

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH PARISH COUNCIL

EXTRAORDINARY LEISURE & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held virtually via Zoom at 7pm on 22nd September 2020

Present Cllr M Lucas (Chair)
Cllr J Yeowell (Vice-chair)
Cllr J Ballman
Cllr R Ballman
Cllr D Patey
Cllr S Thompson

Cllr S Henderson (Non-committee Member)

Officers A Reeves (Parish Clerk)
A Briggs (Estates Manager)

Public Three

Public Session The member of the public present, Mary Farragher, posed a question to the Committee; What does the ecological survey carried out say about planting on Cricklade Field?
Cllr M Lucas confirmed that the survey report made no recommendation but stated that the condition of the field would've improved since trees were planted.

The Estates Manager stated that the results of the ecological survey would be discussed under agenda item 7.

193 **Apologies**
None received.

194 **Declarations of Interest & Applications for Dispensation**
Cllrs J Ballman & S Thompson declared a non-pecuniary interest in HBUF.
Cllr J Ballman declared a non-pecuniary interest in RSPB, as the survey being discussed at agenda item 7 was carried out by RSPB.

195 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
Cllr R Ballman commented on the lack of quotes for parking at St Marks. The Estates Manager responded that 1 quote had been received and Idverde had been chased for a 2nd quote.

Cllr J Yeowell queried the flooding at Rodbourne Farm Leisure Garden site. The Estates Manager responded that the report had been received and confirmed that a section of the tunnel has collapsed which causes a blockage and subsequent flooding and this information would be passed to Thames Water for them to deal with.

Cllr S Thompson moved that the Minutes of the meeting held 18th August 2020 be approved, seconded by Cllr J Ballman. All unanimously agreed

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved as a true and accurate record.

196 **Cheney Manor Garden Survey**
The Estates Manager shared the responses received to the survey.

The Parish Clerk confirmed that the majority of the responses received were against devolving the maintenance of the 2 verges to the North & South of Manor Gardens. Approx. 9% were in favour of the devolution but did not want to partake in the maintenance

The Parish Clerk informed members that most of the challenges received were re: the liability and responsibilities of the householders.

The Parish Clerk suggested that, based on the responses to the survey, the Parish Council continue to maintain the grass verges and he confirmed that Idverde had been contacted and the frequency of cuts etc. confirmed.

Cllr S Thompson proposed that the Parish Council continue, DP seconded. All agreed.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council continue to maintain the grass verges at Cheney Manor Gardens, via Idverde.

197 **Play Area Working Group**

The Estates Manager explained that he had created a list of observations from the play area surveys and these had been itemised in terms of urgency.

The list of observations was shared on screen.

The Estates Manager informed members that he had sent the list of items/actions to Idverde and had requested costings for the suggested actions. The costs would be shared and discussed by the Play Areas Working Group once received.

198 **Bulb Planting**

Cllr M Lucas provided members with details of the areas where planting was to take place.

Costings were being obtained from Idverde.

Cllr M Lucas asked for members to contact officers if they had any comments on the suggested areas for planting or had any alternative or additional areas that could be planted.

Cllr M Lucas informed members that the Head of Finance & Governance had been asked for details of Ward Allowances remaining for the current year financial year and that those Cllrs with Allowances remaining may be asked if they would be willing to contribute their allowances to the cost of the planting to take place.

Cllr R Ballman asked for details of Ward Allowances remaining to be sent to all Cllrs.

The policy and process of Ward Allowances was explained.

199 **HBUF & Southbrook Ecology Survey**

The Estates Manager shared the survey report on screen.

The Estates Manager informed members that as the report was fairly neutral and there were no recommendations; advice had been sought regarding action that could be taken to improve and enhance the areas concerned.

Cllr S Thompson pointed out that badgers had not been mentioned in the report but are present in the areas concerned. The Estates Manager responded that the report was going to be amended to mention the presence of badgers and confirmed that the RSPB, who carried out the survey, confirmed that the proposed works would not have an adverse effect on the badger sett(s) on site.

Cllr M Lucas asked members and members of the public present to make note of the areas they had interest in.

Cllr M Lucas referred to a section of the report that suggested the quality of the grass in certain

areas was of very poor quality.

Cllr M Lucas confirmed that the recommendations sought would be shared with the Committee at a future meeting, once received.

Cllr J Ballman suggested the survey report be shared once the requested recommendations had been received.

The Estates Manager confirmed that the recommendations would be received as a separate report/document so there was no reason to delay the sharing of the survey report.

The survey report was noted by members.

