



NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PROPERTY COMMITTEE HELD AT ROFFEY MILLENNIUM HALL ON 4TH APRIL 2024 COMMENCING AT 7.30pm

Members: Councillors: Mrs K. Burgess, J. Davidson (Vice-Chairman), Mrs R. Ginn, R. Knight (Chairman), T Rickett BEM*, D. Searle, J. Smithurst, S. Torn & R. Turner*.

(* denotes absence)

In attendance: Lisa Underwood - Deputy Clerk & 1 member of the public.

PR/091/24 PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

PR/092/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Council received apologies for absence from Cllrs T Rickett BEM & R Turner.

PR/093/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

PR/094/24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th February 2024 were **AGREED** as being a correct record and were signed by the Chairman of the meeting.

PR/095/24 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman's Announcements - For information and noting only.

Bench in Jackdaw Lane Bus Shelter

At the last Property meeting, min no PR/082/24 refers, Members wanted to check the cost quoted included the bench. After checking, the bench cost had not been included, so the total to install the bench is £330.00 + vat on the bench. The Deputy Clerk emailed all Property Members to advise of this, Cllrs Davidson & Searle responded confirming they were happy for this increased expenditure to be recommended to the CIL Working Party – this item is on the agenda for their next meeting.

Earles Meadow Conservation Group (EMCG) - Website

EMCG have advised that their new website is now in use – Search 'EMCG Horsham' to find it. The website is intended to show the biodiversity of the Earles Meadow Public Open Space and its rich variety of flora and fauna, the gallery is a new addition. NHPC's ownership and involvement in maintenance etc is stated.

Earles Meadow Veteran Oak tree

The tree surgeon has sent the following update on the veteran oak tree:

After I surveyed the Earle's Meadow Oak last year, I discussed my findings with Alex Livingstone at Arborweald consultancy and we felt it may have been suffering

from Acute Oak Decline (AOD). This was due to the presence of the Oak Buprestid beetles (Agrilus biguttatus), the rapid decline in health and the bleeding points on the stem. These can all be present in some cases of AOD which is normally caused by a combination of factors. When I was at a conference before Christmas, I found out that forest research have a process for reporting and confirming sightings of AOD. I went through the online reporting process which includes uploading photos and descriptions of the tree and I was informed that it was unlikely that the tree had AOD. I believe this was due to the way in which the crown had declined and the pictures of the bleeding lesions on the stem.

Unfortunately, the pathogens that are present will still be putting a great deal of stress on the tree and the Oak buprestid beetles (Agrilus biguttatus) in particular can severely weaken trees.

I will visit the oak again in the summer to assess its crown health and whether there is any improvement on last year.

S106 funding for a New Boiler for Roffey Millennium Hall (RMH)

During all the discussions regarding the heating in the halls at RMH, Members suggested that S106 funding could be obtained for when a new boiler is required at RMH and noted that the S106 deadline was August 2024. The Deputy Clerk has been in touch with The Planning Obligations Officer at Horsham District Council (HDC) to enquire about using S106 funding and they advised the following:

As well as adhering to the terms of the legal agreement, we also have to be able to justify using section 106 funds towards projects with reference to the CIL regulations, which means ensuring projects are directly related to the specific new development in that they mitigate its impact.

While the new infra-red heating system enabled the hall to address demand placed on it by development, I'm not sure that a replacement boiler can be justified in the same way. However, should you wish to provide us with a justification, we would be happy to consider it further.

There are earmarked funds set aside for a new boiler when required, so this matter will be added to a future Property agenda when a new boiler is anticipated to be required.

Members requested that this matter be put on the June Property agenda so a justification for S106 funding can be discussed.

Feedback from Hirers

Feedback has been received from a hirer at RMH regarding the Caretaker, stating that Neil was very kind to set the tables up for them, which saved them time and was much appreciated.

Hirers using the halls have feedback about the new heating, stating:

- The new heaters that have been installed are brilliant. I've been so used to the portable heaters and they always took so long to heat up during the cold months. It makes such a difference to walk into a warm hall already and the fact that it's also adjustable. So much better!*

- *The Heating is certainly more efficient now!*
- *Used the hall last night & noticed the heaters, all looks very neat. Had no complaints from my Judo players, so very happy.*

Oak tree at Earles Meadow (not veteran oak)

HDC have confirmed that the oak to be felled should be replaced with a Field Maple, as suggested in their conditions on the planning application and located as close to the felled tree as possible. The Deputy Clerk has liaised with the Chairman of the Property Committee and he is in agreement with this. The Deputy Clerk has also asked our Tree Surgeon for his comments on the location of the replacement tree and he has confirmed the location is acceptable.

Parking on Birches Road Recreation Area

It has been noted that a car has been parking on the recreation ground at Birches Road play area and churned up all the grass, it is thought to be a resident who lives alongside the area. The Deputy Clerk has written to all residents alongside the area advising that parking on the recreation ground is strictly prohibited. Officers are looking at the costing for no parking signage to be placed on the recreation ground.

Additional Chairman's Announcement Horsham Green Gym (HGG)

Horsham Green Gym - Conservation Volunteers have sent in the following email on 4th April 2024:

I'm sending this email to make/re-establish contact with you.

Horsham Green HGG is an independent volunteer nature conservation group formed in 2005, run by its members, with support from Horsham District Council. We work at various sites in Horsham District, predominantly those owned by Horsham District Council, but we also work for Parish Councils in return for a small donation, currently £110 per session.

We hold tasks most Tuesdays and Thursdays, which run from 10am to 1pm. Our volunteer numbers vary, but typically we have 25-30 on a Tuesday and 15-20 on a Thursday. We are therefore able to undertake a decent amount of work at each task.

We carry out most of our conservation work from October to February, outside of the bird nesting season, which runs from March to September. Conservation work includes removal of invasive species like rhododendron, removal/thinning of pioneer species like Silver Birch, tree/hedge planting, hedge laying...

During the bird nesting season we are able to remove invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam and Skunk Cabbage. We also undertake public amenity work including maintaining permissive paths, bridges and boardwalks and installing benches, fences, information signs and also clear streams and other small watercourses.

We have our own tools which are brought to site by an HDC Ranger.

We have tasks booked until the end of July, but if you have any work which you would like us to undertake in return for a donation I would be pleased to discuss this with you.

Members **NOTED** the announcements.

PR/096/24 FINANCE

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Financial Report and the I&E report to 29th February 2024.

PR/097/24 COMPLETED WORKS

(a) Roffey Millennium Hall (RMH) and surrounding area

- i. 2 x radiators repaired
- ii. Lift Inspection
- iii. Lift Service
- iv. Repairs to men's urinal
- v. Partition wall repair
- vi. Additional cctv at rear of building
- vii. Entrance door now has exit only option

(b) North Heath Hall (NHH) and surrounding area

- i. Sink downstairs replaced (and will be re-used in washroom refurb)
- ii. Fire extinguisher maintenance
- iii. Full flush through of pipework
- iv. Lights repairs

(c) Holbrook Tythe Barn (HTB) and surrounding area

- i. Timer for car park lights repaired
- ii. Repairs & washers to taps in toilets
- iii. Fire extinguisher maintenance

(d) All buildings

- i. Workplace Environmental Assessments

(e) Play Areas

None

(f) Multi-Courts

- i. Maintenance visit

(g) Tree Work

- i. Bramble bush and tree cut back at NHH

(h) Open Spaces

None

(i) Bus Shelters

- i. Graffiti removal by HDC - £38.00 per hr, to be funded from 'Bus Shelter Repairs' budget.

(j) Allotments

None

(k) Streetlights

None

It was **RESOLVED** to note the completed works and ratify any detailed expenditure.

PR/098/24 ON-GOING AND PLANNED WORKS

(a) Roffey Millennium Hall and surrounding area

- i. **NEW** - Periodic Electrical Testing
- ii. **NEW** - Lights & emergency light repairs

- (b) **North Heath Hall**
 - i. **NEW** - Servicing of extractor fans
 - ii. **NEW** - Additional light in corridor
- (c) **Holbrook Tythe Barn and surrounding area**
 - i. **NEW** - New controller & thermostats needed for boiler
 - ii. **NEW** - Hot water cylinder repair – quotation for £524.00 + vat, Clerk approved as per the financial regulations, to be funded from R&R EMR.
- (d) **Play Areas**
 - i. Recommended 'medium' & 'low' ROSPA works – part way through weather dependent
- (e) **Multi-Courts**
 - i. **NEW** - Additional Shrouding
- (f) **Tree Work**
 - i. **NEW** - 2 x Cherry trees at Earles Meadow to be cut back
 - ii. **NEW** - Fell & replace oak at Earles Meadow (not Veteran oak)
 - iii. **NEW** - Works to fallen Willow tree
- (g) **Open Spaces**
 - None
- (h) **All Buildings**
 - None
- (i) **Bus shelters**
 - None
- (j) **Allotments**
 - None
- (k) **Streetlights**
 - None

It was **RESOLVED** to note the on-going and planned works and ratify any detailed expenditure.

Cllr J Smithurst advised that hirers of NHH have commented that there is not enough lighting outside when leaving in the dark. It is uncertain if this means lights are not working or the lights aren't bright enough. The Deputy Clerk will ask the Facilities Officers to have a look and report back.

PR/099/24 HEATING CONTROLLER AND THERMOSTATS AT HOLBROOK TYTHE BARN (HTB)

The heating controller was discussed at the last property meeting, min. no PR/087/24 refers. Whilst an additional quotation was being sought and whilst the hot water cylinder was being assessed, the Plumber advised that the current controls running the heating are extremely convoluted, unnecessary and inefficient. Currently, there is no independent control of the boiler, the boiler is running all the time and is only cutting off on the boiler thermostat once the boiler reaches temperature.

Members were advised that the original controller (unrepairable) was able to be controlled via the thermostats in each room, however, the controller quote, previously obtained for £530.00 + vat wouldn't have been able to be controlled by the existing thermostats in the rooms. Therefore, two new quotations have been

requested to simplify the controls giving each end of the building (Barn & Wallace room) independent control of one another, which means the boiler would only be running when it's needed and won't be running through the night whilst the building isn't in use. Each end of the building would also have a new thermostat.

Members noted that only one quotation had been received, totalling £1232.00 + vat.

Members were asked to consider the quotation.

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the quotation, totalling £1232.00 + vat, to be funded from the Repair & Renewals EMR.

PR/100/24 UPGRADE OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Members were reminded that funds have been earmarked for the past few years for upgraded equipment at the playgrounds; as at 29.02.24, a balance of £75,000 is earmarked and an additional £25,000 will be earmarked for the 24/25 financial year.

After conducting an audit of all of the equipment and referring to issues continuously raised from the ROSPA inspections, the Deputy Clerk & Facilities Officer propose that the pieces of equipment that need replacing are as follows:

Amberley Road Play Area: Trim trail, toddler play equipment & interactive boards.
Birches Road Play Area: Roundabout (replace with inclusive roundabout) & trim trail.

Members received 3 quotations and a summary of things to note regarding the equipment. The quotation amounts are as follows:

Company A – Amberley £16,342.37, Birches £19,721.73
Company B – Amberley £25,871.91, Birches £27,080.86
Company C – Amberley £27,350.00, Birches £28,285.00

After careful consideration of each quotation, the Deputy Clerk recommended Company B, for the following reasons:

- The equipment fits in with the style of the existing pieces of equipment.
- Less maintenance with non-painted equipment – no risk of peeling paint.
- The toddler interactive pieces look superior to the other quotations.
- The trim trail equipment looks like it's for older children, which is what is needed – the trim trail from Company A looks like it's for a younger age range, despite the age range given.
- The trim trail in grey steel blends in better.
- The majority of the play equipment already in the play areas is Company B's, so any caps etc needed can be obtained from one company and we will ask when installing new equipment if they can bring caps for missing ones on the existing pieces as they are quite difficult to source. *Members noted that the incorrect company was stated in the Committee report.*
- There are some pieces of Company A's play equipment in Birches Rd (trim trail), but these now needs replacing and they are inferior compared to the other brand equipment.

