

Environment and Allotments Committee

Kidsgrove Town Council
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Minutes of the Environment and Allotments Committee Meeting held on the Thursday 6th January 2022, 7:00pm, at the Victoria Hall.

EA/21-22/2/1

Present

Cllr C Dickens (Vice-chair), Cllr S Dymond, Cllr J Waring, Cllr P Waring, S Blaze.

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

No members of the public were present at the start of the meeting.

EA/21-22/2/2

To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr A Cooper, Cllr D Allport, Cllr S Burgess and H Maxfield.

EA/21-22/2/3

To note declarations of Member's Interests

None declared.

EA/21-22/2/4

To receive and confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 1st of July 2021.

The committee resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of the 1st of July 2021.

EA/21-22/2/5

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 chair).

No members of the public present.

EA/21-22/2/6

Matters arising not covered elsewhere (updates only)

a) Environmental Policy.

The Clerk informed the committee members that a meeting is being arranged with the working party that have been assigned to draft an Environmental Policy. A draft policy derived from this meeting will then be brought back to the next Environment and Allotment meeting.

EA/21-22/2/7

Allotments' update:

a) To receive a verbal update from the Clerk and Allotment Manager– Crown Bank including an update on the security fencing and the lease of land with Aspire.

The Allotment Manager raised concern about a wall that is situated on the boundaries with the allotment and Aspire land which needs attention. It was noted this should be raised with Aspire and the solicitor who is dealing with the lease of the land.

The Clerk raised that the further project of leasing another part of land to extend the allotments was still currently on hold and has been agreed with NULBC and SCC to be currently of low priority.

The Assistant clerk updated on progress with the Fencing. After the decision was made to revisit this in the winter months once the vegetation had grown back, contact has been made with fencing contractors to arrange site visits to obtain quotations. It was noted that due to the current climate it may not be possible to complete the work within this financial year, and that the budgeted amount may need to be ear marked into next year.

The Clerk updated regarding the progress with the lease of land from Aspire; the driveway into the allotment site. The solicitor has struggled to receive correspondence from Aspire, but contact has now recently been made.

b) To receive a verbal update from the clerk and Allotment manager – Lamb Street including progress on the land transfer.

The Lamb Street allotment manager was not present to give an update.

The Clerk agreed to pursue the progress with the land transfer with NULBC. Questions were asked regarding the unregistered triangle of land adjoining the site and the Clerk agreed to also pursue the status of this. It was noted that no progress can be made with the contract with the allotment group for them to become self-managed without this transfer being completed.

The Clerk advised the committee that Lamb Street Allotments are having their AGM meeting at the Town Hall 19th January.

The Clerk suggested that any Councillors wishing to visit either of the allotment sites to gain further familiarity, to contact the office for this to be arranged.

EA/21-22/2/8

Green Spaces/Play Areas – Newchapel Recreation Ground: To receive some preliminary plans from Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and to agree any actions or recommendations going forward.

The Clerk presented the preliminary plans provided by NULBC to the committee, and discussions were had regarding any potential licences or permissions that may need to be clarified before going forward. The Clerk informed that the plans were only provided for guidance and no agreement was in place at this stage. It was noted the Clerk would talk with NULBC to identify requirements before proceeding with the development plan.

Discussions were also had in regard to the items on the plan and on ideas of an Orchard and Wildflower patch. It was felt that Kidsgrove Town Council would need to progress with any plan in stages for the work to be manageable. It was agreed to that further discussion was needed with NULBC.

EA/21-22/2/9

Parish Baskets and Planting: To receive a verbal update on progression of planting previously agreed and to consider any new locations for 2022.

The Clerk updated on the projects undertaken this year. There is currently work underway to provide planters on Moorland Road with the intention of them being planted up in the Spring. The Clerk advised she now has the contact to request permissions for this work to be progressed. The Clerk also updated regarding the railing baskets at The Rookery. There is a plan for the ranger to take the baskets into the local schools to get the children involved by planting them up in the spring.

The Clerk advised she would progress with NULBC permissions regarding sites put forward by Cllr S Dymond and Cllr J Waring for bulb planting.

Discussions were also had on any other potential sites to install baskets and planting. Places for consideration were noted in Talke, Talke Pits and Butt Lane.

EA/21-22/2/10

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

The Assistant Clerk provided an update on the bench quotations and permissions. Contact has been made with both Staffordshire County Council and Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council to establish what the procedure is for installing a bench on each of their respective land. Quotes have been received from various companies of recycled benches and potential locations were discussed.

It was noted the Assistant Clerk would continue to pursue the requirements of gaining permissions and/or any relevant licenses with each Council, to help determine the procedure for bench installation.

Areas for consideration that were discussed as potential sites were Coalpit Hill in Talke Pits and West Avenue in Butt Lane. It was noted that any further ideas of locations to be forwarded to the Assistant Clerk.

EA/21-22/2/11 **Consideration of forward budgeting: To consider the committee’s budget requirements and consider ideas for inclusion in the 2022-2023 budget for recommendation to the F&GP Committee.**

The Clerk provided an explanation and breakdown of the committee’s budget and noted that a slight increase was already suggested by the F&GP Committee. Each line was discussed, and the following recommendations were agreed by a majority show of hands to put to the F&GP Committee.

Cllr S Dymond suggested putting forward a name change to the park on Chester Road in Talke Pits, to commemorate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee this year. It was further suggested that a new piece of play equipment and some planting to enhance and rejuvenate the park could be potentially considered. Cllr J Waring agreed to ask NULBC on the process of a park name change.

Any ear marked reserves to be carried over in the next years earmarked reserve

- Crown Bank Fencing to be put into an earmarked reserve if the work is not completed in the current financial year.
- £3000 precept into the Planters and Hanging baskets budget line
- £3000 precept into the Bench Provision budget line.
- £10,000 precept into the Parks and Green Spaces budget line in addition to the £7500 unspent in the current financial year which can be earmarked.

EA/21-22/2/12 **Ranger Report: To receive an update from the Clerk on the Ranger’s work and to agree any actions if required.**

The Clerk noted that it was hoped to re-implement the Ranger’s community as this has not been able to go ahead throughout the pandemic. This would be managed via the office and to be managed with the required risk assessments.

EA/21-22/2/13 **Members Item – Cllr P Waring: To consider and agree any actions in relation to a complaint received regarding fishing line causing harm to swans at Bathpool Park.**

Cllr P Waring raised concern in regards the swans’ wellbeing, around the fishing area of Bathpool Park. The situation was discussed, and it was agreed that we put a request to the Newcastle Under Lyme Borough Council to contact the Angling Society, and request to reinstate the conservation. It was noted the Office would complete this asap.

EA/21-22/2/14 **To receive any information items or correspondence received from the chair or clerk.**

No further items for discussion.

EA/21-22/2/15 **Future Key Agenda Items**

- Water/toilet provision at the allotment sites

- Livestock policies for the allotments
- Lighting in Bathpool Park
- Planting of a Christmas Tree
- Town Hall Frontage

EA/21-22/2/16 Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 17th February 2022

Meeting concluded at 8.30pm.