

**Minutes of the Greens and Amenities Committee Meeting
Held on Thursday 19th September 2019 in St Mary's Room, Ringmer Village Hall**

Attended: Cllr David Terry (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mandy Brown, Cllr Johnny Denis, Cllr Gavin May, Cllr Clare Herbert, Cllr Jenny Hill, Cllr Richard Turner and Cllr John Whitlock

Also, in attendance: Chris Bibb – Specialist Advisor of open spaces -Lewes District Council, Karen Crowhurst – Clerk, Corinna Goward – Assistant Clerk

Members of the public - 4

Item No	Minutes
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
1.1	Apologies were received from: Cllr Richard Booth, Cllr Margaret Crompton and Cllr John Kay.
2.	DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS & DISPENSATION REQUESTS
2.1	None.
3.0	TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM THE GREENS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30th MAY 2019
3.1	It was resolved to accept the Minutes from the Greens and Amenities Committee meeting as a true and accurate record of the meeting. The Vice-Chairman then signed the Minutes.
3.2	The Vice-Chairman then expressed his thanks and gratitude to the hard work and commitment of ex-Councillor Ron Wilcox during the years of his service to Ringmer Parish Council and as Chair of the Greens and Amenities Committee. All Councillors were in agreement with the comments and wanted to convey their very best wishes to Mr Wilcox.
4.	PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS ON MATTERS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA
4.1	At 7.34 pm the Chair invited the Meeting to suspend Standing Orders and asked for questions or comments from members of the public present.
4.2	A member of the public spoke on his disappointment to hear of the resignation of ex-Cllr Wilcox as his knowledge and experience in the Village was greatly valued.
4.3	Other public members expressed their fears and concerns over the possibility of Rushey Green open space being considered as a play area. Points raised included: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It was stated that the area is Common Land owned by the Christie family.• Most of the surrounding residents were elderly, only one family with young children lived close by.• The area is prone to flooding.• The area is already used for creative play, dog walking, wildlife observation, a quiet meeting place for relaxation for all ages.• It was considered too small an area to install a play area due to its close proximity to the road.• Under the LAP guidelines it was an unsuitable area.

4.4 At 7.42 pm Standing Orders were reinstated.

5. ACTION POINTS - UPDATES AND PROGRESS

5.1. a) Request to contact East Sussex Highways to revisit application for VAS in Ringmer

5.2 The Assistant Clerk informed Members that East Sussex Highways had agreed to arrange a new speed survey at the same location at no cost to Ringmer Parish Council, but this would not happen until the current road works were completed.

CORRESPONDENCE FOR NOTING OR ACTION

6.0 a) To consider any correspondence after this agenda has been published – for noting or action

6.1 Members noted the objections received regarding Rushey Green relating to item 13 – OPEN SPACES – To consider creation of play areas on open spaces.

13. **In light of members of the public present in respect of Rushey Green concerns, the Vice-Chairman agreed to bring this next item forward for discussion.**

OPEN SPACES - To consider any matters relating to open spaces for decision

13.1 a) Sadlers Way
b) Middleham Close
c) Gote Lane
d) Rushey Green
e) To consider creation of play areas on open spaces. As per 8.1 Minutes (21st February 2019) ***A request was made for the Greens and Amenities Committee to consider whether any of the Parish Council owned open spaces could be used for play areas? It was agreed to place this on the next and Amenities Committee meeting Agenda.***

13.2 Members discussed this item at length expressing concerns over the un-suitability of all the open spaces specified, however all were in agreement that an additional play area was necessary in the village. It was suggested to look at the open space available on Caburn Field once the new development was completed to see if the space could accommodate a play area. Members agreed that the sites specified were not acceptable. It was further agreed to request Chris Bibb look the open spaces to establish feasibility of them having any play equipment placed upon them.

7. VILLAGE GREEN

7.1 a) Village pond update and agree any actions.

7.2 Concerns from residents were raised by a Member regarding the de-oxygenation of the water in the pond. The Assistant Clerk advised she had sought advice from Mayfly Aquacare but the advice given was that it would be unlikely to have much effect at this time of the year. The situation would continue to be monitored.

