



NORTH HORSHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PROPERTY COMMITTEE HELD AT ROFFEY MILLENNIUM HALL ON 6th JUNE 2024 COMMENCING AT 7.30pm

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

(* denotes absence)

In attendance: Sarah Norman - Clerk

PR/001/24 TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN

Following nomination by Cllr Searle and being seconded by Cllr Davidson it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Knight be elected as the Committee Chairman.

PR/002/24 TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN

Following nomination by Cllr Knight and being seconded by Cllr Searle it was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Davidson be elected as the Committee Vice-Chairman.

PR/003/24 PUBLIC FORUM

There were no members of the public in attendance.

PR/004/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Council received apologies for absence from Cllrs K Burgess, T Rickett BEM, J Smithurst & R Turner.

PR/005/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

PR/006/24 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th April 2024 were **AGREED** as being a correct record and were signed by the Chairman of the meeting.

PR/007/24 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman's Announcements - For information and noting only.

Earles Meadow Conservation Group (EMCG) Updates

The following updates had been received from the EMCG:

In exchange for some labour to maintain the small park area, the Earles Meadow Residents Association (EMRA) have agreed that the EMCG can have their semi-redundant noticeboard on that site. This noticeboard is the Mk 2 version of the one behind the veteran Oak made by the late John Washington, a master cabinet maker and valued member of EMCG.

The EMCG propose to re-erect it at the entrance to the long boardwalk with the

same signage as on the Oak noticeboard. They will then have entrances on two sides covered. Confirmation was sought that the maintenance of the small park area would not include responsibility for any children's play equipment.

Also, it was reported that lately there have been two occasions when they have discovered evidence of the lighting of small "campfires" in the Upper Meadow, close to the bench. The first on 29th December 2023 and then on 22nd April 2024. Both left in a similar condition extinguished and the charred remains scattered.

The Deputy Clerk sent the EMCG a notice advising that lighting fires are prohibited and they will erect the notice in the area.

The EMCG requested to have an additional dog waste bin at the end of one of the stub roads adjoining the parkland part of the Meadows where Southern Water has a fenced compound. This is a main route through to the long boardwalk and the meadowland. However, after HDC conducted their survey to ascertain if a bin was needed in that area, they advised that 'Unfortunately, Earles Meadow didn't pass the survey, it's seems the multiple dog waste bins already located at Earles Meadow are working as expected'. EMCG have been advised that the Parish Council cannot consider this any further.

Horsham District Council's (HDC) Polling Station Booking at All Halls

HDC contacted the Parish Council regarding their bookings for the recent elections and advised that Central Government have advised that if the venues in question are maintained out of public funds at any rate, the amount that can be paid by the Government is for what the law allows e.g. heat, light and power. If venues have been outsourced and are managed by a charity depending on the terms of the contract and assuming the taxpayer does not contribute to the upkeep at all, the Government may be able to consider a reasonable hire charge.

The key principle behind this provision is to minimise the cost to the taxpayer by utilising resources they already pay for through their taxes.

The Deputy Clerk replied as follows:

The income from the halls provides a substantial portion of the costs involved in operating the 3 Parish Council owned buildings. Any loss of revenue, which would come from the necessary cancellation of other bookings to accommodate the polling stations would result in a greater cost burden being passed to residents through an increase in the Council Tax. As you may appreciate, the Parish Council does not want to add this cost burden to our residents, through no fault of our own.

If it is deemed that HDC will not meet the actual hire costs, then, for future polling station bookings, the Parish Council will have to look at reducing the space that is available. For example, for the elections next week at Roffey Millennium Hall, only one hall was booked initially, however this was extended to 2 halls (through removal of partition wall), so that it could be used for 2 polling stations – in future, if the full hire costs are not met, we will offer only one hall and we will ask HDC to accommodate both polling stations in the one room to avoid having to cancel regular hirers, which would result in a loss of income to the Parish Council, and consequently a cost burden to residents as described above.

