

Minutes of Park and Environment Committee held “remotely”.

At 7.00 p.m. on the 4th of October 2021.

PRESENT: Councillors: J Slate Chair, P Totterdale, G Bevan, Elwyn Williams, Charlie Evans

1. Apologies : none

Two electors present in addition to Howard Davies Clerk.

2. Declaration of interest - none.

3. The minutes of the meeting held on the 12th of July 2021 were confirmed as a true record (**Minute 1021 – P3**)

4. Clerk advised that he and the Chair had recently met with Clive Jarvis Wicksteed’s Contract Manager on site, and he has now agreed for their supplier to inspect the faulty safety gate, and to repair/replace as necessary to ensure safe ongoing operation. They will also return to attend to repaint the scuffs on the gate if it is not replaced. Additionally, as a gesture of goodwill given the poor service experienced throughout the install and subsequent snagging reporting a further £500 will be taken off the invoice. This will be utilised towards the cost concreting a pad beneath the gate.

Wicksteed have been clearly told of our dissatisfaction with their service, and their invoice would remain unpaid until the Council were satisfied that the work had been completed to an acceptable standard.

In the interim the clerk has placed a post to stop the gate opening beyond 90 degrees, which will stop the gate remaining open until this situation is resolved.

Clerk wished to advise that he was still awaiting a response from Mike Jacob for suggestions on how to alleviate the parking issues being seen at the park entrance, however in the interim had circulated to all Committee members a transcript of recent emails exchanged and pointing out his response about the LA enforcement vehicle which could not be deployed here.

Cllr Elwyn Williams was asked to speak with Mike Jacob to see if matters could be progressed here. (Minute 1021 – 4)

5. Sticle path update

Cllr Bevan advised the working party were still working on this plan. Rachael Carter Nature Officer at One Voice Wales had visited and had provided a report with suggestions on how to improve certain areas of Sticle path which had been circulated to all Councillors. Progress on identifying landowners had been painfully slow, with the “Welsh Office” now saying that whilst the Trunk Road Agency does own certain areas of land adjoining the path, the responsibility for maintaining the fences had been abdicated back to Carmarthen C C. The clerk had forwarded this correspondence onto

to the Council seeking their views and asking for their assistance if it was now their area of responsibility. Response awaited.

6. Cllr Slate provided an update on the hire of the temporary toilet for the park.

Whilst accepting that sourcing a toilet had been extremely challenging this year leading to the toilet not been delivered until 18th August the facility had been well received by park users, especially families with young children. The cleaning has been carried out to Covid Standards by our Cleaner Mrs Diane Evans, and the clerk was able to confirm that not a single complaint had been received about the toilet facility.

It was unamously agreed that the Clerk send a letter of appreciation to Mrs Diane Evans expressing our sincere gratitude for her for excellent service in both cleaning and for opening and closing the toilet facility.

Due to the success of this years initiative all agreed that the facility be provided again next year, and the provision of a temporary toilet again to be placed on the agenda for next April's meeting to finalise arrangements. **(Minute 1021 P6)**

Action point

Clerk to write to Mrs Evans thanking her for her excellent work in keeping the toilet clean, safe and secure.

7 Cllr Slate apologised that due to work pressures, and her fall she had not had the opportunity to complete and source new signage for the park but would now be prioritising this as a matter of urgency.

Action point.

Chair to source appropriate signage ASAP.

8. Clerk advised that he had recently held a meeting with Arwel Price Lighting Engineer CC, where he had advised that drawing power to the park entrance would be extremely costly as it would have to cross the main road, and there were additional problems with high voltage cables already running through this area. However, an alternate site opposite Brynmeurig Stores on the triangular grass verge had merit, and he was going to return with costings to get power to this location.

After a lengthy discussion it was agreed to have a site visit for all Councillors early in 2022 to view this site, along with other suggested sites adjacent to Alun West's house in Tregynnwr, and down by the Aelwyd

Action point

Item to be placed on Christmas Lights Committee feedback meeting to be arranged for January 2022.

9. Clerk confirmed that he written to The Police and Crime Commissioners Office at DPP to ask if there was any funding available to support this project. They in turn have passed it on DPP who now deal with such requests. A response is still awaited.

He is in the process of seeking quotes from two local installers viz Dyfed Alarms and Action Surveillance and would report back once both quotes were to hand.

Action point

Clerk to seek two quotes and to chase up DPP for a response to our recent funding request.

10. Clerk advised that he had met with Neil Director of Sunshine Playgrounds to discuss the malfunctioning safety gate at the Toddler's area, and to view the two tears/burns to the artificial surface.

He advised that the gearing mechanism at the bottom of the gate had become broken which was causing the problem, whereby the gate would not shut properly. As the gate was out of guarantee a new gearing mechanism would be required, and if he could not source this on a standalone basis a new gate would be required.

Regarding the tares, he was confident that his company could carry out the necessary repairs.

We then discussed the need for regular inspections and servicing of all play equipment, as the problem with the gate had been caused by water entering the gearing chamber, which could have been alleviated if a regular maintenance programme was in place.

We explained that we are now looking to put such in place and asked him for a quote as to the cost of providing an inspection and repair contract here, covering all the play equipment ion the park, which he has agreed to do.

Additionally, as we still have not received a quote from Wicksteed for the upgrading of the upper area, of the toddlers play area, we have asked him to quote for the provision of a new playing surface, and to quote for the upgrade of certain play equipment.

It was unanimously agreed to ratify the actions of the clerk. **(Minute 1021 P10)**

11. The provision of an appropriate item to commemorate the local lives lost to the Covid Pandemic was again discussed at length, taking on board the findings of Cllr's Bevans earlier consultation with homeowners who live near, or overlook the memorial site itself at the layby at Llangunnor Cross off LLangunnor Road.

In summary the following key points came out of this consultation.:

He had visited 16 properties, which overlooked the site, where he had met with 9 of the homeowners.

All were broadly supportive of some type of memorial to be placed there, in recognition of those who had lost their lives to Covid.

The vast majority felt that a commemorative stone would not be appropriate seeing a stone as being more “macabre” and a plaque being more appropriate.

All felt that we should give the site more respect, and to help keep it in a clean and tidy condition throughout the year.

There were also suggestions made to develop a wildflower meadow at the site.

Following a long discussion, it was unanimously resolved to

1. We need to take our time to get it right, as there is no urgency as we continue to navigate our way through this Covid pandemic.
2. The provision of a new “Friendship bench” along with an appropriate commemorative plaque had merit.
3. A site meeting to be arranged for April 22 for all Councillors to attend the site, and there after a proposal again to be sought as to the most appropriate way of marking this significant event, which will then be communicated to the residents via our web and Facebook pages seeking their feedback/ suggestions.

Action point

Clerk to diarise for a site visit to be undertaken by full Council members in April 22.

12. It was decided to revisit arrangements for an “open day at the park” in early spring for the Council to engage with park users as to what they want to have out of a visit to the park, and what additional facilities would benefit them, to enhance this experience.

Action point.

Clerk to diarise to place on agenda for full Council meeting scheduled for April 2022.

13. Clerk advised that the biannual tree inspection needed to be completed by 8th January 2022.

He has been in contact with the Tree Consultants, and he had been given 4 dates in December which he had also circulated to the two residents who have properties adjoining the park boundary and who had previously expressed an interest to meet with him to discuss certain concerns that they have with trees growing near to their properties. One resident has already confirmed his acceptance of our offer to meet, whilst the other had been written to, had been given a further 7 days to respond, and if no contact is received then arrangements will be made to meet on the most convenient day.

14. Clerk advised that the handyman had reported that his visual inspections of the playing equipment had identified urgent repairs were required to the following:

1. Areas at the corners of the metal skateboard arena, had become corroded with rust and required strengthening/replacement.
2. The yellow gate at the Toddlers' playing area was again not closing properly and required attention.
3. He had replaced two D rings on the large swing.

Clerk advised that Alan Jones of Star Forge had visited the park to inspect the skateboard area and was in the process of providing an estimate for its repair.

The malfunctioning safety gate had already been dealt with under point 10 and duly minuted.

His actions were ratified by the Committee. **(Minute 1021-P14)**

15. Committee resolved to ask the handyman to again plant daffodils bulbs in the following areas to provide a splash of spring colour for residents and visitors alike.

Both tubs at the entrance to the park

Beneath "Llangunnor signs" on Heol Blaengwastad, and above the Police Station where the flower tubs are placed. (To be placed next year on Heol Blaengwastod)

At the junction of Heol Blaengwastod with Mount Pleasant, adjacent to the redbrick house.

Outside the Aelwyd and near to junction with Brynmeurig Road.

At the road junction turning into Tregynwr.

16. Date of next meeting to be confirmed.

As there was no other business meeting closed at 8,25pm

Signed as true record:

Date: