

Environment & Highways Committee

Thursday 24th January 2019, 7.30pm
Catshill Village Hall, Golden Cross Lane, Catshill

Members Present: Cllrs M Knight (Chair), M Shephard (Vice Chair), G Blackmoor, M Ball, B McEldowney

In Attendance: Clerk R Powell

1. Apologies for absence Cllr O Sweeting
2. Declarations of Interest None
3. To consider members' written requests for dispensation None requested
4. Adjournment of meeting for Public Question Time
No Members of the public were present
5. To reconvene to consider approval of minutes of meeting held 20/09/18

It was agreed that the minutes were an accurate reflection of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman

6. Clerk's report, to include updates on:

6.1 Lengthsman Tender Progress

An advert had been put in the weekly CALC updates, on the website, on Facebook and in the Bromsgrove and Redditch Standard, both online and in the paper. There had been one application to date and a request for documentation from a further two people. Closing date for applications was 1st February, with a meeting to open tenders and discuss organised for 4th February, Interviews pencilled in as 11th February then decisions taken to Finance and Staffing and Full Parish Council at the end of February.

6.2 Path and Steps from A38 through to Balance Pools (Picture circulated)

Members noted the pictures which at the time of being taken showed the rail in need of completion, but the steps were now much safer.

6.3 Notice Boards

The two boards, at the Village Hall and by the Social Club, were being delivered and installed week commencing 4th February hopefully

6.4 Dog Waste bag dispenser – Old Horse Course Estate

The dispenser had been ordered and was being delivered imminently. The Clerk would ask the Lengthsman to install it but first needed to check on the exact position for installation. The Clerk had been in contact with Cllr Jones and the Place Team to ensure that the position of near the children's play park was acceptable. There was already a bin located on the park.

6.5 Trees at the War Memorial

Cllr Webb had met the tree officer the previous week and established that they had been in touch with the Crown and were making some progress in getting the trees behind the War Memorial cut between them. They would be cut down to approximately 3 or 4 metres. The Leylandi and the hedges were within the perimeter of the fencing and therefore not the responsibility of the Crown. Cllr Webb had offered funding to assist with cutting these down too to open the area out, which had been received to the value of £1000. If this could be arranged, then Royal British Legion had agreed to repair and paint the fence and provide new aggregate for the area. The schools were looking at planting some poppies in pots for in the area and the Scouts would be working to clear the area next to the War Memorial on Meadow Road, planting some hedging and bulbs as part of Catshill Growing and Catshill in Bloom.

The Clerk had requested that any information CALC received about tree maintenance routines and assessments be passed on.

6.6 Reports from BDC/WCC

Air Pollution – Cllr Webb had reported that she had a meeting at County Hall before Christmas regarding infrastructure in Bromsgrove. She reported that it was in early stages but that she was quite positive about the future infrastructure plans and officers were now talking to local members on their specific areas. Cllr Webb had also requested an analysis of the traffic in Catshill as part of the proposed developments. BDC had gone back to Mott McDonalld at her request.

Dropped Kerbs – These had been completed in Aintree Close and Lingfield Walk **Springs Avenue, Chadcote Way, Bourne Avenue and Woodrow Close** – The Clerk had previously highlighted to the Parish Council, correspondence she had received with concerns about a supposed spam letter regarding access to these roads and them not being a public right of way, which had been denied by WCC. The person who had sent these letters had since been in touch with WCC to dispute their claim to the road and citing their reasons for ownership. Again, WCC had been able to disprove this as although there were documents to prove the persons ownership of subsoil, agreements entered into by developers since, when building the estate, with WCC superseded these. Members discussed this complex issue.

It was agreed that the Clerk would ask WCC if they need to inform affected residents of this information in case anyone had already taken out a law suit.

7. To discuss provision of dog waste bags within the Parish

The Clerk reported that the lady who fills the dispensers on behalf of the Parish had reported that a full one had been emptied overnight and that in addition she was out of bags. The Clerk looked into the provision and 4000 had been used on the Meadow alone in December/early January. The bags in the other areas seem to last twice as long, albeit these are not attended as often as they are filled by a different person. The Parish Council were now adding a further dispenser to the Old Horse Course estate at residents' requests. The Clerk currently ordered 8000 bags approximately every 2 months at a cost of £1555 approx per year.

