

**Minutes of the Estates Committee on Tuesday 14 August 2018 at Beechen Hall,
Wildfell Close, Walderslade commencing at 7.30 pm**

Councillors present: Mr Vic Davies (Chairman), Ms L Clark, Mr Ivor Davies, Mr P Dengate, Mr B Hinder, Mr D Hollands and Mr P Sullivan together with the Clerk.

1. Declaration of Interest or Lobbying

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

2. Apologies and absence

There were none as all members were present.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting 12 June 2018.

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 3107/4.1 North Wall Boxley Village Green. Members **noted** the Clerk's report that she had undertaken a safety check of the wall on 20 July 2018 and that there were no H&S issues identified. Cllr Clarke asked whether it was possible that the Heris Fencing is removed as it was unsightly. After discussion it was **agreed** that as this was in front of the bowed area of the wall the fencing should remain. Cllr Clarke asked whether it was possible to remove the tree causing the problem but was informed that the tree was on private land, as was the wall. The Clerk would continue to monitor the wall. **Action Clerk.**

4.2 Minute 3107/4.3 Provision of Playgrounds within the Parish. The report on MBC's policy concerning the repair or removal of equipment at non-strategic playgrounds was **received** and **noted**. Cllr Dengate asked whether MBC would maintain equipment if a parish council paid for it to be replaced. As Cllr Hinder is a member of the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee he offered to ask that question at the next meeting. **Action Cllr Hinder.**

Cllr Hinder reported that he and Cllr Wendy Hinder would be combining their Borough Councillor Allowances, total £2,000, to purchase another piece of equipment.

5. Dove Hill Allotments

5.1 Cllr Bob Hinder's Allotment Report. Cllr Hinder gave a report and discussion took place covering;

- The silt washing down the road during heavy storms.
- Requests had been made for two more water troughs to be placed at the very bottom of the site. Members were inclined to think one trough near plot B11 might suffice and after discussion it was agreed that costs for installing one and for two troughs would be obtained. **Action office.**
- Water harvesting from the council's shed and possibly the toilet unit. Cllr Sullivan offered some spare water butts. Guttering would need to be installed arounds the sheds and then anyone could help themselves to the collected water.
- Members decided against allowing hosepipes.

5.2 Pest Purge report. **Received** and **noted**. Tenants to be asked not to store or lean anything against the fence as this could damage it. The shed, in parts, leaning against the fence to be removed unless a tenant claimed it. **Action Clerk.**

6. **Boxley War Memorial**

- 6.1 **Ratified** the decision, after consulting members, to award Burslem the contract to carry out the restoration. The work had been scheduled for 21 August 2018.
Noted.
- 6.2 Memorial Plaque at St Mary & All Saints. The Chairman notified members that the work was in hand. The Clerk was asked to obtain an update on the plaque that had been ordered for the Grove Green site. **Action Clerk.**

7. **Matters for Information**

- 7.1 Franklin Drive Play Area. Cllr Hinder gave members an update on the Franklin Drive Open Space,. MBC had repaired the fence and would be cutting back branches form above the swings. Cllr Dengate asked about ownership of the boundary fences. The Clerk notified members that the wooden fence adjacent to the railway, behind which was a poorly maintained chain link fence, would become the responsibility of the parish council when it took over the site but there was no information available on the ownership of the other fences adjacent to private gardens. Cllr Dengate requested that Network Rail be contacted to request that their chain link fence is repaired and maintained.
Action office.
- 7.2 MBC new dog fouling orders. Members **received** and **noted** the report covering the raise in fines and that MBC's new orders would cover the parish council's open spaces.
- 7.3 Weaving Diamond Jubilee Orchard Annual Play Inspection Report. Members **noted** that an issue around a recent repair to a swing, undertaken by MBC, had been highlighted by the report as needing adjustment. MBC has been contacted. **Action office.**

8. **Assistant Clerk's Report**

- 8.1 Hire fees income. **Received** and **noted.** A query was raised about the difference between the 2018/19 and 2017/18 casual hire income. Clerk to investigate and report back to members by e-mail. **Action Clerk.**
- 8.2 Account balances. **Received** and **noted.** A query was raised as to why the HSBC account showed funds well above the £85,000 threshold members request. Members were informed that a maturing bond had been returned to the bank and the Chairman notified members that he and Cllr Hinder had recently signed an authorisation to transfer some of the funds to UTB. **Noted.**
- 8.3 Income and Expenditure. **Received** and **noted.**
Noticeboards. Cllr Dengate asked that new door inserts are investigated for the Gleamingwood Drive noticeboard as the current plastic was damaged by sunlight and was difficult to see through. It was suggested that polycarbonate might be suitable, the office was asked to investigate. **Action office.**
A query was raised about increased insurance expenditure under 4105/280 Allotments. Clerk to investigate and report back to members by e-mail. **Action Clerk.**
- 8.4 Profit and Loss. **Received** and **noted.**
- 8.5 Hall Hire Fees. After lengthy discussion new hire fees were **agreed.**
- 8.5.1 Increase in hall hire fees. Cllr Hinder seconded by Cllr Dengate proposed a 10% increase. **Agreed** with one objection.
- 8.5.2 Increase in committee room fees. The Chairman proposed a 30% increase in low impact hire fees, with the fee being rounded down to £10.00 per hour, and a 35% increase for high impact events. **Agreed.**
- 8.5.3 Increase in hall plus committee room hire fees. Cllr Dengate seconded by Cllr Ivor Davies proposed that dual hire of the hall and committee room would be the hall rate plus 30% of the committee room fee. **Agreed.**
- 8.5.4 10% discount on the total fee to be given for any Day Hire (12.30 pm – 11.30 pm).
Members requested a hire fee review, to allow them to monitor the impact, in 6 months. **Action office.**

Changes were **agreed** to the current system:

- Introduction of different hire fees for two new categories depending on whether they had low or high usage impact on the halls utilities. Delegated power given to the Clerk/Asst Clerk to manage the categories.
- Delegated powers were given to the Clerk/Asst Clerk to amend the hall fees charged for Monday to Friday events booked during school holiday and 16th – 21st birthday parties.
- Delegated powers were given to the Clerk/Asst Clerk to reduce, without the need to seek approval, hire fees by up to 2.5% for Regular Groups that may find the increase difficult.
- If hall hire falls due to the new fees the Chairman and Vice Chairman to be notified and delegated power was agreed to allow them to reduce the increase whilst the issue was returned to the committee.

8.6 Accident Report. A minor hand injury to the Clerk, whilst undertaking emergency safety work at Franklin Drive Open Space was reported. **Noted.**

8.7 PRS Music Licence. The report on the recent changes to the system, halls and local authorities now being required to purchase a Public Performance Licence (PPL) fee for halls, was **received** and **noted**.

9. **Beechen Hall Extension**

Notes from meetings held on 4 and 18 June and 3 August with Waller Building Services. **Received** and **noted**. Members had inspected the progress at the hall and Cllr Dengate pointed out that one of the urinals were supposed to be at child height and was not. The Clerk was asked to investigate the issue with David Tindall. **Action Clerk.** Arrangements were made to have councillors attend the office to authorise the first stage payment.

10. **Policies and Procedures**

10.1 Business Continuity Plan. With a number of minor amendments requested, **agreed**.

10.2 Beechen Hall Snow Policy. With a number of minor amendments requested, **agreed**.

10.3 Clerk's delegated power Dove Hill Allotments. Reviewed and reported by the office as still fit for purpose. **Noted.**

10.4 Burial Grounds Regulations currently being revised by the working group and the Clerk. **Noted.**

10.5 Risk Assessments for hall (Fire, Drink and Public Licence). Reviewed, refreshed and reported by the office as still fit for purpose. **Noted.**

10.6 Annual look at hall. Due to the continuing building works the inspection was deferred to the October meeting. **Action office.**

10.7 Dove Hill Allotment rents, rules and regulations. Brief discussion took place on the actual cost of running allotments. Members **received** and **noted** the list of allotment fees charged by other authorities.

10.7.1 Members **agreed** to remove the temporary ban against fires at the allotment.

10.7.2 It was **agreed** that the regulations be amended so that;

- Controlled and attended bonfires would be allowed.
- In extremely dry conditions there are to be no fires at the allotments until the parish council advises otherwise.

Action Clerk. Cllr Ivor Davies asked that the tenants are reminded that material must not be brought onto the site to burn. **Action Clerk.**

After discussion;

Cllr Hinder proposed seconded by Cllr Clarke that the 2018/2019 fees remain unchanged at £17.50 per quarter plot. The motion was lost (3 for, 4 against).

The Chairman proposed that the 2018/2019 fees be raised to £20 per quarter plot. The motion was lost (1 for, 6 against).

10.7.3 Cllr Ivor Davies proposed seconded by Cllr Dengate that the **2018/2019 fees be set at £18.50 per quarter plot. Agreed** (6 for, 1 against).

It was **agreed** that due to the adverse weather conditions experienced this year that there would be no allotment competition.

The Clerk notified members that there was now a waiting list for an allotment plot and as the applicant was a resident of the parish there would be a need to give notice to a non-resident tenant. It was **agreed** that prior to any lottery two non-resident tenants who had not tended their allotment plots on a regular basis will be approached and asked whether they wish to continue to hire the plot. **Action Clerk.**

10.8 Staff conditions and any alteration to hours review. In view of recent staff changes and review of job descriptions, hours and contracts there was no requirement to review. **Agreed.**

11. **Matters for Decision**

There were none.

12. **Date of Next Meeting.**

Tuesday 9 October 2018 at Beechen Hall, Wildfell Close, Walderslade, ME5 9RU commencing at 7.30 p.m.

13. **Burial Ground Fees**

After careful consideration of the report submitted to members Cllr Hollands proposed seconded by Cllr Hinder ***This committee having duly considered the application for waiver or a reduction in the internment fee is unable to accede to this request. Unanimously agreed.***

Meeting closed at 9.35 pm

Signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

Chairman.....

Date.....

