

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LEISURE COMMITTEE
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD VIA ZOOM
ON MONDAY 15th JUNE 2020 COMMENCING AT 9.00 PM**

Present: Councillors Mrs B Thomas (Chair), Mr A Channon (Vice-chair), Mrs G Gardner, Mr J Paxton, Mrs V Jones, Mr N Day, Mr L Davison-Williams (ex-officio)

Attending: Mrs S Cowie (Assistant Clerk), Mrs C Callen (Clerk), 1 member of public

Minutes Taken by: Mrs S Cowie

20/053 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – None

20/054 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None

20/055 MATTERS ARISING

PPM Pest Management carried out their routine check on 28th May. Low level mouse activity was found in and around the bait stations. All bait was replaced, no further action was necessary.

Following reports of persons entering the play area and using play equipment a reminder was posted on the Parish Councils Facebook page that all play areas are closed as per government advice due to the risk of infection. It is unknown when playgrounds will reopen.

Following a query from a resident regarding orchids in the field beyond Arnold Recreation Ground, Councillor Gardner reported that she has seen a small number of bee orchids in the verge close to the burial ground. The field is not protected however the contractor has been asked to hold off topping the field for the moment.

20/056 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE LEISURE COMMITTEE HELD ON 3rd FEBRUARY 2020

A number of updates were provided; The clearance of the wild area is outstanding as the results of the tree survey have only just been received. Minute point 19/559, site visit took place but the quote to erect fencing and suggestions for drainage has not yet been received. Minute point 19/560 the grant from Central Bedfordshire Council for the cable way was successful and the equipment is now being manufactured ready for installation. Manufacture takes approximately 8 weeks, it is unknown whether play areas will be open by the time the equipment is ready for installation. Should play areas not be open by the installation date, the main structure will be installed but the cable and seat will be held back and installed when it is safe to do so. There were no other queries on the minutes.

Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** approval of the minutes of the Leisure committee held on 3rd February 2020, **SECONDED** by Councillor Gardner and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**. The minutes were approved.

20/057 TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE WEEKLY INSPECTIONS OF THE PLAYGROUND AND FITNESS EQUIPMENT

The inspections of the Norman Road play area, Arnold Recreation Ground play area and fitness equipment undertaken on 8th June were acknowledged, everything was in order

20/058 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE QUOTATION FOR HORTICULTURAL SHOW BANNER

Members discussed whether the banner should be purchased as the show may need to be cancelled this year. After discussion it was agreed that the purchase should go ahead as the banner will be used for future years, the budget is available and cost unlikely to reduce if left until next year.

Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** the quotation from Ocean Creative to supply one 2m x 1m hem and eyelet banner with set of detachable dates (3rd to 14th inclusive) plus one additional set detachable dates numbers 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th be accepted. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Gardner and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

20/059 TO CONSIDER THE ACTIONS NECESSARY FOLLOWING THE RoSPA INSPECTION

Members reviewed the findings of the RoSPA inspection of the Norman Road play area, Arnold Recreation Ground play area and fitness equipment. A small number of faults were found, the groundsman is able to action the majority. Councillor Jones raised concerns regarding the inspectors' findings on the swings in the Norman Road play area. The report found that the rubber surround on one swing seat is cracked and that there is rusting on the chains. It was agreed that this should be looked at further and rectified as necessary, preferably before the play area reopens. **ACTION: Assistant Clerk to progress repairs**

20/060 TO CONSIDER/APPROVE THE PLAN FOR CLEARANCE OF EMPTY ALLOTMENT PLOTS

The groundsman began work clearing empty plots however due to Covid-19, work halted. Now that the situation is easing the Groundsman is continuing clearing plot 11, he will be helped by the new Grounds Facilities Maintenance person who joins the council at the end of June. In addition, plot 12 has recently become vacant, its condition similar to plot 11. The Groundsman has started work strimming plot 12 and will dispose of the items from plots 11, 12 and other newly tenanted plots as agreed. The Council no longer has a skip available to dispose of items so they will need to be taken to the local recycling centre, disposal charges will be according to type of material and weight.

20/061 TO CONSIDER/APPROVE COST FOR ONE-OFF SKIP FOR ALLOTMENT CLEARANCE WORK

Due to the risk of unauthorised use of the skip members agreed that the recycling facility should be used rather than a one-off skip.

20/062 UPDATE ON ALLOTMENT BOUNDARY HEDGES AND AGREE THE WAY FORWARD

The allotment hedgerow, boundary with Dunstall Road properties, is now at a height and width that it is difficult to maintain and complaints have been received from some residents regarding it's size. Following a meeting with two Dunstall Road residents who have removed the Parish Council's hedgerow it was agreed that advice over it's future maintenance should be sought.

A number of suggestions were considered including removing the hedgerow completely and erecting fencing and coppicing the hedge. Councillor Davison-Williams reported that the hedge at Arnold Recreation Ground (Old Road) was coppiced some years ago, work undertaken by Barton Conservation Group. Once coppiced a chain link fence was erected and gaps replanted as necessary. Although this method initially appeared drastic, the hedge quickly grew and is now easily maintained. Coppicing encourages regrowth and provides an excellent habitat for birds and wildlife. Central Bedfordshire Council's Tree Officer for Planning has been consulted and also favours coppicing the hedge rather than it's complete removal. Concerns were raised that not all Dunstall Road residents have fencing to their boundary and the removal of the hedge could cause concern. All agreed that it is important to engage with residents and keep them informed. **ACTION Assistant Clerk to obtain quotes for cutting down, erecting mesh/chain link fencing and removal of the cuttings.**

20/063 TO CONSIDER REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL WASTE BINS IN ARNOLD RECREATION GROUND

Following lock down and the warm weather there has been an increase in visitor numbers to the Springs and hills and additional number of residents using Arnold Recreation Ground. A request was received from a resident to consider installing an additional waste bin in Arnold Recreation Ground. Members felt that the location suggested, by Church Road, would not be feasible as Central Bedfordshire Council Waste Services have indicated they would not be able to empty the bin as they are at capacity and also evidence has shown that users do not always use the bins provided and are regularly leaving their rubbish on the ground. The bins in the recreation ground are currently only emptied during the week, members felt a better solution would be to ask Central Bedfordshire Council to consider emptying the 2 double bins at the rec at the weekends also. The Clerk has made initial contact with Waste Services and will continue to pursue the request. **ACTION: Clerk to continue pursuing the request with Central Bedfordshire Waste Services.**

19/564 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA

Councillor Channon spoke about the general management of people visiting Barton and how the Parish Council could help promote/educate visitors to understand what they should do when visiting the countryside. There is a lack of signage, information on walks is available online and Barton Countryside Conservation have produced walks leaflets but Natural England, owners of the springs and hills do not have a website or any budget available to give information and guidance. This item had been discussed in depth earlier that evening by the Highways and Environment committee. Members agreed that it should continue to be considered by Highways and Environments in consultation with other stakeholders.

There was no further business

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm