

WEST MALLING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 13 JULY 2015, 7.30PM AT VILLAGE HALL, NORMAN ROAD, WEST MALLING

Present: Mr P Stevens
Mrs L Javens
Mr R Selkirk
Co-Opted Member:
Mr S Mullins

Also in Attendance:
Mr J Collins (WMPC Employee)
Mrs A Turner
Three Allotment Tenants

Mrs Sarah Howard (Assistant Clerk)

Minute		Action by	Action taken	Response
15/317	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Mrs Y Smyth , and co-opted members: Mr M Doyle, Rev Green and Mr Musker			
15/318	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –Mrs Javens declared an interest in 15/325.1 as the hedge is on the boundary of her property. Mr Stevens declared an interest in 15/325.1 as his parents own the garage on the boundary of the footpath. Mr Stevens declared an interest in 15/325.2 as he is a member of Malling Town Club.			
15/319	<u>ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN</u> It was agreed to defer this until the next meeting. Assistant Clerk to note for agenda	SH	✓	
15/320	<u>MINUTES</u> of the meeting held on 8 June 2015 were approved and signed.			
15/	<u>MATTERS ARISING</u> from the minutes not otherwise on the agenda			
321.1	Tree Overhanging 18 Norman Road – It was noted that a quotation had been received from Turfsoil to supply a tree surgeon to fell to ground level on the outside chain link fence one Elderberry and one Cherry tree growing close to wall of brick garage. Collect, remove and dispose of arisings from the site for the sum of £210 + VAT. The Assistant Clerk was asked to speak with Mrs Guthrie at the Borough Council as the trees are in a Conservation Area.	SH		
321.2	Tennis Court Fencing – It was noted that the quotation from Collinson Contracts to supply and erect approximately 32m of 3m high green coated mesh plane fencing with panels consisting of 6mm vertical wires and 2no 8mm horizontal wires with apertures of 200mmx50mm supported on 60mmx60mm posts each let into the ground and surrounded by concrete for the sum of £3746.86 + VAT had been agreed by Full Council. The Assistant Clerk was asked to ask the contractor if they were able to carry out a condition survey.	SH	✓	

15/	<u>ALLOTMENTS</u>		
322.1	<p><u>Allotment Report from WMPC</u></p> <p>Mr Stevens carried out the allotment inspection on behalf of WMPC and presented his report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5a – poor. few small beds and little cultivation. • 12 – poor. weedy at both ends of plot and appears to be little cultivation. • 15 – new marker post • 18b – poor. significant weeds at cricket meadow end. • 19 – poor. significant weeds at ryarsh lane end. Small beds and long grass. • 24a – new marker post. • 28 – need marker post as now one plot. <p>It was agreed that first letters be sent to plots 5a, 12, 18b and 19.</p> <p>Mr Steven said that there was a pane of transparent plastic in Ryarsh Lane hedge by the gate opposite plot 7. An allotment holder said that it was from the noticeboard.</p> <p>Mr Stevens said that the tap has now been fixed.</p> <p>An allotment holder asked if the first letters could be reviewed in one month due to the weeds growing very quickly. The Assistant Clerk was asked to monitor the plots in one month.</p>	SH	✓
322.2	<p><u>Ryarsh Lane Allotment Society</u></p> <p>The allotment society report was not available.</p> <p>Mr Mullins reported that there had been several shed break-ins at the allotments.</p> <p>The Assistant Clerk said that an allotment holder had been contacted by a member of staff asking if school pupils could visit the allotments. The school have yet to contact the Parish Council directly.</p> <p>An allotment tenant reported that there is broken pane of glass on plot 29. The Assistant Clerk was asked to send a letter to the tenant.</p>	SH	✓
322.3	<p><u>Fencing Project Fund</u></p> <p>The Assistant Clerk said she had contacted Ray Berwick but had not received a more detailed quotation.</p> <p>Mr Mullins said that Ray Berwick had suggested another contractor, as he is now busy until October, who had been to the site and would provide a quotation. To date this has not been received. The Assistant Clerk was asked to draw up a Specification for the fence work as the cost would exceed £1000, the specification should state that materials and labour be costed separately. Mr Mullins gave an update on the lottery funding.</p>	SH	✓
322.4	<p><u>Allotment Management Plan</u></p> <p>Mr Stevens said about the setting up of an Allotment Management Plan. It was agreed that Mr Stevens and Mr Selkirk represent WMPC. Ryarsh Lane Allotment Society will contact Mr Stevens with their representatives after their next meeting.</p> <p>The allotment society provided members with a copy of their proposal for changes to plot sizes and letting conditions, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has been suggested that all existing full plots be re-designated as “two (new) whole plots”. This means that everyone on an existing full plot will be regarded as 		

