

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LEISURE COMMITTEE
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL
ON 1st JULY 2024 COMMENCING AT 7.04 pm**

Present: Councillors A Vale (Chair), B Thomas (Vice-Chair), G Gardner, K Qureshi, A Tebb, and J Mikkelson

Attending: S Cowie (Assistant Clerk)

Minutes Taken by: S Cowie

24/071 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - were received from Councillors J Paxton.

24/072 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – Members were reminded of the procedures.

24/073 MATTERS ARISING

Re: minute point 025.7. The new latch and fixing have been installed on the pedestrian gate into the Recreation Ground.

Councillor Vale declared a non-pecuniary interest in the following item, as an allotment tenant.

Members considered a request from an allotment tenant to erect a small storage structure within the boundary of their plot. The detailed application was considered and following review and clarification that the application meets the specified criteria for new structures, it was agreed that the request should be granted. A holding deposit will be taken, as per the agreement. Councillor Tebb **PROPOSED** approval of the request for the new structure, **SECONDED** by Councillor Qureshi with **5 in favour and 1 abstention**.

Members acknowledged the complaint from an allotment tenant regarding the central track which is overgrown, and the surface is worn due to vehicle movements. The grass cutting is carried out by the Groundsmen rather than the grass cutting contractor. The Assistant Clerk confirmed that the grass had been cut back and she is discussing ways to improve the track surface going forward.

It was noted that grass has begun growing through the surfacing on the central track. The Groundsman was asked to spray to keep under control.

Members were advised that the Police attended the Recreation Ground on Saturday 29th June and spoke to the rider of a quad bike, which had entered the Recreation Ground. Quad and motorbikes are not permitted on the Recreation Ground and members were pleased to hear that the Police were taking action.

24/074 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LEISURE COMMITTEE HELD ON 29th APRIL 2024

There were no queries on the minutes. Councillor Vale **PROPOSED** approval of the minutes of the Leisure Committee meeting held on 29th April 2024 **SECONDED** by Councillor Thomas with **5 in favour and 1 abstention**. The minutes were approved.

24/075 TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE WEEKLY INSPECTIONS OF THE PLAYGROUND AND FITNESS EQUIPMENT

The inspections of the Norman Road and Arnold Recreation Ground Play Areas and Fitness Equipment undertaken by the Groundsmen on 10th, 17th and 24th June were acknowledged. Everything was in order.

24/076 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE PLAY EQUIPMENT WORKING GROUP AND CONSIDER/ APPROVE ANY ACTIONS

Councillor Mikkelson provided an update on the project and the results of the public consultation which closed at the end of May. The group have met with a play equipment supplier and discussions are in progress with two further suppliers. They have been asked to put forward their ideas for new equipment to meet the needs of the village. It is proposed that the play area should be extended further into the recreation ground, away from the flood area. Discussions regarding flooding are ongoing with Central Bedfordshire Council and the landowner. The project will rely on successful grant funding, and the group plan submit grant applications very soon.

Whilst the survey concentrated on the Recreation Ground, it highlighted the need for improvements to the Norman Road Play Area. Members agreed that the Working Group should proceed with improvements to include - painting the existing equipment, clean the surfacing and patch repairs to the safety surfacing. The need for additional seating was discussed under the next agenda item.

Due to the short deadline for grant applications, it was agreed that authority should be delegated to Councillor J Mikkelson (Chair of the Play Equipment Working Group), Councillor A Vale (Chair of the Leisure Committee) and the Assistant Clerk to progress the grant application. Members to be kept up to date with progress and any decisions.

Councillor Vale then **PROPOSED** approval of the actions undertaken so far by the Working Group and that authority should be delegated to Councillors Mikkelson, Vale and the Assistant Clerk to progress the grant application submission due to the tight deadline. Councillor Tebb **SECONDED** the proposal, and it was **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

24/077 TO CONSIDER/APPROVE PURCHASE OF PICNIC BENCHES FOR THE NORMAN ROAD PLAY AREA

Councillor Mikkelson **PROPOSED** the approval of the purchase of one Pembridge eight-seater picnic bench with dark brown slats, from Glasdons Uk at a cost of £1,002.79 + VAT. Councillor Qureshi **SECONDED** the proposal, and it was **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**. A further bench will be purchased once funds allow.

