

Hoo St Werburgh Parish Council
Minutes from the Environmental Committee Meeting
Held on 18th February 2021 at 1pm via Zoom.

***Councillors Present: Tildesley
Rees
Fray
Pearce
Pratt
Winstanley***

Also, Present: Parish Clerk.

The meeting was Chaired by Cllr Tildesley.

1. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Cllrs Perfect and Freshwater.

2. Declaration of Interests.

No interests were declared.

3. Recreation Grounds.

a. New play equipment.

The Clerk confirmed that this project had now been completed, the new play equipment had been inspected and signed off. She stated that Medway Council had been informed that the project was complete and therefore the Parish Council had adhered to the Section 106 requirements.

b. Hoo Common.

The Chairman reported that the gate at Hoo Common had been damaged. A quotation had been sought from Westsole Fencing to have this repaired at a cost of £875.

Due to the urgent need to have the access to Hoo Common secured, it was agreed that this work should take place as soon as possible. The Clerk was therefore asked to progress the order with Westsole Fencing.

Action: Clerk to progress.

The Chairman reported that there had been an issue with bikes accessing and riding around Hoo Common. He stated the police had been and made aware of this issue and had attended the site.

c. Tree Maintenance.

Quotations to be sought for tree maintenance at recreation grounds when all reports had been submitted by Medway Norse. This was currently delayed due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Action: Clerk to progress.

d. Kingshill Recreation Ground.

The Chairman referred to a report circulated to all members of the Environmental Committee regarding possible improvements to Kingshill Recreation Ground and Hoo Common.

He stated that he and the Vice Chairman had attended with Fiona Leadley from Medway Council to discuss the recreation grounds and as a result the report had been drawn up.

Medway Council had indicated that they were willing to work with the Parish Council to undertake improvements identified in the report.

The Chairman asked for members comments.

Concerns were raised regarding who would finance the proposed work, the timescales and whether this would be financed by Medway Council or from Section 106 allocations.

It was agreed that the report should be submitted to Full Council to ascertain all members views, and the Clerk would liaise with Medway Council to establish timescales and how the work would be funded.

Action: Clerk to circulate report to all members with meeting papers, and to liaise with Medway Council regarding the funding of the work/improvements.

Cllr Fray asked whether the meeting regarding the Hillcrest opening onto Kings Hill Recreation Ground had been arranged. The Chairman confirmed that this was in the process of been arranged by Medway Council, and he would let her know the date if she wished to attend.

e. Dog Park Area.

The Clerk informed members that this item had been placed on the agenda at the request a full council for consideration.

Members discussed the possibility of having a fenced dog area at one of its recreation grounds.

It was agreed that there was no capacity to have a fenced area at Pottery Road Recreation Ground, and it would not be appropriate to have this at Hoo Common.

Members discussed the possibility of having a fenced area at Kingshill Recreation Ground.

It was agreed that at this present time members felt that this would not be possible for the following reasons:

1. There were currently no restrictions regarding dogs at Kings Hill Recreation Ground, and therefore visitors to the area were able to walk their dogs off lead.
2. It was felt that it would not be appropriate to have a fenced dog area at the Recreation Ground at this time, as the area was due to have extensive improvements undertaken to enhance the facilities at the site.

For the above reasons, it was agreed that the Environment Committee would recommend no action taken on this matter at this point in time.

4. Parish Allotments.

The Clerk reported that there were no issues to raise with regards to the allotments at this time.

5. Burial Ground.

Cllr Rees circulated the following report on the burial ground, this was noted by members:

1. Church – Timetable for takeover of Burial Ground

Authority required for me to email the Vicar and Churchwardens to obtain some idea as to when the PCC considers it feasible to take over the Burial Ground.

(Sherrie wrote to the Vicar last year but did not receive a response).

AGREED

2. Saplings

There was a delivery of a further 135 saplings in early November. These were planted by the Warden to infill gaps. Last summer's heatwave and drought appear to have proved detrimental to the growth of some of the saplings.

- (i) **Authority required for me to order more to replace dead ones from the Woodland Trust (free) for delivery in November 2021** to avoid any summer heatwaves.

AGREED

- (ii) The hedge maintenance Schedule is attached and some of the saplings require trimming in accordance with the Schedule. (Paragraph 2(ii)) i.e., prune the tips lightly later this month. **Authority required to ask the Warden to attend or alternative suggestion.**

AGREED

- (iii) Weeding is required around the base of the saplings. The Warden has attended to this very satisfactorily in the past. **Decision required as to whether he should be asked to attend to the weeding or an alternative suggestion.**

AGREED

3. Grass Cutting 2021

The Specification for the 2020 grass cutting contract is attached together with the quotes for 2020. **Decision required to simply update the 2020 Specification for 2021 or revise the Specification.** NB the grass to be cut no lower than 10cms for environmental reasons.

AGREED

Authority required to seek quotes for 2021 once Specification agreed.

There are weeds becoming established in the grass these need removal pre grass cutting. **Authority required to ask Warden if he would be able to attend to this** as overtime.

AGREED

4. Wildflower seeds

Authority required to purchase more Wildflower Seeds for sowing in the rough ground around the grassed area – where they grow better.

AGREED

5. Water Supply

As summers become hotter a water supply is becoming essential. **Authority required to seek an update for these quotes.**

AGREED

6. School Project

For information: Due to the uncertainty with Covid and the lack of information from the PCC, it is suggested that this project be left in abeyance.

AGREED

6. Other Projects.

Village Planting

It was agreed that the Clerk would liaise with Norse to establish their schedule of maintenance for the village centre, this would enable to PC to ascertain how it could assist in keeping this area in a maintained condition.

Action: Clerk to liaise with Medway Norse.

Parish Council Nursery/ Storage Area

The Clerk stated that this project was on hold until the issues over the Section 106 money spent on the new infants play areas had been resolved. The work in the play area had now been completed and therefore this project could be progressed.

This was agreed.

7. Any Other Business.

No matters were raised.

The meeting was closed at 2.25pm.