



Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held remotely on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 at 7.30pm

Present:

Cllr Martin Broughton (Chair)  
Cllr Suzanne Camp  
Cllr Fabienne Hughes  
Cllr Tom Jenkins

Also, in attendance was the Clerk Erin Sugden and Administrator Amy Bush.

### Reports from members of the public

None.

#### 1. Declarations of intentions to record

The Clerk declared that the meeting was to be recorded for minuting purposes.

#### 2. Apologies and absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Jon Hughes and Cllr Pat Marshall.

#### 3. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying

None.

#### 4. Signing of the Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes from Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 were agreed as a true record and duly signed.

#### 5. Clerk's report

The Clerk informed the Committee that the tree works to The Green would commence on the 22<sup>nd</sup> March and the Elizabeth Harvie Field (EHF) on the 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

#### 6. Church Landway/Church Car Park (Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s57(1)(a) and LGA 1972s126)

a) Correspondence: None

b) CCTV to cover car park: The Administrator gave a detailed report providing options for CCTV. Cllr Hughes is waiting for information from Bearsted Golf Club about the solution they have in their car park. The Clerk was requested to investigate how many incidents of crime have been reported in the car park, Church Landway and clubs within the last 2 years.

**ACTION: CLERK/ CLLR HUGHES**

#### 7. General Maintenance (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10 and Highways Act 1980 s96)

a) To identify/ratify essential maintenance issues: The gravel laid at the entrance to the EHF has caused concern that it will spread. The Clerk was asked to look at a suitable alternative.

**ACTION: CLERK**

- b) To review quotations for the reduction of hedge height on path KM227: Three quotations were received to reduce the height of the hedge after permission was given by KCC. Cllr Jenkins proposed to appoint Maidstone Tree Surgeons at a cost of £500+VAT which was resolved with all in favour.
- c) Community Payback: Deferred to the next meeting.
- d) Salt bin volunteer project: After the recent snow fall it was apparent that the salt bins were not being used to grit local roads and pathways. It was proposed for the Clerk to request volunteers to assist with checking the salt bins during the year and laying the grit when there is next snow. A request will be put in the monthly newsletter for volunteers.

**ACTION: CLERK**

- e) Memorial re-furbish: The Queen Victoria Memorial was inspected and the Committee felt that it requires some maintenance. Research will be done to find out how best to treat the wood.

**ACTION: CLERK**

- f) Ground maintenance contract: Discussion was had between the Committee about the most suitable time to re-tender the maintenance contract. It was proposed by Cllr Broughton to continue with Waring for 2021 but put the contract out to tender in September 2021 ready for 2022. This was resolved with all in favour.

**ACTION: CLERK**

**8. Bearsted Green** (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10)

- a) Correspondence: None
- b) To review the finding of reports carried out about the surface of The Green play area: Maidstone Borough Council inspected the flooring and they were concerned with the lifting of the outer edges and that the entrance was slippery. The contractor who fitted the Matta flooring attended site and verbally recommended surface be cleaned with a pressure washer. It was resolved with all in favour for the Clerk to arrange for the surface to be pressure washed.

**ACTION:CLERK**

- c) To consider new trees: With the tree maintenance to take place within the next month the Committee discussed options for replacing some trees. Cllr Hughes proposed that she would speak with a local arboriculturalist for advice and aim to report back at the next meeting.

**ACTION: CLLR HUGHES**

**9. Allotments** (Small Holding and Allotment Act 1908 ss23,25)

- d) Correspondence: None.
- e) To update the committee on the invoicing process for allotment fees: The Clerk provided the Committee details of the charges occurred when the Council banks cheques. With a number of allotment tenants using cheques as payment in 2020 the Clerk recommended that there should be an admin fee to cover this. The Clerk also raised the concern that the Government advice is still for workers to work at home and not be in the office. If tenants send cheques or cash to the office it will not be picked up and cause issues with the administrator process of collecting rents. Cllr Broughton proposed an admin fee of £1 will apply to tenants paying by cheque with a letter to be sent to the allotment committees informing them of this. The proposal was resolved with all in favour.

**ACTION: CLERK**

**10. Meadow Bank** (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10)

a) Correspondence:

- i. Letter of support for Meadowbank: A letter of support for suggestions made by the Wildwood Trust was received from a local resident.
- b) To receive suggestion for the future use of Meadowbank: The Committee discussed the suggestions made by the Wildwood Trust and agreed there were limited alternative options for Meadowbank. Cllr Hughes proposed to use the suggested idea from the Wildwood Trust of transforming Meadowbank into a wildlife corridor which was resolved with all in favour. Cllr Hughes then proposed for the Wildwood Trust to be approached and asked to produce a program detailing the method to create the wildlife corridor which was resolved with all in favour.

**ACTION: CLERK**

**11. Open Spaces** (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10)

a) Correspondence: None.

- b) To consider a path from the Bearsted Woodland Trust via the Elizabeth Harvie Field to Crosskeys: Deferred to the next meeting.

**12. Street Lights in Bearsted**

A number of green lamp posts within the conservation area had been replaced with stainless steel posts which BPC did not feel was in keeping with the local area. KCC were asked when they planned to paint these posts and replied that they had no intention of painting them but BPC could do this at their own cost. As there had been previous situations where BPC had to adhere to strict regulations around street furniture within the conservation area, the Committee were not pleased by this response from KCC. The Clerk was asked to inform MBC Conservation Officer ensuring local Borough Councillors were included in the correspondence.

**ACTION: CLERK**

**13. Memorial Benches**

- a) To review the Memorial Bench Policy: The Committee reviewed the policy and asked the Clerk to include detail about the approved 5ft, teak bench and the brass 25cm x 5cm plaques. It was also suggested that more detail needs to be included as to the criteria for memorial benches on The Green.

**ACTION: CLERK**

- b) To finalise the location of 'Nice to Chat 'bench: It was proposed for the plaque to be installed on to the bench behind the bus stop on the north west corner of The Green.

**ACTION: CLERK**

- c) To consider new requests for memorial benches: A request for a memorial bench was received and it was suggested it might be suitable for this to be placed on the Cricket Pavilion. The Clerk will contact BCC.

**ACTION: CLERK**

**14. General Correspondence**

None.

**15. Future Agenda Items**

Community Payback  
CCTV to cover car park  
Future of Meadowbank  
The Queen Victoria Memorial maintenance  
To consider new trees on The Green

Street lights in Bearsted

To consider a path from the Bearsted Woodland Trust via the Elizabeth Harvie Field to Crosskeys

To review the Memorial Bench Policy

**16. Date of next Meeting, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021**

**There being no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 21.45 hrs**

**Signed..... Date.....**