



BOX PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF AN MEETING OF THE PLAYING FIELDS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 7th AUGUST 2023

1. Present: Councillors: B. Walton (Chairman); R. Bean; M. Tye; T. Walton; D. Wright
Mrs Carey (Clerk)
Ms. G. Potts – Box Allotment Group
Mrs. T. Meek; Mrs J. Wright - Box Bowls Club

2. Apologies: Cllrs N. Ingledew; H. Parker

3. Absent: Nil

4. Public Question Time: There was no members of the public present

5. To consider any items raised by the Allotment Group or User Groups:

Allotment Group: Ms Potts stated that the situation regarding adults and children coming onto the allotments from Fairmead Mead had improved. There is still an issue with balls coming over from the school and it was agreed to write and enquire if the school would consider increasing the height of the netting. Any changes to the height of the fence between the school and the allotments would need to be considered with the budget.

All the allotments are in good condition and being worked. One allotment holder has health issues but the allotment is being cared for by other allotmenters.

Two allotments had been reallocated. Cllr B. Walton had written to people on the allotment waiting list and this has now been reduced to five people.

Sleepers or planks need to be put at the top of allotment number 10a to retain it.
Action DW to contact Ashley Rich

6. Matters arising from the walk round

- Lights between the Car Park and Pavilion: A map will be drawn up as to where lights are needed. The work will be finished by September/October
- Removing vegetation from trees: The Community Payback Team to do this in the Autumn

7. Minutes: The Minutes of the meetings held on 5th June 2023 were taken as read and were signed as a true record with one small amendment

8. Matters Arising:

a. Play Area:

Community playground group to develop the play area: Cllr Tye reported that one new member had joined the group. Chloe Barton had drawn up a new poster with a QR code for the survey. The group is gathering photos of types of equipment and a further meeting will be held in September which will feedback to the next Committee meeting. Companies will be approached re design and costings to be considered with the budget at the

next meeting. There will be an Open Day in the Pavilion to invite people along.

Spring for motorcycle: The parts to mend the motorcycle had been delivered
Spring Closer for gate: The closure had been damaged – Two new closures to be purchased. **Action: TW**

RoSPA will be checking the play equipment in September

The Groundsman will put weedkiller on the play surface in the Under 7s in September which will require the area to be closed.

Wood for the play hut. Cllr T. Walton to collect this. **Action: TW**

b. Update on Lovar Garden:

Community Fund update: Cllr Wright will obtain a further quotation so that the work can go ahead. **Action: DW**

Replacement of small bridge: Thanks were given to Cllr Wright for fixing the bridge. This does not need replacing at the present time. Consideration to be given with the budget setting.

c. Trees and Hedges:

Veteran Chestnut: A bug hotel and beetle bucket had been installed

information board Cllr H. Parker has spoken to the Green Room about this and will pursue this in September when they are back.

New Car Park hedge gate: This had been fitted. This requires a new heavy duty combination lock. Cllr T. Walton to purchase this. Stays may be needed to hold the gate when open. **Action: TW**

2023/24 tree work programme: Future budget considerations had been received from Tree Parts Ltd.

T46: This tree has responded very well with regenerative growth and with the new long grass mowing regime in place beneath its canopy, the current dead wood present poses an acceptable risk and indeed its benefits for conservation are worthy of retention with the context of promoting wildlife conservation. No works

T9: Lime Tree. The end weight from the south side of the tree has been reduced to reduce the leverage effect being placed upon the observed, historic significant structural weakness to the trees main pollarded stem. Whilst it is noted there is positive epicormic responsible growth from the reduced stems it has also been noted on going flexing at the split within the main stem union. Recommend on going phased works to minimise the identified risk of the tree shedding the three boughs that hang out over the cricket pitch boundary.

On going remedial tree reduction works should be budgeted for to manage the spread of the tree in proportion to its historic poor structure and spreading nature as it continues to grow.

It is far more preferential to retain a smaller version of this mature tree in such a key landscape position, rather than not to intervene and run the risk of the tree failing from its historic and noted bio-mechanical defect. A reduction to this risk should also consider the installation of Cobra or similar make of dynamic soft stop bracing

system, to tie in the southern boughs to the trees main stem so the tree can flex dynamically without failure.

Budget 2023 – Bracing system etc £2.5k
2024 – remedial tree works £1k
2025 - remedial tree works £1k

T23: Remove from previous budget

T33 and 35: Wait till next year

T37: Tree over the Basketball Court. It was agreed to ask Wessex Water to cover the costs of felling this tree. This will be needed to gain access for the proposed works.

The wood from the felled tree could be used to create informal benches

Further working group on 17th September:

- Hedge weeding and topping up chippings
- Bog Garden weeding
- Chippings under Lime Tree
- Lovar Garden slope weeding

- d. **Bowling Green**: The Bowls Club representative reported that the Club had had a very successful season with players in National finals. They are to hold its first Village Competition on Saturday 9th September with a 12.30 start inviting local businesses and the Parish Council to put teams in.

Action: Discuss at Full Council

They continue to get the invoices from Avon Sportsground Maintenance Co to check. There had been an issue with the amount of black bags being used. It was agreed to ask them not to use any more of these. In line with the Climate Strategy a number of reuseable small bulk bags will be purchased

Verti-draining 2023: Mrs Wright to speak to the Bowls Club to establish if they wish the verti-draining to be carried out at a cost of £450 + vat which they would cover.

Annual Contract with Avon Sportsground Maintenance Company:

Cllr Bean read out a statement regarding what he considered to be the significant disproportionate costs for the maintenance of the Bowling Green which was not offering value for money and that a subsidy of tens of thousands of pounds converted into what effectively is an unsecured credit facility to a private members club is not an appropriate use of public money. Cllr Bean said that the overwhelming majority of Parishioners who talked to him about the bowling green supported his view that Bowls Club receives disproportionately preferential treatment from the Parish Council and the relationship needed to change. He stated that the Bowls Club has been asked to take direct responsibility for these costs but has refused to, so he now wanted the Council to push the issue to ensure the Bowls Club becomes more proactive in assuming responsibility for the maintenance costs of the bowling green.

He was proposing that the Parish Council informs the Bowls Club and Avon Sportsground Maintenance Co that it is the Parish Council's intention not to re-sign the maintenance contract with Avon Sports Grounds Maintenance Company in April 2024. The Bowls Club could be offered a lease for the use of the Bowling Green at a peppercorn rental and pay the costs of the maintenance contract.

Cllr Bean stated that the Parish Council views the contract between the Parish Council and the Bowls Club as commercially sensitive information and therefore is not available for parishioners to review.

None of the Committee members had seen the statement.

Cllr B. Walton stated that the Parish Council had been open to a higher level of risk in the past but this had been addressed and the Bowls Club was now covering the cost of the contract and materials used. If the cost of the materials exceeds £2K, the Bowls Club will be asked to pay the excess. She will look at the wording of agreement between the Parish council and Bowls club to check that it is robust enough.

Action BW

Cllr T. Walton stated that this could be raised as a discussion point at the September Full Council meeting and any outcomes taken forward to the budget setting meeting.

There was no seconder for the proposal and therefore no vote could be taken.

9. Other items for discussion:

Tennis Courts: A further meeting of the Working Party had been held and three quotations obtained in the region of £50K to resurface both courts.

The working group were looking at funding opportunities.

A further meeting will be held on 19th September

Cllr Bean reported that the Cricket Club would be interested in using one of the tennis courts as a permanent cricket net

Notification received that the CIL money from the Wharf planning application will be paid as follows:

£2,241.15 end of June 2023

£2,177.17 end of September 2023

£2,177.17 end of March 2024

The first instalment has not yet been received.

Forward Plan/Risk Assessment: This will be updated. Waiting to hear from the Cricket Club re Health & Safety procedures for grass cutting and maintenance re use of chemicals.

Action: RB

Signs on Recreation Ground: Cllr Parker had drawn up a list of the signs that need replacing. It was agreed to ask her to liaise with the Clerk re the wording etc. It was agreed to purchase two copies of the signs to hold one as a spare.

Action: HP/MC

Feedback from the Car Boot Sale:

Cllr Bean reported that this had been reasonably successful with 17 cars. There is potentially room for 30-40 cars. Any future event would need to be adequately staffed.

Cllr Bean stated that because of the works and costs involved this might not be run as an event for charity.

Any proposals for future car boot sales should be brought to the Full Council meeting for consideration.

Cutting of Mill Lane hedge: Cllr B. Walton with liaise with Mark Taylor re the cutting of the hedge in October/November. A tractor mower will cut the top and side by the Recreation Ground. The Parish council are not obliged to cut the inside of the hedge. It had been established that the stream was the boundary for the Playing Fields.

Playing Fields Committee – website content

The following is currently on the website:

- Allotment map and rules
- Lovar Garden update – Cllr Tye to amend this
- Lovar Garden Management Plan
- Deed of Gift
- Information re the Rock Circus

It was agreed to update the general information and Councillors were asked to email Cllr B. Walton with any suggestions. Details for booking the tennis courts will be added together with links to the Cricket Club and the Bowls Club **Action: BW**

10. Climate Strategy Action Plan – Impact on Playing Fields actions:

The recycling bins have been delivered. The bases are currently being put down. When the recycling bins have been installed the Clerk will contact Hills Waste to amend the contract with them as agreed at the meeting on 3rd April

11. Monitoring of budget: Clerk to check the carry forward figures for the work to trees. Full report to be discussed at Finance & Governance.

A bulk bag of chippings needs to be purchased to put on the path to the School at the top of the Recreation Ground.

Money to be put into the budget for the replacement of the basketball court fencing

The Committee will discuss what items it wishes to be put into the budget at the next meeting.

12. Correspondence:

- Letter received from the Community Police advising that they will be carrying out rural community engagement on 30th August involving an exhibition van and bringing along some of their partners to offer crime prevention advice and answer any questions or concerns.

Rudloe Community Centre car park - 10.00-11.00

Selwyn Hall car park - 12.00 – 13.00

Clerk to ask for copies of the information posters for display.

13. Items of Report and future Agenda items: Nil

Date of next meeting – 2nd October 2023

Chairman