

Minutes of the Estates Committee Meeting on Monday 21 June 2021 held by a virtual Teams meeting commencing at 7.30pm

Councillors present: Mr D Hollands (Chairman), Ms L Clarke, Mr Ivor Davies, Mr Vic Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr H Monk at item 5.1, Mr C Sheppard and Mr P Sullivan together with the Assistant Clerk, Mrs M Fooks.

The Chairman wished both Cllrs Hinder and Beckwith a speedy recovery.

1. **Apologies and Non-Attendance**

Cllrs Hinder and Beckwith – Apologies accepted.

2. **Declaration of Interest or Lobbying**

Cllrs Ivor Davies, Dengate, Hinder, Sheppard and Sullivan declared they have dispensation to vote on Dove Hill Allotment items. Cllr Vic Davies declared an interest in item 13 as he is related to the member of staff.

3. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting 19 April 2021**

The minutes of the meeting were **agreed** and would be signed as a true record at a later date.

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

4. **Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

4.1. Minute 3476/4.1 Ceremony and plaque for Alan's Tree. Members **agreed** the wording for the plaque with addition of Alan's birth date and death date. The ceremony is provisionally scheduled for 16 August at 6.30pm and prior to the Estates Meeting at Beechen Hall. Invitations to be extended to Parish Councillors and members of Walderslade Woods Group. **Action Assistant Clerk**

4.2 Minute 3476/4.2 Refuse & Recycling at Beechen Hall. It was **agreed** that the Assistant Clerk will circulate a report with costings out of meeting for ratification at the next meeting. **Action Assistant Clerk.**

4.3 Minute 3476/4.3 WDJO Management Plan. Deferred to August meeting. **Noted.**

5. **Dove Hill Allotments**

5.1. Allotment Report **received**. Members **noted** the tree maintenance to be carried out by MBC and the Assistant Clerk was asked to contact them to see if a date for the start of the works has been programmed. Members then considered solutions for the treatment on the entrance road to remove the ruts, and concluded that type 1 aggregate would be the most cost effective option. It was **agreed** that costs were gathered for purchasing the aggregate and to contact Gallaghers to see if they could offer any discount. Costs would be circulated to members for agreement. Cllr Sullivan confirmed that he had the necessary equipment to compact the aggregate into the ground. It was suggested that a working party would carry out the necessary repairs once the tree maintenance had been completed in order to keep costs down. Members asked that once costs have been received whether the owners of the neighbouring property would consider contributing towards the costs. **Action Assistant Clerk/Cllr Sullivan.**

- Thanks was given to Cllr Sullivan for the installation of the new trough.

- Cllr Ivor Davies requested whether Pat and John Brook's bench at the allotments could be treated? Members **agreed** to ask the Caretaker if he could have a look and carry out the work.
- It was reported that a compost bin had been left by the entrance to the allotments, members asked that an email is sent to tenants to remind them to either dispose of it or to put a note on it for someone else to take. **Action Assistant Clerk.**
- Cllr Dengate reported that part of the felt roof of the PC shed needs replacing. It was **agreed** that the Caretaker, would take a look and price up when doing the bench. **Action Caretaker.**
- Cllr Sullivan will fix the leaking tap to the new water trough when time allows. At the present moment this is turned off after every use. **Action Cllr Sullivan.**
- Cllr Vic Davies agreed to take a water meter reading. **Action Cllr Vic Davies.**
- An unkept plot was reported, a photo of the plot would be forwarded to the Assistant Clerk who would in turn speak to the tenant to see if there were any issues. **Action Cllr Sheppard & Assistant Clerk.**

5.2. Pest Purge Report. **Received** and **Noted**. Members asked if Squirrels were part of the contractors remit. **Action Assistant Clerk to liaise with Pest Purge.**

5.3. Allotment Tenants Association. Members discussed the merits of setting up an Association and handing over responsibilities in a staged way. After a lengthy discussion. It was felt that most tenants were probably not interested in belonging to an association and this was based on informal conversations with tenants and the level of response received when asking for interest to be on the working group. With this in mind it was **agreed** that the management will be kept in-house with the Parish Council but offering responsibility to key volunteers, tasks such as checking that plots were being cultivated, any repairs to council property and reporting any problems to the office. Allow the use of the PC shed to store seeds etc. It was also suggested that once restrictions lift that more sociable events at the allotments such as communal BBQ's could be arranged by tenants for tenants. **Action Assistant Clerk/Working Group**

6. Matters for Information
There were none.

7. Assistant Clerk's Report

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

7.2 Account balances. **Received** and **noted**. Cllr Sheppard reminded members that the Clerk was asked to produce a Covid loss report for Beechen Hall, income versus expenditure. **Action Clerk/Assistant Clerk.**

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

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

7.5 Reopening of Beechen Hall. Members **received** and **noted** the Assistant Clerk's report.

7.6 Accident Report – A report was **received** and **noted** by members on a minor accident involving a member of Walderslade Woods Group.

7.7 Review of Commercial Hire Rates – Members **received** and **agreed** the suggested rates and asked for the inclusion of the terms and conditions of paying deposits along with a couple of minor grammatical changes. **Action Assistant Clerk.**

8. Parish Managed Play Areas

8.1 Franklin Drive Play Area – Members **received** the Assistant Clerk's report and photos showing the removal of vegetation and repair to fence panels and commended the good work carried out by Hoods Tree Services . Members

agreed to a site meeting with Cllrs Vic Davies, Hinder and Sheppard and Assistant Clerk to decide:

- Planting new vegetation
- Required new signage
- Location of Cllr Wendy Hinder's memorial bench.

Costings for the above work will be brought back to the next meeting. **Action Assistant Clerk.**

8.2 Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard. Members acknowledged the provisional date of the ROSPA Annual Playground Inspection for both the Orchard and Franklin Drive and that any findings will be brought back to the August meeting. The Chairman passed on the committees thanks to Alan the Caretaker for his work on the repairing and treating the benches in this play area. **Action Assistant Clerk.**

9. Policies and Procedures

9.1 Dove Hill Allotment – Review of Annual Rent. **Received** the Assistant Clerk's report on the operating costs of the allotments and comparative fees charged by other local councils. It was proposed by Cllr Ivor Davies, seconded by Cllr Sheppard, with all in favour to increase the annual rent per quarter plot by 5% to £33.00 with effect from 1 October 2022. Tenants to be notified in the usual way. **Action Assistant Clerk.**

9.2 Dove Hill Allotment – Review of Rules and Regulations. Minor amendments were made to:

- 7.1 Livestock – which are permitted to a maximum of 5 per plot tenant.
- 10.4 insert (e.g. rats, rabbits and squirrels)

9.3 Dove Hill Allotment – Review of Tenancy Agreement. **No changes required.**

10. Ivy growing on the south wall in Boxley Churchyard.

10.1 Members **received** the Clerk's report and agreed in principal, the quotation from Goodsell for the cost of the works on the wall. This included removing the ivy from a section of the wall and repointing, as well as increasing the height to 1200mm in certain sections of the wall for a length of 40 metres.

Concerns were received from the adjoining property owner with regards to not being invited to the meeting to discuss possible options for the repair to the wall.

After discussion members requested to see the survey of the wall, if one had been done and to arrange a meeting with the neighbour and Cllrs Vic Davies, Hollands, Sheppard & Sullivan to discuss the repairs in more detail. **Action Assistant Clerk**

11. Matters for Decision

There were none.

In view of the confidential nature (personal details and data) on the following item to be transacted, it is advisable that the public and press are excluded from the meeting for the duration of or part of the item. There were none to exclude.

12. Caretaking Update

Members **received** the resignation of Debbie Davies for her caretaking role and the Chairman wished her the best of luck in her new career., Debbie will continue with her litter picking duties. Members **received** the Assistant Clerk's report regarding a replacement and **agreed** to the recommendations put forward in that report. An interview panel comprising Cllrs Holland and Clarke with the Assistant Clerk as note taker. **Action Assistant Clerk.**

13. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 16 August 2021 location to be confirmed. **Noted.**

Meeting closed at 9.23pm.

Signed as a correct record of proceedings.

Chairman.....

Date.....

DRAFT