



Minutes of Kingsclere Parish Council General Purposes Meeting GP 06/21 Held at 7.30pm on Monday 14th June 2021 in the Village Club

GP 06/21 – Present:

Cllrs: Adams; Bowes; Farey; Mussett; Sawyer J. Clerk – Ackrill.

06/21.1 – Apologies:

Cllrs: Peach N; Price. Assistant Clerk - Read

06/21.2 – Declarations of Interest:

Item 16.3 Browns Cottages – SA. Item 8 KCA Grant Application – IB.

06/21.3 – Matters Arising:

3.1. OM 01/21.20.1. Grant Application for New DofE Centre in Kingsclere:

At January OM it was agreed to approve this grant application of £260, to be paid directly on receipt of invoices for the specified registration and training costs; or, paid retrospectively into a Kingsclere DofE Award branch bank account avoiding the need to transfer money into a private bank account. The Clerk has since received a receipt for the value of £100 for the cost of two people to attend a DofE training course. It was reported that this cost has already been paid to HCC by the individuals and they are seeking reimbursement from KPC; this is contrary to what KPC originally agreed. The Clerk also understands that a Kingsclere DofE Award Branch bank account has been set up and it was agreed that provided evidence is submitted to KPC confirming the account holder's name is not that of an individual but the DofE Centre, the full £260 approved previously can be paid into this account. Clerk to contact and ask for this information.

Action: Clerk.

06/21.4 – Highways Issues – Areas of Responsibility:

It was proposed to revive the system of reporting highways issues that was in place prior to 2019 where Cllrs would take responsibility for reporting highways issues such as potholes and damaged signs on main roads in the village directly to Hampshire Highways. Cllrs would then forward the log references to the Clerk to file as reference. All Cllrs in attendance were happy to take an area of responsibility. SA – Newbury Road; IB – Basingstoke Road and Ashford Hill Road; MF – George Street; JS – Swan Street, Winchester Road, Bear Hill, Foxs Lane.

Action: Cllrs: SA, IB, MF, JS. Clerk.

06/21.5 – Cemetery:

5.1. Cemetery Update – Management and Development Options:

Councillors and the Clerk are continuing to address the numerous ongoing and daily issues the running of the cemetery generates, including work to revise the current rules and regulations. Updated rules and regulations may assist in addressing and alleviating some issues going forward. The following matters were raised during the discussion.

The continuing issue of unauthorised memorials installed in the Cemetery causes increasing problems. Kerbs around graves mean the areas take longer to trim as these prevent the larger mower running over the area and numerous glass and plastic pots, which are not permitted, also add to the time it takes to cut the area. Pots, not plastic or glass, are only permitted on the base of headstones. It was noted that the current cemetery maintenance budget is not large enough to allow the immaculate upkeep of both the old and new cemeteries to the standard KPC and residents wish, however the cemetery is currently running at a loss. The memorials placed without permission in the ashes area does not allow for easy access for strimming and tidying to take place. KPC recognise the area is untidy receive numerous complaints about the state of the area, however items installed such as permanent artificial flowers and raised memorial tablets all prevent the area from being maintained. All memorial tablets should be flat to allow the mower to pass freely over the area. Over the years memorial tablets have been erected without approval or notification, meaning when the non-compliant memorials are discovered it is difficult to address the issue without causing further stress and grief to families.

Equally of concern is the future funding and income deficit that is growing larger each year. KPC is in the process of looking at the general maintenance schedule and the list of items that require work in the Cemetery and is producing a financial report detailing how the costs have increased year on year over the last 10 years.

The rate at which the New Cemetery has filled up is alarming and there are numerous questions that need to be addressed: What does the village wish to do? Do KPC fill every plot then simply close for burials? Do KPC make part of the cemetery a Memorial Garden without completely filling the cemetery, which may help generate some licenced funds? Do KPC look for additional land now for future use? KPC does not have a legal requirement to provide a cemetery, but if KPC chose to do so in the future how would income be generated to purchase new land or continue the upkeep on the current areas? The important point of how

the Cemetery generates funds for its upkeep was raised; at present KPC only charge a one-off burial fee however must maintain the area for ever, and once the plots are full no burial income will be generated at all. Going forward, how KPC will cope financially with the prospect of the certain increase in costs in the next ten years? It was agreed that KPC will prepare a forecast of the anticipated growth in expenditure, in order to further discuss and consult with the residents of Kingsclere on how the cemetery is funded and the purchase any future land.

It was agreed for CM to include options for cemetery expansion in recommendations. It was agreed to prepare the Rules and Regulations for review and prepare projected operating costs.

Action: CM.

5.2. Sunken Graves:

With the increased use of coffins made from natural biodegradable material will come the inevitable increase in sunken graves, KPC do appreciate however that all graves settle over time. Recently KPC has had two graves that required top up, one significantly. Looking back through records, KPC has not requested the material of the coffin to be notified on Interment Forms so has no idea which graves may sink. The question of who should pay for the top up was raised, KPC or relatives (if the contact details have been maintained over the years). Is there another solution to this problem? Could KPC add a top up cost to the burial fee, although this will not help for the graves already there. Following discussion, it was agreed to investigate the cost and add a top up fee to the cost of a burial. Where possible relatives will be contacted to discuss and obtain consent however it was noted that over the years people move and do not keep the next of kin register up to date in the parish office. Topping up sunken graves is deemed a necessary action from a health and safety point of view, to prevent trips and falls and to ensure the contractors can maintain the graves safely.

CM to include top up costs within projected operating costs for review. Clerk to identify sunken graves when topple testing completed.

Action: CM, Clerk.

06/21.6 – Recreation Ground Wildflower Meadow:

As mentioned at May OM, Kingsclere Parish Council was and is still deeply regretful that the Wildflower Meadow was mistakenly mowed by KPC's contractors. The damage is not as bad as first thought thanks to the cold spring, and whilst it will take time, there is hope that the wildflower meadow will make a full recovery. KPC has received an offer from one of its BCllrs for some free wooden posts to mark or the Wildflower Meadow, which was gladly accepted. Clerk to organise drop off and storage of posts and contact KPC's Contractors to ask them to cut the posts to required height, paint white, and in consultation with KPC install them at intervals to mark the division between the playing field and the Wildflower Meadow. It was suggested that a natural grass border could be allowed to grow over time and the posts eventually removed. It was agreed to organise the repair of the Wildflower Meadow information board as soon as possible – this is an outstanding action for CM and the Assistant Clerk. It was reported there have also been issues with the mowing and maintenance in places such as the MHOS and Holding Field, and it was agreed to request a meeting with KPC's Contractors to walk around the village and reiterate KPC's expectations and instructions for the mowing and maintenance of these areas. IB and the Clerk will attend this meeting.

Action: IB, CM, Clerk, Assist Clerk.

06/21.7 – Making a Difference Awards:

This year it has been agreed to hold the Making a Difference Awards presentations at the Kingsclere Bounce Back event on 14th August. KPC has a list of nominees and will be contacting all nominees to invite them to attend on the day. JS has contacted BCllr Rhatigan, Lord Huntingdon, and put in a request to the new Mayor of Basingstoke and Deane, inviting them to attend and present the awards. KPC has been offered the outdoor patio area at the Fieldgate Centre, and it was proposed to split the awards into three presentation sessions. A public address system is being investigated, although IB explained that KPC will almost certainly be able to use the system at the Fieldgate Centre. The certificates will be produced in the office and there be no need to arrange refreshments for the award presentations ceremony as there will be general refreshments available on the day. The timing of each of the three sessions has yet to be agreed however the aim is for each session to last about 40 minutes with each guest being invited to speak at the session in which they are presenting the awards.

Action: JS, Clerk, Assist Clerk.

06/21.8 – Grant Application from Kingsclere Community Association:

IB provided an update to GP Committee regarding the Grant Application for drainage works at the Fieldgate Centre first submitted to KPC at March OM (Minutes ref: OM 03/21.17.2.). IB confirmed that BDBC has since agreed to provide a further £12,200 for the work from its own S106 funds, not KPC's S106 funds, therefore the grant application for £2000 submitted to KPC is subsequently withdrawn. As similarly discussed at March OM, the point was raised that local community organisations usually not VAT registered and cannot recover VAT, meaning 20% of grant funding is used to pay VAT on services. It was noted that it would be beneficial for KPC to apply for grants for improvement works on behalf of the community organisations and deliver the work, however this is not legally possible.

06/21.9 – Lengthsman:

KPC has 15 Lengthsman hours to allocate with only this meeting and July GP to discuss. The Clerk has created a blank Lengthsman allocation template and will place it on the shared Cllrs OneDrive file for Cllrs to add items themselves. Weeding around the bus shelter, benches in the square, and bollards in the square are already on the list, as well as sweeping of the payments. It was noted the hedge by The Pellows on Basingstoke Road needs trimming as it is covering street furniture, Clerk to write to Vivid. It was also agreed to contact the Contractors regarding the Lime Trees and Basal growth in the Churchyard.

Action: All Cllrs; Clerk.

06/21.10 – Allotment Water Leak:

The Clerk has received and circulated two quotes. After a short discussion it was agreed to go with the quote of £870 + VAT. The company that this quote was sought from is on the list of approved contractors sent to KPC by Southern Water. The Clerk confirmed with the company that they would be able to start work on 13th July if their quote was accepted. Many thanks for the effort of all in turning the Allotment water on and off, to keep the water troughs filled. Clerk to contact the company to request the relevant documentation.

Resolved: £870 + VAT approved for work to find and fix Allotment water leak.

Action: Clerk.

06/21.11 – Church Fete:

St Mary's Church Fete is due to go ahead this August Bank Holiday. It was agreed it would be good for KPC have a presence there. It was agreed to ask to borrow the gazebo from RP and to borrow a table from the Village Club. It was suggested this would be a good opportunity to discuss the Cemetery with residents. CM will seek approval from St Mary's for KPC's normal pitch location. The Fete Committee has contacted IB and requested to use KPC's power supply, KPC will need to notify the supplier and the wattage needs to be checked so that correct usage charge can be agreed. IB to check the wattage.

Action: IB, CM, Clerk.

06/21.12 – Recreation Ground Play Area:

A significant amount of expenditure is needed on the Play Area. As well as installing new fencing new surfacing is required for the slide and climbing frame area and the installation of three new pieces of play equipment will require additional ground levelling. The Parish Council also hope to develop the Holding Field with more recreation facilities. Given these facts it was suggested that KPC should consider the best location to develop an improved Play Area – The Recreation Ground or the Holding Field. Some residents have expressed concern about accessing the current location of the play area, on the Recreation Ground (Rec). The Holding Field (HF), as it is flatter, is an easier location to access and no dogs are permitted on the field. Cllrs are aware that dogs are still taken onto the HF despite no dogs being permitted on it. It was noted that the costs of relocating the equipment KPC has on the Recreation Ground may be more than the cost of just purchasing all new equipment for the HF. CM recalled that roughly 3 years ago, KPC discussed that if a significant amount of expenditure was required for the Rec Play Area, KPC would consider moving it. If the play area is relocated to the HF, it would be closer to the BDBC Strokins Road play area. It was recognised that the play area at the HF would be further away for residents on Swan Street and in the south area of the village, and that some residents may have an emotional connection to the Rec Play Area in its current location. It was agreed to gauge local opinion at the Church Fete before any decisions are taken. It was noted that it is KPC's intention to install an outdoor gym on the HF, and that it is still KPC's aim to acquire the triangular area of land (old youth club land) from BDBC.

06/21.13 – Bus Roue 56:

The Clerk received an email from Basingstoke Community Transport (BCT) with an option for residents to jointly hire a minibus and driver to take them to and from Newbury Retail Park, or Sainsbury's Tadley. After a lengthy discussion it was agreed that KPC is not in a position to facilitate the administrative requirements for organising such trips, however it was agreed that this information should be passed to a suggested member of the community who may be in a position to organise trips and make use of this offer. It was noted that the village based care group that organised transport for individuals, particularly for hospital visits, had to stop operating during the pandemic. This was a valued service and any action to provide this type of service again would be welcomed.

06/21.14 – Additional Glass Recycling Bin Collection Point:

This item was not discussed as no further details had been received from BDBC.

06/21.15 – Health and Safety:

The Litter Warden has noted that three bins have broken bases. The Clerk and RFO are completing an inventory of all bins to ascertain exactly how many replacement bins are required, prior to getting a quote for purchase and installation.

The Litter Warden's appraisal is due. Final amendments and proof reading of the Health and Safety Procedure needs to be completed prior to review.

Only one risk assessment has been received to date. All Cllrs asked to complete risk assessments for their areas or responsibility and return to the Clerk.

Action: All Cllrs, Clerk, RFO.

