

WICKERSLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting

Held at 6.30pm on Monday 24th April 2023 at Wickersley Community Centre

Members Cllrs: P Beighton (Chair), C Grimes, K Phillips, A Bates, M Godfrey, John Robinson

In attendance Cllrs: P Beighton (Chair), C Grimes, A Bates, M Godfrey, John Robinson

In attendance J Whitworth (assistant clerk)

Ben Mitchell from RMBC

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

463 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Phillips

464 To approve the minutes of the Environment committee meeting of 30 January 2023

Minutes agreed.

465 To resolve if members of the press and public are to be excluded from any agenda items of the meeting due to the nature of the business to be transacted, Under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, S1 (2))

No matters to be excluded.

466 To note any matters arising from the meeting of 30 January 2023

455.2 to update on the Queens Green Canopy tree and to discuss plaque, Cllr Bates has obtained a price for a small plaque which is set in stone, this is £1,100. This was considered expensive for what it was. What is needed is a piece of stone and a steel plate. The plate can be glued onto the stone. Cllr Grimes had said she had some stone in her garden and invited Cllr Bates to have a look to see if it would be suitable.

457 to discuss the tree at the memorial. This tree has now had a crown lift which was arranged by the assistant clerk. There is still the issue of the street lighting being blocked but RMBC have been made aware of this.

460 to discuss the Tanyard owner contributions. This is still to be done.

467 To receive financial update

Signed  Cllr Beighton dated 

Environment had underspent by just over £3,000. The new budget allows for St Albans Church grant and the benches will come out of the £3,000 gardening and landscaping work other.

468 To discuss Towns and Villages consultation fund

Ben Mitchell attended from RMBC to discuss this. He explained that the project was something which is being done across the borough and has to be completed by March 2024. The ward councillors had put an area forward. The initial design document was provided to the committee and feedback was wanted to confirm that people are happy with the proposals. There has been consultation with the community, and businesses have been written to together with some householders. Decisions have had to be made on the best use of the funding and also to make sure what is done is right for the village. It has been proposed to make more of a feature of the Clock Tower, to either reuse or repurpose the benches, to ensure that stone masonry forms part of the design, they have some British stone and are looking at using it. They are also looking into putting some power in for some lighting in the trees.

Cllr Bates said that when the consultation took place the message was muted about what it was about. It was appreciated to have the opportunity to represent the Environment Committee's views on the project. The document was misleading and had areas on it that appeared to not get touched.

Ben Mitchell said that there was a separate scheme he was looking to include which was resurfacing of the footpath. He said that it didn't make much sense to not do it at the same time as the other work. The footpath would be resurfaced from Chevril Court to the Masons.

Cllr Bates said that Thurcroft would always take precedence over Wickersley South, it was asked when Wickersley South would be considered. One area which has been left a mess is an area where recycling bins have been taken out and been left in a mess. It seems that the village is being divided and split into 2. It would be good to try and avoid a different look to each side of the village.

Ben Mitchell confirmed that the scheme had been put together on ward boundaries but that there would be discussions of a more evidence led approach and also try not to duplicate funding.

Cllr Bates asked when the resurfacing would happen and it was confirmed that this would be done at the same time as the other work in the summer.

Cllr Bates asked about a bench at Chevril Court which isn't a Parish Council bench, Ben Mitchell confirmed that he was happy to look at it.

Cllr Bates said that some of the design spec could have a different look, he liked the idea of the uplifting of the clock but said there were too many bollards, it was confirmed that this was going to be looked at and any bollards that were damaged beyond repair would be taken out, the existing ones would be painted.

SignedCllr Beighton dated

Cllr Bates suggested that it may be better to avoid putting seating where nobody sits, particularly the seating proposed near the Three Horseshoes on the corner near to traffic. It was also noted that there was perhaps too much seating near to the pubs, the concern about this was when it is kick out time this could cause issues if people linger about, also seating under trees could cause a problem.

Ben Mitchell confirmed that they were proposing to create a paved seating area and potentially re-position what is already there.

Cllr Bates raised the issue about power being installed for some Christmas lights and also to keep some of the planting.

Ben Mitchell responded by saying that it would likely to be a manhole cover with a socket. Authority would be needed from Northern Power and also the cost.

Cllr Bates suggested that the Wickersley had a lot of wildflowers and probably didn't need any more. Also who would maintain it.

Ben Mitchell confirmed that this was different, it was wildflowers in turf with a lot of wild flower species. They have a scheme where they would visit once a month for 3 years to maintain it. After that there may be a revenue investment but if not it would go back into critical grounds maintenance and would have a 2 – 3 times a year visit to maintain it. He asked if we would want to consider maintaining it but it was agreed that the parish council would not wish to and would wish RMBC to maintain it.