Members were asked to consider the quotations and plans for upgraded equipment at Amberley Road & Birches Road play areas.

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the quotation from Company B, totalling £25,871.91 for Amberley play area and £27,080.86 for Birches play area. to be funded from the Playground Upgrade EMR.

PR/101/24 USE OF URNS AT ALL BUILDINGS

Members were advised that Officers have been looking at energy cost savings and have noted that some small group hirers have been using an urn for making their own teas and coffees – the urns hold a large capacity of water and cost more to run as they are left on constantly during the hire period. Groups under 35 hirers, that don't pay for teas and coffees, have therefore been advised that they should only use kettles or hot flasks.

Some of these groups have expressed that they would like to continue using the urns. Therefore, Officers would like Members to consider imposing a hire charge of £10.00 (+ vat at RMH) for use of urns for groups of under 35 hirers.

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** a hire charge of £10.00 (+ vat at RMH) for use of urns for groups of under 35 hirers.

PR/102/24 HDC'S NEW INITIATIVE FOR SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH – SHARED PREMISES SCHEME

At the last Property meeting, under Chairman's announcements, Members were advised that Horsham District Council (HDC) is offering a new revenue stream to Parish Council (PC) partners with capacity to offer their kitchens in community spaces with selected small food businesses currently operating from their home. HDC are asking PC's to register their interest.

Members wanted to discuss this further at this next property meeting to consider the scheme at Parish Council venues.

After some discussion, Members **RESOLVED** to **NOT PROCEED** with registering the Parish Council's interest in this scheme.

PR/103/24 TREE WORKS AT EARLES MEADOW

The EMCG sent a request for tree works at Earles Meadow, as detailed in the committee report, which Members were asked to consider.

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the requested tree works, totalling £120.00, to be funded from the 'Open Spaces' budget.

PR/104/24 FLOWER BEDS AT HTB

Following the works last year of moving the Queens Green Canopy tree to the front of the flower bed, erecting new fencing, laying down a membrane, mulch and wood chip, it has been noted that the remainder of the flower bed looks very unkempt and would benefit from the same treatment.

Members were asked to consider a quotation for labour and materials from our usual contractor, totalling approx. £450.00, which, if approved, would be funded

from the 'Open Spaces budget'.

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the quotation, totalling £450.00 to be funded from the 'Open Spaces budget', but asked the Deputy Clerk to enquire if HGG would be able to carry out this type of work for future reference and whether they would be able to supply the materials.

PR/105/24 RECYCLING CLOTHES BIN AT HTB

Members were advised that there is a Samaritans clothing and shoe bank at HTB. It is becoming a regular dumping ground for all sorts of so called donations which mainly get left beside the bank as people seem to stuff so much into the hatch and then jam it. There have been duvets left there and bags of clothing that get tipped out all over the floor.

The items that get left on the floor are put into the Parish Council's bin as it looks very unsightly at the front of the building. When these items get wet, they get very heavy, which adds to the additional weight to our business waste collection.

The Facilities Officer has contacted the owners of the recycling clothes bin and they have agreed to collect the donations more frequently and they will supply a no fly tipping sticker for the bin.

Whilst in discussions with us, they advised that the current donation recipient is the Samaritans and asked if the Parish Council would like the donation to go to a more local registered recipient, Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School, which caters for pupils with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties, or complex needs.

Members were asked to consider changing the donation recipient.

Members **RESOLVED** to change the donation recipient to the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School and **AGREED** that if the situation does not improve with the dumping of donations outside of the bin, the recycling bin should be removed.

PR/106/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members **NOTED** that the next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday 6th June 2024. Cllrs K Burgess, R Ginn & J Smithurst gave their apologies in advance for this meeting.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.18pm

..... Chairman Date