



Bearsted Parish Council

Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting of Bearsted Parish Council held at the King George V Memorial Hall, Egremont Road on Tuesday 18th October 2022 at 7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Martin Broughton (Chair)
Cllr Suzanne Camp
Cllr Denis Spooner

Also, in attendance were Administrator Joanne Upton, Clerk Erin Sugden, Cllr Richard Ash, and three members of the public.

Reports from members of the public

One member of the public asked for the anti-social behaviour taking place at the Church Lane car park to be put on the next Environment committee agenda. They suggest that gabions and or a gate should be considered. A second resident spoke about the CCTV system in the car park, questioning whether the Parish Council is reviewing and passing on the data to the Police. The Chairman confirmed that BPC needs to be given specific dates and times to enable the office staff to view, download and pass the information to the police. The Administrator confirmed that all incidents reported to the office have been viewed and downloaded to pass to the police. A third member of the public mentioned an error on the agenda and requested that the published agenda be the same as the agenda provided to Councillors.

1. Declarations of intention to record

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

2. Apologies and absences.

Apologies were received and approved from Cllr A Powell.

The Administrator left the meeting at 7.40pm

3. Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying

None.

4. Signing of the Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes from Tuesday 19th July 2022 were agreed as a true record and duly signed.

5. Clerk's report

In the absence of the Clerk, the Chair reported an action from the last meeting for the Working Group set up to examine Parish leases to confirm if the BCC lease prevented the use of covers on the wicket. Cllr Spooner confirmed that the Working Group had not yet met.

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

- a) Correspondence: None
- b) To report from the expert drainage advice: Cllr Broughton proposed to obtain quotes to install a new channel and soakaway similar to the scheme proposed in 2016 which was resolved with all in favour.
- c) To consider the surface of the Church Landway: Cllr Spooner explained that this was a public footpath and as such suggested leaving as it is. Cllr Broughton suggested checking with the contractor who installed it whether this could be repaired.

ACTION: CLERK

7. **General Maintenance** (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10 and Highways Act 1980 s96)
- a) To identify/ratify essential maintenance issues: None
 - b) Community Payback: The Committee were unsure if the Community Payback team were active in the Parish.

ACTION: CLERK TO CHECK WITH CLLR PETERS

Erin Sugden arrived 19.52

8. **Bearsted Green** (Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10)
- a) Correspondence: None
 - b) To consider the use of cricket covers on the cricket square: The Parish Leases Working Group to check the lease to see if the covers would be permitted.
ACTION: WORKING GROUP.
 - c) To consider costs for electrical inspection and condition reports: Four quotations were considered with Cllr Broughton proposing Cooper Leaf at a cost of £240 to complete the electrical inspection which was resolved with all in favour.

9. **Allotments** (Small Holding and Allotment Act 1908 ss23,25)
- a) Correspondence: None.
 - b) Dissolving of The Street Association and consideration of monies due: The committee noted the decision of the allotment association to dissolve the association. It was proposed by Cllr Broughton to reimburse £3.16 to the association which was resolved with all in favour.
ACTION:CLERK
 - c) To discuss the procedure for The Street Allotment plot inspections, maintenance and management of the garden going forward: It was proposed by Cllr Camp to have Warnings to add the maintenance of the allotment garden to their ground maintenance schedule which was resolved with all in favour. Cllr Harris will be asked for his advice about managing the allotment garden. Cllr Broughton suggested that the allotment rent will need to cover all future expenditure.
ACTION: CLERK
 - d) To review the costs for clearing plots at the Church Lane allotment garden: Cllr Broughton proposed to appoint Warnings to clear the vacant plots at the Church Lane allotment garden at a cost of £694. This was resolved with all in favour.
 - e) To review monies spent on the Church Lane Allotments over the past 3 years: The rent received versus the spend on allotment gardens was considered and noted. This will be shared with the CLAA.
ACTION: CLERK
 - f) To consider the date for the CLAA AGM from December to August: Cllr Broughton proposed that BPC would support the CLAA in their decision for their AGM date. This was resolved with all in favour.
 - g) To review a request from the CLAA regarding an extension to their notice period: This was deferred to the Full Council.
 - h) To consider repairs to the Church Lane allotment garden fence: Cllr Broughton will meet with the CLAA to review the works needed to repair a fence.
ACTION:CLLR BROUGHTON
 - i) To consider monies raised in allotment rent should be spent on the allotments: It was suggested that BPC will endeavour to keep provisions of allotments are cost neutral.

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

- i. Overhanging trees: It was proposed by Cllr Camp to ask a tree surgeon to inspect the branches over hanging a property in terms of risk. If there is a health or safety risk the branches will be removed. If there is no risk the resident will be offered to have the branches removed themselves. This was resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: CLERK

- b) To receive an update on the management plan: Cllr Broughton will circulate the management plan.

