



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF ASHURST WOOD PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE held on Tuesday 18th September 2018 8.00 pm at the Council Meeting Room.

PRESENT: Cllrs: D Loveday (Chair), M Bussell, J Forbes, K Lindsay, B Phillips and J Samways

IN ATTENDANCE: Caroline Leet (Clerk); Ceri Evans (Handyman) **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** 0

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

248. Public Questions

Responsibility of

Cllr Loveday gave District Councillor John Belsey's apologies who had hoped to attend the meeting as he had been contacted by a resident; however, Cllr Belsey had emailed the following question for the Committee on behalf of the resident: *Although the footpath through John Pears Field down to Wall Hill Road is welcome it does contain steps which make it unable to be used by mobility scooters or wheelchairs. Such vehicles have to continue to use the busy Wall Hill Road and this is unsafe for those vulnerable people. Given that traffic on our roads will not lessen and that with an ageing population the use of transport such as mobility scooters is going to increase would the Village Council be prepared to look again to see if it is at all feasible to make the path capable of being used by such vehicle.*

Members noted the question and that at the time of the path construction, this had been discussed. Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) Landscapes team had at the time said that the gradient was too steep to allow for a sloop without the path being completely redesigned and that the access point at the road could be compromised. The Committee suggested that this be referred to the Village Council to consider if it was a viable project which the Public Service Committee should investigate further.

Clerk/VC

249. Apologies for absence

Apologies from Cllrs Bright and Phillips were received and **resolved; the reasons were accepted.**

250. To receive Declarations of Interests from Members in respect of any matter on the agenda

Cllr Bussell declared an interest in item 17 on the agenda; she was a trustee of the Village Centre.

251. To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15th May 2018

The minutes were **approved as an accurate account of the meeting.**

252. Recorded meetings: to approve deletion of recording – 15th May 2018
Approved.

253. To receive the income and expenditure and review the budget for Public Services

The budget and expenditure to-date was noted along with the Clerk's report: Dog bins (4240) the invoice for 2017/18 had not been paid last year as it was incorrect; an amended invoice had yet to be received. This would mean that expenditure for 2018/19 would have two invoices. War Memorial (4260) would

exceed the budget due to the renovation and cleaning works, 75% of this would be covered by a grant from the War Memorial Trust and this expenditure had been resolved by the full Council.

Cllr Bussell mentioned that the plants for Dors Patch had been affected by the dry summer and also the War Memorial plants would need to be replaced following completion of the renovation work. This may exceed the budget on plants. Members had no questions.

MB/Clerk

254. Clerk's report

The Clerk's report was received.

255. To receive a report from the Handyman

The Handyman's report was received; there were no questions.

Cllr Loveday mentioned that it would be a good time of the year to carry out some of the general housekeeping duties around the village including the area outside Council office.

Cllr Judge asked about road sign cleaning. The Clerk said that the Handyman had the equipment to clean village boundary and road signs where access allowed him to do so safely. However, it should be noted that signs on the main highway were the responsibility of Highways. It was noted that the village boundary signs had recently been nicely cleaned.

Handyman

256. Winter Management Plan

a Update for winter 2018/19

Cllr Loveday reported the grit salt audit had been done and submitted to West Sussex County Council (WSSCC).

b To consider the expenditure of up to £188 to purchase a 400ltr bin for storing reserve grit salt supplies currently held in a crane bag

The Clerk's report noted that the current method for storing the salt grit was in a crane bag which had rotted and also meant that the grit salt was exposed to the weather. Members **resolved the expenditure of up to £188 to purchase a 400ltr bin for storing the reserve grit salt supplies.**

Clerk

257. War Memorial

a To receive an update of the cleaning and renovations work

Cllr Loveday mentioned the contractor, Burslem, had started the cleaning and renovations work. The centre pillar was cleaned in August and was looking very clean. The remaining renovations should be completed by the end of September.

258. To receive an update on Dirty Lane

Cllr Loveday referred to the Clerk's report: Following the last meeting, enquiries had been made to West Sussex Highways about the road surface and drainage issues; their reply was for Village Council to consider an Operation Watershed application. However, as already discussed, the extent of the works would require a specification to be prepared and then putting this out to quote for was a lot of work. Due to other commitments, there were not the resources to undertake this.

259. To receive an update on possible Tennis court improvements – John Pears Recreation Ground

Cllr Lindsay reported that she and the Clerk had attended a meeting on 18th September with Stuart Brown (Outdoor Services Team Leader at MSDC), District Councillor John Belsey, and from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)

Amy Gardner (Local Authority Engagement Manager) and Matthew Glazier (Community Business Manager – South East). The meeting was led by the LTA who were working with local authorities looking at what they can do to help increase general tennis participation. Their aim was to get more people playing tennis; MSDC want to increase the activity for their facilities and increase the income generated; the Village Council could benefit through the John Pears Rural Management Agreement (RMA) and increase its income; and the Ashurst Wood Community Tennis Club (AWCTC) would like to improved access and the court booking facilities for its members. This could be achieved with a 'smoother customer experience', in other words improved court access using an electronic gated entry system which gives complete control on how the facilities are used and allows for online or App bookings and payment system and issues unique individual codes. The system can also differentiate between members and pay-as-you-go users.

The LTA has carried out a lot of research in to who plays tennis and where; park sites are a key venue where people play tennis, but these courts were still not being used to their full potential.

There are currently 120 of the proposed electronic gate systems in uses with local authorities. (Examples included Elmbridge Borough Council and Surrey Heath Borough Council). At each venue (the number of courts do vary) they are achieving an average of 3,185 hours of tennis played. For Ashurst Wood it is difficult to measure in the same way, but on the pay-as-you-play, assuming all were adult hirers, it would be just 26 hours this year (this does not include AWCTC members). It is already established that the courts are underutilised. Working with the AWCTC and its membership with the LTA, a pilot scheme for the district could be trialled. The cost to install the electronic gated system is estimated in region of £5k-£7k, but a quote would need to confirm this. MSDC did not seem to be put off by this. However, it should be noted that MSDC does already offer a push button coded gate system on its other courts in the district. But, it is less sophisticated; it gives out only one code which is intermittently changed and does not provide data of usage. It does allow for online bookings but again there are limitations. Ashurst Wood's courts are currently managed at a local level and with a key. If the courts were to move over to the current MSDC push code system it would not be possible for the tennis club to continue with its current membership fees and system; all users have to pay on line and pay the MSDC fees. MSDC annual membership is £89.60 per adult; AWCTC family member is £100 or adult membership is £40. The proposed electronic gated entry access system would allow for different memberships and pay-as-you-go.

The idea would be for Ashurst Wood to pilot the scheme and collect the data which would hopefully show increased participation and then MSDC could consider rolling it out to its other facilities. Stuart Brown and Cllr Belsey indicated that they would support a pilot for Ashurst Wood, though they needed to secure the funding and the support of the trustees for John Pears Recreation Ground.

Cllr Lindsay added that the AWCTC would be keen to support this initiative and would be able to consider a financial contribution. This would be a really good opportunity for the Village Council, MSDC and AWCTC to work in partnership helping to increase tennis participation, improve the well-being of residents and increase revenue for both councils.

Members discussed and **agreed** to propose to the full council to support further investigation for a new court access system to the tennis courts in partnership with the AWCTC and MSDC and to consider a financial contribution to be included in the new budget for 2019/20.

- 260. To consider a shared investment for a Speed Indicator Device with other parishes in the Cluster Group and the expenditure of up to £500. The SID would then be shared on a rota basis between the parishes (up to 6 parishes). This SID would be in addition to one which is expected to be purchased by the WSCC CLC for shared use in the Northern Mid Sussex area**

Cllr Loveday referred to the Clerk's report and mentioned that this had been going backwards and forwards for two years. In November 2016, the full Council resolved to support a shared purchase of a Speed Indicator Device (SID) with the Cluster Group and the expenditure of £500 (res 365a). However, in December 2016, the County Local Committees (CLC) awarded a grant to WSCC Highways to purchase a SID for the shared use between the parishes, and the Cluster Group had decided to hold back purchasing one. Unfortunately, this SID was stolen in August 2017. The Cluster Group were keen to reconsider a shared ownership SID and were asking parishes to budget for this in its 2019/20. Members **agreed to budgeted for the expenditure of up to £500 (budget 2019/20) to support a proposed shared ownership scheme for a SID with neighbouring parishes and who are part of the Cluster Group.**

Clerk/F&A

- 261. To consider installing wooden bollards with reflectors at the grass verges for Hammerwood Road/Maypole Road and the expenditure of up to £110.00**

Members discussed if this was absolutely necessary. It was pointed out that at this section of Hammerwood Road the road narrowed and therefore it could be difficult to pass especially, if there was a parked car. If bollards were put on the grass verge, it could make a situation worse as there would be nowhere for vehicles to go and it could create issues at the junction of Maypole Road/Hammerwood Road. It was also noted that recent building works had perhaps aggravated the situation, but the work had now been completed and so there would be less lorries using this section of road. It was noted a license would need to be obtained from WSCC Highways. Another point raised was that it could set an expectation for other grass verges in the village. It was agreed to defer a decision and monitor the situation.

- 262. To consider the need to possibly increasing the number of amenities skips collection, currently twice yearly and therefore increasing the budget (currently £322 per collection, one vehicle)**

This is in view of East Sussex County Council (ESCC) recent announcement that it would be closing the Forest Row Amenities site and that Mid Sussex recently announced that fly-tipping had increased

Cllr Loveday said that the amenity skip collections were booked annually and the Committee would be considering if to recommend to the Finance and Administration (F&A) Committee the budget for 2019/20 should increase to allow more skip collections. Cllr Bussell asked if there had been any requests for this. Cllr Loveday replied yes and proposed to increase the collection from twice yearly to three times. Members **resolved to propose to the F&A Committee to increase the budget for the Civic Amenity Collections in the budget 2019/20 from £650 to £1,000 to allow the number of skip collections to be increased from twice yearly to three times a year.**

Clerk/F&A

- 263. To consider funding the hire of the minibus from Community Transport for a Christmas excursion to the Bluebell Railway for the shopping bus users. This has been organised by one of the volunteer drivers**

Cllr Loveday referred to the Clerk's report: 17 residents who used the shopping bus had booked to attend a Christmas event organised by one of the



drivers, unfortunately the Community Transport mini bus was not available for the times needed due to the school run times. Members discussed and agreed that it was not ideal for the organiser to be using his own vehicle to ferry people back and forth. It was suggested that the Clerk could ask Sackville School if its mini bus was available. Alternatively, and in the event the Sackville bus was not available, the Committee **resolved the expenditure of up to £100 to fund taxis to transport to and from East Grinstead train station.**

Clerk

264. To consider a clothes bank for the village; in return a rental income would be paid to the Village Council

Cllr Forbes said that the company who had approached the Council were not a charity themselves, but a commercial company who sells clothes to third world countries and this can have an impact on those countries textiles importing business. Cllr Bussell said that the trustees of the Village Centre had considered a clothes bank in the past, but did not like the idea. Also, a lot of money had recently been spent to make the Village Centre look nice and did not think a clothes bank was suitable. John Pears Car Park had in the past had a British Heart Foundation clothes bank, but this had just become a dumping area and the bank had since been removed (assumably by MSDC). Members concluded that they did not have a suitable location for a clothes bank.

265. Any items for reporting or inclusion on future agenda
None.

266. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 11th December

Meeting closed: 20.43

Chairman.....

Date.....