200 Penhill, Backland Vine Removal

The Estates Manager gave details of a complaint received from a resident of Penhill regarding an overgrown vine which is damaging the residents fencing. The resident had requested that the Parish Council remove the vine concerned.

The Estates Manager went on to give details of other areas where vines are present, and pictures were shared on screen.

The Estates Manager asked if Cllrs would be happy to pay for the removal of the vine a complaint had been received about. The cost of removal would be £462.55 + VAT.

Cllr J Ballman suggested the cost of removal of additional vines around the same area be sought. The Estates Manager confirmed a quote could be sought from Idverde.

Cllr M Lucas commented on the high cost of removing one vine and how a precedent for the removal of vines could be set and further requests received. It was suggested that a report be presented to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

The Estates Manager proposed he conduct a site visit with Idverde to create a schedule for maintenance of the various areas of land where vines are present.

Cllr D Patey asked if greenery would need to be removed from within residents' gardens. The Estates Manager confirmed that this would not be the case.

Comments were made on the neglect of SBC and it was confirmed that the Parish Council were responsible for the areas of land concerned.

Cllr J Ballman agreed that the proposed works needed to be completed but how the cost of the works would be covered would need to be agreed. Cllr M Lucas agreed.

Cllr R Ballman asked if the Parish Council would be responsible for making good any damage to residents' fences. The Estates Manager responded that residents would need to be consulted prior to any work being undertaken to ensure the Parish Council would be indemnified from being liable for paying for any damage to private property.

The Estates Manager confirmed that he would meet with Idverde to assess the additional areas which needed attention and a quote would be obtained for the maintaining of all areas and this would be shared with Cllrs. All agreed with the proposed action.

RESOLVED that the Estates Manager meets with Idverde to assess the various sites and a cost be obtained for the maintenance of the identified sites and this be shared with Cllrs.

201 Development of Natural Habitats within the Leisure Gardens

Cllr M Lucas informed members that this item had been brought to the Parish Council by local Cllr Bob Wright via Cllr S Henderson.

An email received from Cllr B Wright regarding developing allotment sites to improve the environment was shared and the contents summarised. The Estates Manager suggested some vacant plots could be used to drive the idea forward and a schedule for the Allotments Officer could be put in place.

Cllr M Lucas commented that the issue raised was an environmental issue and should be raised with the Environment & Planning Committee. He went on to speak of the use of insecticides by allotment holders.

The Estates Manager suggested the item be discussed with the Allotment Working Group and Leisure Garden site representatives.

Cllr J Ballman commented on the use of the term 'Leisure Gardens', meaning decisions regarding the Leisure Gardens should be made by the Leisure & Recreation Committee.

Cllr R Ballman informed members that she had spoke with Cllr B Wright who had agreed that the information provided had been sent in via the wrong channel(s).

Cllr R Ballman went on to say that the Committee should come to a decision that they are satisfied with their workload and schedule of work, and how this is managed by the Chair and that members do not wish for this to be altered.

Cllr R Ballman proposed a vote be taken on whether members were happy with the workload and schedule of the Leisure & Recreation Committee including Leisure Gardens, were in full support of and had full confidence in the Chair in carrying out the workload and didn't wish for this to be changed, seconded by Cllr S Thompson.

A vote took place. All agreed with the proposal.

RESOLVED that members were happy with the workload and schedule of the Leisure & Recreation Committee including Leisure Gardens, were in full support of and had full confidence in the Chair in carrying out the workload and there was no desire this to change.

Cllr D Patey queried whether the item raised by Cllr B Wright was specifically relating to the use of Leisure Garden sites or whether there was a consideration to made across the whole of the Parish in terms of the use of chemicals and pesticides. The Estates Manager responded that the email received was specifically about the use of allotments but there was scope for the Parish to environmentally minded when considering the use of weed killers etc.

202 Request for Additional Funding to Purchase Tractor Attachments

Cllr M Lucas explained that there would some funding left over from funding obtained for the purchase of a tractor which would be used to purchase some of the additional attachments the Parish Council had been advised to purchase, but additional funding of approx. £6,000 was required to purchase all of the desired attachments. He went to say that he would be looking into budgets and ward allowances remaining to cover the cost of the agreed bulb planting and the additional tractor accessories.

Cllr S Thompson confirmed that he would be willing to put forward his Ward Allowance for the bulb planting.

Cllr J Ballman proposed that, providing the additional funds needed could be obtained, the purchase of the additional tractor accessories and attachment by approved. Seconded by Cllr D Patey. All unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that providing the additional funds needed are obtained, the purchase of the additional tractor accessories and attachment be purchased.

The meeting closed at 8.06pm

Signed.....

Date.....

Chair of the Leisure & Recreation Committee