

Environment & Highways Committee

Thursday 10th March 2016, 7.30pm

Catshill Village Hall, Golden Cross Lane, Catshill

Members Present: Cllrs O Sweeting (Chair), M Ball, G Blackmoor, B McEldowney

In Attendance: Clerk R Powell

1. Apologies for absence Cllrs M Shephard and S Webb
2. Declarations of Interest None
3. To consider members' written requests for dispensation None requested
4. Adjournment of meeting for Public Question Time Not required
5. To reconvene to consider approval of minutes of meeting held 03/12/2015

The minutes of the meeting 03/12/2015 were approved and signed

6. Clerk's report to include progress with to include progress with:

6.1 Vulnerable Persons element of Emergency Plan

The Clerk reported that in order to begin the process of the Emergency Plan in relation to the Vulnerable persons list, research had been carried out and information found included the Vulnerable Guidance circulated via email. Although dated 2008 the Clerk found it useful. Following this, contact was made with Sgt Richard Leek at the Police and all the Churches in Catshill to find out if they had a list of vulnerable people and what process would need to be followed in order to access these, if needs be, during an Emergency. The Clerk had received responses from both Catshill Baptist Church and Sgt Richard Leek which were discussed by Members of the Committee. The Committee noted that this was a large project and continued investigations would need delegation to a Councillor interested in taking on the project. Members engaged in discussions around the Emergency Plan including how broad a term and wide ranging 'emergencies' were, the current plans in place at the schools for evacuation to the Village Hall in an emergency, the responsibilities of different organisations in an Emergency, places of refuge within the village, vehicles that could be accessed in an Emergency and the barriers to accessing vulnerable persons lists due to Data Protection. Members were informed that CALC would be investigating the best way of obtaining these lists as all Councils reported this as a stumbling block. Members felt that using the contact details of Parish Councillors in the Emergency plan as a point of contact and including the list of services provided by Sgt Richard Leek would be the best way forward as it was not the Parish Council's responsibility to ring around residents. The need for review of the document was also discussed along with the importance of Parish Council Identification Badges in an Emergency situation.

It was agreed that the Clerk would add an Agenda Item to the Full Parish Council meeting to agree Councillors who would be willing to look further into the Emergency Plan and begin the document.

It was agreed that an article should go into the Parish Newsletter in order to generate some community spirit in regards to the Emergency Plan and enlist any assistance possible in creating it.

6.2 Bus shelter obtained through New Homes Bonus Grant

The Clerk had obtained a revised quote of £3,090 plus VAT which had been forwarded to Matthew Mead, the Senior Engineer at BDC, as requested. The Clerk had also requested an update in relation to the investigations Matthew had agreed to make in regards to the payment of the grant and the next step in the process. As yet, no response had been received despite further contact.

6.3 Obtaining quotes for new Parish Notice Board

The Clerk had carried out calculations and using Greenbarnes Ltd as for the Notice Board at Ivy Cottage would cost approximately £1600 plus VAT. The Clerk informed the Council that other materials were available but this design was the most user friendly of the boards and the one Members had asked to be obtained.

It was agreed that the Clerk would obtain an official quote prior to the next Committee Meeting.

Members discussed the location of the proposed sign.

It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the Catshill Social Club to query positioning of the board within the corner of their land. In addition, enquiries should be made with the Welcome Hall with the view for another board in that location in the future.

6.4 Golden Cross Lane fencing to grass area

The previous Environment and Highways committee had tasked the Clerk with sending letters to residents of Golden Cross Lane affected by parking on the slip road in that location, to gain opinions on how the Parish Council should proceed in alleviating the issue. Since that meeting Worcester County Council had actioned the erection of a low fence along this area using funds/materials left over from another job that can be allocated in the present Financial Year. However, Cllr Sweeting had been receiving complaints regarding the fence and the way it had been installed including the distance from the edge of the verge, the level of the fence and the fact that it does not replace the white posts at the end. Following communications with Worcester County Councillor Sheila Blagg and Highways Officer Richard Clewer, it had become apparent that the fence was not yet complete. The fence would replace the white posts, the distance from the verge was due to a sewer that is positioned there and the level appears to be due to the roots of trees in the area.

6.5 Situation in relation to litter and debris from the brook and grid at Wildmoor Lane and Golden Cross Lane Car Park

The Clerk had been contacted by Cllr Shirley Webb and Fiona McIntosh, Senior Water Management Officer regarding the debris and litter that is pulled from the brook at Golden Cross Lane Car Park and the brook and grid at Wildmoor Lane, which at present is being left on the bank. This means that when it becomes windy or the water level rises it returns to the brook. The Clerk had contacted Allen the Lengthsman who was happy to help and had suggested that two, 2-tonne bags be dropped at the Parish Council Office and that he would use one until full then leave it by the bin on the car park at Golden Cross Lane for collection by the Place Team (Graham Cutler) as per a suggestion by Fiona. However, Graham had stated he was unable to provide such bags and had asked for Allen to contact him so they could discuss the best way forward. The Clerk had facilitated the swapping of information and asked for a report when the situation was sorted but had heard nothing to date.

Members discussed the brook in Church Road and the build up of silt.

It was agreed that the Clerk would find out if Worcester County Council could remove this build up as had happened in previous years.

Members also discussed litter in Catshill and in particular in the alleyway from Golden Cross Lane to Oak road which had a large amount of litter and dog waste present.

It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Worcester County Council and ask which areas their litter picker covered in order to co-ordinate the Parish employed litter picker effectively. Also to ask who picks up the dog waste, where the Parish Council could obtain litter picking equipment from and how to obtain 'no dog fouling' signs for erection.

7. To consider the following:

7.1 Location of signs such as 'no horse riding', 'no bikes' etc within the village as deferred from previous Environment and Highways Committee (minute 15/03-7.1)

Members deferred the discussion of this item to the next Environment and Highways Committee. Members discussed the need for larger signs for 'no litter' and 'no dog fouling' to also be considered in light of the discussions in Agenda Item 6.5.

7.2 Next step in process of purchase of name signs for the Parish, to include location of signs on a map.

The Clerk had identified that the process for obtaining name signs for the Parish was for the Parish Council to identify where the signs were to be located, preferably on a map, before sending this information to traffic management who design the signs and provide the Council with an estimate for manufacture and installation. The Clerk provided a picture of how she believed these signs looked using an example from Bell Heath in the Belbroughton Parish. Members found this sign agreeable and assisted the Clerk with locations for the signs on a map that was projected onto the wall of the Committee Room.

It was agreed that the Clerk would request a quote for the manufacture and installation of 5 signs. Separate quotes should be requested to reflect the possibility of the inclusion of Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council's Logo. The signs should read 'Catshill, in the Parish of Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council'.

It was agreed that the Clerk would find out if there were grants available to pay for projects such as this.

7.3 New Homes Bonus Grant Application for 2016/17 with possible use to obtain an additional bus shelter as part of the rolling programme of installation. Members to also reconsider the location of this shelter.

Cllr S Webb had informed the Council that she is applying for a driveway to allow drive on-drive off facilities which may impede the installation of the bus shelter at the location suggested for the next in the programme, in this area. Cllr Webb had informed the Council merely so it could be noted and still believed there would be sufficient room for a bus shelter but that consideration should be given to her neighbours who already find leaving their drive difficult and the location in proximity to the road junction with Ash Drive. Members considered this and the visual impact on neighbours but felt that as the road was straight in this location there should be no adverse effect.

It was agreed that the Clerk should continue with looking into obtaining a bus shelter from this New Homes Bonus Grant and in addition, if there was facility to include the acquisition of place name signs as per Agenda Item 7.2.

7.4 Lengthsman role in light of new application as per Finance and Staffing Committee (minute 16/02-7.4)

The Clerk informed the Committee that Allen Farnsworth began with the Council in 2010. The contract runs to 31st March 2016 so it was suggested that it was probably too late now to be considering a new Lengthsman for this year but that the contract could go out to tender next year allowing more time to prepare. The Clerk also informed the Committee that the Lengthsman Scheme would continue next year but as yet there was no indication as to the funding amount that would be allocated.

It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the interested applicant and suggest he re-apply next year when the contract would go out to tender.

7.5 Any actions to be added to the draft Council Action Plan for the year

Members considered the Action Plan and suggested the inclusion of the development of the Emergency Plan and development of the website including social media links. Whilst looking at the Action Plan Members requested information in relation to the budget to which the Clerk responded that all expenditure for the Environment and Highways Committee was under budget for this year. There were also discussions regarding the Bonfire night takings which the Clerk was able to inform the committee had almost covered the firework expenditure, was the highest amount received to date and included extra donations from members of the public who had attended.

7.6 The amount and variety of trees to be obtained through the Woodland Trust Free Tree Pack Scheme

Members discussed the information provided.

It was agreed that the Clerk should order 105 trees in the form of the Wildlife Pack which included Oak trees, hawthorn, rowan, blackthorn, silver birch and hazel trees.

8. Members questions

Consider the situation and any action needed in relation to the steps near Miu Miu takeaway

Members discussed the issue which related to the steps being slippery and there being no handrail to facilitate their negotiation.

It was agreed that the Clerk contact the Hilton Hotel Manager in relation to the repair of the handrail.

9. Date, time and venue of the next meeting

To be confirmed at the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May 2016

This meeting ended at 21.04hrs.

Agreed as a true record of the meeting held 10/03/16

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