

Minutes of Park and Environment Committee held “remotely”

At 6.30 p.m. on the 25th July 2023.

PRESENT: Councillors: J Slate Chair, D E Williams, P Totterdale, G Slate, M Williams.

One elector present in addition to Howard Davies Clerk.

1. Apologies: None

2. Declaration of interest – To be recorded during agenda items.

3. Cllr Jenny Slate was unanimously re elected as Chair. **(Minute 07/23 - P3)**

4. The minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd of May 2023 were confirmed as a true record **(Minute 0723-P4)**

5) The Llangunmor Playground Operational Inspection reports for May and June had been delayed, and it was agreed to add them to the Agenda for next September’s meeting. The clerk had received assurances that the reports for May and June had been undertaken, and the delay was done to the company having been exceptionally busy of late, and the secretarial function was running behind. **(Minute 0723 – P5)**

The Chair then wished to deal with item 10 next.

10. A lengthy discussion took place regarding the costs of running and maintaining the park.

The Clerk once again referred all Councillors to an estimate that he had prepared in January for the Council’s total running costs for the financial year 1.4.23 – 31.3.24, and reminded everyone that no budgets had been put in place for any of the committees for this year, as the costs had been prepared on a “what’s already known basis” and were flat with no large capital expenditure included. Suffice to say it is projected to cost £42765 to run the Council this financial year here, if the same levels of service are to be maintained, with any excess expenditure/investment in capital projects to come from cash reserves which stood at £54744.

Within this £9150 had been allocated to the park to cover:

Handyman £1200 i.e., your fixed cost of £97pm

| | |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Additional works | £2000 |
| Toilet Servicing | £750 |
| Monthly Inspection | £1000 |
| Grass cutting | £3300 |
| Purchase of Dog Gloves | £300 |
| Biannual Tree Ins | £600 |
| Total | £9150 |

Spend to end of June – 3 months

| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Handyman basic Park duties | £291 |
| Extra work as directed | £475 |

Specialist Contractors

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Dynevor Trees | £550 |
| Toilet costs | £432 12 services at £36 |
| Grass Cutting | £731.02 Net £609.18 paid quarterly arrears |
| No bill from Dragon | Commenced in Feb at an agreed cost of |
| £75p.m. | yet to be billed to date, |
| Dog Gloves | £ 85.86 - 2 boxes. |
| Total spend to date | £2565 |

Under consideration all plus Vat apart from Dynevor

Repairs to park Equipment to address health safety concerns Dragon Play
£2720

Estimate from Dynevor to cut back branches on the three large Oak Trees near
to the Skateboard Park.

£640. Licence already obtained.

To level spoil recover/trash/reinststate ditch at bottom of park £1440

Estimate from Dragon to replace defective safety gate, paint, and repair other
gate and to resurface grass area at top of play area £12924 of which £6500 will
be covered by grant, the remaining £6500 to come from reserves.

To install CCTV and carry out repairs to the play area would have cost us
£20000, but with a grant of 10k and 3.5k from our 106 monies these two
projects can be completed at a much-reduced cost of £6500.

Obviously, we will have to pay out of Reserves the full amount in the first
instance, before reclaiming the grant and 106 balances.

We have earmarked spending 20k on the playing area to carry out improvements for several years. Subject to agreement of full Council we can at last move these projects forward for the benefit of the Community, at a vastly reduced cost.

Installation of CCTV at an estimated cost of £7000 again fully funded from grant and 106 monies. There is no purchase cost to Council.

Already agreed and proceeding

Electricity connection costs already agreed will be funded from 106 monies held- £3500

Upon completion of the Electric connection our connection fee of £828 and £720 for a pillar will be refunded by National Grid which will cover the ditching, clearance, and levelling of the spoil, which again becomes self-funding at no cost to ourselves.

Chair then returned to the running order of the Agenda and to point 6.

6 For the benefit of the new Councillors the Clerk ran through the costs paid to the handyman.

The job description created in 2018 and appended here for ease of reference, which had been circulated to all Committee members in advance of this meeting.

Job description

Job title: Handyman to Llangunnor Community Council

Reporting to: Llangunnor Community Council

Location: Llangunnor Park and within the Community of Llangunnor

Nature of the job role: To ensure Llangunnor Park is a safe environment for the public to enjoy. Ensure that the assets of the council are kept in good order.

Main Duties:

- A weekly litter pick, litter to be removed from site.
- Wiping down bins and disinfecting every two weeks.
- Wiping down and disinfecting benches/tables April – September – monthly, October – March to check but weather will probably keep them clean and checking that they are safe for use.
- Wiping down and disinfecting gym equipment monthly April – September, October – March to check but weather will probably keep them clean
- Basketball Hoop – ensuring it is kept clean and cutting back branches as and when needed.
- Tarmacked Area (basketball hoop / skateboard area) – ensuring that area is swept periodically, including cutting back branches as and when needed.
- Ensuring ‘playwall’ is well maintained and painted annually.
- Ensuring that where possible weeds are kept under control and paths are kept clear of leaves etc.
- General maintenance of community assets e.g., seats, noticeboards, cutting back hedgerows as and when necessary.
- The Council is in discussion with CCC in respect of taking over the maintenance of public rights of way in the Tregynnwr area – this may become part of this job description in due course.
- **Hours of work:** To be discussed.
- **Rate of Pay:** To be discussed.

June 2018.

£97 per month has been paid to the handyman for the past 4 years and prior to this he was paid £75 per month for his services. The increase was due to our insistence that he took out his own Public Liability cover, a copy of which we retain on file.

For £97 per month, he undertakes the following work on a weekly basis.

- 1.Undertakes a litter pick of the park for 1 hour per week, and disposes of the rubbish,
2. Checks on and replenishes the Dog Glove bags.
3. Walks the park and carries out a visual inspection reporting anything untoward to the Clerk.

The level of payment was agreed by the Council at least 4 years ago from my research and has not changed.

Any work outside this and contained within the job description is chargeable, at his currently hourly rate of £22p.h. Worth mentioning he does not charge a call out fee, neither does he charge mileage. A time sheet is produced for all work undertaken, and a detailed breakdown is included on his invoice, which is transferred across to our monthly accounts falling for payment.

Worth noting

The park is well maintained with no litter issues, with dog fouling well under control, and regular compliments received for the cleanliness and tidiness seen within the park, with minimal complaints received which is down to our handyman.

If we look at a weekly cost of £25 per week, this is good value when compared to the cost of hiring in people to undertake the work that Emrys undertakes for us in a dedicated and diligent manner. Emrys is competent and can turn his hand to most things, negating the need to call in more expensive trades. A comparison sheet of hourly costs of various tradespeople has been shared with you for comparison purposes where hourly rates are much more expensive, some of which have call out fees. Adrian Lloyds Ops Manager at Carmarthen Town Council confirms we received good value for money with Emrys.

In the spirit of cost control, and to facilitate ease of park management it was unanimously agreed to give the Clerk authority to instruct the handyman to carry out essential works to the value of £250 without having to refer back to full Council. Any health and safety issues to be left to the common sense of the Clerk who will refer as necessary. (Minute 0723 -P6)

7. Clerk advised the Committee of the broad details of the grass cutting contract for the park. Carms C C were to come back with the finer detail of what was covered and when it was up for renewal. The net cost of the contract for 23/24 will be £2558.56, and there is a yearly increase built in. Last year's cost was £2436.72.

8. The Chair advised that due to work pressures and time taking up in leading the preparations for the successful Fun Run and Party in the Park had taken up much of her time of late, had prevented her for attending to the new signage.

Cllr Graham Slate offered to help with this task, and an update on progress be provided at our September meeting.

9. A quote for £2720 plus VAT from Dragon Play to carry out essential repairs, to replace missing bolts, caps etc to park equipment and to construct infill panels to prevent children falling from the above the pipe tunnel onto the floor, to address Health and Safety concerns as all these items are being reported on our monthly inspection reports on a regular basis, was discussed at length,

Given the length of time some of these repairs have outstood, allied to H & S concerns it was unanimously decided to "bite the bullet" and to recommend to Full Council next month that we get all the outstanding works completed at the same time, with funds to come from our cash Reserves. (Minute 0723 – P9)

11. Two quotes from Dynevor Trees were received in the sum of £640 to cut back branches on the Oak Trees near the Skateboard park, and the second to clear undergrowth from the ditch, reform ditch and to level spoil heap £1440 including fuel with no Vat.

The merits of carrying out the work was discussed at length, and again needs to be undertaken for health and safety reasons as water was ponding in this area, and water flow through the ditch was poor, leading to complaints from the adjoining houses that we were adding to their drainage issues a point that we have refuted as from local knowledge these houses at Lewis Morris which adjoin the park were built on very wet land in the first place. It will also improve the drainage on our side of the park, thus ensuring that surface water running off the park disperses quickly into existing drains, and with the ditch cleaned out, water will flow and disperse much quicker, into a land drain that was put in by the Community Council some years ago running behind the bungalows which empties into the local surface water drainage system. This

will also demonstrate to the adjoining homeowners, that we are seen to be considerate tenants of the Park and have taken their comments on board by putting a plan in place to help disperse the water away from their properties, during periods of heavy rain.

The clerk pointed out that the refund due from National Grid on the completion of the electricity connection of circa £1550 would fully cover this work.

It was unanimously agreed to recommend acceptance of both quotes to our September meeting of full Council. **(Minute 0723 -P11)**

12. The installation of CCTV was again discussed, where Full Council agreed to adopt our recommendation at our June meeting **(Minute 0623- 6i)** subject to:

- i) Full funding in place.
- ii) Compliance with current Data Protection requirements.
- iii) Planning permission to be obtained.

With funding and a draft Data Protection Policy in place and ready for adoption, all that now remains is to engage a planning Consultant to apply for planning. Llew Thomas Clerk to Gorslas CC has recommended that we use liam@lwdesign.studio who successfully applied and obtained planning permission for three installations for them installed by Dyfed Alarms.

Clerk was instructed to obtain a quote for his costs, that could be presented to our September meeting for approval to get this project moving. (Minute 0723 – 12)

He will also try and get a representative of Dyfed Alarms along to our September meeting.

13. A quote from Dragon Play in the sum of £12924 for the repair to one safety gate, and replacement of the other, along with replacing the grassed areas of the upper play area with a bonded mulch was discussed at length and it was unanimously agreed to recommend acceptance to full Council at our September meeting. **(Minute 0723- P13)**

In reaching the decision alternative quotes for considered from Sunshine Playgrounds at £14800 and Sovereign at £28188, and Touchline £12720 to

replace the grass only. It was decided not to proceed with Sunshine due to previous poor experience of dealing with them, Sovereign due to cost, and Dragon offered better value over Touchline as a new gate was being installed and the other repaired within Dragon's price and would be extra with Touchline.

Date of next meeting Tuesday 7th November 2023 to be held remotely.

As there was no other business meeting closed at 8.15 pm

Signed as true record:

Date: