



Minutes of a Meeting of the AMENITY COMMITTEE

held in the Parish Office, Benetfeld Road on
Tuesday 1 October 2024 at 8:00pm

PRESENT: Cllrs: Katie Dover, Hilary Doyle, Dave Ellis, Katherine Giles
Also Present: Ceri Rance, Clerk, Purveen Hira, Amenity Officer

18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Paul Day, Andy Fish, Ian Leake, Amanda McLean & Kiran Meka.

19 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Cllr Doyle declared an interest in agenda item on 4.1 Consultation with Allotment Holders as an allotment holder. It was proposed that by Cllr Doyle, seconded by Cllr Giles and **RESOLVED** that Cllr Ellis would chair item 4.1.

20 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

21 REPORTS FOR DECISION

21.1 Consultation with Allotment Holders

At the June Amenity Committee Meeting (dated: 04.06.24, min: 8.2) a recommendation was put forward to amend some wording in the current allotment rules to clarify some aspects of BPC allotment management. Councillors requested that a wider consultation with the allotment holders was required. The consultation questions were shared with all Allotment Holders on 20 August 2024, with a deadline to complete by 8 September 2024. In total, 36 responses were received. It was proposed by Cllr Ellis and seconded by Cllr Dover and **RESOLVED** that the following recommendations be made to Council.

- To charge incoming tenants an extra year's rent to be retained if they vacate their plot in an unsatisfactory condition.
- Stick with the monthly inspections, but term them as 'checks' and if the first 'check' in the season is not satisfactory, keep a note of it in house. If the following inspection is still not satisfactory, inform the tenant.
- Define the term 'cultivation', to be included in the rules.
- Rather than stating 80% of the plot should be cultivated, change to two thirds.
- Growing season to be between April – October.
- Produce a flow chart to show a visual aid to the tenants on what the checking process involves.
- Produce a general summary sheet of all the comments received, to be shared with all the allotment holders.

21.2 York Road Play Equipment

During August Amenity Meeting (dated: 06.08.24) members requested that the Amenity Officer carried out further research on how to combat the ongoing issues of cracks in the wooden play equipment. Even though there were no high risks found at the last Play Inspection, which took place in April 2024, and with the EN1176 standards stating that "*Splits in single pieces of wood shall not be considered a finger entrapment where the gap diminishes towards the centre of the wooden part*", members wanted to see if there were any ways to combat the cracks getting worse. The Amenity Officer recommended



purchasing a shrinkage crack treatment kit which fills the cracks with resin. It was proposed by Cllr Doyle and seconded by Cllr Ellis and **RESOLVED** to purchase the kit at a cost of £195.59 to be taken from budget line 24, Amenities Repairs and Maintenance.

21.3 Tree Work on Silver Jubilee

A resident has raised their concerns about an Indian Bean Tree which is in the Silver Jubilee Arboretum and backs onto their property. They received a copy of the last Tree Inspection report, which took place in April 2023. However, this tree was missed during the inspection, so the resident had requested that the tree is inspected as a matter of urgency.

The tree was inspected, and the following recommendation made by the arboriculturist.

The Indian beam Tree (T90) requires pruning, and the cut to be brought back to the boundary line. It was proposed by Cllr Doyle and seconded by Cllr Dover and **RESOLVED** to accept the quote of £680, to be taken from the Tree Budget, to carry out the necessary work.

22 **REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

22.1 Update Report

This was **NOTED** and the following comments were made.

22.1.1 Request to cut back branches overlooking the tennis courts on Foxley Fields

Binfield Tennis Association have asked whether the trees which overlook Court 3 can be cut back as they are causing issues to the play surface. The court is being damaged by tree sap.

The Amenity Officer was asked to obtain quotes to be presented at the November Council meeting.

22.1.2 Litter bin on Oakmede Parade

There have been a few occasions recently when the bin has been overflowing. The situation is being monitored by BPC Warden and BFBC.

22.1.3 Tennis Court Shrub/Flower Borders

Following the completion of the border work near the tennis courts, it was noted that a further £300 will be set aside from budget line 21/8 to purchase some additional plants.

22.2 WI Tree on Foxley Fields

The Binfield WI had requested to fund some trees to be planted in the Foxley Fields open space. This was approved at the Amenity Committee Meeting (dated: 01.08.23 min: 15.1.1) and three trees were planted in November 2023. Unfortunately, there were a few issues with the planting, the main one being that one of the trees planted by the contractor was not the agreed species. The item was brought back to the Amenity Committee Meeting (dated: 04.06.24 min: 8.3.1) and members agreed to set a budget of £600 to purchase a Wedding Cake Tree to replace the incorrect tree planted previously. To purchase a tree of significant height, the cheapest option was approximately £525, so a suggestion was put forward to purchase a Liquid Amber Styraclifua 'Lane Roberts'. Due to the size of the tree, BPC will arrange for it to be planted by our open spaces contractor.

23 **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None.

Meeting closed 9.14pm

