis Table moved to nearer the MUGA site.

Minute 378/18 – The Assistant Clerk said Councillors had agreed by email a design for a memorial bench for late Councillors to go outside the parish office. The Committee agreed plaques could be added to the bench in memory of past and future deceased Councillors commencing from the late Betty Wagstaff. The Assistant said she would go ahead and order a bench shortly.

Minute 848/18 – The Chairman commented on how good the Meadow Plantings looked and thanked all those who were involved in their planting. A plaque still needed to be ordered for one of the Meadows on the Village Green in memory of the late former Councillor Mrs Anne Harberson, as past Councillors had donated towards this meadow.

518/18 OUTDOOR TABLE FOOTBALL TABLE

This table has been sited for a few months now and has seen a few incidents of vandalism. However, the Film Society has been resolving any issues and the table is generally being well used. Cllr Shah reported that more than forty balls had been purchased from Seaview Stores and it was mainly by grandparents looking to entertain their grandchildren.

The Committee was pleased to learn there had been no reports to date of anti social gathering of youngsters around the table but it would continue to review this on an ongoing basis should any problems occur. The first few months of the table's use looked very positive.

519/18 PUBLIC TOILETS – SEA ROAD REFURBISHMENT

The Assistant Clerk said she was still waiting to hear from the architect regarding tenders received. She explained the tender process had taken longer than expected due to the specialist nature of equipment to be installed. She was hopeful to hear something shortly.

The Chairman said there were two main suppliers and installers of the specialist equipment, Space to Change and OpeMed and so it was likely these would be approached as part of the tender process.

The Committee was hopeful the refurbishment would still be on target to commence in the Autumn, subject to funding being obtained.

520/18 SEA ROAD BEACH ACCESS

The Assistant Clerk said she was still waiting to hear from the Council's solicitors for an update on the unregistered beach land at the bottom of Sea Road.

The Committee NOTED that a narrow pathway had been cleared by someone at the Sea Road beach entrance this Summer which also led into the Beach Café Kiosk.

The Committee agreed it did not want to progress with a more permanent beach access until the matter of the unregistered land had been resolved with the Council's legal team. The Assistant Clerk said she would continue to chase this up.

521/18 PUBLIC TOILETS – SOUTH STRAND

The Committee NOTED the Tamarisk branch growing into the roof of the South Strand toilets had now been removed and any damage to the roof would be assessed and repaired by the Council's Handyman in due course. Vegetation previously cut back off the roof of the toilet block had also been removed by the tree contractor. However, it was noted that more cuttings had been dumped along the side of the toilet block but the Parish Council was not willing to pay for this to be taken away. The Committee suggested photographs were taken to monitor whether more vegetation was being dumped along this stretch in future.

The Committee went on to consider quotes to replace the external doors and frames to the toilets which were rotting badly and causing difficulty in being locked. Full Council had agreed to budget £5,000 from the Council's Annual Contingency Budget for these doors but Councillors had questioned why the more expensive aluminium doors and frames were being considered as opposed to timber doors and frames, the same as the existing. The Assistant Clerk explained the suppliers were recommending the aluminium doors as being more heavy duty and suitable for public use. One of the suppliers had refused to quote for timber doors and frames saying they were unfit for purpose, although the other two suppliers had supplied quotes for both timber and aluminium doors and frames.

Given there was a significant difference in price between the aluminium and timber doors, and the uncertain future of the toilets at South Strand once they were handed back to ADC, the Committee agreed to replace the doors and frames like for like using the timber option with the same colours as the existing and agreed to the quote from Pavilion Glass for £2,100.00 plus VAT.

522/18 MEMORIAL BENCH

The Committee considered a request by Mr Stobbe to site a memorial bench looking out to sea. The previous location on the beach at Sea Road was no longer viable following further consideration and so an alternative site needed to be agreed.

The Assistant Clerk informed the Committee she had been in touch with West Sussex County Council, who owned the strip of grass alongside the western side of the pathway onto Sea Lane beach, and the County Council had given permission for a bench to be sited on this verge. Mr Stobbe had already been informed that this site may be a possibility and was happy with the location and asked for the bench to be sited at an angle so it had more of a sea view.

The Committee AGREED for a recycled plastic bench to be sited at the Sea Lane beach location. Mr Stobbe would be asked to fund the bench, concrete base plus £100 towards siting and future cleaning costs.

523/18 HIGHWAY VERGE CUTTING

The Committee considered recent complaints about the overall state of the highway verge grass cutting and noted the next cut was due on 23rd July. Members noted this year had been particularly bad due to the hot wet weather during the Spring and contractors were struggling to keep up with the rapid growth.

West Sussex County Councillor, Roger Elkins had informed the Council there was currently a WSCC initiative whereby Parish and Town Councils were being supplied with sheds and grass cutting equipment to encourage community groups to take on some of the additional grass cutting tasks to keep the grass cutting in overall better condition inbetween the Council's cuts. First Aid training could also be offered to those volunteering.

