

Burwell Parish Council

Community, Leisure and Sport

Minutes of the Meeting of 01.12.20 at 7.30 pm using Zoom

Present: Michael Swift (Chair), Helen McMenemy-Smith, Gill Miller, Jenny Moss, Jim Perry, Liz Swift, Geraldine Tate, and Paul Webb

CL&S/011220/01 Apologies for absences and declarations of interests

There were no apologies for absence. There were no initial declarations of interests, however Paul Webb, Jenny Moss and Helen McMenemy-Smith later declared an interest, being members of the Burwell Environment Group, about the proposed tree nursery being sited in Priory Meadow.

CL&S/011220/02 Approval of the minutes of the 20.10.20

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th October 2020 were approved. Proposed by Liz Swift and seconded by Helen McMenemy-Smith.

CL&S/011220/03 Action Sheet Updates

Recreation Ground

Having received a specification and costings of around £50k from Meads to carry out major capital work to the car park at the Recreation Ground, Michael Swift explained that potentially £35K had been allocated from CIL Funding for the work. However, this still needs to be approved by Full Council. The Group had previously agreed that no decision should be made about having the work done until more information is available on the Councils budget for the next year. As this information is not yet available, and money is likely to be limited because of Covid 19, it was agreed to defer making a decision again. The Group noted that there had recently been a receipt of £20,000 in respect of the Goose Hall Solar Farm. This could be considered for funding for the remaining balance.

Helen McMenemy-Smith informed the Group of the work taking place at the Recreation Ground to create a wildflower border around the trim track. Seed is only needed for the south side and seed suitable for a shady area has now been sown. Soil exposed when the trim track was constructed around the rest of the field, has exposed a lot of wildflowers and there is no need for any more seeds to be sown. There is no need for any more trees around the edge of the Recreation Ground, although some further shrubs and woodland plants could be planted. These could be obtained at no cost to the Council. A strip will be left between the trim track and the wildflower border, so that the Maintenance Officer can continue to control weeds on the trim track using weedkiller. A lot of the trees on the Recreation Ground have ivy growth and Helen McMenemy-Smith explained that she is in the process of cutting this away from the trees.

Paul Webb reported that the Maintenance Officer may need to carry out some deep root clearance over the winter to stop the tree roots causing damage to the trim track. Grass cutting around the gym equipment will continue. The Clerk asked about the cutting of the boundary hedges which is generally currently carried out in the late autumn. It was confirmed that if the hedge is cut at this time, then it would not be a problem as this is the time when the wildflowers die back.

A letter has been received from a resident concerned about the safety of pedestrians in the car park of the Recreation Ground due to the speed that some cars enter the site. The resident had suggested that traffic calming is installed between Hythe Bridge and the entrance to the car park. However, the Council has no power to carry this out unless it is through an LHI. Consideration could be given to some form of traffic calming within the car park and this could be discussed as part of the capital car park work.

A quotation had been received to install an automatic locking device to the public toilet at the Recreation Ground. The cost to install is £956.76 including VAT. It was agreed not to go ahead with this at the current time, but if CIL123 funding is still available once the table tennis table has been purchased the installation of the device could be considered again. It was suggested that it would be useful to look in the long term at the costs involved with the key holders opening and closing the facility in comparison

with the installation of the lock. Paul Webb confirmed that he was hoping to sort out the table tennis table by the end of the financial year.

Tennis Court Barrier – The Maintenance Officer has found some netting to prevent stones travelling on to the tennis courts. The cost for the netting of £92.99 will be put to Council by F&GP for approval at the Full Council meeting on 8th December 2020.

The Sports Centre is starting to get back to opening as normal.

There is no further update on the transfer of land from Hopkins Home.

James Moss has now taken a drone photo of the Community Orchard, but the trees are too small to be seen in detail. Jenny Moss will try to edit the photo to include information on the fruit trees.

A decision needs to be made on where the location of the first Community Garden is to be sited. Prior Meadow is one option. Pound Hill continues to be an option. However, the original design for Pound Hill may need to be revisited. The garden could be of a smaller scale with bench seating, but no lighting resolving concerns made by neighbours. Helen McMenamin-Smith, Jenny Moss and Paul Moss to discuss further prior to a decision being made.

CL&S/011220/04 Moving of seat from Spring Close to Apple Tree Grove

The Clerk informed the group that she had received no further updates on moving the bench from Spring Close to Appletree Grove and would chase ECDC again.

Helen McMenamin-Smith passed on positive comments from residents about the bench which is now sited at the far end of the Recreation Ground.

CL&S/011220/05 Buying of additional land

Jenny Moss clarified that she was not suggesting the Parish Council purchased additional land but wanted the Parish Council's permission to make enquiries to landowners to create a more substantial walkway linking Priory Wood, Spring Close and Pauline's Swamp. Landowners may be interested as over the next 5 year's certain farming subsidies will be lost and replaced with other subsidiaries to promote the use of land for green environmental purposes. The first thing that is needed is to ascertain who owns the farmland required to create the walkway. Jenny Moss was asked to investigate further including the costs involved to make a Land Registry enquiry.

CL&S/011220/06 Donations for consideration - None

CL&S/210220/07 Policies

1. Climate Change

Thanks, was given to Paul Webb and Jenny Moss for creating the policy. A few words may need to be changed, to ensure that we do not state that we will do something that we do not have the necessary power to change, such as house design. In these situations, we can only encourage or support changes. If approved by Council, ECDC would like to use the document as a template for other parishes. The Clerk raised concerns that budget restrictions in the next year may limit changes the Council can take in the short term and that consideration should be given to lengthening the timescale of the short-term period. A suggestion of 18 to 24 months was suggested.

It was agreed that the document once some minor changes had been made by Paul Webb and Jenny Moss should be considered for adoption by the Full Council at the first meeting in January 2021. The Group confirmed that they would be happy for Paul Webb to start working on a more detailed version of the Policy once approved by the Council. Geraldine Tate asked when we would encourage community involvement and it was suggested that the Annual Parish Meeting in May 2021 would be a good opportunity to share with the community. Burwell Environmental Group could be involved following approval by the Council; however, it would be necessary for the Council to remain in control.

CL&S/011220/08 Any other business

Priory Meadow use of land as a Tree Nursery

The Council had received a request to use a small area of land in Priory Meadow as a Tree Nursery. A map was shown of the location which is situated on the right-hand side looking from Priory Close, about

halfway down the main field. Those involved would like to put up picket fencing for which they would be responsible to prevent animal damage to the trees. They would also install some form of water harvesting mechanism. The trees would be young plants which would be moved on to other locations when ready. There would be no financial commitment for the Parish Council. The Clerk suggested that an agreement was made between the organisation creating the Nursery and the Council to ensure that the area is returned to its original state should the tree nursery discontinue to be maintained. There was some concern over the set-up group for the nursery and this needs to be clarified by members of the Burwell Environment Group. The Clerk also raised the importance of an agreement amid concerns of the use of land on the boundary of the meadow and adjacent County Council land.

The group agreed to make a recommendation to Full Council that the Council supports the creation of a tree nursery in Priory Wood subject to a formal agreement being made with those creating the nursery.

A declaration of interest was made by Paul Webb, Jenny Moss and Helen McMEnamin-Smith.

1.Grass land management

The village grass cutting contract is due for renewal this year and a recommendation to Full Council will be made by the Asset and Environment Group who are responsible for the contract. A letter regarding a suggested grassland management plan to encourage nature conservation in Burwell had been received from a group of residents and the letter had been forwarded to all members of the group. The management plan covered Priory Meadow, Pound Hill, the High Street/Isaacson Road junction, Hall Lane at the entrance to Jubilee Green and Green Lane. Michael Swift explained that he could see no reason why Priory Meadow, Spring Close and Pauline's Swamp could not be managed in such a way to improve conservation. Other areas suggested are the responsibility of Highways, other than Pound Hill and with discussions having taken place earlier during the meeting regarding the potential community garden on Pound Hill it was agreed that more time is required prior to making any recommendations for this area of land. Planted daffodils on Pound Hill will also need to be considered. Several years ago, the Council had trialled leaving Pound Hill grass cutting until after the buttercups had died, however there had been complaints. Michael Swift also reported that people had complained to him about the state of the grass on the Causeway when cutting has been delayed. Unfortunately, not everyone sees the importance of nature conservation.

The Clerk raised some concern regarding the proximity of the allotment gardens and the transfer of seeds in the wind should wildflowers be encouraged in Green Lane. She continued to explain that due to the condition of the surface of the lane, vehicles may drive on the verges to avoid potholes, which could damage any wildflowers growing along the verge.

The Clerk explained that bringing changes into the grass cutting regimes for Council owned areas should not be an issue. She raised concern however about ensuring that the regime for cutting of the vast area of verges in the village does not become too complicated for the contractor to deliver satisfactorily. It was agreed that the Clerk would respond to the group of residents with an update of discussions so far. Helen McMEnamin-Smith informed the Group that she is aware of some hedging plants that are available which could be planted on the edge of the Amenity Area at Hatley Drive and the riverbank. She also asked about the small areas of uncultivated ground near the zebra crossing on Ness Road. The Clerk informed her that these were seeded with grass earlier in the year.

CL&S/011220/09 Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 16th February 2021.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Signed

Dated

