

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Council Offices
Langley Road
Abbots Langley
Herts
WD5 0EJ

16th June 2016.

To Members of the Leisure Committee

Councillors Sara Bedford, Jane Lay, Robin Powell, Hitesh Tailor, Alison Ward & John Wyatt (Chairman).

The next meeting of the Leisure Committee will be held at the above address on Wednesday 22nd June 2016 at 7:30 pm when your presence is summoned for the purpose of transacting the business outlined below. The press and public are welcome to attend the meeting.

Tim Perkins
Clerk to the Council

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
To receive and accept apologies for absence.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive declarations of interest in items on the agenda.
3. **Public Participation**
To note if any members of the public have requested to speak at this meeting, in accordance with the Parish Council's Public Speaking Arrangements.
4. **To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on**
20th April 2016.
5. **Committee Vice-Chairman**
To appoint a committee Vice-Chairman for the current municipal year.
6. **Reports from Allotments Representatives**
To receive reports from the Allotments Representatives.
7. **Reports from Sports Representatives**
To receive reports from the Sports Representatives.
8. **Reports from Halls Representatives**
To receive reports from the Halls Representatives.
9. **Project Updates**
Update on the progress of the following projects. (Clerk's report item 1.)
 - i. Manor House Greenspace Action Plan (CMS)
 - ii. Manor House Patio
 - iii. Manor House Allotment Wall
 - iv. Manor House & Primrose Hill Car Parking
 - v. Christmas Lights
10. **Abbots Langley Bowls Club - Greens Maintenance**
To consider if the Parish Council should submit a response to the club's request for greens maintenance services. (Clerk's report item 2.)

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11. South Way Play Area

To consider the reports on the condition and maintenance requirements of the above. (Clerk's report item 3 and Works Manager's report enclosed.)

12. Manor House Play Area

To consider the report from the Facilities Manager. (enclosed)

13. Public Spaces Protection Order

To consider the report from the Clerk. (Clerk's report item 4.)

14. Carnival Arrangements

To consider the report from the Clerk. (Clerk's report item 5.)

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Abbots Langley Parish Council
Clerk's Report - Leisure Committee - June 2016

1. Project Updates

i. Manor House Greenspace Action Plan (CMS)

Multiple attempts to get some sense out of the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust got nowhere.

Windrush Ecology have been instructed to carry out the wildlife survey of the Manor House (£1,250). They will report on what wildlife is present, what needs to be done to maintain and improve habitats and also what other measures could be taken to attract other wildlife.

The survey will be carried out in line with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee guidelines for habitat surveys (2010).

http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/PDF/pub10_handbookforphase1habitatsurvey.pdf

Patrick Stileman will then carry out a "health report" on the New English Wood, taking into account any recommendations from the wildlife report. Patrick has had a brief look at the woods and expects to recommend thinning around 30% of the trees, these will be of the poorest quality trees, or in areas where tree density is not supportive of the health of the remaining stock. Once complete CMS will assist in identifying contractors that are able to carry out the required works and derive revenue from the timber.

(Update: Wildlife survey is scheduled to be carried out on 29th June.)

ii. Manor House Patio

The contractor is looking to schedule the works, but given their current workload, the level of summer bookings in the Manor House and potential disruption during the cricket season the works will probably take place in September or October.

(A further verbal update will be available at the meeting following discussions with the contractor scheduled for after this report was written.)

iii. Manor House Allotment Wall

Pending details from the Chairman of further contractors to quote the works.

If none are available as this has been delayed now for two months officers recommend proceeding with Contractor 3 (£13,900) as reported to the last meeting of this committee.

iv. Manor House & Primrose Hill Car Parking

Signage is due to be installed, but will remain covered and the parking ticket equipment commissioned during w/c 13th June.

Go-live is proposed for w/c 4th July.

v. Christmas Lights

Slight change of priorities.

The Works Manager attended a meeting at County Hall where all Parish and Town Councils were briefed on the new requirements for electrical and pull testing, contractor qualifications and many other aspects of using highways infrastructure to hang and power Christmas lights.

Discussions are needed with our current contractor to see if they comply with the requirements of HCC, particularly around the qualifications held by the contractor's technicians and electricians. If they do not comply then we are going to have to find another contractor. This work is ongoing and we will update further in August.

The requirements whilst complex are more of an evolution for the Parish Council. The Works Manager has done a lot of work in the past to ensure compliance to requirements, there is though considerable additional work to do.

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A number of Parish and Town Councils are going to find compliance to the requirements difficult, particularly around ensuring the competence of their contractors. The days of some Parish Councils using volunteers, a ladder and a screwdriver to get Christmas lights hung are well gone.

Once we are clear on which contractor we will be using this year we will then restart the work on specifying new lights and festoons. Which may also be impacted by the changes in requirements.

2. Abbots Langley Bowls Club - Greens Maintenance

As part of the lease negotiations the Parish Council agreed to carry out maintenance of the bowling green up until 30th September 2016. The club has submitted a fairly detailed specification of the maintenance work they require post September and have asked if the Parish Council will submit a costed proposal.

There will be quite a bit of work needed in putting together the proposal. At this stage I need guidance from the committee as to whether they want the Works Team to undertake this work, or alternatively redeploy the hours previously spent maintaining the green into other activities.

For information following is the hours spent by the Works Team on maintenance of the green in the past year.

2015									2016			
Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
5.5	42.0	33.0	55.5	80.0	52.5	21.0	72.0	13.5	0.0	23.0	19.0	417.0

3. South Way Play Area

There have been multiple discussions with Three Rivers District Council and the contractors over the issues at South Way. A report from the Works Manager is enclosed and that goes into some detail. The top three issues are:

1. The surface of much of the "wet pour" safety surface is breaking up, it is difficult to explain and as the surface is black, also difficult to photograph. The surface is desiccating into pieces maybe 8-10cm, it is expected that it will all need replacing in the near future, it may not survive another winter. The cost will be significant.
2. Climbing posts are rotting at the bottom, they will need an impervious collar fitted to stop further water damage. Also around 20 tonnes of sand is needed to be replaced at an apx. cost of £2,000.
3. There is significant erosion to the banks around the slide, whilst the steps have eased the erosion it is still likely to become a further problem in the near future.

With the benefit of hindsight the cost of maintaining this type of play area is significant, something officers had not appreciated as it was the first principally wooden play area installed in the parish. It requires on-going weekly attention to stay on top of maintenance. The new play area at Langley Way has had a significant sum retained from the developer contribution to cover the longer term maintenance, it would appear an oversight that a similar provision was not made for South Way.

As the Parish Council has no contractual relationship with the installer they have found it easy to ignore our communications.

Officers from both authorities will meet to resolve the issues in the near future, any guidance from members would be appreciated.

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4. Public Spaces Protection Order

As requested the Staffing Committee reviewed the above at their meeting on 8th June. This has been referred to Watford and Three Rivers HR and both committees will be kept updated on progress and the actions required.

5. Carnival Arrangements

There have been indications from a number of the organising committee for the above that they will be standing down after this year's event. The committee is not getting any younger and many have been involved for years. As has previously been discussed there is a huge amount of work required to organise the event and there is no capacity within current staffing levels for the Parish Council to take this over.

Consideration needs to be given on how this event can be organised in the future. Planning for the 2017 carnival will start in the autumn of this year.

Tim Perkins
22nd June 2016.

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