7.3 b) War memorial update and agree any decisions regarding Lt Col E J Jameson

7.4 It was noted that the previous resolution to add the name of Lt Col E J Jameson had now passed and further information regarding his life and whereabouts had since come to light. Members agreed that it was not appropriate to add his name at this time but further investigation was necessary. Members agreed to defer and seek further information regarding Lt Col Jameson.

c) Village Green tree map – update

- 7.5 Members were informed that the map was complete and remedial work on particular trees was continuing.
- 7.6 d) Tree works – to consider the quotations of work – ***Exclusion of press and members of the public***
- 7.7 There were no quotations to consider.
- 7.8 e) Fencing adjoining Delves House – to consider quotations and approve the expenditure from a different cost centre or reserves as this is not in the budget or include the fencing in the 2020-2021 budget – ***Exclusion of the press and members of the public***
- 7.9 **The Vice-Chairman agreed to discuss e) and item f) -**
 f) To consider any other matters relating to the Village Green - **after items 8, 9, 10 and 11 had been discussed.**

8. **PLAY AREAS**

- 8.1 a) Update on damaged slide on Village Green - progress, update and agree any actions
- 8.2 Members were informed that no recent dialogue had been received from Sovereign. The slide was still blocked off. A quote of £ 2000 for a metal replacement had been received from Lewes District Council (Chris Bibb) but this would be deferred until further quotes were sourced. It was proposed to write to Sovereign requesting they re-consider their earlier response, giving a deadline of 21 days for a reply. All were in favour.
- 8.3 b) Renewal or purchase of play equipment using Section 106 funds – Progress, update and agree any further actions
- 8.4 The Clerk explained the options available to Members where the all work could be managed by the Parish Council or work alongside Lewes District Council, benefitting from their experience and knowledge. It was suggested to invite Chris Bibb to a future meeting for his advice. Cllr Turner proposed to work in conjunction with Lewes District Council on the renewal and purchase of play equipment using Section 106 funds, this was seconded by Cllr Whitlock. All members agreed, therefore a resolution was passed to work alongside Lewes District Council. Mr Bibb accepted the invitation and agreed to assist.
- 8.5 c) To consider any other matters relating to the Village Green

8.6 There were none.

9. **RELOCATION OF SKATE PARK-** To consider options available to deliver a skate ramp(s) and consider any other alternative locations

- 9.1 a) To consider a developer-led scheme to provide a skate ramp at the cost of £45,000 available
- b) To consider a Lewes District Council-led scheme to oversee, manage and implement a skate park and work with the Parish Council to secure further funding to provide a higher cost bespoke skate park
- 9.2

Items a) & b) were discussed jointly.

9.3

9.4 Members agreed that the amount of £45,000 provided from a developer-led scheme would be insufficient to provide a suitable skate ramp and that the favourable option would be to work with Lewes District Council, in providing a more suitable skate park. Further funding would be required so that more ambitious projects could be considered possibly including a bike/pump track. It was considered worthwhile to spend more on the equipment for a long term facility. Members approved the Lewes District Council led scheme.

9.5 c) To consider other areas where a skate park can be sited

9.6 At 8.17 standing orders were suspended to allow Chris Bibb to talk on the suitability of certain sites to be used for a skate park.

9.7 Mr Bibb informed Members that the proposed site at Fingerpost Field was unsuitable as this was screened by high hedges, there was a lack of parking and no local amenities. Past experience proved that areas not clearly visible provided the potential for bad behaviour and drug abuse. Safety of the users had to be a priority. However, if Fingerpost Field was declined some form of play provision would be required to satisfy the number of children residing in that area of the village. Mr Bibb suggested that an area on the Village Green was a favourable site, open, visible, close to shops and amenities and an area for parking. He stated that skate parks could be sunken into the ground so as to be more discreet.

9.8 At 8.24pm standing orders were re-instated.

9.9 Members discussed this item in depth. Views on the possibility of building a skate park on the green were mixed. Once built it would be altered forever and Ringmer would lose its village feel and consent would be required from Strutt & Parker. Other ideas included the option to purchase land, in particular the land opposite Ringmer Academy. Broyle Lane informal play area was also suggested. Cllr Terry proposed that Ringmer Parish Council request Mr Bibb to investigate possible areas in the Village as suitable sites for a skate park and obtain feedback. Cllr Brown seconded the proposal. All Members were in agreement. Mr Bibb agreed to explore options and left the meeting at 8.34pm.

10. **QUOTATIONS – GRASS CUTTING CONTRACTS 2020 -2023 Exclusion to the Public and Press**

10.1 a) To resolve to exclude press and members of the public

10.2 This was not required as no quotations had yet been received.

10.3 b) To approve grass cutting and maintenance specifications

10.4 The Clerk provided Members with the specifications required for the grass cutting and maintenance and explained that tenders had been distributed to Members in order to remain transparent. Maintenance and grass cutting were now separated. Members approved the specifications.

