

REDBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Commons & Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on Thursday 7th SEPTEMBER 2017 at 7.30pm in the Conference Room, Redbourn Parish Centre

PRESENT: Cllrs C O'Donovan (Chair), T Finnigan (Vice Chair), D Mitchell, I Caldwell and D Bigham and M Maynard

IN ATTENDANCE: N Khanna (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr V Mead (Prior Engagement)

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr Caldwell – Nickey Line, U3A

Cllr Bigham – Care Group and Village Hall

Cllr Maynard – Redbourn in Bloom and the Museum

Cllr Mead – The Museum, Redbourn in Bloom

Cllr Finnigan – RPC representative for Classics on the Common

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

4. MATTERS FOR REPORT

4.1 RPC stall at Classics on the Common

4.2 Decisions made over the summer under Delegated Powers

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th July 2017 are adopted as a true record of the meeting.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA

11.2 Cllr Maynard asked whether Long Cutt play area was covered by CCTV. The Clerk reported that it was not.

7. FINANCE

7.1 The Clerk summarised the Commons income and expenditure and balance sheet reports dated 4th September 2017 for Cllrs. The Clerk reported that the reported reflected accounts reconciled to the end of July 2017.

The Clerk clarified that the code '4806 – Car Park Repairs' showed an expense of £4,100, but this was an error and the current available balance was £5,000, not £900. This was due to the previous year's underspend being moved from the current year's budget instead of the reserves. This has now been corrected.

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The Commons Committee Income and Expenditure and Balance Sheet reports dated 4th September 2017 be received.

The Clerk then summarised the latest Balance Sheet showing the latest figures for the reserves.

8. REDBOURN COMMON

8.1 To receive an update on Common repairs

Cllrs discussed increased traffic on and around the Common for the erection of the Cricket Club marquee and around the building works at Cover Point.

The Clerk suggested he contact the owner of Cover Point for an update and to arrange a meeting to close off any repairs to the Common that may need to be carried out.

Action: Clerk

Cllr O'Donovan reported that an overgrown hedge was reducing the carriageway on North Common at its junction with Lybury Lane. The Clerk was asked to investigate if this was Highways responsibility to maintain or RPC's and to progress getting it cut back.

Action: Clerk

8.2 Common Car Park Working Party Update

The Clerk reported that we were currently awaiting documents from the contractor selected for the Lybury Lane car park extension works.

Cllr O'Donovan made Cllrs aware that the works did not include 'grasscrete' surfacing for the existing car park and suggested that the contractor be asked to quote to do this also. Cllrs agreed this would be a good idea.

Action: Cllr O'Donovan

8.3 To receive an update to a previous easement request across the Common

Carried forward as further details from our solicitors still pending.

8.4 To Review overnight access to Cumberland Garden

Cllr Maynard reported that increasing amounts of litter were being found in the Garden each morning, including needles. The Clerk added that our grounds maintenance contractor had also had to clean up human faeces and toilet paper in the Garden.

Cllrs discussed if the Garden should be closed overnight and who would do it. This was previously done on a voluntary basis, by a few residents. The Clerk recommended that if this was to be considered, that it was done using a paid for service rather than volunteers.

The Clerk suggested that he get some more evidence from the grounds maintenance contractor to help Cllrs reach a decision. The Clerk said he would ask for a log to be kept daily, with photographs if litter was excessive and report back

Action: Clerk

The Clerk said he would ask our grounds maintenance contractor if he would be interested in opening and closing the gates every day. Cllr O'Donovan said he would also speak to the volunteers who previously did it, to see if they would consider doing so again.

Action: Cllr O'Donovan / Clerk

8.5 To receive formal notification of the grounds maintenance contractor rate increase

The Clerk had previously reported that the grounds maintenance contractor planned to increase his rate by 3% and Cllrs had approved it in principle as it was the first increase in many years. The increase had now been formally received from the contractor for Cllrs to consider.

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

***The 3% rate increase from our grounds maintenance contractor
be accepted.***

8.6 To consider the provision of more cycle racks in Redbourn High Street

Cllr O'Donovan asked Cllrs to consider whether more High Street cycle racks would be of benefit. Cllrs were supportive of the idea.

The Clerk was asked to write to the Co-Op to see if they could make provision for cycle racks in the car park of their new store in the High Street.

Action: Clerk

All Cllrs present were asked to walk the High Street and suggest suitable locations for any additional cycle racks.

Action: All

The Clerk was asked to add this to the Highways meeting agenda.

Action: Clerk

8.7 To review how the River Red is managed

The Clerk reported that he had contacted Affinity Water and the Environment Agency for advice on how to proceed and would report back once he had more information.

Action: Clerk

Cllrs asked the Clerk to contact CMS directly also, for advice.

Action: Clerk

8.8 To consider a quote to 'grasscrete' the existing Lybury Lane/Common car park

See Item 8.2 above.

8.9 To discuss parking on the Common

Cllr Finnigan raised concerns over the increasing number of vehicles parking on the Common, both generally and on Easement driveways. Cllrs agreed that this appeared to be a growing problem and in the case of Easements, homeowners should respect that Easements across the Common were granted for access and not for parking.

Cllrs Finnigan and Bigham offered to help office staff with the delivery of the letters.

Action: Cllr Finnigan / Cllr Bigham

The Clerk was asked to draft a generic letter to deliver to properties where this was an issue. Cllr Finnigan offered to help draft the letter.

Action: Clerk / Cllr Finnigan

8.10 To review how the overflow Common car park is being used

Cllr O'Donovan reported that the overflow car park would be closing as usual at the end of the cricket season. Cllr O'Donovan asked Cllrs to consider if 'grasscreting' the entrances, which was where most of the damage occurs, should be done before it reopens next year.

Cllrs also discussed reducing the size of the overflow parking area using logs, to limit use and damage.

The Clerk suggested Cllrs also consider using the overflow car park on the other side for a season to allow the Common to recover.

The Clerk said that he had already asked our grounds maintenance contractor to fill the ruts with topsoil and seed to help with the recovery. The Clerk to let Cllrs know when this was done.

Action: Clerk

9. NICKEY LINE

- 9.1 The Clerk explained that we were still awaiting road planings from HCC's contractor. The Clerk had escalated the request to HCC and it was now with our senior Ringway contact to action. A tentative timetable of end of January 2018 has been suggested. This is still not guaranteed, but it looks like the best chance we have had so far.

Our Ringway contact had suggested we also consider purchasing Type 1 granular which was relatively cheap and would resolve the surface issue quickly. However, on hearing the path was sloping, he suggested that the planings would be far better than the Type 1 granular.

The Clerk suggested that as we were having path repairs done in Cumberland Garden, he ask the contractor to quote for surfacing the Nickey Line entrances at Chequer Lane.

Action: Clerk

10. CUMBERLAND GARDEN

- 10.1 Cllr O'Donovan reported that a further quote had been received in August for the footpath repairs at both entrances to Cumberland Garden. The contractor was able to repair like for like using the resin finish already in place and would also include some patch repairs along the length of the path. The quote was higher than the others received because they were repairing in concrete.

Using delegated authority, the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Chair of the Council and the Clerk decided to use the more expensive contractor at a cost of £2,500+VAT to repair the path in a like for like finish.

- 10.2 Cllr Bigham reported an incident in Cumberland Garden where a dog was off the lead behaving aggressively and disturbing other users of the Garden.

Cllrs discussed this and felt that it would be better for dogs to be on leads in the Garden to ensure that they did not spoil the enjoyment of the Garden by other users.

It was proposed, seconded and resolved that:

All dogs should be kept on leads when using Cumberland Garden.

The Clerk was asked to arrange for 2 x signs to be placed in the garden advising that dogs must be kept on leads and for owners to pick up after them.

Action: Clerk

11. PLAY AREAS

- 11.1 **East Common Play Area**

None

- 11.2 **Long Cutt Play Area**

None

- 11.3 **Flamsteadbury Lane Play Area**

The Clerk reported that the Community Officer was still progressing this, but some tasks that were taking longer than expected to resolve as they relied on responses from other stakeholders. Firstly, as we lease the land from St Albans District Council, we have requested permission from them to install the outdoor gym. Secondly, whilst we have had confirmation from the District Cllrs that they are supportive of the project, we do not yet know whether the SADC Portfolio Holder has approved the s106 spend.

- 11.4 **Silk Mill**

The Clerk reported that, following a complaint from a resident, he had requested our grounds maintenance contractor jet wash the play equipment to remove the algae.

12. TREES

Cllr Finnigan reported that Shepherds Row was becoming overgrown with ivy from a neighbouring property again. The Clerk was asked to look into ownership and arrange for it to be cut back.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Finnigan said that she had clarified that HCC were responsible for Shepherds Row.

Cllr Mitchell said it would be good to add ownership details of some of these less obvious plots of land to our new GIS mapping software, when it was functioning.

13. COMMONS OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

The Clerk was asked to bring the list up to date and send out with the next agenda, for Cllrs to assess progress and suggest priorities where necessary.

Action: Clerk

14. MATTERS FOR REPORT

14.1 RPC stall at Classics on the Common

Cllr Maynard encouraged all Cllrs present to look at the Cllr rota for the stall and sign up to cover a slot if they had not done so already.

Cllr Mitchell said he would send the link to the online rota schedule out to all Cllrs again.

Action: Cllr Mitchell

14.2 Delegated authority

Cllr O'Donovan reported that under delegated authority over August, approval had been given for 4 x exercise sessions to be held on Redbourn Common in August 2017.

15. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 5th October 2017, 7.30pm, Parish Centre.

The meeting closed at 9.18pm.

Chair..... *Date*