	<p>having two new size plots. The reason behind this being that All newcomers will be offered one new size plot only and no more – however much previous experience they may have.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After working the plot satisfactorily for at least 12 months, they may apply to go on the waiting list for a second new size plot, which could be anywhere on the site depending where vacancies exist, (possibly if there happens to be two new size plots available which are adjacent they could move from their existing plot to take on those two?). This takes away the stigma of only being offered a half plot and ensures a minimum 12 month probation period for newcomers. • The cost of the new “full plot” would be the current price of ½ plot so there would be no change to existing plot holders rental. <p>This will be discussed further at the Management Plan meeting.</p> <p>The allotment tenants left the meeting at 8.25p.m.</p>		
15/	<u>CHURCHYARDS</u>		
323.1	<p><u>Report from Rev David Green</u></p> <p>Rev Green provided a report, about the Churchyard, in his absence:</p> <p>Tree work from 2014 Further to my report for the October 2014 meeting, the agreed ‘Year 2’ work and work on the ‘Churchfields Limes’ was successfully completed over three days in February 2015. As agreed, we held on until near to the end of the Parish Council’s financial year. I’ve not heard any negative feedback from Churchfields residents, and the work has made a difference to the southern end of the north-west annexe.</p> <p>Water bills Long-term members of the Committee will remember our problems with the standpipe and some horrendous water bills. On their third attempt this Spring, South East Water found the source of the leak and dug up the ground between the meter and the standpipe to replace the pipework and fix the leak. St Mary’s received something of a refund on the water bills, but we had the maintenance costs to cover. It should be a lot more sensible going forward.</p> <p>Maintenance Turfsoil have been visiting the Churchyard on a monthly basis since April. At certain times of year in the Spring and the early Autumn, the visits really need to be more frequent than that to keep the grass to the specification’s maximum height of 10cm and it’s noticeable that families of those buried in our Churchyard take matters into their own hands when they think the grass has got too long. We end up with a landscape that looks like a dog that has been to the vets! Patches of smooth ground and trim grass surrounded by wilder vegetation. When Turfsoil do come, the job they do is very good. We continue to have one or two problems every year with clashes with funerals and interments of ashes, since Turfsoil never inform me when they plan to come.</p> <p>Tree work in 2015 I hope that the Parish Council will continue to value and follow the 2012 Tree Survey that gave us a five year plan of maintenance for the 50 plus trees in the Churchyard. We have a couple of outstanding items from the</p>	SH	✓

	<p>‘Year 2’ work (involving the felling and removal of two cherry trees) and then also the ‘Year 3’ work to address. It is important that we point out that tree removal in Churchyards requires Faculty permission. I intend to confirm PCC approval on 21 July and apply to the Diocesan Advisory Council at that point to set the process going. The removals will not be able to go ahead until that permission comes through. As always, St Mary’s remain grateful and reliant on the Amenities Committee for budget money allocated to maintenance in the Churchyard. If the Parish Council is amenable, I am very happy to instruct our Benefice Administrator, Jenifa Muscat, to seek quotes for the work outlined in the Tree Survey and bring those quotes for scrutiny to a future meeting of the Amenities Committee.</p> <p>1</p> <p>Proposals from Tree Survey</p> <p>That in order of priority, we seek to accomplish the following work (figures quoted are <i>Down to Earth’s</i> figures from the original Tree Survey):</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">1. Thinning the crown of tree T7 by 25%</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 860.00 +VAT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1. Fell and remove stump of T25</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 380.00 + VAT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Fell and remove stump of T29</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 280.00 + VAT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Remove major dead wood in T44</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 180.00 + VAT</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Raise low canopy of T46 to 2.5m</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>£ 70.00 + VAT</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 1,770 + VAT</td> </tr> </table> <p>I would ask the Amenities Committee to consider this matter and to give me a steer as to the sense of budget so that we can talk to the contractors and seek quotes, (if indeed you are happy for us to do the legwork and seek the quotes).</p> <p>The Assistant Clerk was asked to check the budget for 2015/16 and if there is sufficient funds available Rev Green be asked to obtain costings for the tree work.</p>	1. Thinning the crown of tree T7 by 25%	£ 860.00 +VAT	1. Fell and remove stump of T25	£ 380.00 + VAT	2. Fell and remove stump of T29	£ 280.00 + VAT	3. Remove major dead wood in T44	£ 180.00 + VAT	4. Raise low canopy of T46 to 2.5m	<u>£ 70.00 + VAT</u>		£ 1,770 + VAT		
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<p>15/324</p>	<p><u>MACEY’S MEADOW</u></p> <p>Minutes of the Macey’s Meadow meeting held on 24 June 2015 were received.</p> <p>(Minute 15/260 refers):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree in question was in fact hawthorn, not “holly” • Macey’s Meadow meeting did not consider it appropriate that any cost should come out of the Macey’s Meadow budget • Did not consider that major work needed to be carried out anyway...especially as this was near the water pipe • Refer back to the Amenities Committee. <p>Mr Selkirk said that the hawthorn was rather large and was shading most of plot 30 on the allotments.</p> <p>Mr Stevens asked the Assistant Clerk to arrange a site meeting with Mr Doyle on a Saturday morning.</p>	<p>SH</p>	<p>✓</p>												

15/	<u>PLAYING FIELDS</u>		
325.1	<p><u>Norman Road Playing Field & Children’s Playground Specification</u></p> <p>Further to the site meeting, prior to this meeting, it was agreed that the following action be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Clerk meet with Turfsoil to obtain a quotation for reducing the height of the hedge on the boundary with Woodlands Close to a height of 1.8m from ground level on the children’s play area side. The hedge will also need to be considerably reduced in width. • Assistant Clerk meet with a Tree Surgeon to discuss any works necessary to the 2/3 large trees within the children’s play area. • Assistant Clerk meet with Turfsoil to discuss the hedge on the boundary of the children’s play area and playing fields and all other boundary hedges. The hedges needs to be reduced in width and this work is included in the existing Specification. There may need to be some reduction in height which will require a quotation being obtained. • The boundary hedge around the Village Hall Park is not included in the existing Specification. It was agreed that a quotation be obtained and an amendment made to the Specification to include the cutting back of the hedge in late winter. • The hedge between the garages at the top of Woodland Close and the FP MR139 needs cutting back. This should be reported to KCC. • Overhanging trees on FP MR139 need cutting back on both sides, This includes those overhanging from Fartherwell Avenue. This should be reported to KCC. • Turfsoil to be reminded to strim around the play equipment. • Turfsoil be asked to provide a quotation to even the ground under the pedestrian gate at the entrance to the playing fields. • Assistant Clerk to obtain a quotation for the installation of a security post between the Village Hall, right hand side, and the boundary hedge to prevent cars from accessing the playing fields. <p>It was agreed that the amendments be made to the Specification and be discussed further at the next meeting.</p> <p>The Assistant Clerk reported that Turfsoil use the Football Association recommended Herbicide.</p>	SH	✓
325.2	<p><u>Malling Town Club</u></p> <p>The Malling Town Club are holding their Fun Day on Saturday 29 August 2015. They have booked the Village Hall but would like to use the playing field for children’s activities, from 1.30-5.30pm. There will be no barbecue or hog roast. WMPC have no objection to the use as long as they are aware that the field is open to the public.</p>		
15/326	<p><u>BALL PARK</u></p> <p>Discussion took place regarding the recent spate of vandalism at the ball park. There have been suggestions to remove the trees and hedges which form the boundary with the cricket club so that the users are on view rather than concealed. There is one broken table that needs to be removed.</p>	SH	

Mrs Marlor had forwarded her comments, as follows:

The ball park is heavily used by all sections of the community and I feel that while it's easy to "finger" particular groups, I'm not sure that we have definite evidence on which one is committing the damage or to connect any one group to alcohol consumption or drug abuse.

A few years ago, there was a substantial ASB problem around the Cricket Pavilion. Young people regularly met there throughout the year, often from early evening until 2.00 in the morning. They were noisy and left a lot of litter, including empty booze bottles and what appeared to be drug paraphernalia. PCSO Ed tackled it by meeting the youngsters and getting to know their names and as is often the nature of these things, the situation gradually resolved itself.

By using the Community Safety Partnership, the police and other agencies can become involved in the anti-social behaviour which is the main issue here. There may also be a safeguarding concern as some of the groups seem to include pre-teens along with older teenagers. The school must be encouraged to report intrusions and damage to T&M's community safety partnership so that it can be logged. Do they ask their evening users if they've experienced problems?

Similarly, has the Cricket Club ever had problems?

Kent Police use "Predictive Policing" and by increasing the number of logged anti-social behaviour incidents, either via 101 or the CSP, the greater the likelihood of them visiting the ball park to identify the people using it.

Removing the tree(s) won't remove the anti-social behaviour (groups meet there all year, including the winter months when it's cold and there are no leaves on the trees) and may actually encourage larger groups to use the extra space!

I would suggest that we consider:

- * Trimming the tree(s) as needed to repair any damage and to protect public safety;

- * Removing the broken table (for safety reasons.) but feel that we should consider also removing the other table now before it meets a similar fate.

By removing them and posting a notice stating that following damage, the tables have been temporarily removed for repair or replacement as necessary, we can buy time for a Keep Crime Out type of survey to be done of the ball park.

By using this opportunity to survey and design out crime, changes could be made before the ball park becomes a no-go area and most likely, without making major changes.

Also, the CSP will know of other parishes that have dealt with similar problems and may be able to pass on advice. Liz Guthrie may have knowledge about this from a planning perspective and the equipment suppliers may be able to offer advice. If all else fails, we could try kelly.webb@sevenoaks.gov.uk (the CSP

	<p>Manager at Sevenoaks DC) as I know that several parishes in that area have had problems with ASB in their car parks and play areas.</p> <p>Mr Stevens proposed that the two tables be removed from the site, seconded by Mr Selkirk. Notices should be provided stating that the benches have been removed due to vandalism.</p> <p>The Assistant Clerk was asked to obtain quotes for the removal of the hedges and trees, costed separately.</p> <p>Mr Selkirk said about locking at the Ball Park of a night.</p> <p>The Cricket Club to be asked if they suffer from any anti-social behaviour at the Pavilion.</p>			
	THE MEETING WAS SUSPENDED AT 9.20 DUE TO ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN THE VILLAGE HALL CAR PARK. THE REMAINDER OF THE MEETING WAS INQUORATE AND ANY ACTION TAKEN WILL NEED TO BE RATIFIED AT THE NEXT MEETING			
15/327	<p><u>VILLAGE GREEN</u></p> <p>The trees on the Village Green are in need of some attention; they are starting to obscure our streetlights. WMPC do not have a regular programme of tree work but they have in the past been tidied up; if allowed to become too luxuriant it causes problems when the Christmas Lights are in place.</p> <p>The Assistant Clerk was asked to obtain quotes for the tree work.</p>	SH	✓	
15/328	<p><u>VILLAGE HALL</u></p> <p>Mrs Turner reported that the bottom panel on the door to the boiler room had been kicked in twice. There is no access to the hall from the boiler room although it does have equipment in it. Mrs Turner said that the police had been informed and were meeting her at the village hall on Tuesday 14 July 2015.</p>			
15/	<u>RECYCLING, CLEANSING & ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES</u>			
329	<p><u>Love Kent Hate Litter Campaign</u></p> <p>It was noted that the Love Kent Hate Litter Campaign will be running from 13 July – 31 August across Kent. Love Kent litter campaign – promotional film https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZ149ewTCo&feature=youtu.be</p>			
15/	<u>TOURISM, ENTERTAINMENT & THE ARTS</u>			
330.1	<p><u>Heritage Open Days</u></p> <p>It was noted that The Twitch Inn will be open on Saturday 12 and Sunday 13 September 2015 from 11.00am-4.00pm.</p>			
330.2	<p><u>Open Space Society</u></p> <p>It was noted that the Summer 2015 edition of Open Space had been received.</p>			
15/	<u>YOUTH ISSUES</u>			
331.1	<p><u>2015 Summer Playscheme, Activate and Y2Crew</u></p> <p>It was noted that the Borough Council will be running summer programmes including</p>			

	<p>Summer Playscheme, Activate and Y2Crew offering a diverse range of activities for young people. This year the programmes will run from Monday 27 July to Friday 21 August 2015. Brochures are available to download on leisure.services@tmbc.gov.uk .</p> <p>Mr Stevens commented on the fact there was a lack of provision for older children in West Malling.</p>			
331.2	<p><u>ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AT BORE PLACE, KENT TN8 7AR</u></p> <p>It was noted that the following activities for children are taking place at Bore Place, Kent: Mon 3rd-Fri 7th Aug and repeated Mon 24th– Fri 28th Aug.</p> <p>Cost: from £10-15 for first child with discounts for additional children. Book ahead, full details at our website or call us 01732 463255.</p> <p>Try something new this summer! Fun packed activities to keep the kids busy... pond dipping, den building, paper and clay crafts, plus pizzas, pancakes and milkshakes!</p> <p>Courses & events booking now...</p> <p>10 October 10.30am-2pm Commonwork Autumn Day</p> <p>Suitable for all ages – choose a morning activity such as butter making, screen printing, pottery, family crafts... then enjoy a delicious lunch cooked by our chef!</p> <p>17 October 10am-4pm Bake Bread</p> <p>Make, bake and take home! There’s nothing quite like your own bread. Join our tutors in the kitchen for a day of baking. Delicious breads to take home and share. £49 per person.</p>			
331.3	<p><u>Try Angle Award 2015 – West Kent Area</u></p> <p>It was noted that reply had been received regarding the above awards. There are two nominated people from Malling but it does not state if East or West.</p>			
15/332	<p><u>Questions from Members of the Public and Councillors</u></p> <p>There were no questions from Member of the Public and Councillors.</p>			
15/333	<p><u>Date of next Meeting</u> – Monday 10 August 2015 (concentrating on Churchyards)</p>			
	<p>There being no further business the Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.34p.m..</p> <p>Signed.....</p> <p>Date</p>			