24/078 TO REVIEW AND AGREE THE ALLOTMENT TENANCY AGREEMENT

Councillor Vale declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda items 24/078 – 081, as they are an allotment tenant.

Members reviewed the Tenancy Agreement (version 6). During visits to the site, it had been noticed that not all tenants are working their plots as per the agreement, and some plots show little sign of cultivation or crop rotation. Councillors Vale and Thomas agreed to visit the site to undertake a full inspection. It was agreed that tenants should be reminded of the rules, set out in the tenancy agreement, regarding cultivation in the annual letter.

The following amendment to the Tenancy Agreement was agreed.

- 2.3 Within the first three months of the tenancy, 25% of the plot must be under cultivation with crops. This is discretionary on the condition of the plot at the start of the tenancy agreement and time of year the plot is let.

After three months it must be seen that the plot is being regularly tended and is showing signs of progress.

Within twelve months of the tenancy start date and thereafter, plots must be fully cultivated with crops (fruit, vegetables, flowers) which should be planted annually, on a rotation basis.

Members reviewed the Information for Tenants booklet and there were no amendments made.

Councillor Vale **PROPOSED** approval of the Allotment Tenancy Version 7, with amendments as agreed, **SECONDED** by Councillor Mikkelson with **5 in favour and 1 abstention**. The document will be adopted at the July Full Council meeting.

24/079 TO REVIEW AND AGREE THE ALLOTMENT ANNUAL RENTAL FEE EFFECTIVE FROM 1ST OCTOBER 2025

Following discussion, Councillor Mikkelson **PROPOSED** that the fees from 1st October 2025 should remain at the 2024 rate which is £22.50 for a 5-pole plot and £45.00 for a 10-pole plot. Councillor Tebb **SECONDED** the proposal, with **5 in favour and 1 abstention**. The next review will take place in July 2025.

24/080 TO APPROVE THE COST TO ENGRAVE THE ALLOTMENT WINNERS CUP

Councillor Gardner **PROPOSED** the approval of the cost of £21.00 + VAT for Trophy Too to engrave the allotment competition winner's cup. Councillor Thomas **SECONDED** the proposal, with **5 in favour and 1 abstention**.

- 24/081 TO APPROVE THE PURCHASE OF GARDENING GIFT VOUCHERS FOR WINNERS OF THE ANNUAL ALLOTMENT COMPETITION**
Councillor Mikkelson **PROPOSED** the approval of £80.00 for gardening gift vouchers for the annual allotment competition winners. Councillor Qureshi **SECONDED** the proposal, with **5 in favour and 1 abstention**.
- 24/082 TO ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THE ANNUAL ROSPA INSPECTION REPORTS FOR THE NORMAN ROAD PLAY AREA, ARNOLD RECREATION GROUND AND FITNESS EQUIPMENT AND AGREE ACTIONS**
Members acknowledged receipt of the RoSPA Inspection Reports for each location. A summary of findings will be collated, ready for discussion at the next meeting.
- 24/083 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE TREE REPORT FOR ARNOLD RECREATION GROUND AND CONSIDER QUOTATIONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED WORKS**
Following consultation with Central Bedfordshire Council regarding the ownership of the trees on the Hexton Road boundary it has been confirmed that they are the responsibility of the landowner and not Central Bedfordshire Council.
- Following review of the independent arboricultural survey report, Central Bedfordshire Councils Tree and Landscape Officer for Planning has issued their approval for all work within the report to go ahead without the need for a formal planning application.
- Due to risk of potential bird nesting, advice was sought, and it has been agreed that only the high priority work, which must be carried out within 3 months from the survey date, should go ahead at this stage. All other work is medium risk and will be actioned early September, after bird nesting.
- The Assistant Clerk is seeking revised quotes for consideration at the July Full Council meeting.
- 24/084 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE COLLECTION POINT AT THE ALLOTMENTS FOR EXCESS PRODUCE**
Due to other work commitments, it has not been possible to build a suitable container to house excess allotment produce yet. **ACTION: Assistant Clerk to investigate what materials are available to be used to construct the container.**
- 24/085 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA – for information only**
Members were asked to consider when they would like to look at the Recreation Ground gates project. Both sets of gates along Old Road are due refurbishment or replacement and are included in the Action Plan for 2024/25. It was suggested that a meeting be arranged in August to assess the gates and in the meantime, members were asked to get together their ideas for discussion.

The meeting closed at 8.58 pm.