

## MINUTES OF A SITE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 25<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2019

**PRESENT:** Cllr. Fairweather (in the Chair), Cllrs. Fermor, Fletcher, Kings, Pethurst, Smith and Veitch (in part). Parish Warden Ivor Hatcher. Jeremy Boxall, Chair of Kent Countryside Access Forum. A member of the public.

### **Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying:**

Members are required to declare any interests, dispensations, predetermination or lobbying on items on this agenda. Members are reminded that changes to the Register of Interests should be notified to the Clerk.

Cllrs. Fletcher and Pethurst declared a personal interest in the allotments as tenants.

### **01/19: Election of Vice Chairman:**

Cllr. Fairweather nominated Cllr. Fletcher to be Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr. Pethurst and agreed.

### **02/19: Allocation of Sites for Responsibility:**

Members volunteered to take responsibility for the following sites:

Allotments:	Cllr. Pethurst
Crane Valley:	Cllr. Fletcher
Jubilee Field:	Cllr. Fermor
Regal Car Park:	Cllr. Veitch
Tanyard Car Park	Cllr. Fletcher
Ball Field & Jockey Lane Car Park	–Cllr. Pethurst.

### **03/19: Issues from Inspection of Grounds:**

a) Ball Field:

Members were happy with the overall condition of the Ball Field.

b) Allotments:

Requests had been received from several tenants asking for permission to erect polytunnels on their plots. It was agreed to grant the requests but in order that the structures do not dominate the plots, size would be limited to a maximum of 2m x 3m. Permission was also granted for two tenants to erect a small tool shed on the boundary of their plot.

The majority of the plots were in good order. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to those that fell below standard requesting action. Plot 26 had been under constant review and the tenant informed last year that unless significant improvement was evident, the tenancy would be terminated. Cllr. Fairweather proposed that unfortunately as no improvement could be seen and in fairness to surrounding plots, the tenancy should be withdrawn with immediate effect. This was seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

The trees, particularly at the top of the site were in need of cutting back. It was agreed to seek a quote for this to be carried out at the appropriate time of year.

### **04/19: Play Equipment Review:**

a) Ball Field:

It was proposed by Cllr. Veitch, seconded by Cllr. Fairweather and agreed to remove the bases of the animal rockers, as to replace missing parts was deemed uneconomical.

It was agreed to investigate replacing the equipment and improvement to the safety surface under the swings following any recommendations in the forthcoming ROSPA report.

b) Crane Valley:

Members were informed that work on the drainage around the skate park was expected to commence in the autumn.

An email had been received from the KCC contractor providing youth provision in the Borough. They were requesting permission to use the Crane Valley to offer a programme of free activities to all young people in the community on Monday 5th August. Members raised no objection, subject to evidence of suitable insurance cover and relevant risk assessments being provided.

c) Jubilee Field:

It was agreed that the grounds contractors would be asked to trim the branches overhanging the basketball area.

**05/19: Issues from Car Parks:**

a) Jockey Lane:

A large pothole was identified at the entrance to the Car Park. It was agreed to contact the contractor that had recently undertaken the essential repairs in the Regal and ask him for a quote.

One of the EV charge point logos was coming unstuck on a corner again. The Clerk agreed to contact the supplier to request this is repaired. Cllr. Fletcher advised that the grant monies due for the installation of the EV points was expected at the end of this month.

b) The Regal:

It was noted that the contractors that had repaired the Co-Op gas supply cabinet following a road traffic accident had failed to remove some of the debris from site. The Clerk would raise this with the Co-Op.

The cover to a ventilation pipe has been dislodged again. The Parish Warden agreed to rectify.

At a recent meeting with Cranbrook in Bloom it was agreed to discuss improvements to planting in the Car Park. Members suggested that some of the open green spaces could be planted with nectar rich species to encourage pollinators. The central area in the lower car park could be planted with wild flower seeds which would be an inexpensive short term solution to approve the appearance of the area.

Some of the vegetation in the car park required cutting back. The Clerk would chase the contractors to undertake this before the Cranbrook in Bloom judging takes place.

TWBC had asked if the Parish Council would consider retaining some smaller bins in the recycling area for mixed glass, plastics, cans and foil when kerbside collections are introduced. Cllr. Fairweather proposed that we ask TWBC to remove all recycling bins as soon as kerbside collections commence. This was seconded by Cllr. Fermor and agreed.

c) The Tanyard:

Although Members agreed that the Car Park was generally tidy, the Clerk would contact the grounds contractors to ensure that all the work in their specification was completed to a good standard.

## **06/19: Any Other Environmental Management Issues:**

### **a) Trees:**

Cllr. Fermor had compiled a report on ash dieback disease which was affecting some of the trees on our land. Concerns were raised that we could lose a significant amount of ash trees from the disease. As there will be more development in the Parish and trees will inevitably be lost, the idea of identifying a location within the Parish that could be used as a tree nursery was discussed. Cllr. Fletcher agreed to investigate the cost of young saplings and to get advice on the feasibility of the idea.

Cllr. Fermor raised concern at the trees overhanging the Pound at Wilsley which in her opinion required some cutting back. It was agreed that she would write to the owners of the trees, in her capacity as Tree Warden.

Vegetation at the top side of the Crane Valley was overgrown and required cutting back. The Clerk would contact the ground contractors to undertake this as part of their contract.

### **b) Streetlights:**

The Clerk advised it had been necessary to authorise expenditure to replace a lantern in Campion Crescent costing £325 + VAT on the grounds of health and safety.

### **c) Replacement of Floodlighting at Sissinghurst Tennis Club:**

An email had been received from the Chairman of the Club requesting from us as their landlord, permission to allow them to replace the current aged floodlights with LED bulbs which would be more economical. The Committee considered the request. They were keen that there should be no increase in the lighting footprint. Before approval was granted, Members agreed they would like to see the lighting plan and receive confirmation that there would be no expense incurred by the Parish Council for the project.

### **d) Parish Council Footpath Representative:**

The Chairman invited Mr Boxall to advise Members why he was asking the Council to consider appointed a footpath representative. He informed the Committee that he was the Chairman of the Kent Countryside Access Forum. They meet four times a year and give councils' advice on Public Rights of Way, footpaths and byways. Councils have no duty to maintain these facilities however they do have certain powers they can utilise if they wish. The KCAF would like to see the Council appoint a person to represent the community and liaise with KCC. As there were no volunteers forthcoming from the Committee, it was agreed that Mr Boxall would write a specification for the role, which would be circulated to all councillors.

## **07/19: Items for Information:**

No items were raised.