

Minutes of the Estates Committee on Monday 19 August 2019 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.31 pm

Councillors present: Mr Vic Davies (Chairman), Mr P Dengate, and Mr P Sullivan together with the Assistant Clerk. Mr Ivor Davies, Ms L Clarke and Mr B Hinder arrived at 8.30pm (Item 8) as they had been present at an earlier Environment Meeting which had overrun.

1. Apologies and absence

Apologies. Cllr D Hollands.

2. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying

Cllrs Ivor Davies, Dengate, Hinder and Sullivan declared that they had dispensation to vote on Dove Hill Allotment items.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting 17 June 2019.

The minutes of the meetings were **agreed** and **signed** as a true record.

As no members of the public were in attendance the meeting was not adjourned.

4. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

- 4.1 Minute 3272/4.1 New Rateable Value for Beechen Hall. The Assistant Clerk reported to members that the Clerk will be making an appeal to valuation office to see if the Parish Council would be eligible for a reduction as some of the areas assessed may not be subject to a charge. **Action Clerk.**
- 4.2 Minute 3272/4.2 Franklin Drive Open Space Lease. The office is still awaiting the revised lease agreement from Maidstone Borough Council. **Noted.** The Assistant Clerk confirmed that the office will call MBC to obtain an update. **Action Assistant Clerk.**
- 4.3 Minute 3273/8.3 Location of Alan's Tree. **Ratified**, the Assistant Clerk's decision after consulting with the committee to plant Alan's Tree at the entrance to the car park. Members agreed to defer the decision for a plaque and ceremony to full council at its September Meeting

5. Dove Hill Allotments

5.1 Cllr Bob Hinder reported that two of the three tenants who received letters regarding their plots have started cultivating them. Members requested that another newsletter is sent to tenants asking for volunteers to join a working party to carry out some much-needed maintenance at the site.

- These will be organised in October/November over 2 weekends (dates TBC) and will include:
 - raising the water troughs and placing them on concrete slabs to stop any deterioration.
 - Cutting back vegetation encroaching from the PRoW along the perimeter fence.
 - Improving the drainage of the main haulage way at the entrance to the allotments.

Cllr Hinder also suggested the purchase of a lightweight petrol brushcutter to enable the above work to be carried out. It was agreed that the Assistant Clerk would circulate costs to members via email.

Cllr Hinder also highlighted some of the plot signs were deteriorating and that although there were some spares, additional ones may need to be made. **Action office.**

5.2 Pest Purge Report. **Received** and **noted.**

5.3 Allotment Cup Presentation. The Assistant Clerk reported that she had only had one response and that had been positive towards holding a presentation and a BBQ and the tenant suggested that it should be for the most improved plot. After discussion members agreed that judging will take place this year by Cllrs Lynn Clarke and Vic Davies and a presentation picnic will be held in May/June (date TBC) 2020 where

the cup will be presented. This is to be included in the newsletter to tenants.
Action Office.

5.4 Isolating Valves on existing water troughs. Cllr Hinder confirmed he will meet with the water company on Thursday 22 August. It was **agreed** that the quotations would be circulated by email for decision out of meeting. **Action office.**

5.5 Uncultivated Allotment Plots – One tenant will be served with a notice to quit as there plot remains uncultivated. **Action office.**

6. **Matters for Information**

6.1 Boxley Church Boundary Wall adjacent to the Granary. A meeting has been arranged for Thursday 29 August at 1pm with members of St Mary & All Saints Church, Diocese of Canterbury, the owner of The Granary and members of the parish council to discuss the condition of the boundary wall. A report will be returned to the October meeting for consideration. **Noted.**

7. **Assistant Clerk's Report**

7.1 Hall hire fees income. **Received** and **noted.**

7.2 Account balances. **Received** and **noted.**

7.3 Profit and Loss. **Received** and **noted.**

7.4 Income and Expenditure. **Received** and **noted.**

7.5 Hall Hire Fees Review. Members **received** the Assistant Clerk's report and after a lengthy discussion it was proposed by Cllr Dengate, seconded by Cllr Clarke with all in favour not to increase Hire fees for the coming year but to reduce the discounts given to regular hirers by 50% commencing 1 January 2020 and in October 2020 review again and to reduce the remaining discount to zero by January 2021. Members decided not to increase the hourly hire fee for the Acorn Room in the evening for existing hirers, but any new hirers would be charged at the new rate of £14.00. Notice was also to be given to existing regular hirers that this would be reviewed in October 2020 with the view that fees will be aligned with the new pricing structure. It was **agreed** that the Assistant Clerk's recommendations for a targeted awareness campaign for marketing and promoting the hall and Acorn Room and these consisted of:

- Targeting local schools, colleges, doctors' surgeries and businesses etc.
- Brainstorming session with members of the committee.
- Liaise with other halls to find out what they do and how they do advertise etc.
- Advertise of the Parish Noticeboards.
- Use of Social Media.

Action Assistant Clerk.

7.6 Loss of Regular Hirers – **Received** and **noted.**

7.7 Accident Report. None to report. **Noted.**

7.8 Potential Hire – Saturday 28 December 2019. Members **received** the Assistant Clerk's report and have **agreed** on this occasion to allow the hire to go ahead, however they wanted to make it clear that this was a one-off request and this period is when the hall is closed for maintenance. **Action office.**

7.9 Inconsiderate Parking on Wildfell Close. Members **received** and **noted** the Assistant Clerk's report. However, with the absence of a written complaint and evidence, members were unable to consider any further action. Cllr Dengate went on to point out that a Van is consistently parking outside the Hall gates causing an obstruction for cars entering and exiting the Hall car park. It was **agreed** that the office would issue a polite notice asking the owner to move the vehicle away from the entrance to the Hall. **Action office.**

8. **Beechen Hall Extension**

8.1 Financial Report on cost of extension was **received** and **noted.** Also received was the deadline for the retention fee to be paid to Waller Associates. It was **agreed** that a final snagging list would be drawn up in time for the next Estates meeting in October. **Action office.**

- 8.2 Provisional date for the installation of the flagpole w/c 2 September was **noted**.
- 8.3 Landscaping. Members **agreed** to grass seed the area of landscaping by the bin compound. It was **agreed** that the landscaping would be carried out by a working party in October (date TBC) and that topsoil, and grass seed that is drought resistant and will grow in shade should be purchased. Members also **agreed** that not all the paving slabs would be utilised and the surplus should go to the allotments to be used for the water troughs. Members also **agreed** that WWG could have the sharp sand. **Action office.**
- 8.4 Further Acoustic treatment to the Acorn Room. Members **received** and **noted** Cllr Vic Davies report. Members were advised that a double acoustic door could not be considered on the door leading to the kitchen an additional acoustic measure. The alternative option would be an acoustic curtain. It was **agreed** that the Chair and the Assistant Clerk would look at acoustic tiles and curtain and circulate options via email to members. **Action Cllr Vic Davies/Assistant Clerk.**

9. **Beechen Hall Card Payments for Hiring the Hall.**

Members **received** and **noted** the Assistant Clerk's report regarding the unsuitability of the virtual terminal after considering alternative options Cllr Dengate proposed, Cllr Hinder seconded the notion to proceed with a WorldPay hand terminal with all in favour. Cllr Dengate reiterated that the relevant policies must be in place before taking any transactions and that no card details must be written down. **Action Office.**

10. **Parish Annual Property Inspection**

Members **received** and **noted** no further deterioration to the North Wall at Boxley Green.

11. **WDJO – Annual Play Inspection**

Members **received** and **noted** the Assistant Clerk's report including recent repairs to the Junior swings by Cllrs Vic Davies and Pat Sullivan.

12. **Policies and Procedures**

12.1 Burial Ground Review of Regulations. Currently being update by the Clerk and the working group **Noted.**

12.2 Risk Assessments for hall (Fire, Drink and Public Licence). These policies were reviewed and amended earlier in the year and are fit for purpose. **Noted.**

12.3 Snow Policy Members **reviewed** the policy and made a couple of minor alterations with one to the staff attendance at the Hall during snow conditions. Members also **agreed** to purchase a wheeled salt spreader. **Action office.**

12.4 Dove Hill Allotment Rent Review Members **received** the Assistant Clerk's report and **reviewed** the allotment rent increases. After discussion Cllr Hinder proposed not to increase the rent for 2020/21, seconded by Cllr Dengate with 5 in favour and 1 against.

12.5 Dove Hill Allotments Tenancy Agreement and Rules and Regulations Review. Members **received** and **reviewed** and made amendments to existing documents. It was agreed that the revised rules and regulations would be reissued to tenants. **Action office.**

13. **2020/21 Budget Items for consideration**

- Upgrading fire alarm call points at Beechen Hall x4 at £44.00 + VAT. **Agreed.**

14. **Matters for Decision**

14.1 Replacement CCU's at Beechen Hall – **Ratified** the Assistant Clerk's decision after consulting with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Estates committee and the chair of F&GP committee to proceed with Able Cable who will carry out the work on Wednesday 23 October 2019 . **Action Office.**

15. **Date of Next Meeting.**

Monday 20 October 2019 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade.

As no members of the public or press were present there was no resolution to exclude them. The meeting went into confidential session.

16. **Staff Conditions and any alterations to hours review.**

Members **received** and **noted** the update on the Caretaking situation at Beechen Hall

Meeting closed at 10.00 pm

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Chairman.....

Date.....

DRAFT