

**Benson Parish Council Recreation and Lands Committee meeting held
on Thursday 8th February 2018 at 7:30PM in the Committee Room**

Present: Cllr P Baylis (CPB) (Chair)
Cllr S McCann (CSM)
Cllr P Murray (CPM)
Cllr D Olley (CDO)

Proper Officer: D Brooks (CLK)

MINUTES

1. **Apologies.** Cllr T Stevenson

2. **Declarations of Interest.** – There were no declarations of interest

3. **Public Session.** There were 2 members of the public present

Mr John Brannan updated members of the council concerning his lease and business plans for the Cuckoo Pen. He confirmed that he would like to renew the lease when it expires in February 2019. He would also like to continue to use the area for storage of tools and plant production with a view to opening as a plant nursery but on Saturdays only during the main growing season. Mr Brannan was asked to put his request in writing to the Council.

Mrs Elizabeth Leppard thanked the Council for the Tubs Awards again this year and suggested it would perhaps help everyone who tends a tub if the council were to offer a donation to cover basic costs; perhaps just £5 per tub? **Action:** proposal to be referred to the Awards committee

CLK

4. **Village Centre**

a. Cllr Baylis informed members that there had been no further requests from the Greengrocer regarding a Saturday market.

Members were reminded that the next Benson Tidy Group were to meet on Saturday 24th March. The costs to produce some high vis vests with a logo would be around £40; it was agreed these should be purchased. **Action:** Clerk to do so

CLK

There was no response to the letter reminding residents of College Farm that the car park was for general use. However, an issue has arisen with 2 cars parked on the Parish Council owned land to the rear of College Farm, near the garages. This is being dealt with by the chair.

CPB

Finally, the bicycle rack has now been installed at Bob's Corner.

b. There were no other issues to report.

5. **Rivermead:**

a. The work on the entrance to Rivermead has now been completed.

b. The old and damaged picnic bench has been removed. Recycled wood, for repairing the shelter, has been ordered and delivered. Wallingford school students are to complete the work after half term.

6. **Allotments.**

- a. There is still a waiting list for allotments; although some have been re-allocated. Several loads of wood chippings have been delivered and used to improve the paths etc. Compost has also been requested from Agrivert.
- b. One allotment holder has requested if she may enter her allotment in the Open Gardens competition. Members fully supported this. **Action:** clerk to inform resident and to discuss possible allotment competition with the Halls Manager.

CLK/
HMR

7. **Play Areas:**

- a. The positioning of the new play equipment at St Helen's has been agreed with residents and with the contractors; all costs fall within the budget set, including relocation of the white BCA bench. HAGS have been instructed to start the installation.

The relocation of the climber in Green Close has been investigated following a complaint from one of the residents. Wicksteed has quoted an amount of at least £3340 exc. VAT; it was felt this was too high. **Action:** clerk to respond to Wicksteed and request a review of circumstances and costs.

CLK

- b. A draft rota for Councillor Play Inspections was presented. CPM confirmed he would be able to do his inspection at the end of February. (CPB and CSM to swap months).
- c. No other issues to report

8. **Bertie West Field (BWF).**

- a. The Forest School agreement has been sent and we are still waiting confirmation from the Primary School.
- b. Some litter to be cleared and fire building to be monitored. **Action:** Clerk and groundsman

CLK

9. **Sunnyside.**

- a. A quote from Azalea Landscapes, for the work planting the infill trees on Sunnyside, was reviewed. It was felt the trees could be purchased for less. **Action:** clerk to follow up.
- b. The installation of the benches (kicking wall and Hale Road) are next on the work rota list.
- c. Several companies have been approached about hedge-laying around the car park and we now await quotes. It will probably not be able to be completed until the autumn due to the height of the hedges and potential nesting birds.
- d. No other issues to report

CLK

10. **Benson War Memorial.**

- a. GEM is in the process of re-signing the contract for work on the war memorial.
- b. An increased budget of £600 for the Centenary year 2018 has been agreed and included in the precept.
- c. There were no other maintenance issues.

11. **Benson Brook.**

- a. In the absence of Cllr Stevenson an update on the boardwalk has been deferred.

- b. Clerk to ask CTS to inspect growth of Gunnera. The next hogweed treatment is due in April. **CTS/CLK**
- c. No other issues to report.

12. **General.**

- a. Three quotes for the Grass Cutting contract for 2018-19 were reviewed. After discussion the following recommendation to council was proposed:
“Recommendation to Full Council that Benson Parish Council re-appoint Azalea Landscapes for a period of 2 years with an option to extend for a further one year, at a cost of £4545”
- b. The ‘Speed Watch’ project enables members of the community to be trained in using a Speed Indication Device machine; they are then able to do speed checks and collate data without needing the Police to be present. Engaging in the project was suggested following concerns about the speed of cars outside the Primary School. Following discussion, it was decided to put an article in the Benson Bulletin promoting the project and asking for volunteers. **CLK**
- c. See item 4a.
- d. The Oxfordshire Together contract was discussed again at some length. Finally, it was decided to recirculate and review the maps of the various areas for which OCC are currently responsible to make sure they are complete. The cost of a third cut also needs confirmation/clarification. **Action:** clerk to circulate maps and gain confirmation on costs. **CLK**
- e. The kissing gates, to replace the 2 stiles on footpath 125/2, have now been ordered by the Chiltern Society.
- f. Any further investigation of the chain link fence, around the St Helen’s Road allotments/play area, has been deferred until after the installation of the new play equipment.
- g. The Council has a software package for risk assessments and maintenance logs. However, this needs upgrading if it is to be used effectively. **Action:** refer to finance committee. **RFO**
- h. The padlocks have been removed from the salt bins as they had corroded. Replacement of them to be considered once the cold weather has subsided.

13. **No Other Items to Note or for the Next Agenda**

14. **Date of Next Meeting.** 12th April 2018



Dianne Brooks, Parish Clerk
12th February 2018