



Winnersh Parish Council

Winnersh Community Centre
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Minutes of the Informal **RECREATION AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE** meeting held remotely on **Tuesday 5 OCTOBER 2021**.

PRESENT: Cllrs L. Wooldridge (Chairman); P. Fishwick; S. Hanna; J. Southgate.

IN ATTENDANCE: Philip Stoneman (Clerk)

Joanne Yeomans (Community Engagement & Lettings Officer - CELO).

Mr Chris Webber (Winnersh Allotment Association)

Mr Ric Tilbe (Winnersh Allotment Association)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: None

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: None.

3 BERKSHIRE YOUTH

3.1 Gareth Mephram from Berkshire Youth (BY) sent apologies as he was unable to attend due to another commitment.

3.2 Berkshire Youth had submitted a proposal for youth outreach work that would continue until the end of March 2022. The cost of the service was £7,200 but BY were able to meet the deficit between the cost of the service and the grant of £4500 that WPC had made provision for in 2021/22.

3.3 The committee considered the proposal and recommended that it be accepted.

3.4 The Committee requested that Mr Mephram offer a status report to supplement his proposal setting out how the 2021/22 grant had been used so far including the services provided.

3.5 The committee asked how the service was being communicated within the community to ensure as many young people as possible knew when and where the provision was. The Clerk and CELO would liaise with Berkshire Youth to ensure that the sessions were being promoted.

ACTION CLERK/CELO/BY

3.6 Suggested sites for where the detached youth work could take place were parks in Jersey Drive, Bathurst Road (near the railway station) and Rainbow Park. Any additional suggestions to be sent to the Clerk who would collate a list for BY.

- 3.7 Cllr Fishwick requested that a report from BY be provided by Christmas 2021 so that the impact and benefit of the service could be reviewed in advance of any future funding in the 2022/23 annual budget.
ACTION:CLERK/BY

- 3.8 Cllr Hanna requested a breakdown of the contributions that WPC had made to youth service work in recent years.
ACTION: CLERK

4 WINNERSH ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION (WAA)

- 4.1 The committee welcomed Mr Chris Webber, Chairman of the Winnersh Allotment Association, and invited him to present a report on the progress the WAA had been making and plans for the future.
- 4.2 A report prepared by Mr Webber had been circulated to committee members in advance of the meeting and key points were discussed.
- 4.3 The WAA were in the process of setting up a bank account with NatWest so that the annual allocation of £1,000 from WPC could be deposited. Mr Webber explained that £450 had already been spent on drainage works to the orchard and that a sum of around £150 would be spent on wildflower seeding to the community area within the allotment garden.
- 4.4 Mr Webber asked for clarification if the £1000 budget was by calendar or financial year. Cllr Southgate advised the £1000 already allocated was by financial year and observed that if the first £1000 had been allocated in the last financial year then he considered a further £1000 for this year would be appropriate. This suggestion was not discussed further or agreed and would need to go to Full Council for agreement.
- 4.5 The concerns around security had largely been dealt with and Mr Webber thanked his colleague Mr Tilbe (also a member of the WAA) for his efforts in encouraging allotment holders to ensure the gates were being kept locked.
- 4.6 Mr Webber explained that a draft master plan was being developed and would be worked on over the winter.
- 4.7 The issue of a small number of uncultivated plots was discussed and the WAA would want to be involved in removing plot holders that were not complying with the rental agreement by not adequately cultivating the plots allocated to them. Mr Webber explained that covering plots with weed suppressant material (black sheeting) was not acceptable in the view of the AA.

Cllr Wooldridge advised that the issue of allotment inspections and giving notice to plot holders would be discussed under Item 7.1 on the agenda.

- 4.8 The issue of low water pressure to the standpipe close to plots 1 – 6 was discussed. Despite attempts by the drainage contractor to identify a fault, the cause had not been found. The WAA offered to expose the pipe and investigate if there was a twist or kink in the pipe.
- 4.9 Mr Webber set out a proposal for a third anniversary event around mid-April 2022. This would be for invited guests and plot holders only and more detailed plans and costings

would be presented to WPC in due course. The committee considered that as the allotments were funded by public money that it would be appropriate to open the event to parishioners and WBC and noted that if this were the case then arrangements must be made to marshal members of the public to protect the allotments and avoid damage. The committee discussed when in the year the allotments would be looking their best as that would probably be an appropriate time to host such an event. Mr Webber advised that though his proposal had flagged April for the event, early to mid-May would be a time when the allotments would be looking good.

- 4.10 Cllr Hanna advised that an event in mid-April would coincide with the Easter weekend and would possibly result in a lower attendance. Whilst the WAA had concerns about the general public being invited, WPC would want to explore whether this would be possible and the arrangements for managing people on the site. Cllr Fishwick supported the idea of an event and that WPC should take a lead role with the WAA. Cllr Fishwick was also supportive of the planting of a tree to commemorate the event.

- 4.11 In conclusion it was felt that the event should take place in May 2022 (rather than April) and that a working group consisting of members from WPC and the WAA be established and the membership would be discussed between Cllr Wooldridge, Mr Webber and the Clerk and that it should be established by January 2022.

ACTION: CLLR WOOLDRIDGE/CLERK/CHRIS WEBBER

- 4.12 Land drainage to plots 80-86 was discussed and the Clerk explained that he had sought quotes for the work. Whilst the WAA were willing to carry out the work the Clerk offered to speak with WBC to establish if they would fund the works as this remained an outstanding issue that had not been resolved as part of earlier land drainage works.

ACTION: CLERK

- 4.13 Cllr Hanna asked whether raised beds would be suitable for plots where water was not draining sufficiently. A discussion took place including that raised beds would be more appropriate on the hardstanding area in the car park as it would provide better all-round access. Mr Webber agreed to investigate the installation of raised beds that would be of benefit to people with disabilities.

- 4.14 A lack of maintenance to the access track and the field adjacent to the plots was discussed and the Clerk would speak with WBC Property Services about keeping weeds and brambles under control.

ACTION: CLERK

- 4.15 Mr Webber asked if he could receive copies of the minutes and/or a redacted version covering allotment matters. Cllr Wooldridge advised that minutes were publicly available.

Cllr Wooldridge thanked Mr Webber and Mr Tilbe for attending the meeting and for providing a helpful update on the work and plans of the WAA.

5 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

- 5.1 The minutes of the meeting held on the 7 September 2021, approved at Full Council on the 14 September, were noted and the following matters were raised:-
- 5.2 Item 3.8: The list of sites would be provided to Berkshire Youth. Any suggested sites should be sent to the Clerk who would forward a list to Mr Mephram.

- 5.3 Item 6.2: The bunds that had recently been installed at the boundary with New Road had been checked and, whilst they did not prevent pedestrian access, a small adjustment would be made to one of the bunds (adjacent to a vehicular and pedestrian gate) to ensure unimpeded access for pedestrians.
- 5.4 Item 6.3: Wildflower seeding to the bunds would be carried out in the spring 2022.
- 5.5 Item 8.10: The use of drones for a laser show would be prohibitively expensive.
- 5.6 Items 7.2 and 8.13 were completed.
- 6 PUBLIC SESSION:** There were no members of the public in attendance.
- 7 WINNERSH ALLOTMENT GARDEN**
- 7.1 The last allotment inspection was carried out on the 11 September and included the CELO, Cllr Hanna and Mr Tilbe. Sixteen plots were identified as needing attention and the CELO had written to the plot holders. That resulted in one plot holder giving up their plot, ten had replied with a range of reasons why they had not cultivated and there had been no response from the remainder. The CELO would revisit the allotments to see whether any progress had been made. **ACTION: CELO**
- 7.1.1 Whilst support from the WAA in identifying plots that needed attention was welcomed, the committee was clear that the responsibility of engaging with plot holders about non-cultivation would rest with WPC and not the WAA.
- 7.1.2 WPC would encourage plot holders to cultivate their plots and, where there was not a justifiable reason for not doing so, a firm approach would be taken to take back plots. However, it was explained that there may be valid reasons why some may not have been able to cultivate their plots and these would be taken into account and a balanced approach would be taken.
- 7.1.3 Suggestions of help from WPC offering to trim plots and/or assistance from WAA to help those having difficulty was suggested.
- 7.2 The committee considered a proposal to amend future tenancy agreements to include the maximum size of structures including sheds and poly-tunnels. The committee felt this was unnecessary as the provision of not causing a nuisance was sufficient to cover the eventuality of structures being installed that could impact adjoining neighbours. The CELO would however explore how this matter is dealt with at other allotment sites in the area. **ACTION: CELO**
- 7.3 The CELO informed the committee that approximately 50% of allotment holders had paid their annual rents. The rent 'due by' date was 29 October so it was expected that the remainder would be paid during October.
- 7.4 The issue of land drainage to plots 80 to 86 was covered in Item 4.11 and would be followed up by the Clerk.

8 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS EVENT

- 8.1 The committee discussed the Christmas Light event that would be held on the 3 December 2021 and the Clerk updated the committee on progress.
- 8.2 Bearwood Primary School, Winnersh Primary School and Wheatfield Primary School had all been contacted inviting children to attend and sing carols.
- 8.3 St Sebastian Wokingham Band had been contacted about playing at the event and a reply was awaited.
- 8.4 The cost of a laser display to replace the fireworks was investigated but at around £2,000 it was considered this should not be progressed. It was felt that there should be some investment in providing improved lighting around the trees and new decorations in the Community Centre and Allnatt Pavilion.
- 8.5 Given the relatively low numbers likely to attend, a discussion took place about traders that may be interested in attending to sell Christmas related gifts or items. The Clerk suggested that whilst some local traders may be interested, they could be invited without having to pay a pitch fee to help mitigate the risk of making minimal sales.
- 8.6 The committee recommended that a budget of £1,000 be made available for the event and this would be presented to Full Council for approval.

ACTION: CLLR WOOLDRIDGE

9 CORRESPONDENCE

- 9.1 Email: Reading Thames Rotary Club
Subject: Planting of crocuses (weekend of 23 October) in support of world polio day.
- 9.2 Email: ARD Playgrounds
Subject: Quotation for repairing the slide in the children's playground at £426.25 +VAT.
- 9.3 Email: Wokingham Brough Council
Subject: The launch of SHARE Wokingham providing food boxes for those in need.

10 ANY OTHER MATTERS CONSIDERED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

- 10.1 Cllr Southgate requested that the committee consider whether there were any suggested projects for inclusion in the 2022/23 budget and that these be presented to the next meeting in November and/or December.
- 10.2 Cllr Wooldridge sought views on 'in person' or remote (informal) meetings and these would be shared with Full Council on the 12 October, 2021. There was a general view that a mixed schedule of meetings was preferred combining in person meetings interspersed with virtual meetings.

11 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 2 November at 7.30pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.45.