It was agreed that an article would be added to the Parish Magazine regarding appropriate use of the bags

It was agreed that a sticker would be purchased for each of the dispensers encouraging appropriate use

It was agreed that if the dispenser was emptied within a couple of days it would not be instantly refilled

It was agreed that the dog fouling sign provision would be investigated and these would be requested to be installed higher if needs be

8. To consider the purchase of a full set of Lengthsman Equipment for use within the Parish

The Clerk reported following recent training, the Parish Council Lengthsman had been informed that the equipment that was being used was not to required standards due to changes in size and amounts. The contract with WCC for the Lengthsman service states that WCC will provide equipment but there was no funding available and limited equipment available, which had been provided to Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council Lengthsman on request. The Clerk had been informed by WCC that the contract would be altered from April and WCC would no longer be providing the equipment. Options to proceed included the Parish Council providing the equipment, which could be difficult when it came to shared services with other Parish Councils, or an expectation that the self-employed Lengthsman would provide his own equipment.

It was agreed that in the future, the Parish Council would expect the Lengthsman to provide their own equipment as they are self-employed and are contracted for services.

9. To discuss Parish Council Gardens and planting including:

9.1 Discussion regarding the Parish Council's contribution to Catshill Growing and Catshill in Bloom

The Clerk had attended a meeting of Catshill Growing, which was the initiative that would lead into Catshill in Bloom. The latter was now being co-ordinated by the Village Hall and the application for funding had been made which included hanging baskets. The Parish Council could already contribute to the Catshill in Bloom portfolio which celebrates what is happening within the Parish. This would include the gardens maintained, the Summer Gardens Competition, the employment of the litter picker and gardener, the wildflower initiative and any decisions made about planters under 'Welcome to Catshill' signs.

It was agreed that the Parish Council were happy to provide the evidence of these activities for the Catshill in Bloom Portfolio.

9.2 Consideration of the quotes received to provide planters under each of the 'Welcome to Catshill Signs' (documents circulated)

The Clerk had provided quotes from Plantscape for two services – purchase of planters and rent of planters to include planting and watering. The Clerk had also provided a quote from Amberol which was for purchase of planters only. Both these companies had been at the Clerks conference.

Singletons and the gardener had also been asked for quotes for planting up planters.

It was agreed that the Clerk would ask for recommendations of the service provided by Plantscape. Also request advice from neighbouring Parishes, such as Lickey and Blackwell and Cofton Hackett.

It was agreed that the decision be requested at the Full Parish Council in February to prevent delay in provision.

9.3 Ivy Cottage Garden redesign

The Clerk suggested that this had the potential to be a big project and that the broad scope of allowing children to design it was possibly not manageable. The Clerk suggested some ideas for the area which the Committee discussed.

The Clerk informed the Committee that, in relation to the raised bed, she had requested a quote from the gardener to compare with the usual from BCC. It didn't seem to be something that Willowbrook offer as a service, but Singletons do.

9.4 Remembrance Garden Poppy Stakes

The Clerk had provided links to examples of some Poppy stakes which she had thought may be a nice addition to the Remembrance garden as some all-round colour and to honour Remembrance. She had also contacted the RBL to ask if they provided these stakes which would then allow a contribution to charity along with the purchase.

It was agreed to purchase metal poppies for the Remembrance Garden

It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged with the gardener to discuss both the design of the Remembrance garden, to include the addition of a gate, a possible path and a site for a Christmas tree and a design for the Ivy Cottage Garden.

10. To appoint lead Councillors to distribute the 30mph speed signs to appropriate areas of the village

It had been previously agreed that Councillors would target areas for the signs that would most benefit from the signs

The Clerk informed the Committee that she had received a few requests from individuals in the Parish for the signs.

It was agreed that the signs would be distributed with the newsmagazines, allowing Councillors to knock on doors. This would include main roads – Stourbridge Road, Golden Cross Lane, Woodrow and Wildmoor Lane

11. Date, time and venue of the next meeting

14th March 2019 at 19:30hrs in Catshill Village Hall Committee Room

The meeting ended at 20:54hrs

Agreed as a true record of the meeting held 24th January 2019

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Chairman, Environment & Highways Committee
Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council