

Abbots Langley Parish Council

Minutes of the Leisure Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 21st October 2020 at 7.30 pm in the Council Offices, Langley Road, Abbots Langley.

Those present:

Vice Chairman: Councillor Jane Lay
Councillors: Councillor Jean Bowman
Councillor Liz Burns
Councillor Simon Stanley
Councillor Roxanne Yau

Also Present: Mr Chris Bromwich - Allotment Representative
Mr Robert Stimpson - Allotment Representative
Mr Vince Watts - Allotments Representative
Mr Tim Denyer - Sports Representative

Officers: Tim Perkins - Clerk to the Council
David Abbott - Facilities Manager
Mark Ellis - Works Manager

The meeting opened at 7:30 pm.

154. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received, accepted and recorded from Councillors John Wyatt and Sara Bedford (both unavailable).

155. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Jane Lay declared an interest in agenda item 7iii Fees and Charges as a member of the Gardening Society and an allotment tenant.

156. Public Participation

No members of the public had expressed an interest in addressing the committee.

157. Minutes of the Meeting

It was proposed by Councillor Roxanne Yau, seconded by Councillor Liz Burns and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 19th August 2020, copies of which had been sent to all Members of the Parish Council prior to the meeting, be taken as read and were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

158. Reports from the Allotments Representatives

Manor House - Mr Chris Bromwich

One plot unworked and another under worked, otherwise plots being generally well managed.

Kingsfield - Mr Vince Watts

Mt Vince Watts expressed concern that some plots were not tenanted for two years, the Clerk said this certainly was not the case as there was a waiting list for the site.

The Clerk acknowledged that since the allotment invoices went out on 1st October a number of tenants had given up their tenancy, across all sites.

Primrose Hill - Mr Robert Stimpson

One of the recently planted trees has been vandalised. Otherwise no major issues.

The Clerk will ask the Works Manager and Council Administration Officer to produce a report on allotment tenancies, waiting lists and tenants on notice for the next meeting of this committee.

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159. Reports from the Sports Representatives

Pitches all in reasonable condition, thanks to the Works Team.

The storage container that had been discussed at past meetings was on hold. The club is reviewing alternative options and also conserving funds.

160. Budget 2021-2022

i. Key Projects

Members discussed the latest revision of the Key Projects report.

- In the Spring officers will put a costed proposal together for replacement of the footpath lights at Primrose Hill and the Manor House with solar units (project 14).
- Since the report was produced Hertfordshire County Council have given full approval for the Christmas Lights installation (16).
- Depot Project report has been delayed due to pandemic related staffing issues at the consultancy. Staff have been reassigned to the project and the tender process will be underway shortly (17).
- Councillor Jane Lay will arrange to meet with the Facilities Manager and Works Manger to review the additional parking bollards (15) and refurbishment of the pound, both at Kitters Green (21).

ii. Budget 2020-2021

Members reviewed the budget in detail. There was still significant uncertainty on when hall hire income and bar revenue will start to return to pre-pandemic levels.

The Clerk produced a “Commercial Income - Year End and Budget Assumptions” report, base lined on actual income in the FY 2019-2020, which was not significantly affected by the pandemic.

Assumptions in this report were Tanners Wood Hall, Manor House and bar revenue would in 2021-2022 be 65% of base lined levels. Given recent increases in pandemic tier levels the 65% may prove to be optimistic and the assumptions will require review through the budget process.

The following actions were also agreed:

- All non-essential expenditure such as Water Fountains and other small projects would be put on hold until spring 2021.
- Recruitment for the Groundsperson would go ahead.
- No major projects such as the Car Park at South Way would go ahead as it may be necessary to release earmarked reserves to support the budget.
- The Depot Project should proceed as this had Health & Safety implications and the new surface was urgently required. Funding sources to be confirmed but likely to be a combination of earmarked reserves, revenue budget and Community Infrastructure Levy.

Members also noted that the Community Warden’s vehicle was currently off the road due to gearbox problems, it may prove necessary to replace this vehicle if repairs are not economical. The vehicle was due for replacement this year but this was put on hold due to the pandemic, so it is unfortunate it now needs major repairs.

The Facilities Manager has looked at the costs of purchasing a hybrid or electric vehicle but these are still very expensive and battery life will be impacted as the vehicle is used for mainly short “stop/start” journeys.

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iii. Fees & Charges 2021-2022

It was proposed by Councillor Liz Burns, seconded by Councillor Simon Stanley and **RESOLVED** that there being no further amendments to the schedule as presented members recommend approval to the Parish Council.

Members also agreed the freeze of venue hire charges for the new financial year and Delegation of Authority is granted to the Facilities Manager/Clerk to agree discounts as appropriate to secure bookings which offer a significant booking and bar revenue opportunity.

Any discounts of greater than 10% to be reported to this committee.

Members noted the ongoing discussions the Clerk was holding with the Tennis Club. The club's business situation is difficult due to the loss of revenue during the summer.

For the February meeting of this committee the Clerk will ask the Tennis Club to provide a report on their plans and finances for the 2021 summer tennis season.

161. Updates

Members noted the Clerk's report on the following:

- i. Pitch Fees 2020-2021
- ii. Works Team Staffing
- iii. Christmas Carols and Lights On

The meeting closed at 9.12 pm.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____