

WADHURST PARISH COUNCIL

THE MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE PAVILION, SPARROWS GREEN, WADHURST AT 7.30 P.M. ON THURSDAY 16th SEPTEMBER 2021

Present: Cllr Crawford (Chair), Cllr Griffin, Cllr Gadd, Cllr Morris and Cllr Anderson.

Also in attendance: Claudine Feltham (Deputy Clerk), Kelly Nash (Trainee Clerk) and five members of the public including: Bob Penny (Caretaker), Guy Milner (Wadhurst Tennis Club) and Trudi O'Niell (Wadhurst Junior Football Club).

MINUTES

1. To receive apologies and reasons for absence.
Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Tincombe & Cllr Niell.
2. To receive declarations of personal, prejudicial and disclosable pecuniary interests on items on the agenda and updates to members' register of interests.
Cllr Gadd declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 7.20 as a Trustee of WIHF CIO.
Cllr Crawford declared a personal interest in respect of agenda items 7.8 and 7.9 and a member of Wadhurst Tennis Club (Cllr Gadd agreed to Chair the meeting during these items).
3. Public Forum – time limit 15 minutes.
A parishioner spoke of his intended project for a weather vane to be installed at the Pavilion. The design would be of two fighters, to represent the last bare knuckle prize fight in 1863 in Primmers Field, Wadhurst, as well as the connection with boxing as Henry Cooper had opened the Sparrows Green Pavilion.
The parishioner has kindly offered to pay for the weather vane, with Bob Penny creating the design, and a local roofer dealing with the installation. A plaque would also be included at the Pavilion to explain the significance.
Other members of the public present at the meeting voiced their support for this project.

Cllr Crawford declared the meeting open and it was agreed for agenda item 7.6 to be brought forward to this point of the meeting.

Weather vane gift – Cllr Gadd
Resolved: *Cllr Gadd proposed for the weather vane to be allowed, this was seconded by Cllr Crawford and reached a unanimous approval.*

2 members of the public left the meeting at 1938 hours.
4. To consider, and approve if appropriate, which agenda items are sufficiently confidential as to warrant exclusion of members of the press and public under the provisions of the Public Bodies (admissions to meetings) Act 1960.
None.
5. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11th February 2021
Resolved: *The minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held 11th February 2021 were approved as true record. This was proposed Cllr Gadd, seconded by Cllr Griffin and reach unanimous approval.*
6. To determine matters arising from the previous minutes for updating and noting.
Cllr Anderson previously mentioned about whether it would be possible to have a path around the recreation ground, and after looking at the site thought that this would impact on the football pitches.

Trudi from WUJFC commented that the spectator's area was also a specified area of minimum/maximum size which needed to be adhered to.

Cllr Gadd commented that there has been mention of a running track in future but this was not yet being considered.

7. Items for decision and allocation of resources, if necessary.

7.1 Access to Round Oak Allotments (ROAA) (new and existing) – Cllr Gadd

Cllr Gadd advised that in the lease documents for the ROAA, the allotment holders should have access on foot, and time to time with tractor and trailer to deliver manure. There had been concern raised over the width of the new gate that had been installed.

Bob Penny was able to advise that he had measured the new gate and it was in fact wider than the first gate, so this would not cause any additional access issues.

Cllr Gadd had also looked into a price in case disabled vehicle access was ever required, this information would be retained for future.

Cllr Griffin added that over the summer period when the allotments had been busy that there were no access issues raised by the allotment holders.

7.2 Recreation ground trees (including 2 x large oak trees at the main entrance and trees adjoining the garden of 3 Southfields.) and appointment of Broad Oak Tree Consultants for an assessment– Cllr Griffin/Clerk.

The Deputy Clerk suggested that if Broad Oak Tree Consultants were going to assess the trees at the recreation ground, then should they also be requested to do the same at the Jardin d'Aubers and the other locations within the parish where trees had been planted, as no assessment reports had been made since 2017.

Resolved: *Cllr Anderson proposed that Broad Oak Tree Consultants be requested to carry out the assessments as above with a budget of up to £1500 being authorized. This was seconded by Cllr Gadd and reached a unanimous approval.*

Bob Penny advised that there was a branch leaning on the telephone wires in the lower car park.

Action: *Deputy Clerk to request for the telephone company to asses this.*

7.3 Intruder alarm at the Pavilion – Cllr Gadd

Insurance Co say if an alarm system is installed then it has to be used and working, however, can be removed and would not affect the insurance policy.

Resolved: *as the alarm does not work Cllr Griffin proposed that the alarm was disabled from use, this was seconded by Cllr Crawford and reached unanimous approval*

Action: *Clerk to see if Bob Penny can disable the alarm.*

7.4 Possibility of Clothing/recycling bins at the recreation ground

Members of the Amenities Committee considered whether this would be a good idea, but had concerns that as a child's play area, that was locked at night, it would not be a suitable location.

Deferred: *Cllr Gadd proposed that this item be deferred to full council in October for consideration of a more suitable venue, this was seconded by Cllr Griffin and reach unanimous approval.*

7.5 Recreation grounds closing times during – Cllr Gadd

Members considered if the Caretaker should leave it as late at 9.30 p.m. or dusk to lock up the gates, and maybe an earlier lock up time, like 8 p.m., would be more suitable.

Bob Penny (Caretaker) explained that there are often exercise classes or meetings that would prevent an earlier lock up time, but this could possibly work on the weekends when the Pavilion was not hired out.

Resolved: *Cllr Gadd proposed for the Caretaker to decide upon the closing time, this was seconded by Cllr Crawford and reached unanimous approval*

7.6 Weather vane gift – Cllr Gadd

This item has been bought forward to the start of the meeting.

7.7 Pavilion office quote – Cllr Gadd

Cllr Gadd advised members that we were running out of storage space, and how it would be nice for the Caretaker and Clerks to have the option for access to an office space. Cllr Gadd had sought an initial quote, which would be in the region of £6500.

Resolved: *Cllr Gadd proposed for this idea to be presented to full council for consideration, this was seconded by Cllr Griffin and reached unanimous approval. Note: this expenditure would require 3 quotes.*

Cllr Gadd took over as Chair of meeting whilst agenda items 7.8-7.10 were considered.

7.8 Tennis club figures

Cllr Gadd advised members that some anomalies with the tennis club invoices and receipts over the last 5 years had come to light. As a result, the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO: Claudine Feltham) and Cllr Gadd had looked into this in depth. It was found that between 2016-2017 and 2020-2021 that the tennis club had paid £540 too little.

It was noted that the contract did state what the tennis club should pay including interest at the RPI.

Resolved: *Cllr Gadd proposed that the historic error was noted, that due diligence checks had been conducted and that the parish council should not back charge the £540 to the tennis club. The correct rate of rent would be invoiced to the tennis club for 2021-2022, this was seconded by Cllr Griffin and reached unanimous approval. **Action:** RFO to invoice the tennis club for the first half of 2021-2022 financial year.*

7.9 Compensation to tennis club – Cllr Gadd

Cllr Gadd advised members that we had considered the COVID discretionary grants received from WDC, alongside the COVID related expenditure and loss of income at the Pavilion.

The funds received during 2020-2021 had been spent, but there was a possibility that there maybe a small surplus of funds from the grant received in 2021-2022 period, but we would need to assess at the financial year end once we knew the expenditure and if there would be any further losses in Pavilion income.

Action: *RFO to set a task to look at this after the financial year end 31.3.2022.*

7.10 Wadhurst Junior Football Club figures

The RFO advised members that the Football Club had paid all invoices over the previous 5 years. There had been a query about whether interest should have been added but it was previously decided that due to the COVID pandemic affecting financial income, that no increase would be considered at this time.

Trudi O'Niell advised members that the football club had received a reduction of 30% of subscriptions due to losing a third of the season to COVID.

Member agreed that if there were funds left over from the COVID grant (as per agenda item 7.9) then the Wadhurst Junior Football Club would also be considered as a recipient.

Cllr Crawford took over as a chair of the meeting.

7.11 Request from KHL – Cllr Gadd

KHL had contacted the parish council about whether it would be possible for KHL to use 8-10 parking space at the recreation ground for their staff. Members considered this but felt that the car park was already busy with users for the recreation ground, play area, tennis club, exercise classes, football club etc. and would not have the space to accommodate KHL too.

Resolved: *Cllr Gadd proposed that we decline the request from KHL, this was seconded by Cllr Griffin and reached unanimous approval.*

7.12 RoSPA Play Safety report for consideration and decisions on any actions required

Members commented on the report, and noted that some items of play equipment were items due to be purchased using S106 funds from Waters Reach, of which we were awaiting the indemnity agreement from WDC.

Action: Deputy Clerk to re send the report to the Caretaker for consideration.

- 7.13 Replacement of the zip wire equipment at Sparrows Green Recreation Ground
The Deputy Clerk advised members that the zip wire had been taken out of use when the Caretaker noted some fraying to the wire. Attempts had been made to replace the wire, but whilst we could purchase one, we could not find a suitably qualified person to undertake the work. It was also noted that this piece of equipment was over 20 years old.
An appointment had been made with Playdale to quote for a new zip wire, possibly on the opposite side of the field.
- 7.14 Jardin lease with ESFR – Cllr Gadd
*Cllr Gadd advised that when talking to ESFR about the Neighbourhood Plan they indicated that they might be open to selling the land to the parish rather than leasing the land. Cllr Griffin commented that the value of this land would be low. **Resolved:** Cllr Gadd proposed that it would be put to full council to consider the purchase of this land, this was seconded by Cllr Anderson and reached unanimous approval.*
- 7.15 Retrospective planning application for Jardin d'Aubers
Cllr Griffin advised that David Masheeder of WDC had been in contact and wanted some additional information for works required at Jardin d'Aubers, for example the number of trees of a certain size, and information on others trees that will require action (for example 5 trees with Ash Die back) and a tree at the rear of the pond which was diseased and needs to be removed asap. Cllr Griffin is due to meet the contractor on site within the next few days, to consider this and then additional information will be sent to David Masheeder. Cllr Griffin confirmed that works can continue at Jardin d'Aubers, with the exception of tree works.
- 7.16 Replacement noticeboards in Jardin d'Aubers – Cllr Gadd
*Cllr Gadd advised that we need 1-meter noticeboards for holding large posters, and if we had some railings this would assist. **Action:** Cllr Gadd and Cllr Griffin to meet on site to discuss this.*
- 7.17 Bench installation at Jardin d'Aubers (on behalf of Brigitte Beal)- Deputy Clerk
*Members considered the proposal from Brigitte Beal about the installation of the bench by her uncle, they felt that a depth of 3 inches concrete would not be sufficient, and a depth of 6 inches would be more appropriate. Members also considered if the installation would be carried out by a suitably experienced person, and if they had public liability insurance. The Clerk explained that Brigitte had been waiting quite some time for a decision from the parish council. **Resolved:** Cllr Crawford proposed for the Deputy Clerk to speak to Brigitte Beal to ask if the intended installer had the correct experience and liability insurance. Cllr Anderson offered that Brigitte could liaise with him with regards to suitable installation. If the experience and public liability were appropriate then this could proceed, if not then this item will be added to full council on 14th October 2021 for further consideration. This was seconded by Cllr Gadd and reached unanimous approval. **Action:** Clerk to contact Brigitte Beal.*
- 7.18 Request for a memorial bench or tree (on behalf of Freddie Burcombe) – Deputy Clerk
*Members discussed this request at length. Whilst they fully appreciated the intentions of Mr Burcombe they were also concerned about the number of benches already in the Jardin d'Aubers, and how East Sussex Fire & Rescue (ESFR) had indicated that they did not want any more trees planted in Jardin d'Aubers as it could impact on the line of site for fire vehicles trying to exit the station (the parish council lease Jardin d'Aubers from ESFR). Cllr Griffin explained that there were considerations for a board walk around the pond in future, and this could maybe have a decked area with a bench, overlooking the pond. It was also mentioned that there were benches at the church yard which were not in a great state and maybe this could be a location for Mr Burcombe's requested bench. (The state of the church grounds was also commented on. **Action:** Clerk to contact the Church Warden to establish how the previous years grant had been spent).*

*Cllr Gadd also suggested that maybe a bench overlooking the sports field behind the Commemoration Hall could be considered. The Deputy Clerk commented how Mr Burcombe was keen to have a memorial to his late wife and how he had hoped this could be resolved as soon as possible. **Action:** Deputy Clerk to make contact with Mr Burcombe and see if they could meet to discuss the situation.*

Caretaker (Bob Penny) left at 2105 hours.

Cllr Gadd left the meeting whilst agenda item 7.19 was considered.

7.19 Washwell Lane play area update– Cllr Griffin/Deputy Clerk

Cllr Griffin advised members that a draft lease had been produced by WIHF, that had been commented on and returned to John Mitchell (WIHF), requesting a copy of the lease with a site plan and the play area location outlined in red. The Deputy Clerk advised that Cllr C Moore was trying to appoint a Solicitor.

Resolved: *Cllr Griffin proposed that once a final lease had been received from WIHF that the parish council instruct a solicitor to review the lease, this was seconded by Cllr Crawford and reached unanimous approval.*

Cllr Gadd returned to the meeting.

7.20 Request for additional members for the committee - Cllr Griffin

Cllr Griffin advised that this had already been considered but had not received any volunteers. Cllr Anderson advised he could be more involved and attend the amenities committee meetings.

7.21 Health & Safety Risk Assessment of the Recreation Ground, Pavilion and Allotments

The Deputy Clerk gave an overview of the assessments that had been carried out with Bob Penny, and no real issues had been identified.

7.22 Health & Safety audit – Cllr Anderson

*Cllr Anderson explained that he had concerns over the current methods involved when issuing contracts and looking into contractors etc. and the current Health and Safety policy is out of date and not fit for purpose. **Action:** Deputy Clerk to see if there is a sample NALC template. **Action:** Cllr Anderson to undertake a Health & Safety audit, assisted by the Deputy Clerk where required.*

8. Items for discussion

8.1 Sparrow Green CIL/S106 funds – Cllr Crawford/Cllr Griffin

*Cllr Griffin confirmed that the parish council can use S106 (Waters Reach) funds for maintenance of current equipment at Sparrows Green. The Deputy Clerk advised that she was in the process of applying for an indemnity agreement from WDC to purchase the replacement equipment for Sparrows Green play area. Cllr Gadd commented that these funds could also be used for the tennis courts sinking fund. Cllr Anderson commented that the area by the pergola was very boggy and maybe some funds could be used to alleviate this issue. Another area of cost will be the ground works for the basketball equipment. **Action:** Clerk to chase these quotes.*

*Cllr Anderson advised that Cllr C Moore kept a spreadsheet of CIL funds including their expiry date. **Action:** Deputy Clerk to check the S106 agreement to ascertain the deadline for the use of the funds.*

9. Items for noting only

9.1 Update on painting of the bollards at Jardin d'Aubers – Cllr Gadd

Update: *Cllr Gadd is chasing the contractor for a date, but the work needs to be done at the weekend or during school holidays.*

9.2 To note Amenity Committee, spend to date against budget

Noted

9.3 Jardin d'Aubers fence (right hand side)

Update: *Works are due to be carried out by the end of the weekend.*

10. Any new amenities issues

None

11. Urgent issues at the discretion of the Chair for noting or inclusion on future agenda.

None

Meeting closed at: 2133 hours