

Minutes of the Maintenance Committee Meeting of Milton Parish Council held on Thursday 20 December 2012 at 7.30pm in the Bowls Pavilion

Present: M Ellwood (chair) WD Booth DJ Chamberlin IF May J Mowatt (arrived at 7:35pm)
RT Summerfield
The clerk

1. **Apologies for absence:** J Western

2. **Declarations of interest and dispensations**

a) **To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda.**

b) **To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any).**

None received.

c) **To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate.**

M. Ellwood had been given dispensation for item 6 (Allotments)

3. **Public Participation:** No members of the public were present.

4. **The minutes of the Maintenance committee meeting held on 24 September 2012 were approved.**

Daffodil bulbs had been planted on bund opposite Tesco, around War Memorial and new oak tree in Coles Road (M 6/09-12).

The repair for the Commando Crossing on Humphries Way has been done (M8/09-12).

The Trees Officer has visited the resident at Recreation Close to discuss her letter and any work required to trees at rear of Bowls Pavilion (M10/09-12).

5. **Cemetery**

Command Pest Control reports (Oct & Dec) were NOTED – rabbits very active, slight mole activity, 4 traps set. Water in ditch very deep.

Cemetery Policy was reviewed (M5/12-11) including fees. DJC advised that the Church of England had raised churchyard fees so they were now more-or-less in line with the current fees charged.

AGREED to recommend cemetery fees remain the same for 2013 (proposed IFM, seconded DJC).

In the clerk's opinion the policy in place worked well. IFM asked that the maximum headstone size was added to child headstone prices to avoid any misunderstanding about the size of headstone allowed.

**Action:
Clerk**

6. **Allotments**

Rabbit Infestation: A quote had been received from Command Pest Control to clear rabbit infestation – £440 + VAT. It was AGREED that alternative quotes should be obtained. ME would find out about costs to use ferrets to clear the rabbits. It was noted that as most allotments were not rabbit proofed, if the rabbits were cleared a further infestation could occur at any time.

**Action:
ME**

Standalone Toilet: A request had been received from an allotment holder for a standalone (waterless) toilet at the allotment site who had also canvassed for views of other allotment holders. J. Western had collated these replies:

Eight allotment holders replied to an email request for views on the topic. Most replied positively. However, the following areas of concern were expressed:

Area of concern (Number of respondents expressing this concern)

Responsibility for cleaning (5)

Unwanted access (2)

Vandalism (3)

Eco-friendliness (1)

Effect of cleaning cost on the rent (1)

Note: One respondent provided the following suggestion:

Would it be possible to add a little building where gardening needs could be sold from?

Maybe it could open just for week-ends.

After discussion it was AGREED that the request to install a standalone toilet and/or building selling gardening supplies should be rejected due to the work that will be needed to maintain these, the possible additional cost and the security issues – vandalism and theft do happen at the allotment site due to its somewhat isolated position.

Update: Buchans will clear overgrowth from 3 vacant allotments in January 2013 so these can be offered to people on the waiting list. One tenant has given up his allotment in December.

Waiting list – now at 5.

NOTED the tenant has now vacated the horse grazing field. A new tenant has not yet been found. An advert will be placed in the next Village View (Parish council minute 06/12-12).

Review of Fees for allotments and horse grazing land:

Current fees: £12.50 p.a. per half-size allotment (£25 p.a. for full size (10 pole) allotment) and £500 p.a. for horse grazing.

Fees received to date 2012/13: £1383 Expenditure to date 2012/13: £1957

AGREED to recommend an increase from £12.50 to £15 p.a. per half-size allotment (pro rata for other size allotments - 1/3-size = £10, 1/4-size = £7.50) as from October 2013. Fee for full size allotments to remain at £25 (proposed JM, seconded IFM)

AGREED to recommend no increase for horse grazing (proposed JM, seconded IFM).

7. Play – update

Fenland Leisure Products (FLP) carried out the 6-monthly inspection of play equipment in December. Their report was noted and it was AGREED that no repair work was necessary (proposed DJC, seconded IFM).

AGREED to recommend that FLP carry out 6-monthly inspections of play equipment in 2013 (proposed DJC, seconded IFM).

8. Grass Cutting and General Maintenance

Hedge at Humphries Way play area: 100m of hedging has been received and was planted by Buchans on 13th Dec.

It was AGREED that the proposal to waive standing orders to allow Buchans to tender unopposed for a 3 year contract from 2015 should be rejected (proposed RTS, seconded IFM). The Clerk was instructed to advise Buchans that they will be asked to tender for this contract but that as a public authority the parish council is committed to following the principles of 'Best Value' and cannot give an assurance their tender will be unopposed.

**Action:
Clerk**

9. Tompkins Mead

Work needed was been identified during a walk-through by ME, Roger Day and Mick Woolhouse. A quote has been received from Town & Country for £190 + VAT.

AGREED to recommend acceptance of the quote from Town & Country (proposed ME, seconded IFM).

10. Budget for 2013/14.

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|---------------|------------------------------------|
| grass cutting | £25,000 (inc allotments, cemetery) |
| highways | £4,300 |
| play | £3,000 |

11. Correspondence: none received

12. Date of next meeting – Monday 25th March 2013

The meeting closed at 8:05 pm

Signed:

Date: