



MINUTES

Meeting: ENVIRONMENTAL
COMMITTEE

Date: 21 January 2015

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: NORTH WEALD LIBRARY, HIGH ROAD, NORTH WEALD

PRESENT:

Councillors (6) G Mulliner (Chairman), C Hawkins, B Eldridge, B Bartram, A Buckley,
Mrs E Godwin-Brown

Also in Attendance (3)

Susan De Luca, Clerk to the Council
Adriana Jones, Principal Finance and Administrative Officer*
Joanna Tyler, Administrative Officer*

*For part of meeting

Members of the Public (1)

E14.32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (1)
NOTED apologies received from Cllr B Clegg.

E14.33 OTHER ABSENCES (0)

E14.34 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
NOTED there were no declarations of interest.

E14.35 MINUTES
The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2014 were *CONFIRMED* and signed as a true record.

E14.36 FORMAL ADOPTION OF TERMS OF REFERENCE
Members *CONFIRMED* that they had received a copy of the REVISED Terms of Reference for this Committee. Members *RESOLVED* to Adopt the Revised Terms of Reference for this Committee.

E14.37 FORMAL ADOPTION OF TERMS OF REFERENCE
Weald Common New Play Area Sub-Committee (to Environmental Committee)
Members *CONFIRMED* that they had received a copy of the REVISED Terms of Reference for this Committee. Members *RESOLVED* to Adopt the Revised Terms of Reference for this Committee.

E14.38 PLAY AREAS

a) QUARTERLY PLAY AREA INSPECTION REPORT
Members *NOTED* that the Quarterly Play Area Inspection was completed by ARD on 11 December 2014. The Principal Finance and Administrative Officer had

visited each of the sites between 12.30pm and 1.30pm on Thursday, 15 January 2015, to review the findings of the report. At the time of the visits, the weather was dry and bright however, due to the previous heavy rain, the ground at all three play areas was extremely muddy and wet. Following discussion, Members **AGREED** the following actions:-

Weald Common Play Area – New Site

1. Install a pathway to the gate and a hard standing at the gate to allow the play areas to be accessed during the wetter periods – **PRIORITY 1**. Members **NOTED** that this item would be discussed under a separate agenda item.
2. Cut back the projection bolt threads from the rear of the sign – **PRIORITY 1**. Members **NOTED** that these works had been completed.

Weald Common Play Area – Old Site

1. Install a pathway to the gate and a hard standing at the gate to allow the play areas to be accessed during the wetter periods – **PRIORITY 1**. Members **NOTED** that this item would be discussed under a separate agenda item.
2. Treat and repaint the litter bin – **PRIORITY 3**. Members **AGREED** that this item would be reviewed after the February inspection.
3. Replace 1 rotting stepping stump near the clutter bridge – **PRIORITY 2**. Members **NOTED** that as the stump showed no signs of movement and was not representing a H&S Risk, it was **AGREED** that this would be reviewed again in the Spring, after the February inspection.
4. Monitor all other Stepping Stumps where showing rot at ground level. Members **NOTED** that these are reviewed on a weekly basis by Thornwood Grounds Maintenance. An inspection report dated 2.1.2015, stated that all stumps were ok. Members **NOTED** that no action was required at the present time.
5. Monitor damage to top of 1no. Upright to Chain Walk for any splintering. Members **NOTED** that the weekly inspector report, dated 12.1.2015, states that one section of the support has rotted away, however, this is currently deemed a low risk. The Principal Financial Officer has spoken to the contractor who has stated that the item itself is solid with no movement, therefore it can be assumed that structurally the item is sound. Members **AGREED** that they would visit the site on Wednesday, 28 January 2015 to inspect the item.
6. Monitor 1no up upright to swinging logs and cross chains were leaning over slightly. Members **NOTED** that there has been no further deterioration to the leaning and, when pushed and tested, all uprights were found to be solid, with no movement at all. Members **AGREED** that they would visit the site on Wednesday, 28 January 2015 to inspect the item.

