

Minutes of the Maintenance Committee Meeting of Milton Parish Council held on Monday 1 July 2013 at 7.30pm in the Bowls Pavilion

Present: M Ellwood (chair: Item 1 only) G Heaney (chair: Items 2-11) WD Booth JE Coston
IF May J Mowatt M Perkins HM Smith RT Summerfield J Western
G Wynne-Jones The clerk & asst clerk
1 member of the public (ME) from Item 2 onwards

1. **Election of Chairman:** Proposed RTS, seconded JM, G Heaney was elected as chairman.
GH thanked ME for his service.
ME remained at the meeting as a member of the public
2. **Apologies for absence were accepted from:** DJ Chamberlin – conflicting commitment
3. **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.**
GH has been given dispensation for item 7 (Allotments)
4. **Public Participation:** No members of the public were present.
5. **The minutes of the Maintenance committee meeting held on 23 March 2013 were approved.**
6. **Cemetery:** deferred until end of Agenda
7. **Allotments**
Noted there are currently 5 people on waiting list for allotments. All allotments rented out.
Rabbit problems (previous min M6/03-13) – update. Meeting arranged for Tues 2nd July with College of West Anglia.

Received Allotment Representatives report on neglected allotments: It was AGREED (proposed JM, seconded GH) to write to the tenants of the nine neglected allotments and ask them to tidy plots by 1 September. **Action: Clerk**

WDB noted that there were three plots on which non-fruit bearing trees were planted. Of particular concern were plots E4 & E5 which had numerous conifers as well as high security fencing. It was AGREED (proposed RTS, seconded IFM) to write to the tenant of E4 & E5 and draw his attention to the fact that he is in breach of Paragraphs 5(f) and 5(i) of the tenancy agreement. **Action: Asst clerk**

Considered closing off 2nd entrance to allotment site. WDB noted security concerns if 2nd entrance is not closed. It was AGREED (proposed GH, seconded JM) that GH would consider the viability of closing off the 2nd entrance and report back to committee. **Action: GH, Asst clerk**

Update on horse grazing (previous min 6/03-13). An advert has been placed on Tesco's noticeboard and the Parish noticeboards. Clerk has received 2 enquiries but nothing has come of them.

8. **Play – update**
Received play inspection report from Fenland Leisure. It was AGREED (proposed GH, seconded JM) that GH would inspect play areas with Asst Clerk and was delegated power to decide repair priorities with a view to having high risk repairs done straight away. **Action: GH, Asst clerk**
9. **Grass Cutting and General Maintenance**
Noted that on sleeper has been replaced on bund footpath from Butt Lane to Sycamores Rec (previous min M8/03-13).
10. **Correspondence:** none received
11. **Date of next meeting** – Monday 23rd September 2013.

6. Cemetery

Noted Command Pest Control reports (May) – rabbits very active - all burrows checked and re-treated where necessary, 3 moles caught, no further activity apparent so traps removed; and (June) – rabbits slightly less active but still a problem. All workings treated. No mole activity.

Considered providing a rainwater butt to collect rainwater. General agreement that idea was not feasible as there was no run-off. It was AGREED (proposed GH, seconded JM) to reject idea of providing rainwater butt on practical grounds as unable to install adequate facility.

Considered providing a security camera. Noted damage to wreaths after recent funeral. Camera was installed by family of deceased without approval from or notice given to council. Police informed and instructed family to remove camera. General concerns about installing camera in public area as well as concerns for grieving relatives not wanting to be photographed. It was AGREED (proposed IFM, seconded MP) to reject idea of installing security camera.

Considered updates to cemetery policy. Clerk gave background to current situation: Clerk and asst clerk met with family of recently deceased who was to be interred in Milton cemetery. Numerous issues arose in which family misled council’s representatives, e.g. family purchased double plot for deceased and one other person whilst intending to bury only deceased. Family also requested to purchase surrounding graves and were told they could not do so. Subsequent correspondence from family members who contend they were not informed they could not purchase adjacent plots. Police had been called to office as family members were harassing clerk and asst clerk. It was AGREED (proposed GH, seconded JM) to write to the family and inform them that they were told by council’s representatives that they could not purchase adjacent graves and include clerk’s notes from initial meeting in the cemetery.

**Action:
Asst
clerk**

JEC and IFM concerned that recent developments (such as concrete tombs and brick curbing) are changing the character of the cemetery. IFM suggested putting in a hedge as a line of demarcation from which only lawned graves would be permitted in future and suggested that only residents of the village be permitted burial in the cemetery.

MP suggested that a pro-active cemetery policy is required which should be in a written form for families to sign prior to burial.

General agreement that current policy needed to be more robust to ensure that character of cemetery is maintained in future. It was AGREED (proposed GH, seconded MP) that a working group consisting of GH, MP, JEC, DJC (if available), the clerk and asst clerk draw up amendments to the current policy for full council to consider at July parish council meeting.

Considered delegating responsibility for meeting with families of late Queenie Smith and Louise Smith to agree situation regarding purchase of adjacent graves. JEC suggested that council should only speak as corporate body.

The meeting closed at 9:06 pm

Signed:

Date: