

Environment and Allotments Committee



Kidsgrove Town Council
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Minutes of the Environment and Allotments Committee Meeting held 9th July 2019, 7:00pm, Chairman's Room, Victoria Hall

EA/19-20/2/1

Present

Cllr K Robinson, Cllr S Dymond, Cllr A Cooper, Cllr G Burnett, Cllr H Maxfield, Mr Blaze, Mr Plimbley.

In attendance: Sue Davies, Town Clerk

Cllr John Dodgson attended as a non-committee member.

A representative of Lamb Street Allotments attending as a member of the public

EA/19-20/2/2

To receive and consider apologies for absence

Cllr P Waring, Cllr J Waring, Cllr C Dickens, Cllr A Cartwright.

EA/19-20/2/3

To note declarations of Member's Interests

None declared

EA/19-20/2/4

To receive and confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd June 2019.

The minutes of the meeting on the 3rd June were approved by those present.

EA/19-20/2/5

Public Participation – A period not exceeding 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions or submit comments.

Cllr John Dodgson addressed the committee to ask that the committee consider recommending to Council the protection of the Parish's Green Spaces through bodies such as the Playing Fields Trust. Cllr Robinson thanked Cllr Dodgson and iterated that such matters should be considered as part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

EA/19-20/2/6

Matters arising not covered elsewhere

a) Waste bins on King Street which are currently not emptied by NULBC

The Clerk updated that Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council (NULBC) has informed that they have offered to re-site the bin if the landowner first removes it from the anchor. The Clerk was asked to write to the landowner.

Action: The Clerk to write to the landowner

EA/19-20/2/7

Allotments update:

a) To review the draft contract between Kidsgrove Town Council and the Lamb Street Allotments for self-management of the allotment site.

The draft contract had previously been circulated. The Clerk informed that she has been in contact with the solicitor who drafted the contract the previous year and it has been verified that it has not been signed off. The solicitor has informed that the Town Council are required to complete the land transfer first. This needs to be pursued with J Phillips, NULBC, and a meeting has been arranged for 11th July 2019.

It was noted that there is still asbestos in some of the old buildings on site and that transfer of ownership may include the grass bank and hedge and that the Town Council have no provision for large scale hedge and grass cutting.

b) To consider Issues around the removal of the asbestos waste on both sites.

The Clerk informed that she has been in touch with NULBC who have agreed, as a one-off, to remove the bagged-up asbestos waste from both sites as a goodwill gesture whilst the transfer of the land to the Town Council is being negotiated.

c) To receive an update on and agree any actions on matters relating to the Crown Bank allotments

i) Water provision.

The provision of water is still being investigated and priced up. Some allotment holders are less keen as they have homes that back onto the sites and talks are continuing. NULBC have advised contacting other sites who have had similar issues to share information. It was noted that sites in Newcastle have water provided by NULBC.

Action: The Clerk to make arrangements for communication with other sites.

ii) Mares Tail

The Mares Tail issue needs urgent attention. Mr Blaze will supply the Clerk with his quotes to enable her to progress the issue.

iii) Date of Next Committee Meeting

The AGM is planned for the 5th August 2019.

iv) Father Hudson

A further Father Hudson Day is organised for 19th August 2019 (provisional). A follow-up meeting from the first session is to be held on the 15th July at 11:00am.

v) Negotiation with Aspire regarding the Drive

It was agreed that the proposal needs to be taken to Full Council for approval.

Action: Cllr Robinson and the Clerk.

d) To receive an update on and agree any actions on matters relating to the Lamb Street Allotments from the Chair of the Allotment Committee, Mr Plimbley

i) Water Installation

The costs for water on Lamb Street is higher than anticipated and the Allotment Committee is hoping to discuss with the town Council. The transfer and lease will need to be agreed to establish responsibilities.

ii) Green Site Decision

The Allotment Committee and plot holders have made a decision that going forward, the site will be environmentally friendly with no harmful pesticides and herbicides used.

iii) Asbestos used in the old sheds

It should be noted that at some point in the future, there will be a cost for removing the asbestos used in the sheds from site.

iv) Rubbish Issue – a Complaint

It was raised from the Council that there has been a complaint of rubbish on a roof on the allotment site being unsightly.

EA/19-20/2/8

Ranger Update

The Clerk updated on the Ranger activities:

- The Galley Centre Community Vegetable Garden is planted up and growing.
- The Ranger is hoping to reinstate his planting with schools now the Town Council has put in place its own paperwork
- The Ranger is still working with Kidsgrove Care Solutions
- The shed alarm project will continue in the autumn which is a peak time for shed thefts.
- The ranger has attended Thursfield Ladies Group on the 8th July in the evening to talk about his role in the community.

EA/19-20/2/9

Play Areas and Greenspace:

- a) To receive and consider a request from Cllrs Dodgson and Jukes that the Council commit to protecting the Parish's open spaces from future sale and development. To make a recommendation to Full Council if required.**

Further to Cllr Dodgson's report in the public speaking, it was agreed that consideration be given to protecting areas both via the Neighbourhood Plan and through the ongoing Greenspaces Project.

b) To receive reports from Members and to discuss and agree actions to progress the survey and report.

Councillor surveys have commenced in each ward. The following points were raised:

- It might be more effective for the Council to focus on one park each year.
- Footfall will need considering.
- Parks require more advertising.
- There is a lack of signage.
- Some Greenspaces are completely overgrown with no provision.
- Public consultation must be considered.
- The committee should look at good models from elsewhere in the community.
- Some Greenspaces are quite isolated for children's use.
- Demographics have changed over time and needs may be different in some areas with potential for Greenspaces to be adapted for the elderly.
- The Council should be imaginative and think 'outside the box'. There are further options than traditional parks.
- Funding may be available through grants.

It was agreed that a small working party be put together with the remit:

To review and consider the Parish's Greenspaces and to compile a report with draft recommendations to be brought back to the Council.

Cllrs Cooper, Maxfield, Dymond and Robinson volunteers to members of the working party. The Clerk agreed to contact absent members to given them an opportunity to contribute.

Cllr Burnett left the meeting at 20:00

EA/19-20/2/10

Footpaths – To receive an update and agree any actions required

The Clerk has found the footpath map but is trying to get an updated one in better condition.

The footpath officer at Stafford County Council has been contacted and it was agreed to invite him to come and talk to the Council. The Clerk was asked to find out if there is a schedule for path clearance work.

Issues with various paths were raised:

- Footpath 114 – potholes
- Beech Drive to Bishop's Snicket

EA/19-20/2/11 Five year-plan and Budget Update

Deferred

EA/19-20/2/12 Clerk's Items

The Clerk informed that the Kidsgrove Ranger would be assisting (up to two days) with the preparation of the Borough wide Britain in Bloom prior to judging next week. Councillors present agreed that two days assistance was fair and adequate.

EA/19-20/2/13 Future Agenda Items

- To consider a Town Council Environmental Policy
- To consider ways of reducing single use plastics in the town
- Woodlands Trust – arrange a meeting
- Community Orchard schemes

EA/19-20/2/14 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 2nd September 2019