

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Leisure Areas Committee** held on 23rd July 2018 at the Parish Centre.

PRESENT

Councillors Mrs J M Cole, B L Correll, R J Dykstra, Ms L A Gifford, Mrs M H Harlock, P S Potts, Mrs J A Tavener, Mrs S J Wilcox, G C M Willis, Dr S C Withams and Mrs A R Wyatt.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors J A Parker and R A Payne.

01/18 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Upon being moved by Councillor Dr Withams and seconded by Councillor Mrs Wyatt, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor G C M Willis be elected Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

Councillor Willis in the Chair.

02/18 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Upon being moved by Councillor Mrs Cole and seconded by Councillor Ms Gifford, it was

RESOLVED

that Councillor B L Correll be appointed Vice Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

03/18 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor Mrs Harlock and seconded by Councillor Mrs Tavener, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30th October 2018 were confirmed as a correct record. As the minutes had been collected for binding earlier that day, the Committee noted that they would be signed and initialled by the Chairman on their return.

(Councillor Potts arrived in the meeting at this point in the proceedings.)

04/18 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No interests were declared by Members in respect of items appearing on the agenda.

05/18 MATTERS ARISING

The Committee noted that there were no matters arising from its meeting held on 30th October 2017 that were not dealt with later on the agenda.

06/18 MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

The Committee reviewed the maintenance requirements of the various areas within its remit. In so doing, the Committee considered a report by the Clerk summarising the discussion and recommendations of a working party meeting of Councillors Willis, Correll and Mrs Cole following the receipt of the report of the annual inspection of play equipment in the Council's ownership by PlaySafety Ltd.

The Chairman explained that relatively few issues had been raised by the inspector as a result of the investment by the Council in recent years in new equipment and the maintenance undertaken by the Handymen. All of the immediate repairs that could be dealt with by the Handymen had been attended to and the Clerk reported that he would be meeting Caloo's Area Sales Manager shortly to discuss repairs to equipment that they had supplied which required specialist tools and expertise.

(a) Adams Lyons Playground

Members were informed that all of the issues raised in the safety report had been completed with the exception of the following –

- Tightening of the frames on two items of fitness equipment, works to the cableway and a replacement musical activity striker which would be dealt with by Caloo;
- Raising the ground level around the toddler swing which would be undertaken by the Handymen in the autumn when the current hot and dry weather had ended;
- Sanding and cleaning seats which again would be dealt with by the Handymen in the autumn; and
- Work to clad and replant the raised garden where the supporting sleepers were rotting which would be the subject of investigation and report by the Clerk.

Councillor Correll referred to the BMX track that had been installed with the help of a Play Pathfinder grant but had been little used since its installation. Members were reminded that an extensive consultation exercise had been undertaken to secure the grant with young people supporting the installation of a BMX track. Councillor Correll suggested that the track be removed and the land returned to

grass to enable football to be played. Although it was acknowledged that a full size pitch could not be accommodated, it was suggested that a kick-about area would be welcomed by youngsters. The Clerk pointed out that the BMX track had been made from crushed aggregate which would require removal from site.

Other Members suggested the installation of skateboard facilities to replace the BMX track. This had been the subject of investigation on a number of occasions previously but had not proceeded for a number of reasons, including cost, the lack of interest in mobile skateboard facilities which had been trialled and the proximity to neighbouring dwellings.

The Clerk also drew attention to complaints from residents of The Paddocks mobile home park about overhanging shrubs and branches which were affecting their homes. Members were informed that tree surgeons had undertaken work to fell and cut back trees on two occasions in recent years. As the Handymen were restricted to the use of long arm hedge cutters, a tree surgeon would again need to be engaged if the trees were to be lopped. Members were of the opinion that the trees provided useful screening of the playground for the residents but in view of the costs being incurred at their request, the Clerk was requested to seek their views on the potential felling of the trees.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the recommendations contained in the working party report submitted by the Clerk be endorsed;
- (ii) that the Clerk be requested to investigate and report back on the cost of cladding and replanting the raised garden;
- (iii) that the Clerk be requested to investigate the cost of removal of the BMX track and its use as a football 5-a-side area; and
- (iv) that the Clerk be requested to investigate the possibility of obtaining mobile skateboard equipment to assess the level of interest by young people in a skateboard park.

(b) Jubilee Park

The Chairman reported that apart from minor issues that had already been attended to by the Handymen, the only matter raised in the safety inspection report had been the basket swing seat which the inspector was of the opinion constituted a risk of finger entrapment and did not meet the British Standard. However the Chairman reminded Members when this had been raised in the previous year's report, confirmation had been obtained from the suppliers, Sutcliffe Play, and the manufacturers, Huck, that the seat met the relevant European Standard. Under the circumstances, the Committee agreed that no action was required.

Members noted that the inspector had drawn attention to a crack in the tarmac entrance roadway but again Members considered that no action was required as

the roadway was in better condition than many of the adopted footways in the village.

In response to a question by Councillor Mrs Tavener, the Clerk reported that RADAR keys had been purchased by the Council for re-sale to members of the public with mobility issues who wished to open the gate adjoining the eastern access to the park. However no one had asked to purchase a key.

Arising from a request from Councillor Correll that the gate hinges at Jubilee Park and Adams Lyons be oiled, the Clerk indicated that this would be undertaken by the Handymen.

(c) Orchard Close Playground

The Chairman reported that only one minor issue had been raised in the safety inspection report and this had already been dealt with by the Handymen.

(d) Heath Pond and Sheepwash

The Clerk advised that the Heath Pond was now very silted and that a scheme to restore the Sheepwash some years previously had not been progressed because of the cost. The Handymen kept a pathway clear from Heath Road and carried out some maintenance work but otherwise little money had been spent in recent years.

Councillor Mrs Cole reported on her investigations into the history of the Sheepwash and Councillor Dykstra suggested that it be filled with earth to avoid any risk to public safety. Under the circumstances it was suggested that the local Archaeological Society be asked if they were interested in its future maintenance.

(e) Pathfinder Way Open Spaces

It was noted that no action was required.

(f) The Weir

Councillor Mrs Cole updated the Committee on the problems of the low water level following the lack of rainfall in recent months. In the event of a sudden thunderstorm, Councillor Mrs Cole reported that the aerator would need to be used to help add oxygen to the water and she referred to the need to cut back the vegetation around the pond sides in the autumn. She also thanked Councillor Ms Gifford for her help in monitoring the situation.

(g) School Road and High Street/Woodlands footpath

The Clerk reported that he had received a number of complaints about the overhanging bushes in the footpath leading to Woodlands from the High Street. This was the responsibility of the County Council as the highways authority but the Handymen cut the bushes back on a regular basis. Some of the brambles and low vegetation had been strimmed by the Handymen in response to the complaints and a more thorough job would be undertaken in the autumn when the nesting season had finished.

(h) War Memorial

Members noted that no action was required.

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed.

Chairman.