10.5 c) To agree to request quotations for the next 3 years offering a three year contract or remain on an annual basis from 2020 - 2023

10.6 The Vice Chair of Greens requested an item be added for consideration at the next Greens & Amenities meeting. This was to consider employing a linesman to manage the grass cutting, hedging and other horticultural requirements. The option to merge with other parishes to combine the services of such a person in order to save money was suggested. This person could then be contracted out when time allows. Members were eager to investigate this idea

further and therefore resolved to award the grass cutting and maintenance contract for one year only. The idea of a three - year contract could be re-visited at a later date.

11. **PARISH MARKER STONES**

11.1 a) To agree actions for repair and restoration

11.2 Cllr Denis apprised Members of the 7 boundary stones, 5 of which were in need of restoration. He provided a list of their current locations. Only 2 remained in good condition.

11.3 b) To identify the funds as this is not in the Parish Council Budget

11.4 This item was combined with a). Concerns were raised regarding the cost of such restoration. Cllr Denis proposed to investigate the cost of repairs and then consider them as a budget item for 2020. Cllr Herbert seconded the proposal. Apart from one abstention, Members agreed to the proposal.

7.10 **VILLAGE GREEN – (Cont'd)**

7.11 e) Fencing adjoining Delves House - to consider quotations and approve the expenditure from a different cost centre or reserves as this is not in the budget or include the fencing in the 2020-2021 budget – ***Exclusion of the press and members of the public***

7.12 Members discussed this item in depth. The matter arose due to the concerns of the Delves House residents regarding the lack of security at the premises, but Members agreed the cost to provide adequate security fencing would be immense and had not been accounted for in the budget. The quotations received were for fencing that would not satisfy this concern, would mean cutting away much of the vegetation and be difficult to erect. The wording of the lease was discussed and the Council's obligations. Members noted that the previous resolution to repair existing fencing had now passed. It was expressed by councillors that it was felt that the boundary was sufficiently marked by the hedge/vegetation that had grown over a previous fence and that this was more in keeping with the rural environment and possible conservation area. It was also a wildlife habitat
The Vice Chairman proposed that Ringmer Parish Council write to Delves Retirement Homes Ltd informing that it was not the Council's responsibility to provide security fencing. This was seconded by Cllr Turner. All Members agreed. **ACTION – The Assistant Clerk to write to L Mundy advising of the decision. The Vice-Chairman to work in conjunction on the response.**

7.13 g) To consider any other matters relating to the Village Green

7.14 An enquiry was made regarding the maintenance of the metal benches on the Green. The Clerk informed Members that there was a schedule of works that would be commencing shortly.

12. **OVERGROWN TWITTENS**

12.1 a) To agree any actions/decisions arising from this and identify any associated costs and agree where the expenditure should come from.

12.2 The Clerk apprised Members that the responsibility for this lies with either East Sussex County Council or Glyndebourne and residents should contact them about concerns or advise the Parish Office so that a report can be sent to the relevant department.

TIMBER BENCHES IN THE VILLAGE

14.

a) To agree any actions for repair or restoration

14.1

14.2 The timber benches around the Village had been made from windfall trees from the great hurricane and some were now in need of repair.

14.3 b) To identify the funds for this if not in the Parish Council Budget

The Clerk clarified that this was an on-going scheme on the maintenance schedule.

14.4

GENERAL PURPOSES MATTERS

15.0

a) Request for Parish Office signs on the Lewes Road and Harrison's Lane - update

15.1

Members were informed that East Sussex County Council had agreed in principle for the instalment of Parish Office signs.

15.2

ALLOTMENT MATTERS

17.0

a) To consider matters relating to the allotments requiring action or decision

17.1

There were no matters requiring action or decision

17.2

b) Allotment structures – to consider any amendments, alterations and other items for inclusion to the existing allotment rules

17.3

17.4 Members were informed that feedback from the allotment holders was necessary to amend the existing rules. It was suggested to find an additional holder who can record usage and switch off the mains water when necessary. **ACTION – Assistant Clerk to contact holders for suggestions.**

18. ANY REPORTS ON GREENS OR AMENITY MATTERS (BY LEAVE) – NOT DECISION OR DISCUSSION

18.1 Reports were received regarding Ringmer swimming pool.

19. URGENT ITEMS (CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION) OR ITEMS FOR REFERRAL TO NEXT AGENDA OR APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE

19.1 The Vice Chairman requested that an item be added to the next agenda for the appointment of a Chairman to the Greens & Amenities Committee.

19.2 It was reported that Cllr Julie Terry had tendered her resignation.

20. CLOSE OF THE MEETING

20.1 There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.08pm.

Date of Next Meeting: 7th November 2019
St Mary's Room, Ringmer Village Hall

THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND