

WARBOYS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Leisure Areas Committee** held on 24th March 2014 at the Parish Centre.

PRESENT

Councillor G C M Willis, Vice Chairman in the Chair

Councillors Mrs M P Bucknell, P Clarke, Mrs J Cole, J A Parker, P S Potts, J C Price, Mrs J E Tavener and Mrs A R Wyatt

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs M H Harlock and R A Payne.

09/13 MINUTES

Upon being moved by Councillor Clarke and seconded by Councillor Mrs Wyatt, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28th October 2013 were signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

10/13 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Potts declared an 'Other Interest' in Minute No. 11/13(a) (Matters Arising – Feast Week Band Concert) as a member of the band that had been booked to play at the concert.

11/13 MATTERS ARISING

The Committee considered the following matters arising from their meeting held on 28th October 2013:-

(a) Feast Week Band Concert

Further to Minute No. 07/13, Members were informed that the possibility of Feast Week being used as a means of stimulating business had been raised with shop keepers at meetings with them in recent weeks. Their view had been that the visit of the funfair resulted in a fall in income for those premises affected by the road closure, although it was hoped that some of them would use the opportunity to try to encourage more business in the future.

The Clerk reported that he had spoken to the Roberts family about the possibility of an awning for the band concert but that as they no longer lived in Warboys, it was thought unlikely that they would provide one without charge as they had done for the Queen's Jubilee street party. The family had promised to provide information as to what they might be able to provide on the day in question.

In terms of a venue for the band concert, it was agreed that the most suitable location was the White Hart car park. Councillor Potts offered to liaise with the licensee of the public house to ensure that this was available and the facilities required.

12/13 MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

The Committee reviewed the maintenance requirements of the various areas within their remit with the assistance of the reports of the annual safety inspections carried out by Wicksteed Leisure Ltd. of the Adams Lyons and Orchard Close playgrounds, copies of which had been circulated to all Members.

(a) Adams Lyons

Members noted that the safety inspection report had drawn attention to the fact that bark levels were low where this was used as safety surfacing for equipment in the playground. The Clerk reported that he was checking on the price of supplies and the necessary quantity would be ordered in the new few days.

Attention had been drawn in the safety report to the need to replace the footboards at the roundabout within the next twelve months. The Clerk suggested that the footboards remained in a reasonable condition and were suitable for continued use for some months before replacement but the Committee agreed that an order should be placed for new boards with immediate effect.

As the basketball back board required replacement, the Committee decided that the equipment should be removed as it appeared unsightly compared to the other more recently provided facilities in the playground and a composite basketball/football/cricket stumps apparatus had been provided as part of the refit some three years previously.

Further to Minute No. 05/13(a), the Clerk reported that he and Councillor Clarke had met on site to consider whether an alternative solution could be found to counter the erosion of the slopes on the slide mound. Members were reminded that quotations had been received from two companies to provide different forms of safety surfacing to cover the whole of the mound to prevent the hardcore base from being exposed. Councillor Clarke and the Clerk had considered whether sleepers could be laid on end on the slope to protect the underlying ground but they had concluded that this might be equally expensive and might lead to adverse comment in a subsequent safety inspection as this would not be a recognised solution.

Councillor Clark suggested that much of the damage was caused by older children riding cycles over the mound and he expressed concern that if this were to continue, it would quickly damage the safety surfacing. He suggested that if safety surfacing were to be provided, it would be preferable if some form of feature similar to the trim trail cluster could be installed around the base of the mound to prevent access by cycles. Under the circumstances, the Chairman offered to approach Image Playgrounds who had provided the trim trail to ask if

they could provide a feature around the base and a safety surface to cover the mound.

Councillor Mrs Bucknell drew attention to a number of issues at the playground, including a missing striker from the chimes, a loose foothold on the climbing wall forming part of the slide mound and bolts protruding under a seat. The Clerk undertook to arrange for the missing items to be replaced and for the Handymen to deal with the other matters.

Discussion arose as to whether the Handymen should undertake repairs at the playground or whether specialist playground companies should be engaged to do the work. Although the Chairman recommended that all work should be undertaken by external specialists to avoid any future possible repercussions, the Clerk suggested that most of the work was straightforward and did not require any specialist skills. Where the latter was necessary, suppliers were asked to install or repair the equipment. Following debate, the Committee agreed that they had no objection to basic repairs being effected by the Handymen.

(b) Jubilee Park

Following the eventual transfer of the land to Parish Council ownership, the Committee was reminded that the Council had agreed to the installation of play equipment at a cost of £30,000 by Sutcliffe Play. A grant of £20,000 had been obtained from Cambridgeshire Community Foundation under the AmeyCespa Community Fund.

Members were informed that the installation work had been completed on 17th March and that copies of the final invoice and photographs of the completed work had been sent to CCF later that week to enable the grant to be paid before the end of the financial year.

Members were informed that an opening ceremony for the new equipment had been arranged for the morning of 2nd April and that details would be announced shortly. The arrangements would include children from the Under Fives Playgroup and Clap and Sing organisations. Members were asked to contact the Clerk if they were able to help with the arrangements and the provision of refreshments at the Parish Centre after the opening had taken place.

Members were informed that the new equipment had met with positive comments from the parents of younger children, although it was also attracting teenagers whose presence had prompted several calls to the Police by neighbours. Although not enforceable, the Police had asked if signs could be erected stating that the equipment was not for use by children over the age of 8. Although more formal signs would be provided after byelaws had been approved, the Committee asked the Clerk to arrange for temporary signs to be erected in the hope that this would discourage older children from playing on the equipment.

With regard to the equipment itself, Councillor Mrs Bucknell questioned the height of the drop traverse which was too high for use by smaller children. While this had been included in the original design, the Clerk suggested that it had been expected that the crossbeam would have been much lower and that he would take

the matter up with the installers. Councillor Clarke also suggested that the screwheads in the rope tangle be filled with glue to prevent these from being unscrewed by youngsters.

(c) Orchard Close

The Clerk reported that he had ordered the parts for repair of the swing chains and that the Handymen would undertake any necessary repainting work in the near future. The Chairman offered to ask Image Playgrounds if they could supply a price for the repair of the safety surfacing at the spring mobile when they quoted for the work at Adams Lyons playground. Councillor Mrs Bucknell drew attention to the need to attend to erosion near the perimeter fence when hardcore was being exposed which the Clerk indicated he would arrange for the Handymen to deal with.

Further to Minute No. 05/13(b), the Clerk reported that he was attempting to obtain a quotation from A1 Fencing for the erection of a strong fence at the rear of the playground to prevent future problems with the condition of the perimeter wall which was the responsibility of adjoining house owners.

(d) Heath Pond and Sheep Wash

No issues were raised in respect of the Heath Pond and Sheep Wash.

(e) Pathfinder Way Open Spaces

Following the successful transfer of Jubilee Park to the Parish Council, the Clerk reported that he had begun to press Persimmon Homes for the transfer of the open space at Pathfinder Way near the Lea Brooks Close estate. However no replies were being received to e-mails and the Clerk indicated that he would continue to pursue the matter.

(f) The Weir

The Clerk reported that the Handymen had re-seeded the tops of the rock gabions at The Weir in the previous week and would be removing the loose rocks at either end of the gabions.

Members were informed that problems were being encountered in locating a dredging company who had the necessary equipment and were prepared to dredge the pond. Several companies had been approached and a reply was currently awaited from one company. Members were asked to notify the Clerk if they could suggest any other companies and the Clerk indicated that he would approach Mick George Haulage to see if they could provide a quotation.

(g) School Road Garden and High Street/Woodlands Footpath

Members noted that no action was required currently, other than the normal maintenance by the Handymen.

(h) War Memorial

Members noted that no action was required currently, other than the normal maintenance by the Handymen.

(i) Miscellaneous

Councillor Mrs Bucknell expressed her appreciation to the Handymen for litter picking at the antenna site opposite the Airfield Industrial Estate and asked that they clean the village sign in Ramsey Road. Councillor Mrs Tavener also reported that the person who planted up the hanging baskets for the Council had informed her that the baskets were in a poor condition and needed replacement. Under the circumstances, the Clerk was requested to replace the baskets with self-watering baskets.

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

Chairman.