

Environment and Allotments Committee

Kidsgrove Town Council
Victoria Hall
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Minutes of the Environment and Allotments Committee Meeting held on the Thursday 1st July 2021, 7:00pm, at the Victoria Hall.

EA/21-22/1/1

Present

CLlr C Dickens, CLlr S Burgess, CLlr B Owen, CLlr A Cooper, CLlr P Waring, CLlr J Waring, CLlr G Burnett, CLlr S Dymond, CLlr D Allport, Mr S Blaze (Crown Bank Allotments).

In attendance: S Davies (Town Clerk), E Norton (Assistant Clerk).

Two members of the public were present at the start of the meeting.

EA/21-22/1/2

To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from CLlr H Maxfield.

EA/21-22/1/3

To note declarations of Member's Interests

None Declared.

EA/21-22/1/4

To receive and confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 25th February 2021.

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th February 2021, were received and approved by the Committee.

EA/21-22/1/5

Public Participation – A period not exceeding 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions or submit comments. (no individual to speak for more than 2 minutes without the permission of the chairman).

One member of the public asked to speak regarding Newchapel Recreation Ground and asked what the plans were in regard to future development on the site following social media posts by MP Jonathan Gullis requesting a "Tuck Shop" to be installed.

The Town Clerk advised there were no agreed plans in place, that she had received a letter of request for consideration from Mr Gullis, and it would be discussed at the next Full Council Meeting.

The member of public requested it would be noted they have concerns in regards anti-social behaviour. The Clerk informed that their concerns would be passed to Newcastle-under-Lyme borough Council who are responsible for the site.

EA/21-22/1/6

Matters arising not covered elsewhere (updates only)

It was noted that the work on the road islands at the junction of Boathorse Road and First Avenue is now completed.

EA/21-22/1/7

Allotments' update:

a) Crown Bank – including an update on the security fencing.

i) Fencing

The Clerk provided an update regarding the fencing. After a visit at the site, it was identified the boundaries where the desired fencing would be installed requires significant amount of clearing before it can be considered.

It was agreed that the work would be better undertaken in the winter months when the vegetation has grown back.

Steve Blaze confirmed that the fencing requested would be continual fencing with no access gates required.

It was resolved that the clerk and assistant Clerk continue seeking quotes.

ii) Lease of land from Aspire.

The Clerk advised that in regards the lease, the solicitor is struggling to receive anything back from Aspire, and the clerk would now pursue by writing a letter from the Council.

iii) Letter from Environmental Health, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council

The Clerk reported that Environment and Health at Newcastle Under Lyme Council had received a complaint from a resident regarding rats. This would be further discussed by The Clerk and Steve Blaze after the meeting.

iv) Expansion Plans

The Clerk noted to the Committee that the expansion plans have been on hold due to Covid.

v) Any other matters

Mr Blaze requested consideration of a water supply and toilets to be installed on the allotments. The Clerk agreed to add this to the agenda for the next meeting but noted that money is not available in the current budget.

b) Lamb Street – To receive an update.

i) Land Transfer

The Clerk has been in touch with Jackie Phillips of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council (NULBC) who has informed her that she is still awaiting to hear from the land registry.

ii) Other Issues

The Clerk raised that a complaint from a nearby resident about noise late at night had been received and Mr Plimbley had dealt with the issue.

The Clerk raised that she had been in communication with Mr Plimbley regarding a site visit. As well as officers, Cllrs J Waring, G Burnett, S Burgess and C Dickens expressed an interest.

EA/21-22/1/8

Environmental Policy: To agree a date for an informal meeting for members to discuss a policy to bring back to the September committee meeting for review.

It was agreed a task group be formed to discuss and consider a draft policy to bring back to a future meeting. Cllrs S Burgess, S Dymond, P Waring, J Waring, C Dickens volunteered and it was agreed that the task group consist of these councillors.

It was agreed the first meeting would be held on the evening of the 2nd August 2021 by Zoom or Teams.

EA/21-22/1/9

Green Spaces/Play Areas

a) Newchapel Recreational Ground: To receive notes from a meeting held between Town Council E and A committee members and NULBC officers to discuss partnership working to allow the Town Council to use some of the available space to implement ideas. To agree any recommendations. (Report E&A 21-22-04).

Cllr A Cooper and J Waring felt the meeting was very constructive. Some other issues raised were access to the car park and positioning benches further away from the track.

Steve Blaze suggested toilets and first aid should be installed and it we felt these comments needed to be addressed to NULBC.

Cllr A Cooper stressed the meeting held was about enhancing the area and not the pump track itself. Cllr J Waring confirmed a barrier rail will be constructed to prevent vehicles from going onto the grassed areas.

Cllr S Burgess asked in regard to insurance concerning accidents. The Clerk affirmed that this is the responsibility of NULBC.

The Committee resolved to receive the report and agree the recommendations:

- The committee consider the outcome of the meeting and agree for discussions with NULBC to continue with a view to utilising some space at the site to provide environmental improvement schemes for its residents.
- That the Clerk progress this with task group comprising of those Newchapel and Mow Cop Ward Councillors who are on the Environments committee.
- The task group consider proposals and bring back a further report to the committee with progression update and recommendations. - agreed to resolve by a majority show of hands.

The council agreed to suspend standing orders to allow members of the public to submit comments regarding the item on the agenda.

One Member of the public raised about consultation. The Clerk advised a consultation would be considered but at moment it is in the very early days.

The member of the public also raised concerns about the anti-social behaviour. The Clerk confirmed they need to address with the NULBC, and any illegal matters to contact the police.

Standing orders resumed.

b) Other Green Spaces/play areas: To receive a report from the Clerk.

The Committee agreed to defer this to the next meeting.

EA/21-22/1/10

Parish Baskets and Planting: To discuss planting.

a) To receive an update on the two locations previously proposed for railing planters and to agree any further actions.

The Clerk updated in regards the two locations. The location on Butt Lane was not given permission due to safety concerns, but the Rookery area was agreed. The planters have now been purchased and installed into location.

b) To receive an update on the provision of more substantial planters on the triangle on the entrance to Moorland Road and to agree any further actions.

The Clerk updated that this land has been given permission by Staffordshire County Council from their point of view as long as any planters are not too high. The Clerk has identified that this land is owned by Aspire, except for the periphery which is owned by Staffordshire County Council. The Clerk will progress permission and quotes.

c) To receive any further sites for Town Council consideration.

Further suggestions were received:

- Cllr J Waring suggested Lowe's Corner, Pennyfields Road.
- Cllr S Dymond suggested a location in Talke.

The Clerk agreed to investigate possibilities at these sites.

- d) **To note the Clerk will be inviting members to visit the Town Hall by arrangement to discuss and submit ideas for improvements to the planting schemes at the front of the Town Hall. Ideas received will be considered and agreed at the next meeting. (The Ranger is to strive to keep the area weed free in the meantime.)**

The Clerk invited members to submit proposals to her for discussion around the development of the planting in front of the Town Hall. Planting contemporary to the era the Victoria Hall was built and environmentally friendly planting were both suggested at the meeting. The Clerk asked for further proposals to be emailed to her.

Cllr J Waring and Cllr G Burnett offered to help out with weeding the area so it is tidier in the interim.

Cllr G Burnett raised concern of the area where the BT Exchange is situated, on Liverpool Road. The Clerk agreed to write a letter from the Town Council to ask for some tidying up.

EA/21-22/1/11

Parish bench provision: To receive an update on suggested locations and to receive further locations for consideration. To agree any actions going forward.

The Clerk confirmed £1500 is in the budget which is sufficient for approximately three recycled plastic benches.

Steve Blaze requested Coalpit to be considered a location for a bench to be installed.

The Clerk agreed to investigate potential locations, ascertain permissions, and bring ideas back to the next Full Council.

EA/21-22/1/12

Footpath working party: To agree any actions.

The Committee considered the purpose of the working party and membership.

Cllr S Burgess, Cllr J Waring, Cllr C Dickens volunteered to be involved. The Clerk agreed to email suggested dates to hold the meeting.

Discussions were had on potential ward maps to show footpaths.

EA/21-22/1/13

Ranger Report: To receive an update from the Clerk and to agree any actions if required.

The Clerk updated in regards the Ranger. The operational side remains under this committee although HR aspects have been moved to the staffing committee.

A lone working procedure for the Ranger is being drawn up such that he must contact the office before and after using equipment such as hedge cutters and trimmers and also before going into quiet areas which are more isolated.

The Ranger is keen to get back into local schools. The Clerk is arranging meetings with various schools to discuss how Mark can work with them. Cllr P Waring raised that teaching children about litter would be useful as well as engaging them into the Town Council's planting. This would link in with the Council's environmental policy.

The clerk confirmed The Galley Centre has now been closed and sold so Mark's work there will not be continuing.

EA/21-22/1/14

Five Year Plan and forward budgeting: To note the committee members need to review the plan and submit their ideas such that a draft revision of the plan can be produced.

Copies of the previous update on the Five-Year Plan were circulated on the evening. Members had received a budget update on the agenda.

The Clerk noted that £5000 from Environmental Improvement could also be used on the Newchapel Recreation Ground area if required.

The Clerk asked members to confirm by a majority show of hands to reduce projected amounts if no spending has taken place in the first quarter, the council resolved to agree.

The Council members agreed the new style report.

EA/21-22/1/15

To receive any information items or correspondence received from the chair or clerk.

None raised.

EA/21-22/1/16

Future Agenda Items

- Livestock policies for the allotments
- Lighting in Bathpool Park
- Allotments – Crown Bank – water and toilets

EA/21-22/1/17

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 23rd September 2021