We may also have to look at your access to the buildings as currently we have to cater for additional working hours due to the early opening and late closing of the buildings. For instance, we may have to provide a key, so the buildings can be opened up by HDC staff.

As the bookings are for next week, the invoicing of the polling station hires is imminent and as we have no definitive answer as to how this will play out, we will have to invoice at the agreed rates when booking.

HDC have confirmed that they will pay the full charges for the polling station bookings on 2nd May and 4th July 2024 and the Clerk will liaise with Democratic Services at HDC to agree a way forward, noting that if the amount that can be paid is to be capped, consideration will need to be given to condensing the bookings into fewer/smaller rooms, so we can accommodate our own hirers.

Use of Mounds at Roffey Recreation Ground (RRG)

During the works to re-vamp RRG, there have been lots of young people using mountain bikes on the landscaping mounds, barriers have now been put in place, but were moved out of the way with riders continuing to ride through the ball court and jump over the mounds.

HDC have advised that there is strong feeling for providing mounds elsewhere in the Roffey area for jumping over. HDC have stated that it will be difficult to keep the mounds at RRG from a landscaping perspective and have considered alternatives, such as Broadwood Recreation Ground or Amberley Close Recreation Ground, which is Parish Council land.

The Parish Clerk has responded to this consideration as follows:

Thanks for the email and the update. Do we know where these bikers were jumping prior to the mounds being developed at the Rec?

If HDC would like the Parish Council to consider the proposal of accommodating some mounds at Amberley Close Open Space, for the matter to be considered by Council we would need to know full details of the spec of the earthworks, future provision for maintenance, address the insurance implications (I know that BMX tracks which I think this would be classed as are specific issues that our insurers would have to include) and an idea of where they would be located. Obviously, there are a lot of houses in close proximity (from whom we have previously had to deal with complaints from about the use of the area!) and there is a current lay out which includes the play area in the middle together with an informal football "pitch" with goal posts. We currently have these posts on the western side but had to move them from the other side of the play area last year due to damage to the ground at the goal mouths and therefore, have to bear in mind that it may be necessary to move them back again in future years if the same damage to the surface occurs. Also, please note that the rectangle of grassed area that I've marked in red on the map below is not owned by the Parish Council.

There is of course the future bike track at Mowbray to be taken into account.

I'll await to hear from you further if you would like the Parish Council to consider the suggestion.

No response has been received from HDC.

Felled Oak (not Veteran) and Replacement Field Maple in Earles Meadow

The oak tree has now been felled and the replacement Field Maple was originally planted further out from where the oak tree was. However, it was discovered that there were potential water pipes under where the replacement had been planted, so it has now been moved back to be more in line with where the felled oak was, to avoid any possible water pipes.

Anti-social Behaviour at Holbrook Tythe Barn (HTB)

The Caretaker has reported that young people have been causing bother to hirers at HTB and in the multi courts because they have lost their footballs. We have asked the local PCSO to increase their patrols around the area. The additional shrouding works, to prevent unauthorised entry to the courts, has been problematic, but it is hoped that this will be completed w/c 27th May 2024. Members were advised at the meeting that additional shrouding had been installed.

Members **NOTED** the announcements.

PR/008/24 FINANCE

It was **RESOLVED** to note the Financial Report and the I&E report to 30th April 2024.

PR/009/24 COMPLETED WORKS

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

- i. Periodic Electrical Testing
- ii. Lights & emergency light repairs
- iii. Men's toilet leak repaired
- iv. South Hall door repaired
- v. Toilet dispenser repaired

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

- i. Servicing of extractor fans
- ii. Additional light in corridor & light repairs
- iii. Partition wall service
- iv. Fire exit doors repaired
- v. Boiler door keys and lock repaired
- vi. New isolator switch for downstairs water heater & water heater repaired
- vii. Kitchen heat detector replaced

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

- i. New controller & thermostats needed for boiler
- ii. Hot water cylinder repair
- iii. Sprayed box hedges to prevent insect infection
- iv. New larder cupboard in corridor & cupboard door in kitchen corridor
- v. Additional shelving in storage cupboard to store chairs safely
- vi. Mulch & bark for side flower bed

(d) All buildings

- i. Fire Risk Assessments
- ii. Ground maintenance of shrubs and borders

- (e) **Play Areas**
 - i. Recommended 'medium' & 'low' ROSPA works – part way through-
weather dependent
- (f) **Multi-Courts**
 - i. Maintenance visit
 - ii. Vandalised signs repaired and installed
- (g) **Tree Work**
 - i. Fell & replace oak at Earles Meadow (not Veteran oak)
 - ii. Works to fallen Willow tree
- (h) **Open Spaces**
 - None
- (i) **Bus Shelters**
 - None
- (j) **Allotments**
 - None
- (k) **Streetlights**
 - None

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

PR/010/24 ON-GOING AND PLANNED WORKS

- (a) **Roffey Millennium Hall and surrounding area**
 - i. **NEW** - Floor machine requires parts
 - ii. **NEW** - De-commission AHU
 - iii. **NEW** - Intercom to be repaired or install doorbell
 - iv. **NEW** - Decorating schedule works
 - v. **NEW** - Some ceiling tiles need replacing
 - vi. **NEW** – Lift repairs, totalling £1275.96 + vat, to be funded from R&R
EMR
- (b) **North Heath Hall**
 - i. **New** - Partition wall repairs - £695.00 + vat to be funded from R&R
EMR, booked for 17.07.24
 - ii. **NEW** - Lighting in room 9 to be improved as very dark
 - iii. **NEW** – Brighter outside lights (quote awaited)
 - iv. **NEW** – Annual stage lights check
 - v. **NEW** – Sanding stage & treating (quote awaited)
- (c) **Holbrook Tythe Barn and surrounding area**
 - i. **NEW** – Leaking overflow to be repaired
 - ii. **NEW** – Hedge outside fire exit to be cut down – quote of £410.00
approved as part of grounds maintenance works, to be funded from
the 'Open Spaces' budget
- (d) **Play Areas**
 - i. **NEW** – ROSPA Inspection
 - ii. **NEW** – New playground equipment at Amberley Rd & Birches Rd play
area
 - iii. **NEW** – Possible finger entrapment on slide needs looking at

- (e) **Multi-Courts**
 - i. Additional Shrouding
- (f) **Tree Work**
 - i. 2 x Cherry trees at Earles Meadow to be cut back
- (g) **Open Spaces**
 - i. **NEW** - Earles Meadow - broken fencing around water drainage ditch to be replaced and extend along drop – quote of £779.00 approved as a health & safety risk, to be funded from the 'Open Spaces' budget
- (h) **All Buildings**
 - i. **NEW** – Boiler service & legionella flushing
 - ii. **NEW** – PAT
 - iii. **NEW** – Change mechanical timers (quote awaited)
 - iv. **NEW** – Fire risk assessment recommendations - Officers working through lists
- (i) **Bus shelters**
 - i. **NEW** – 3 x bus shelters to be painted
- (j) **Allotments**
 - None
- (k) **Streetlights**
 - None

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

PR/011/24 S106 FUNDING FOR A NEW BOILER FOR ROFFEY MILLENNIUM HALL (RMH)

Members were reminded that 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 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.

Members were also reminded that they requested to have this matter added to this agenda so a justification for S106 funding can be discussed in a S106 funding application and make a suitable recommendation to Full Council.

Members were asked to note the justification used in the infra - red S106 application to assist with their considerations, which was as follows:

North & South Hall in Roffey Millennium Hall (RMH) is used by many community groups in the North Horsham Parish for things like exercise classes, church groups, adult & children's dance classes, game groups, business conferences, family celebrations and children's birthday parties.

The current heating system was installed when RMH was built in 1999 and has not been working properly for the last couple of years. The Parish Council has paid for repairs to rectify the issues, but we have now been advised that there is a likely problem with the controller, which is now obsolete and investigative works would total £1196.00 + vat, which is in addition to the previous repairs already paid and if it was found that the controller was at fault, a new one would be in the region of £10,000 - £15,000, so Members agreed that it would be more beneficial to install new heating.

During Winter 2022, when the halls were in full use again, after COVID, there were many complaints from hirers as to how cold the halls were as the heating system wasn't working, so we had to use small convector heaters as a temporary measure, which are not effective, cost efficient or environmentally friendly.

The S106 funding would benefit many users of the hall, who are from all areas of North Horsham, the population of which is increasing due to completed and future house building.

According to the latest S106 unspent report, it is unclear what further funds are available for a new boiler, if approved, as it doesn't look like HDC have deducted the S106 funds for the infra-red heating, so Members were asked to consider, as part of the S106 application, what percentage, if any, that the Parish Council will fund towards the cost of a new boiler.

An updated quotation for 1no boiler and associated works has been obtained totalling £19,297.89 + vat. The current EMR for a new boiler is £40,000.00. A further boiler quote has been received and both quotations were emailed to Members of the Committee ahead of this meeting to assist with their considerations of this agenda item.

Members discussed the potential submission of the S106 application but taking into account the comment of the Officer at HDC stating "*I'm not sure that a replacement boiler can be justified in the same way*" and not wishing to prejudice any future bids by the lodging of a tenuous application, it was **AGREED** not to make any application for S106 funding for replacement boilers at RMH.

However, with Members aware of the deadline for any application for these specific S106 funds being August, discussion took place about alternative uses which would comply with the required justifications with the following **AGREED** :

- a) Enquiries would be made with HDC to ascertain whether, due to the impending deadline, the defined use can be relaxed or the deadline extended. Furthermore, clarification sought as to what will happen to the funds after August i.e. is the developer still trading and therefore able to receive any rebate.
- b) S106 funding be placed on the Agenda for the August meeting and

Members asked to provide suggestions to the Deputy Clerk of any other projects that could use the funds.

With regard to the replacement of the boilers, as reported previously the lifespan of the existing boilers was estimated as 3 to 5 years and with existing Earmarked Reserves of £40,000 it was **AGREED** that this issue be returned to the Committee in the next 12 to 24 months (unless events require earlier discussion) to proceed with the replacement units.

PR/012/24 PROHIBITED VEHICLES SIGN FOR AMBERLEY CLOSE & BIRCHES ROAD PLAY AREAS

Members noted that, following on from the Chairman's announcement at the last Property meeting, min no PR/095/24 refers, where Members were informed of vehicles parking on the grassed area on Birches Road recreation ground, the regular vehicle has now stopped parking on the grass as the residents have moved from the area. However, tyre marks can still be seen on the grass, which indicates that other vehicles are driving on there.

Officers have, therefore, obtained a quotation for signs to be erected at Birches Road recreation ground and Amberley Close recreation ground, which state 'Vehicles On The Grass Are Strictly Prohibited', totalling £424.00 + vat, which if agreed, would be funded from the 'Open Spaces' budget.

Members were requested to consider this quotation.

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the quotation, totalling £424.00 + vat, to be funded from the 'Open Spaces' budget.

PR/013/24 REPLACEMENT TREE OR SHRUB FOR THE SIDE FLOWER BED AT HTB

Whilst the recent mulching and bark was placed on the flower bed at HTB, a dead shrub had to be pulled out, which has left a space, Members had seen a photo with the Committee Report.

Members were asked to consider planting a replacement tree or shrub to fill the space and agree the maximum expenditure. If agreed, this would be funded from the 'Open Spaces' budget.

Members **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** to replace with a shrub (type to be discussed with the contractor) with a maximum expenditure of £200 (including labour), to be funded from the 'Open Spaces' budget.

PR/014/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members **NOTED** that the next meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday 8th August 2024.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.52pm

..... Chairman Date