

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LEISURE COMMITTEE
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE PARISH OFFICE, 1 WINDSOR PARADE
ON 25th NOVEMBER 2024 COMMENCING AT 8.03pm

Present: Councillors A Vale (Chair), B Thomas (Vice-Chair), K Qureshi, J Mikkelson (ex-officio) and J Paxton (ex-officio)

Attending: S Cowie (Assistant Clerk), C Callen (Clerk)

Minutes Taken by: S Cowie

24/302 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – These were received from Councillor G Gardner and A Tebb.

24/303 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – Members were reminded of the procedures. There were no declarations made.

24/304 MATTERS ARISING

The Groundsman reported that a refuse bin in the Recreation Ground has corroded at the base but is safe for now.

The routine pest control check of the Allotments was undertaken by the contractor on 12th November. Bait stations were replenished, there were no recommendations made.

Minute point 24/211. The quote for installation of a slam plate to a gate at the Recreation Ground has been requested. Cost to be considered once available.

Play equipment project - The following updates were provided. The installation is due to begin on Thursday 28th November and expected to be completed on 4th December. Central Bedfordshire Council advised that they are able to allocate additional funding to the project as one of the successful bids is not able to proceed. This additional funding means that Parish Council reserves will not be needed to cover the shortfall which is excellent news. The Groundsmen removed the picnic table and stools prior to the installation. They are in poor condition due to continued vandalism and have been disposed of.

During maintenance and clearance of overgrowth in the Play Area, the Groundsmen discovered damage to the perimeter fence due to a fallen tree. The trunk will need to be removed to enable the fence to be repaired. Also noted is a tree with low branches which require cutting. Quotes for both are being sought.

The quotation for hedge cutting in the Community Garden has been received. There is no increase in last years cost. Members to approve the cost at the Full Council meeting.

24/305 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LEISURE COMMITTEE HELD ON 7th OCTOBER 2024

A copy of the minutes was provided to all members ahead of the meeting. Councillor Vale **PROPOSED** approval of the minutes of 7th October 2024, **SECONDED** by Councillor Thomas and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

24/306 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 12th and 18th November were acknowledged. In the Recreation Ground it was noted that the surfacing on the gyro spiral unit needs replacing. The unit is currently under water. Everything was in order in the Norman Road Play Area and the Fitness Equipment.

The Assistant Clerk reported that a meeting has been arranged with Barton Education Trust (landowner of the Play Area) to discuss the ongoing flooding issue.

24/307 TO CONSIDER REQUEST TO ERECT A SHED ON AN ALLOTMENT PLOT

Councillors Vale and Qureshi declared non-pecuniary interests as they are both allotment tenants.

The application meets the specified criteria for new structures, and it was therefore agreed that the request should be granted. A holding deposit will be taken, as per the agreement.

Councillor Vale **PROPOSED** approval of the request for a shed to be erected on an allotment plot **SECONDED** by Councillor Paxton, and it was **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

24/308 TO CONSIDER/APPROVE THE COST OF DOG FOULING ORDER SIGNS FOR THE RECREATION GROUND

Following discussion, it was agreed that the signage should be put on hold until the new gates have been installed. Central Bedfordshire Council have provided stickers which will be used wherever possible within the Recreation Ground.

24/309 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE FOR 2024/25 AND TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE DRAFT BUDGETS FOR 2025/26

The expenditure for 2024/25 was reviewed. Repairs to the safety surfacing in the Norman Road Play Area have been completed and a new picnic bench installed. In the Recreation Ground, a tree survey and recommended tree work have been completed and a new refuse bin has been installed following vandalism. As noted earlier in the meeting a second refuse bin will need replacing in the next financial year. The Play Equipment Project is moving forward with installation beginning next week. Four new pieces of play equipment, surfacing, fencing and a gate will be installed. The contractor has included a care package free of charge for both the Recreation Ground and Norman Road Play Area which means that savings will be made on the usual Rospa inspections as they will no longer be needed. Following the opening of the Coronation Community Garden, new fencing has been installed between the garden and Allotments to ensure the site remains secure. The internal hedges in the Recreation Ground and field beyond have been flailed, the remainder of hedge cutting work will take place over the winter months.

Budgets for 2024/26 allow for a 4.5% increase in grounds maintenance costs and the additional hedge and tree works required in the Recreation Ground.

Councillor Vale **PROPOSED** the approval of the draft 2025/26 Leisure Income and Expenditure budgets, with a £16,870 committee precept, an increase of £330 which represents a 2% increase on last year. Councillor Qureshi **SECONDED** the proposal, and it was **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

24/217 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA – for information only

Outstanding items for future meetings to discuss include hedge planting in Norman Road play area; signage for the fitness equipment; outstanding actions from Rospa, to agree a plan to refurbish/replace the Recreation Ground gates and plot markers for the allotments.

The meeting closed at 8.47pm