

**Minutes of the Meeting of the  
Playing Fields, Allotments and Amenities Committee  
held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023 - 7pm at Diamond Jubilee Lodge**

**Present:** Cllr D. Maidstone (Chairman)  
Cllr N. Barker  
Cllr D. Fahy  
Cllr S. Gurney

**Also in Attendance:**  
Mrs F LeBon (Clerk), Mr K Sage (Facilities Manager) and 3 members of the public

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting

**1. Apologies and acceptance for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr G. Diffey.

**2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

None declared.

**3. Approval of the Minutes from 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

The draft Minutes had been circulated from the meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> April 2023. These were **AGREED**.

**4. Public Participation**

A member of the public asked if the council were aware of the issues he had raised about the muntjac deer in the allotment site. It was noted that the council were. He further advised that he had received a copy of the risk assessment and was satisfied. A further member of the public gave advice on how to deter deer from individual plots.

A member of the public asked about progress of sub dividing plot 19. The Facilities Manager advised that he will be measuring up the plot shortly.

A member of the public asked if any chippings/timber from tree removal at Mountfield Park can be taken up to the allotment site. This can be accommodated if the Parish Council team are able to get them loaded onto the trailer.

It was requested that additional costs for allotment plots, such as administration fees and damage deposits be added to the Parish Council's website.

A member of the public gave an overview of the membership of the bowls club and the facilities provided for the amount the club pays.

**5. Allotments**

**a. To Consider Alternative for Securing Allotment Site.**

It was reported that the padlock to the allotment site had failed. To replace the lock and have new keys cut for every allotment holder and staff would be a costly exercise.

A good quality combination lock has been installed to secure the site, and this has been generally well received. The benefit to this system is if the lock fails again then it can be changed quickly and easily and the same combination can be retained. Or if the combination has to be changed for security reasons, the new code can be distributed by email. For those not on email, a letter can be sent out. AC Leigh had been consulted and had provided a specification for an electric system with SALTO smart cards, but this would be costly to set up and would not alleviate any of the problems that would be encountered with a padlock and key system.

It was **AGREED** that the combination lock should be retained to secure the allotment site. In addition to this, a second lock should be purchased which will allow for the lock to be changed quickly in the event of failure.

**b. To Receive Update Report on Planning Application for Parking at Allotment Extension**

In November 2022, upon the advice of Broadland Council’s planning department, the Parish Council submitted a planning application to convert an unused allotment in the allotment extension area to a car park to be used primarily by those with limited mobility, as it is quite a distance from the main car park to the allotment extension. The car park will be constructed of rubber matting so it can be removed and converted back to an allotment at any time.

On 2nd June, Broadland Council advised that they had sought legal advice and advised that Planning Permission could not be granted as permission needed to be sought from the Secretary of State for disposal of an allotment, quoting s8 of the allotment act 1925. After seeking advice, the Parish Council has queried that this is permitted development citing The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 Part 12 and also the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 s26. The matter of disability compliance was also discussed.

It was **AGREED** that a letter of complaint should be sent to the Managing Director at Broadland Council about the way this planning application has been handled, copying in all the Hellesdon District Councillors.

**6. Parks**

**a. To Consider Request for Seating at Cottinghams Park**

Correspondence had been received from a parishioner about the lack of seating at Cottinghams Park. Some options had been provided to committee members on Enviropol seats and benches. It was **AGREED** that two seats would be appropriate to the north of the site. Discussions occurred as to the material of the seats, with the desire to make the seating as vandal resistant as possible.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk and Facilities Manager should work with a £2,000 budget (from the HEL2 reserves) and source two appropriate seats and fixings. The options are to be sent to the committee for consideration.

**b. To Receive Quotes for Tree Removal at Mountfield Park.**

Further to the agreement at the last meeting to remove two problematic trees at Mountfield Park, quotes had been received for the works. It was **AGREED** after a proposal from Cllr Maidstone and a second from Cllr Fahy to proceed with the works for a cost of £2,300 (budget 4455 – tree works and inspections). It was noted that a semi mature tree should be planted in an appropriate place on Mountfield Park to replace these trees, but this can be done in the autumn to increase the chance of survival. Cllr Fahy suggested a Paloma Princess tree, due to its rapid growth and attractive flowers.

**c. To Receive RoSPA reports for Play Equipment**

The annual RoSPA reports for the play areas had been circulated. There were no matters of concern to be reported. Cable ties are to be installed in areas to deter birds from settling on the equipment and therefore reducing bird strikes where children are likely to play.

The Facilities Manager reported that the cracks in the concrete at the skate park can be repaired in house so the cost of repair would be just that of the materials.

Discussions occurred as to the replacement of the timber sleepers in the entrance to the ball games area and whether the Parish Council is resourced to replace these or whether the works should be contracted out. The Facilities Manager advised that these should be able to be done in house in the autumn, but if there are any concerns over resource at this time, the matter should be brought back to the committee.

## 7. Fees

### a) To Review Allotment Fees for 2024

Under the allotment rules, the Parish Council is required to give 12 months notice of a rental change. As result, any change in rental upon tenancy renewal in October 2024 would need to be communicated by 30th September 2023. Each allotment holder is charged a tenancy amount and then an amount for pest control and water (the latter two items are equal to the amount that the Parish Council is charged). Upon taking up an allotment, an initial administration fee of £15 is charged, as is a £30 refundable damage deposit, which is returned upon termination of the tenancy, should the plot be returned in the condition as it was let.

Discussions occurred as to the level of damage deposit and whether it was an incentive to clear plots prior to vacating. The following was **AGREED**:

- i) That the administration fee be scrapped.
- ii) That the damage deposit be scrapped and all deposits held refunded to allotment holders. The Parish Council would still retain the right to claim back the cost, should one arise, of clearing a plot on vacation of the tenant.
- iii) That the allotment fee from October 2024 should be £48 per annum and 12 months notice of this increase be given to allotment holders.

### b) To Review Football Pitch Fees for the 2023/2024 Season

The following prices were **AGREED** for the 2023/2024 season (VAT inclusive):

- |      |                        |        |
|------|------------------------|--------|
| i)   | Adult pitch per match  | £70    |
| ii)  | Junior pitch per match | £45    |
| iii) | Training per hour      | £11.45 |
| iv)  | Changing Rooms         | £11.45 |

### c) To Review Hard Court Fees (netball)

It was **AGREED** to charge the following from the 2024 netball season (VAT inclusive):

- |     |                        |       |
|-----|------------------------|-------|
| i)  | Netball court per hour | £8.50 |
| ii) | Floodlights            | £3.25 |

### d) To Agree Bowling Green Fees for 2024

Discussions occurred as to the cost of maintaining the bowling green versus the income generated and there being a shortfall. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk and Facilities Manager should further investigate the maintenance costs of the bowling green and present a figure to the next committee meeting (to be arranged nearer the end of September). This will allow the Bowls Club to discuss this at their AGM in October. Cllr Maidstone will also meet with representatives of the Bowls Club in the meantime.

## 8. Items for the Next Agenda

Fees for the Bowling Green for 2024

Budget setting

Replacement Tree for Mountfield Park.

**9. To Confirm Date, Time and Venue of the Next Meeting**

To be arranged at the end of September.

**MEETING CLOSED AT 9.10pm**

DRAFT