7. Replace 1no top Q link to Chain Walk and Beams – **PRIORITY 2**. Members **NOTED** that the Principal Financial Officer could not locate any specific damage or concern to any Q link upon inspection. Members **AGREED** to visit the site on Wednesday, 28 January 2015 to inspect the item.
8. Replace 1no missing plastic cap to clatter bridge – **PRIORITY 3**. Plastic cap is missing, but does not cause a H&S risk at this time. Members **AGREED** to review this item in the Spring.
9. Replace 1no plastic cap to Burma Bridge upright and a further 3no to the horizontal logs – **PRIORITY 3**. Members **NOTED** that these caps are missing, however, they do not present a H&S risk to any users of the equipment. There are no bolts protruding and all fixtures are inset. Members **AGREED** to review this item in the Spring.
10. Replace worn centre links to bottom Burma Bridge Chains – **PRIORITY 2**. At the previous meeting held on 29 October 2014, Members agreed to review this item after the next play area inspection as it did not present a serious H&S risk. The priority rating has not changed and this has not been identified in the weekly reports. Members **AGREED** that they would review this item after the next inspection.
11. Monitor chain wear to other components for signs of deterioration. The Principal Finance and Administrative Officer conducted a brief inspection of the chains and reported that, whilst some wear is evident, all chains were found to be satisfactory at this time. Members **NOTED** that no action is required at the present time.
12. Monitor all timber works for any signs of rot and rough edges plus any deterioration in the splits that have appeared. At the previous meeting held on 29 October 2014, the Chairman of this Committee had agreed that he would monitor this once a month and report any issues. Members **AGREED** to visit the site on Wednesday, 28 January 2015 to inspect the item.

Members **NOTED** that on 2nd January 2015 a report was received of graffiti on equipment at the new Weald Common Play Area. This has been removed by the Parish Council's maintenance contractor.

School Green Lane Play Area

1. Consider installing hard standing at 1no gate entry and also a bench – **PRIORITY 2**. Members **NOTED** the comments from the Principal Finance and Administrative Officer's report, which stated that the flooring under the gate was very wet and muddy, but this extended beyond the gate and into the field. Installation of a bench has been agreed as part of the budget for 15/16. Members **AGREED** to consider this recommendation at the time of installing a bench.

2. Adjust 1no prosafe gate to allow it to close flush with post and re-secure loose slam plate – **PRIORITY 2**. At the previous meeting, Members agreed that the gate does not present a H&S Risk and would be reviewed after the next inspection. Members **AGREED** that the Principal Finance and Administrative Officer should obtain costings for both repairing the slam plate and gate and to supply the tool needed to repair the slam plate.
3. Remove/replace old sign on fence as it is now breaking up – **PRIORITY 2**. Members **NOTED** that this item has now changed form a **PRIORITY 3** to a **PRIORITY 2**. Members **AGREED** to remove the sign and to have a new sign made.
4. Monitor minor cuts to top section of Duo Disk for deterioration. Members **NOTED** that the cuts do not compromise the safety of the piece of equipment and have not deteriorated since the last time they were inspected, therefore no action is required at the present time.
5. Rub down, treat and repaint top bar to Cradle Swing – **PRIORITY 3**. Members **NOTED** that the Parish Council's maintenance contractor would complete these works before the end of February.
6. Monitor wear to swing bushes on Cradle Swing for deterioration. Members **NOTED** that whilst there is some wear to the swing bushes, they were sufficient and acceptable at the time of inspection. Members **AGREED** that this item should be reviewed after the next inspection.
7. Replace 1no set of anti-wrap bars and tail chains to the Flat Seat Swing – **PRIORITY 2**. Members **NOTED** that this had also been mentioned on the weekly report, however, it was deemed to be low risk. Members **AGREED** to review after next inspection.
8. Monitor wear to shackles on Flat Seat Swing for Deterioration. Members **NOTED** that these were reviewed and whilst showing slight wear, were found to be perfectly acceptable, therefore no action is required at the present time.
9. Replace 1no missing bung to upright on Multiplay unit and slide – **PRIORITY 2**. Members **NOTED** that at the time of the Principal Finance and Administrative Officer's inspection, it was reported that there were two bungs missing, both of which could cause a finger entrapment risk. On 29.10.2014 a request for caps was emailed to Monster Play. The Parish Council's maintenance contractor was asked to fix these within 6 weeks. On 2.12.2014, the Principal Finance and Administrative Officer was informed that Monster Play was no longer trading and the business had been purchased by a company called Caloo. Following various emails, Caloo eventually agreed to supply bungs to the Parish Council by 19.1.2015. The Parish Council's maintenance contractor was given the bungs for fitting on 21.1.2015.

10. Monitor fraying rope and minor burn damage to the tower platform on the Multiplay unit and slide for deterioration. Members **NOTED** that the rope is structurally sound and secure and that there was no H&S risk at the time of inspection.
11. Recommend filling the large gap under the fencing with soil and turf or, alternatively, fit gravel boards to prevent animals from entering the area – **PRIORITY 2**. At the previous Committee Meeting, Members agreed to ask the Parish Council's maintenance contractor to suggest a solution, perhaps fitting a gravel board to fit the gap. The Parish Council's maintenance contractor confirmed that a gravel board could be used and backfilled, Members **AGREED** that a quote should be obtained for these works.

Thornwood Common Play Area

1. Jet wash to remove minor moss and algae growth from original tarmac surfaces inside the area on a regular basis – **PRIORITY 3**. The Parish Council's maintenance contractor had been asked to remove the moss and algae before Summer.
2. Monitor uneven paving slabs to 1no gate entry. Members **NOTED** that these were checked and did not present a trip hazard, therefore, no action is required at the present time.
3. Monitor movement to components on Monster Play Shell fort for deterioration. Members **NOTED** that whilst there was some very slight movement, this was not out of character for the piece of equipment and there was no H&S risk.
4. Repair small split in black wet pour under Rock N Cross – **PRIORITY 2**. At the previous Committee Meeting, Members noted that Cllr Spearman had agreed to fill the split with liquid tar to stop any further deterioration. Cllr Hawkins stated that he would obtain an update from Cllr Spearman.
5. Monitor tiny hole in black wet pour next to Rock N Cross. Members **NOTED** that the hole had been there since the equipment was installed, is not a H&S risk and has not deteriorated, therefore, no action is required at the present time.
6. Replace missing plastic cap at slide entry section on 2 Tower Unit and Slide to cover exposed bolt threat – **PRIORITY 1**. Members **NOTED** that these works had been completed.
7. Replace 1no missing blanking bolt to 2 Tower Unit and Slide Upright – **PRIORITY 2**. Members **NOTED** that these works had been completed.
8. Replace 1no missing plastic cap to Monster Shop Play Panel – **PRIORITY 2**.

At the previous Committee Meeting, Members agreed that the cap should be replaced. The replacement cap held at the office did not fit, therefore, new ones have been ordered and should be delivered by the end of January.

9. Fit a 'do not hang on ring' sign on Monster Ball games backboard – **PRIORITY 3**. Members **NOTED** that this is not considered to be needed, as it is not a H&S risk, but a risk associated with children using the equipment for their intended purpose.
10. Monitor grass in front of surface in front of ball games wall for deterioration. Members **NOTED** that no action was required at the present time.

**The Principal Finance and Administrative Officer left the meeting and the Senior Administrative Officer joined the meeting.*

b) Access to New Play Area – Weald Common

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding this matter. Members **NOTED** that the Clerk had requested legal documents from the Parish Council's solicitor and it was **AGREED** that the matter would go to the Parish Council for further discussion.

E14.39 DOG BIN – CHURCH LANE, NORTH WEALD

Members recalled, from the Budget and Precept Meeting, that a request had been received, via Cllr Stallan, to install a dog bin in Church Lane, North Weald. Following discussion, Members **AGREED**, as per previous requests, that the Clerk contact Cllr Stallan and ask that he provides a map of the location (pinpointing the exact site), together with a petition/letter of support from local residents/dog walkers, in favour of a dog bin installation in the location.

E14.40 NOTICE BOARDS FOR POSSIBLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Clerk advised Members that this item had been agreed at the previous Parish Council meeting and did not require any further discussion.

E14.41 CEMETERY

a) Tree Planting

Members **NOTED** that the tree planting project had, unfortunately, been cancelled. The Clerk informed Members that access to the Parish Council's land to clear the area in readiness for planting had proved to be an issue. The Parish Council's maintenance contractor, along with Cllr Hawkins and the Senior Administrative Officer, visited the site on Monday, 19 January 2015 and it was established that the costs involved to clear the site, without the use of a mini digger, would be far more than the £780.00 originally quoted.

Councillor Hawkins asked if the money allocated for clearing the land could be used towards installing a bridge across the stream, which would alleviate any problems with access to the land. The Clerk stated that she had made enquiries to Countrycare with regard to installing a sleeper bridge and the costs involved and

is currently awaiting a response. Cllr Mrs Godwin-Brown asked if the Conservation Volunteers could be contacted next year. The Clerk confirmed that they would keep in contact.

b) Maintenance Work

Members *NOTED* that the Clerk had arranged, in November, for the area at the rear of the Cemetery to be cleared by Thornwood Grounds Maintenance, at a cost of £100.00.

c) Grave No 98

Members *NOTED* that the residential address advised for the deceased by the Coroner was, initially, in Woodside. When the paperwork was received in the Parish Office, the address was recorded as Woodland Grove, Epping. This was an error by the Coroner's Office.

