

BUXTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Property and Recreation Grounds Committee held in The Reading Room, Church Road, Buxted at 7.50 p.m. on Tuesday 28th January 2014

Present: Cllrs. Rose (Chairman), Blandford, Cox, Hall, Treacher and Warner
Also present: Miss B Macklen Clerk

Public: 4.

Allotment Association Members - Mr & Mrs De Bolla, John Fowler and Graham Taylor

Mr John Fowler – Chairman of the Allotment Association commented on the issues listed in the agenda:

1. Culvert: The area belonging to Network Rails between the outlet under the line to the fence has not been cleared and is therefore causing further unnecessary flooding. The existing 150mm culvert is currently blocked.
2. This coupled together with the existing culvert under the road (which is too small) is causing excessive overflow across the road and onto the allotments.
3. Road: Previously in the hands of Malcolm Wilson who had made contact with Southern Water – has any further ground been achieved on this? Part of road has been repaired which is good, but the approach road is getting dangerous. A lot of allotment members walk and there are concerns of injury. The Allotment Association would like the parish council to chase Southern Water to make road improvements.
4. Trees: Understand that the trees marked will be removed, however there are concerns that other existing poplars could still fall, thus being a safety issue.
5. Fencing: that was flattened by the trees falling on it is still intact. Therefore, if the tree surgeon could carefully remove the trees from the fence, the Allotment Association are happy to repair and re-erect the fencing.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr. Hall

2. Declarations of Members Interests.

Cllr. Cox declared a personal interest by virtue of having an allotment at the site.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd July 2014 were signed and ratified as a correct record of the meeting.

4. Buxted Allotments

Culvert: The Chairman reported that the parish council had received a quote to replace the existing 150mm culvert under the road totaling £3000.00 + VAT. Members discussed how this is a lot of money to replace a culvert that does not belong to the parish council, however, it is understood the impact that the blocked culvert is having on the allotments. It was therefore **agreed** that the parish council should approach both Southern Water and the owner of the track to request that both parties, together with the parish council pay one third each. It was also **agreed** to make further contact with Network Rail to request that the ditch (belonging to them) which is blocked and should be cleared.

Road: It is outside of the ownership of the parish council and it is understood that Southern Water has access rights over the track which also requires them to maintain it to a suitable standard. The parish council has previously been advised by Southern Water that no money currently exists to improve the track, but it would be looked at again in April 2014. It was therefore **agreed** to approach Southern Water again to improve the state of the track. It was also suggested that the road should be closed due to it being dangerous and see if this incites a response from Southern Water. It was also **agreed** to directly approach the land owner to ask what agreement is in place with Southern Water and what responsibility is on Southern Water to maintain the track.

Trees: The clerk advised that a quote had been received from the tree surgeon who has been contracted to remove the trees for a further £320 to remove the newly felled trees which had fallen onto the fencing. Work to the original trees to be felled would start mid-March at the latest however the trees which had fallen would be removed as soon as practicably possible. It was **agreed** to ask the contractor to remove the fallen trees and that he is asked to re-assess the poplars again in June to ensure no further trees are in need of removal.

Fencing: In addition to the allotment fencing, the poplars also fell onto land belonging to the neighbouring land owner taking down some stock fencing. A quote had been received to replace the fencing and remove the trees for £330.00 by AD Woolgar. It was therefore **agreed** to accept the quote received from Mr Woolgar and to also accept the kind offer of the Allotment Association to replace the fencing at the allotments.

Recommendations to Parish Council:

- **Parish Council continues to pursue Southern Water regarding the current state of the access track**
- **Network Rail be asked to clear the existing ditch between the fence and the culvert to ease flooding**
- **Contractor be identified to clear the existing culvert**
- **Contact be made with Southern Water and the land owner to request payment of one third proportion of new culvert**
- **Ask the landowner what agreement is in place with regards Southern Water's maintenance of the track**
- **Existing tree contractor be asked to remove the fallen trees at a cost of £320, but to ensure the fence remains intact**
- **Tree contractor be asked to re-assess the trees in June**

5. Improvements and Repairs to the Reading Room

Damage to Roof and Leaking in Kitchen: Two quotes received, both to repair the damage, but with two solutions to the flat roof, one to repair and one to replace – with very different prices. Members discussed which would be the better option given the hope that a new community hall would be built within the next 5 years. It was therefore **agreed** to therefore spend the £140 to repair the flat roof. Agreed that Steve Holmes should carry out full job.

Discussion took place with regards the state of the existing lavatories, sinks and water heater and kitchen floor. Agreed that Cllr. Hall should come and assess the current facilities and give professional view of how these could be improved. Members assessed the facilities and ask Cllr Hall to draw up a specification of what should be quoted for.

Recommendations to Parish Council:

- **Mr Steve Holmes be awarded the contract to repair and make good the Reading Room**
- **Cllr. Hall be asked to assess the current toilet facilities and kitchen and toilet floors with a view to getting quotes for improvements.**

6. Fingerposts

Cllr. Blandford reviewed the last fingerpost survey carried out in 2002 by visiting each post in the parish. There are 16 in total - all need painting with some needing repairs. It is parish council policy and generally north Wealden parishes policy to keep the wooden fingerposts as part of countryside heritage. ESCC may pay 50% toward the costs of repairs, but this contribution is not guaranteed and is dependent of funding. It was therefore **agreed** to request quotes from approved contractors for renovation and repair works to all the fingerposts then approach ESCC for 50% funding. Money has been set aside in the budget for these works if ESCC funding is not available. A suggestion was made for the parish council to ask if any residents wish to adopt individual fingerposts as it appears the parish already has a phantom painter, however this is not encouraged as any maintenance contractor has to be covered by £1 million insurance to work on a roadside. Parish Council preference is to keep the wooden signs, however it has been noted that Coppards make plastic fingerposts which look very much like the original wooden ones. This could be a possibility for the future if a fingerpost needs complete replacing.

Recommendations to Parish Council:

- **Quotes be sought to repair and repaint all existing fingerposts in parish with a view to approaching ESCC for 50% funding.**

7. Members Questions

High Hurstwood Playground fence is broken – Cllr Warner reported that one of the posts rotten and the horizontal posts are broken. It requires a concrete spur in the post and then replace horizontal parts or put a brace on to hold together. **Agreed** that a concrete spur can be put in and fence replaced as long as it does

not lie within fence line of the play area.

8. Any Other Matters Properly Notified

None this meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.35p.m.

Signed:

Chairman

Date: