

Environment and Allotments Committee

Kidsgrove Town Council
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Minutes of the Environment and Allotments Committee Meeting held on the Thursday 17th February 2022, 7:00pm, at the Victoria Hall.

EA/21-22/3/1

Present

Cllr C Dickens (Chair), Cllr G Burnett, Cllr S Dymond, Cllr J Waring, Cllr P Waring, S Blaze (Talke Allotments Manager).

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

No members of the public were present.

EA/21-22/3/2

To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr A Cooper, Cllr S Burgess and D Plimbley (Kidsgrove Allotments Manager).

EA/21-22/3/3

To note declarations of Member's Interests

None declared.

EA/21-22/3/4

To receive and confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 6th January 2022.

The committee resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Thursday, 6th January 2022.

EA/21-22/3/5

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/21-22/3/6

Matters arising not covered elsewhere (updates only)

a) Environmental Policy.

The Clerk informed the committee members that a meeting is currently being arranged with the working party to progress this.

b) Frontage of Town Hall

The planting at the front of the Town Hall was raised. The clerk is to arrange with the ranger to tidy up the front. It was agreed this would be an agenda item discussed in more detail at the next committee meeting.

It was asked about the paintwork at the top of the brick columns and the front doors at the front of the building. The Clerk informed that either the Facilities officer or the Ranger could address this.

EA/21-22/3/7

Allotments' update:

a) To receive a verbal update from the Clerk and Allotment Manager– Crown Bank.

i) To receive an update on the lease of land from Aspire

The Clerk updated that she had been in touch with the solicitor and had also chased up with Aspire to find out if there was any progression. Discussions were had and it was noted that the clerk continue to pursue to contact Aspire weekly until a response is received.

ii) To receive quotes for the allotment fencing and to resolve to agree the way forward.

The assistant clerk presented report EA 21-22-10 to the committee, and discussions were had on the three quotes provided. The extent of fencing required was discussed. The committee resolved to agree Trentham Fencing would undertake the work and that the fencing would be powder coated, with the request Trentham Fencing could provide an alternative quote to install fencing on just the bottom section of the allotments, and to install a gate.

It was delegated to the clerk in consultation with Cllr P Waring and Cllr C Dickens to continue to finalise the details with Trentham Fencing, depending on the alternative quote to be received and if there is a significant saving.

iii) To note the need for asbestos removal discovered upon clearing the perimeter in preparation for the fence construction.

The Clerk informed the committee that more asbestos has been discovered at Crown Bank allotments upon some clearance work. The clerk advised that she had been in touch with the company used last year at the Lamb Street allotments for asbestos removal and has received a quote of £300.00 including disposal. Due to the pending fencing work and safety issues, it was agreed for the clerk to go ahead and arrange this as soon as possible.

iv) Any other issues to be reported.

S Blaze asked if a supply of water to Crown Bank allotments could be considered. The Clerk informed that the office would begin to explore costs associated with this ready for a future agenda item.

It was also mentioned that if any councillors wish to visit the allotments this could be accommodated. Councillors should contact the office to arrange this.

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

i) Land transfer

The clerk updated the committee on the progress of the land transfer after discussions with J Phillips of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council. She informed that complications had arisen with the method of land transfer via the Land Registry as this isn't a new application. The two options would be to progress jointly as a transfer or for the Town Council to contact the land registry directly and put in for a rectification. The Town Council solicitor had given an opinion that more information would be required from NULBC to progress via a rectification.

The clerk also advised that the extra corner of land currently not registered could be put in as a first registration.

It was requested that the Clerk continue to discuss with Jackie Philips and write a formal letter to NULBC to encourage the progression.

ii) Allotment Manager's update

Apologies were received from the allotment manager, Mr Plimbley. He has requested his report be fed into the meeting on by the Clerk:

- Lamb Street allotments currently hold 32 plots, 20 are full size and 12 are half size. 4 of the plots are used to house pigeons. There are a further 3 full and 1 half plot that will be coming back into use.
- There have been 20 native heritage and fruit trees planted, with a further 10 being planted next year.

- The beekeeper has been unwell and therefore the bees are no longer kept on the site, however the hives are still there and they possibly might look into bringing a queen bee back in the spring.

D Plimbley also asked whether an Allotment event could be hosted at the Town Hall. The Clerk agreed to look into this and bring it to the next meeting.

EA/21-22/3/8

Green Spaces/Play Areas – To receive an update on plans including the process for installing equipment on NULBC land and also any progress on a request for the name change at Chester Road play area.

It was agreed the Clerk arrange a teams meeting with NULBC and inviting committee members to attend. It was noted that a site meeting would probably need to follow.

EA/21-22/3/9

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 providing a planter on Moorland Road. Talks have been had with Aspire and they agree in principle to allow the planters to be installed. Once the committee has agreed on the planters, they require the full details including images of the selected planters and a plan to be sent to them so they can keep on record and for them to give the final agreement.

Various shapes of recycled plastic and steel planters were considered. Self-Watering and larger sized planters were also noted as being possibly more expensive but would save costs in the future and help reduce the risk of damage and theft. It was agreed that a standard recognisable theme should be used for the Town Council planter provision.

It was agreed by a majority show of hands that delegation be given to the clerk in consultation with Cllr Dickens and Cllr P Waring to pursue the purchase of one large black/gold octagonal shape planter.

The clerk requested councillors to identify other potential areas for future consideration for Town Council planters.

Cllr Dymond provided details of plans to install fruit trees at the Memorial Garden and requested if a check with Streetscene could be initiated. It was noted that a scheme is currently available through Staffordshire County Council to fund the planting of trees and that further details would be investigated by the office.

EA/21-22/3/10

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 Clerk and Assistant Clerk provided an update regarding permission procedures to install benches on both Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council land and Staffordshire County Council land. After further talks with both councils it was determined that a license would be required for each authority. This will also carry a small cost which is to be confirmed.

The clerk advised she would discuss the potential location on Crown Bank with Becky Allen at NULBC and report back to the next meeting.

The committee viewed some examples of recycled benches and discussions were had on colours and styles. It was agreed that confirm permissions and discuss acceptable bench designs with Newcastle Borough Council.

EA/21-22/3/11 Ranger Report: To receive an update from the Clerk on the Ranger's work and to agree any actions if required.

The Clerk advised that the contract renewal for the ranger would be coming up soon and that a meeting will be arranged to discuss this.

EA/21-22/3/12 Fishing Line at Bathpool Park: To consider and agree any actions in relation to a complaint received regarding fishing line causing harm to swans at Bathpool Park.

The Clerk updated that a letter had been sent from the office to NULBC expressing concern.

EA/21-22/3/13 To receive a budget update

The Clerk provided an update on the committee's expenditure to date in the budget year.

EA/21-22/3/14 To receive any information items or correspondence received from the chair or clerk.

No further items for discussion.

EA/21-22/3/15 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/21-22/3/16 Date of Next Meeting: Monday 14th March 2022

Meeting concluded at 8.30pm.