Members had mixed feelings about this initiative from the liability side and the fact residents were paying for grass cutting through their Council Tax, against which no reduction would be given. After further discussion, the Committee AGREED to invite a WSCC Representative to talk to the Committee about the initiative. This would provide members with more information. It was also agreed to try and talk to other villages who had already implemented community grass cutting to see how it was working out for them. The Committee was certain it did not want to take over the full responsibility of grass cutting again after trialling this back in 2014, as it proved very problematic with a small contractor.

The Committee agreed an article should be put in the Parish Newsletter urging people to assist by cutting the verges outside their properties and neighbouring properties if those residents were unable, to try to improve the overall condition of the grass cutting. Any larger verges such as Vicarage Lane & St Mary's Drive could possibly be supported at times by community volunteers and/or the Parish Council.

524/18 VILLAGE GREEN SIGNAGE

The Committee NOTED it had agreed at the last meeting to put up new signage to ban ball games on the village green. This was due to large organised games of football dominating the green at times and intimidating residents. The signage still needed to be arranged.

The Committee also discussed at the last meeting about more effective signage to prevent dog fouling. The Assistant Clerk had tracked down some glow in the dark "We Are Watching You Signs" from Keep Britain Tidy but these were £25+VAT each with a minimum order of ten signs. Members agreed this was a lot to pay for one sign. The Committee had also been emailed options of a cheaper sign showing dog eyes watching and agreed this sign was effective and could be photocopied and used initially around the Village Green to see the impact.

The Committee AGREED to purchase one Dog Eyes dog fouling poster at £5.99+VAT and one Clean it Up Stencil at £5.99(inc VAT).

525/18 TREE MATTERS

The Committee NOTED the Fig tree was growing back rapidly and would need regular pruning to keep it at a reasonable size. It was still debateable whether this tree had outgrown the Village Hall site but the Council was prepared to continually monitor the tree and make any decision deemed necessary from a risk perspective. Cllr Moore said Fig trees liked hot dry conditions and they would be thriving with the current weather. Previous concerns by residents the harsh pollarding had destroyed the tree were now proven to be unfounded.

The Committee NOTED the Annual Tree Survey was due this Thursday, 12th July. It was customary for the Assistant Clerk to meet with the tree surveyor to discuss any issues arising.

Cllr Toney said he had been approached by Steve Hodgson of SMH Services about trees overhanging his car yard in Sea Road. The Assistant Clerk said these would be pointed out to the tree surveyor for logging.

Some remedial work had also already been carried out to trees in the north east corner of the Warren Recreation Ground which were touching a property's aerial.

Cllr McElroy reported that although the vegetation had been cut back off the path by WSCC along North Lane by the School Crossing Patrol, it was still causing a problem to get past and still concealed traffic signs, especially by the alleyway. The Assistant Clerk said she would re-report this.

526/18 TERMS OF REFERENCE

A couple of minor changes had been proposed under Sections 7 and 8. These were AGREED by the Committee and no further changes were made. Members agreed it was not necessary to include the new MUGA on the Lashmar Recreation Ground at this stage as this was on Arun District Land and maintained by ADC.

The Amenities Terms of Reference were adopted for the current financial year 2018/19.

527/18 2018/19 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.

Cllr Shah commented that the Village Green Car Park takings seemed to be on the low side to date. The Assistant Clerk said there had been a collection recently but it was not always processed that quickly. The Committee noted the car park was being well used over the Summer months.

528/18 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

Correspondence received regarding new boundary fencing on the Warren Recreation Ground was NOTED by the Committee and did not raise any concerns.

529/18 URGENT MATTER ARISING (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

The Committee had recently become concerned over the use of the Village Green for exercise classes after a Facebook page had been set up inviting people to meet there before going for a run around the village and ending with warm-down exercises on the Village Green. The Facebook page included photographic evidence of this.

The organiser had contacted the Clerk advising him the council could advertise activities and events on the Facebook page if it wanted. The Clerk had replied to explain the Parish Council did not permit organised sports activities or classes on the Village Green due to lack of space, as it could restrict the general enjoyment of the green for others. The organiser had replied the classes were not organised but went silent when the clerk said having public liability insurance suggested a greater level of organisation than the organiser was prepared to admit to.

The Committee agreed a more formal letter should be sent to the organiser to restate the Council's Policy.

530/18 ITEMS TO BE REFERRED TO THE NEXT AMENITIES MEETING

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

- (a) Youth Shelter review
- (b) Outdoor Table Tennis Table
- (c) MUGA - Ceremony

The meeting concluded at 20:10 hrs.

Chairman: *Cllr Steve Toney* Date: 17th September 2018

Chairman's Initials: *ST*

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