Cllr Bates then asked about the planters and seating as it doesn't fit in with the scheme that the Parish Council already has. The wood doesn't age as well as stone and we would want to put some stone back in. At the other side of the road near to the Tanyard there are planters which are drains and they don't look the best, there is also one at the side of the bank

Ben Mitchell confirmed that it was difficult to find commercial suppliers but agrees in principal, it's the practicalities with what would be an alternative to timber. They have an area to focus on, there are a lot of assets, it could be that they can change where the planters are currently and see if there is potential for them to be better placed around the parish. They would also like to put in edging stones around the heritage garden, this was agreed.

Cllr Bates then asked about the underpass, he said that it doesn't make sense just to do the North side. The underpass needed a resin coat and also the drains sorting out as they have been filled with mortar. It isn't being treated as 1 entity, the ramp and steps at both sides need to be done.

Ben Mitchell said that there is a core budget but would try and bring in additional services. He said this was a good example of that and is something that they should be able to do.

Cllr Bates then mentioned that the railings look shabby

Ben Mitchell confirmed that Bramley had in fact had theirs painted by community payback and an application could be made to the neighbourhoods team. Audits were being carried out to see if any of the guardrails could be disposed of, perhaps in the central reservation. It was noted that this would not deter people from turning across the carriageway.

SignedCllr Beighton dated

Cllr Bates then asked about the horse trough and said that the Parish Council would like to keep this.

Ben Mitchell said that he would like to put this on the clock side to complement and add to what was already there.

Cllr Bates asked about a timespan.

Ben Mitchell confirmed that the detailed design work was happening at the present time and he would hope to start issuing work orders, this work will be delivered internally. He expects the design in the next 4 weeks and will make sure we are sent a copy of it.

It was noted that once this happens the Environment Committee would need a meeting to which Ben Mitchell would be invited to attend.

Ben Mitchell also confirmed that an initial letter drop had been done to the people who would be most directly affected and each business has also been written to. Utility providers have also been written to to say that only emergency work would be allowed and not any general maintenance for a 12 month period. With regards to the work they would propose to have 2 teams, one for the footpath and 1 doing the other work. The preference would be to do it in more manageable chunks, possibly work Mon – Thursday and ensure the site is cleared so it would be accessible.

Ben Mitchell was thanked for his attendance and going through the plans. He will attend the next meeting either in person or on teams.

469 To consider other issues relating to the environment to include:-

469.1 To discuss and agree progress for bench replacement

The benches will be replaced are the ones at Newhall Avenue and the one at Almond Glade. The benches are to be ordered when the area is ready.

469.2 To update on the plaque for the Queens Green Canopy tree

This has already been discussed at 466

469.3 To discuss St Albans Church Grant

This has been agreed, a letter needs to be sent to them in the terms discussed at the previous environment meeting.

Action : Assistant Clerk to write to the Church

470 To discuss the tree at the memorial

This was discussed at 446

471 To discuss Almond Glade area

The area around Almond Glade will be tidied up as a 1 off. It was noted that it is currently bird nesting season so this may need to be put off until the Autumn.

Action : Assistant clerk to contact the contractors to ask about this.

SignedCllr Beighton dated

472 To confirm and approve the Tanyard toilet warden honorarium payments for 2023/24

This was discussed, proposed by Cllr Bates, seconded by Cllr Beighton and agreed unanimously.

473 To discuss a vehicle for the handymen

Cllr Bates had done some costings for a garage which would be £8,000 – £9,000. The fence would need taking down, a ramp would need to be installed. It would take 2 of the parking spaces in a morning from 6am until 11am. The garage would be split into 2 with an area for the vehicle and an area for storage. It would be replacing a building that is not fit for purpose and would enable us to have an area to put an electric vehicle at a later date.

Cllr Grimes raised the question of how to approach it, is it WCCA or does it belong to the parish. This would need checking. Would planning be required, Cllr Godfrey thought it probably would be needed.

Cllr Bates suggested that careful costing would be needed together with a rough architectural plan including the cost of the base so that a fully costed scheme could be put together. After that then planning permission could be applied for. This would have to go to full council for consent. A vehicle cannot be purchased without first having somewhere to store it. Bob Mason rec ground isn't an option, it is too far away and not near enough to the centre of the village, the vehicle would have limited mileage and speed and also that area isn't that well guarded.

Cllr Godfrey thought this should be a 2 stage funding but put both on the proposal.

Cllr Grimes suggested that this be looked at after the gala had taken place and it should be put in the next agenda. By that time the caretaker will have been spoken to about what items are stored and which are WCCA an which are Parish Council items.

Action : Assistant clerk to see who the shed belongs to, speak to caretaker about what is in the shed and put the item on the next agenda.

474 To note the next meeting date Monday 10th July 2023

SignedCllr Beighton dated

