

**Minutes of the Estates Committee Meeting on 17th October 2022
held in the Acorn Room at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Chatham ME5 9RU
commencing at 19.30.**

Councillors Present: Mr D Hollands (Chairman), Mr M Beckwith, Mr I Davies, Mr V Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mrs P Huntingford, Mr P Sullivan, Mr D Hubbard.

Council Staff Present: Assistant Clerk Finance - Miss L Watt

1. Apologies and Non-Attendance

Cllr C Sheppard and Cllr B Hinder – Apologies Accepted.

2. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying

Cllrs I Davies, M Beckwith, P Sullivan and P Dengate declared they have dispensation to vote on Dove Hill Allotment items.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting 15 August 2022

All agreed pending minor spelling change.

Adjourn the meeting to allow the public or press to comment

No members of the public attended the meeting.

4. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

Assistant Clerk is still working on costings report for Beechen Hall. Hall costs to go to F&GP meeting once complete.

Action: Caretaker to circulate outcome of allotment gate dragging on the ground and other gate works as per previous minutes to the committee.

5. Beechen Hall

5.1 Income to Date Review.

It was requested that the Assistant Clerk provide income figures in a year to date format and equivalent year to date for the previous year.

Assistant Clerk to also add information to the income report to make it clearer to see any deficit prior to inclusion of income from reserves.

Action: Assistant Clerk to circulate year to date for equivalent month figures for 2021.

5.2 Account balances.

Noted.

5.3 Accident Report – None at the time of compiling the agenda.

Noted.

5.4 Fire Safety.

Concerns regarding the cost of extra works were expressed considering the building is now fire safety compliant.

It was raised that if the extra work is completed, it may increase the costs of maintenance going forward as well as potentially meaning the recent safety certification may need to be repeated.

It was also discussed that with more load, systems may need a larger battery capacity to meet compliance standards.

The committee felt more information was required and the decision was deferred to the next meeting with extra information being provided.

Action: Caretaker to provide committee with breakdown of costs of extra works, to circulate current report to committee and to address concerns relating to load.

5.5 Audio for Acorn Room.
Noted

5.6 Heating Control.

It was discussed as a consideration that a £50 charge be added to the hirer terms and conditions if a hirer was found to have been tampering with the thermostats.

It was discussed that a Hive (or similar) heating control system be looked into which would increase staff control over the thermostat. Concerns over the cost of the system were raised and the potential to lose control of the system during power outages.

It was proposed by Cllr V Davies and seconded by Cllr P Dengate that staff shall research costs of simple Hive (and similar) systems. Once costs have been obtained the information is to be circulated for an out of meeting decision. All agreed.

Action: Caretaker to get quotes/find out costs for simple hive like thermostat control system.
Assistant Clerk to circulate for **out of meeting decision**.

5.7 Noise Inhibitor.
Noted.

5.8 Beechen Hall Boundary Fence.
It was proposed by Cllr P Dengate, seconded by Cllr Ivor Davies and all agreed that, the fencing shall be replaced with quick growing, native hedging at a maximum cost of £1000.

Hawthorn and blackthorn were discussed as appropriate species in order to discourage passing through by the public.

Action: Office to obtain to three quotes for hedging and circulate for an **out of meeting decision**.

5.9 Hirer Refund Request – None at time of compiling the agenda.
Noted.

6. Matter for Information
None at the time of compiling agenda.

7. Dove Hill Allotments

7.1 Allotment Report.
Allotment report regarding the setup of an allotment committee deferred to the next meeting. Cllr B Hinder was unable to attend the meeting.

7.2 Pest Purge Report.
Noted

- 7.3 Allotment Income.
Noted. YTD Expenditure to be added in future.

8. Parish Managed Play Areas/Open Spaces

- 8.1 Impton Lane Open Space.
Noted. To go to ***out of meeting decision***.

- 8.2 Franklin Drive Play Area.
Noted. To go to ***out of meeting decision***.

- 8.3 Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard.
Noted. To go to ***out of meeting decision***.

- 8.4 Other Parish Areas.
Noted.

9. Budgets

- 9.1 Beechen Hall Draft Budget
Provisional figures on the proposed 2023/2024 budget were discussed and amended appropriately.

- 9.2 Estates General Draft Budget
Provisional figures on the proposed 2023/2024 budget were discussed and amended appropriately.

10. Tree Management Policy

Minor changes were discussed by the council and made by the Assistant Clerk.

It was proposed by Cllr V Davies, Seconded by Cllr I Davies and all agreed to accept the policy.

The committee wishes to thank Cllr D Hubbard for his brilliant work on the development of the policy.

11. Policies and Procedures for Review

Policies & Procedures were discussed by the committee and minor changes made by the Assistant Clerk. All accepted pending implementation of changes.

- 11.4 Grounds Maintenance Contract.
The current cost of parish Council grounds maintenance stands at 10,644.68 per year.

As the current contractors have historically proven vastly cheaper than their competitors, it was felt that no work to have other companies provide quotes would be necessary. Office to go ahead with contract on condition that all current works are met.

Action: Assistant Clerk/Caretaker to circulate quote for ongoing works alongside quote for previous years.

Action: Caretaker to look at current and future contract to ensure all areas of work required are covered and indicate how quote compares with previous years.

- 11.5 Review of Caretaking needs.
To be returned to agenda at a later date.
Noted.

12. Boxley Churchyard

Clerk’s Update.

Noted.

The committee would like to express their appreciation to the Clerk, Daniella Baylis for her work on the church walls and lottery grant application.

It was proposed by Cllr P Dengate and seconded by Cllr V Davies and all agreed that points one and two be accepted in principle.

Action: Clerk to pursue an update from the tree officer regarding point 3.

13. Matters for Decision

14. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 19 December 2022 commencing at 7.30 pm at Beechen Hall. Items for the agenda must be with the parish office no later than 9 December 2022.

Meeting closed at 21:30.

Signed as a correct record of proceedings.

Chairman.....

Date.....