

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LEISURE COMMITTEE  
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM  
ON MONDAY 26<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2020 COMMENCING AT 8.18 PM**

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

**Attending:** Mrs S Cowie (Assistant Clerk)

**Minutes Taken by:** Mrs S Cowie

**20/313 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Councillor Mr N Day

**20/314 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – None.

**20/315 MATTERS ARISING**

Allotment plot numbers 11 and 12 have now been cleared of debris ready for collection. The clearance work was undertaken by the Groundsman and a resident who gave his time at no cost. Members asked that a letter of thanks be sent to the resident for his help with the project.

The incidents of faeces in Arnold Recreation Ground Play Area were reported to the Police and Central Bedfordshire Council's Environment Services Team. The Police have not received any other reports of similar incidents, Environmental Services are not able to assist in any way.

A response was received from a resident who has complained about noise from users of the zip wire. A copy of the residents reply was acknowledged by members.

The Contracts Manager from Proludic has examined the zip wire following reports that it has recently become noisier when in operation. His findings were that the noise is coming from the plastic covers on the mechanism to stop finger entrapments but that the noise will improve as the plastic covers wear. If the noise continues or other issues arise the manufacturer will review. There were no other faults found and the equipment is in full working order so no further action was needed at this time.

One fence panel from the waste skip area of the allotment site was found to be broken, the groundsman has replaced it.

Central Bedfordshire Council's Highways department installed two metal barriers in the alleyway to the Norman Road Play Area. The location and size of the barriers made access for push chairs and grass cutting impossible. The Assistant Clerk arranged for the barriers to be removed the following day and is organising an onsite meeting to discuss an alternative solution.

**20/316 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE LEISURE COMMITTEE HELD ON 21<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020**

There were no queries on the minutes. Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** approval of the minutes of the Leisure committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020, **SECONDED** by Councillor Davison-Williams and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

**20/317 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 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> October were acknowledged, Everything was in order except for damage to the yellow gate at the Arnold Recreation Ground Play Area which had been vandalised. This item would be discussed later in the meeting.

**20/318 UPDATE ON TEMPORARY FENCING OPTIONS FOR THE PLAY AREA AT ARNOLD RECREATION GROUND AND TO AGREE ACTION PLAN IF PLAYGROUNDS ARE ASKED TO CLOSE**

Details of temporary fencing for hire were reviewed by members. Some items could be hired at weekly cost, others would need to be purchased rather than hired. The supplier was not able to offer a installation service due to the size of the project and a separate contractor would need to be sought to erect the fencing should it be required. **ACTION: Assistant Clerk to source contractor and costs for installation of fencing should it be required.**

**20/319 RETROSPECTIVE APPROVAL OF COST TO REPAIR PLAY AREA GATE FOLLOWING VANDALISM**

The yellow gate into the children's Play Area Arnold Recreation Ground had been vandalised and required welding. Due to the wet weather the contractor had not been able to carry out the repair so the costs were unknown at the time of the meeting. In the meantime the gate had been chained and

padlocked to prevent further damage or injury, the costs of repair would be agreed once the work has been carried out.

**20/320 TO CONSIDER RE-LOCATING THE ARNOLD RECREATION GROUND PLAY AREA BENCH FOLLOWING REPORTS OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND TO CONSIDER INSTALLING AN ADDITIONAL BENCH WITHIN THE RECREATION GROUND**

In previous meetings concerns had been raised regarding anti-social behaviour in the play area and particularly during the lock down period when the play area was closed. Members discussed whether the bench should be relocated elsewhere within the play area but following discussion agreed that it should be left in it's current position and not relocated at this time.

A new bench was purchased some time ago to replace the bench by the basketball net which had fallen into disrepair. The Groundsman later found that he was able to repair the existing bench and the new bench (no longer required) has been kept in storage since that time. A number of possible locations within Arnold Recreation Ground were discussed, initial thoughts were that close to the fitness equipment would work well. It was agreed that the locations should be reviewed in the Spring once the ground has firmed up.

**20/321 TO CONSIDER/APPROVE QUOTATION FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE ALLOTMENT HEDGEROW AND AGREE THE WAY FORWARD**

At the previous committee meeting members asked for quotations for cutting/maintenance of the allotment hedgerow/Dunstall Road boundary. The annual cut only removes re-growth and the hedge is now at a height and width which is difficult to maintain and more action is required. Quotations and options from three contractors were considered. The amount budgeted for the annual cut this year would not cover the work required and members felt that more information regarding the proposed work and the budget available should be explored before a decision is made. **ACTION: available funds and additional information on hedge works to be established and discussed once the information is available.**

**20/322 TO CONSIDER/APPROVE QUOTATION FOR ALLOTMENT HEDGE CUTTING NOT INCLUDED IN THE ANNUAL CONTRACT**

Members considered quotations to cut the section of allotment hedgerow which is not included in the annual contract. Again, the funds needed to cut all hedges is not available in this financial year, therefore Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** that the quotation from Reynolds Landscaping to cut the section of beech hedge at a cost of £95.00 plus VAT be accepted. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Channon and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**. The outstanding section of hedge cutting would be reviewed once the budget is established.

**20/323 TO CONSIDER INSTALLING FENCE AND GATE(S) AT THE ALLOTMENTS FOR SECURITY PURPOSES**

This item was looked at in 2019 however it was decided not to proceed at that time due to costs. In recent months there have been numerous reports of unauthorised access to the allotment site and the security of the site and it's tenants was a concern. It was agreed that allotment security should be included in the next precept budgeting and not pursued at this time due to the increased pressure on the Parish Council's funds from Covid-19.

**19/324 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA – for information only**

None

The meeting closed at 10.22 pm.