E14.42 ALLOTMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

The Chairman stated that the Sub-Committee continued to visit the allotment sites on regular basis. A complaint had been received at Hastingwood A, regarding an allotment holder leaving a bonfire burning. Members had spoken to the allotment holder and were happy with the response they had received. Notices regarding bonfires were placed on the two noticeboards. A further complaint had been received by EFDC regarding waste being brought onto the allotment site for burning. Members *NOTED* that EFDC were dealing with this complaint.

Members were reminded that works would be commencing to lay the electricity cable at Queens Road allotments the first Monday in February.

E14.43 THE TALBOT ROUNDABOUT

Members *NOTED* that the Clerk had received an email from Trevor Baker, Land Drainage Engineer, Engineering, Drainage & Water Team, EFDC, regarding the planting of closely placed bulbs (narcissi tete a tete) on land near to the Talbot Roundabout. This matter had been discussed with Members of the Allotment Sub-Committee, who had agreed that the planting would be beneficial to North Weald. The Clerk had sent a response to Trevor Baker confirming this.

E14.44 BLUEMANS END

Members *NOTED* that the hedge at Bluemans End had not been cut and would be completed as part of the winter work by the Parish Council's maintenance contractor.

E14.45 NEW BOLLARDS ADJACENT TO LIBRARY

Following a request at the Parish Council Meeting on Monday, 5 January 2015, Members *NOTED* that the Clerk would be arranging for the Parish Council's maintenance contractor to lay grass seed around the new bollards which are adjacent to the Library.

E14.46 GREEN OUTSIDE PARADE OF SHOPS

Following on from the previous Committee Meeting, Cllr Buckley reported

that he had met with Quentin, who had taken photos of the site, to put together a visual map of how the area would look. However, since that meeting, Cllr Buckley stated that he has had difficulty contacting Quentin to obtain an update. The Clerk is still awaiting information from EFDC regarding the removal of the phone box, despite chasing on a regular basis. Cllr Buckley stated that he would give an update at the next Committee Meeting.

E14.47 OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

a) Litter

The Chairman mentioned complaints regarding litter in and around the vicinity of North Weald Station, in particular Station Road, leading up to the level-crossing. The Clerk suggested that an email be sent to Richard Thomason at EFDC asking if he could possibly investigate.

b) Risk Assessment – Trees

The Clerk stated that, when she was recently discussing the issue of the pathway at Weald Common with Cllr Mulliner, it came to her attention that risk assessments should be carried out on trees located on Parish Council owned land. In the past, tree inspections have only been carried out at the allotment sites. The Clerk is currently seeking advice as to how the risk assessments should be carried out. It was suggested that the Clerk should speak to the Parish Council's Insurers regarding this matter. The Clerk stated that she had spoken to Kevin Hebden, who confirmed that he would be able to carry out a visual check, and to Kevin Mason of Countrycare, who had said that he knew of someone who could carry out a structural assessment. The Clerk confirmed that this matter would be included on the next Parish Council Agenda.

c) Bridge at Weald Common

Cllr Buckley mentioned the access to one of the bridges to Weald Common, located on the road leading from the village hall, just past the gateway. He reported that it was very muddy and he was concerned someone may slip on the sleeper steps. Members **AGREED** that they would inspect the bridge on their visit to Weald Common Play Area on Wednesday, 28 January 2015.

d) Pike Way

Cllr Hawkins reported that he had visited the site with Cllr Spearman to assess the number of laurels required and whether they could be planted along the boundary where the trees had been felled. Cllr Spearman estimated that a total of 30 laurels would be required, these would be 3ft plants and would cost £7.00 each. The laurels would need to be planted amongst the tree roots, however, there was a concern that the bank of the ditch could collapse. The laurels would also require frequent watering as the soil is very dry. Following discussion, it was suggested that the Clerk contact the resident and request permission for the laurels to be planted on their boundary.

MINUTES

Meeting: ENVIRONMENTAL

Date 21 January 2015

Meeting closed: 11.00 am

Signed

Date