ACTION: CLLR BROUGHTON

- c) To discuss options for the forming of Friends of Meadowbank: Deferred to the next meeting.

11. Open Spaces

(Open Spaces Act 1906 ss9-10)

- a) Correspondence: None.
- b) To review the specification for the fence at the Elizabeth Harvie Field: Cllr Broughton proposed the specification of works which would include the fixing of the current fence (no replacement). This was resolved with all in favour.

ACTION: CLERK

- c) Temporary flood light on the Elizabeth Harvie Field: Cllr Spooner suggested to seek Cllr Harris advice on this matter. Deferred to the next meeting

ACTION: CLLR SPPONER/HARRIS

- d) To receive an update on the maintenance schedule: The Clerk shared a document with tasks that have been completed to date and options for the next year. This was duly noted.

- e) Options for planting of spring/summer bulbs: Cllr Camp proposed to spend £300 on Spring bulbs. This was resolved with all in favour. Cllrs Camp, J.Hughes, F.Hughes and Broughton will work out a planting plan.

ACTION: CLERK/ CLLRS CAMP/F.HUGHES/J.HUGHES/BROUGHTON.

12. Play Areas

- a) To receive an update regarding the need for play area inspections: MBC informed the council that they were no longer going to carry out monthly and annual playground inspections on behalf of Parish councils from January 2023. The Clerk informed the council that these inspections are required along with weekly visual inspections of the play areas. The Clerk will carry out the weekly inspections until more resources can be found.
- b) To review costs for playground inspections: It was proposed by Cllr Broughton to appoint Landscape Services for monthly inspections at a cost of £440 (annually) and ROSPA for the annual inspection at a cost of £234 (due July/August). This was resolved with all in favour.
- c) To review costs for playground maintenance: Inspections of the stepping stones at the BWT play area indicated that two needed replacing. It was proposed by Cllr Broughton to spend £117.96 with Playdale for new stepping stones and £178 with Lee Harrison to install the equipment. This was resolved with all in favour.

ACTION:CLERK

- d) To receive feedback from the community engagement program regarding new play equipment for the BWT: The Administration Officer had visited 3 pre-schools and two toddler groups to exhibit four contractors' options for additional equipment at the BWT play area. Children and parents were asked for their opinion on the options, and it concluded that a wooden-style playhouse with a seesaw and spinning bucket was the favourite.

- e) To decide which playground equipment is to be installed into the BWT: The equipment that was favoured during the community engagement exercise was by the company Kompan. The quotation that was put forward was for £29,325.40 + VAT. As the council were not aware of the expected cost of the equipment

solutions, tenders were not put through the contract finders website. If the council had been aware of the potential costs, requests for tenders would have been submitted via the contract finder website in line with the financial regulations. Costs submitted by three other companies were all of a similar value.

Cllr Camp proposed to recommend to the Full Council to appoint Kompan for the supply of the new equipment at a cost of £29,325.40 plus £435.71 for the post installation inspection. This was resolved with all in favour.

13. Budget (Accounts and Audit Regulation 2011/817)

- a) To review the current spend versus budget: The budget was duly noted.
- b) To review the budgetary requirement for 2023-2024: The Clerk worked through the budget with the committee, with items such as playground inspections, The Street allotment maintenance, and increases to water rates etc being increased. Cllr Broughton proposed the budget for recommendation to the Full Council which was resolved with all in favour.

14. Delegation

To review the delegations in place for the committee: The Clerk reported that due to the bi-monthly meetings some issues had not been dealt with in a timely manner. In particular the replacement of stepping stones in the BWT Play area. The current delegation to carry out our remedial work is set at £500 with Cllr Broughton suggesting this should be increased to prevent the delay in maintaining council assets. Cllr Broughton proposed to recommend to the Full Council increasing the delegation to £1000 with items being ratified at the next meeting of the committee/council. This was resolved with all in favour.

15. Sustainability Policy

The committee considered a number of policies of other councils but felt that as BPC had not set particular aims it would be hard to agree upon a policy. Cllr Spooner suggested that green issues should be at the forefront of everything the council does and that this should be written into each committee's TOR. This will be put forward to the Full Council. Cllr Broughton will make contact with the Bearsted Climate Action Group.

ACTION:CLERK

16. General Correspondence

- a) Damage to the Ashford Road verges due to SGN works: It was suggested that the company doing the work was SGN but this was questioned. The Clerk will contact Kent Highway for clarification and request that the land is return to its original state.

ACTION:CLERK

17. Future Agenda Items

To consider the use of cricket covers on the cricket square
To discuss options for the forming of Friends of Meadowbank
Temporary flood light on the Elizabeth Harvie Field

18. Date of next Meeting, 20th December 2022.

There being no further business to transact, the meeting ended at 9:48pm

Signed.....Date.....