

**GREAT CORNARD PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Meeting of the **ART, SPORT & LEISURE COMMITTEE**

held in The Stevenson Centre at 7.15pm on Monday 27th June 2022

**Present:** Councillors M D Newman **Chairman**

 Mrs C J Baker Mrs M Bark A C Bavington T J Keane

S M Sheridan Mrs T E A Welsh Mrs J Wilson C G Wright

D Young

Council Manager Mrs N C Tamlyn

Council Administrator Miss E Skuce

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

 No apologies were received.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

Councillor Bavington declared a non-pecuniary interest in any matter relating to Thomas Gainsborough School as he volunteers at the school and a family member is employed by the Trust.

Councillor Young declared a non-pecuniary interest in any matter relating to Thomas Gainsborough School as he and a family member are employed by the Trust.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

**NONE.**

**4. ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – FOR NOTING**

Members reviewed and **NOTED** the Items Brought Forward List.

The Chairman advised Members that he had invited Councillor Mrs Welsh onto the Recreation Provision Working Party as she had been organising the involvement of local children with the Consultation for new play equipment at the recreation ground. **NOTED.**

**5. CORRESPONDENCE**

1. **Cornard Resident: Memorial Plaque at the Country Park**

Members reviewed a letter from a local resident in relation to installing a commemorative plaque at The Country Park in memory of Mick Cornish who sadly passed away in 2020. Members discussed the fact that Mr Cornish had been heavily involved with the creation of the Country Park and that a plaque was a good idea. It was suggested by the Chairman that it could possibly be located at the main entrance on Blackhouse Lane underneath the original Country Park sign which would also need to be refurbished.

It was **AGREED** for the Council Manager to liaise with the local resident regarding the location and suitable wording as well as arrange a quotation to refurbish the sign and bring the matter back to the Committee.

1. **Cornard Resident: Concerns regarding protected species in the Country Park**

Members reviewed correspondence from a local resident which raised concerns over the safety of the badgers currently residing at the Country Park. The resident was concerned that the badger setts had been disturbed and vandalised.

Councillor Mrs Bark stated that she and Councillor Wright had attended the SCLC Trustees inspection of the Country Park. The group had discussed the issues in the area of the badger setts and the Ranger had mentioned that the ground there was ideal for building ramps as it was soft. It was felt that those responsible for building the ramps and fires probably didn’t care that there were badger setts in the area and in fact the badgers were getting in the way and a nuisance to them.

Members agreed that educating the local children was probably the best way of preventing issues like this continuing. It was suggested the local resident, Sudbury Common Lands Charity and the Wildlife Officer at Suffolk Constabulary could give talks at the local schools. The talks would hopefully not only highlight the fact that the badgers were not to be disturbed but also the dangers to the children when they are building ramps, lighting fires and possibly coming into contact with the badgers themselves.

Members **AGREED** for the Council Manager to contact the Police first and report their views back to the Council.

1. **Cornard Resident: Gainsborough Trail Interpretation Board in the Country Park**

Members reviewed correspondence from a local resident who had raised issues with the wording on the newly installed Interpretation Board, in relation to barn owls. With the Council’s permission, the local resident had placed black tape over the wording while suitable alternative wording was agreed.

The Chairman informed Members that the amended wording, “It is home to Common Lizards and at dusk Barn Owls can be seen” had been suggested as an alternative. Unfortunately, the officer who designed the boards originally has left the County Council and the Green Access Manager is in the process of locating the original art work so that it can be amended.

A Member commented that the wording in relation to Danes Hole was historically inaccurate and suggested it be amended.

The Council Manager advised that the Council had originally approved expenditure of £900 for the Interpretation Boards and the invoice had now been received for £570 plus VAT which included a stand and plinth, leaving a sum of £330. It was anticipated that an amended Board would cost less than £570 plus VAT but the Council Manager would confirm this once the information had been received from the County Council.

Members agreed to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council for the Chairman to approve the amended wording and agree reasonable costings over and above that which the Council had already approved.

Funds for the amended Board would come from the Recreation Budget.

1. **Cadent Gas: Proposed valve works at Shawlands Wood LNR**

Members reviewed correspondence from Cadent Gas which advised that they were currently undertaking valve remediation/upgrade programme across East Anglia and as part of those works, they were asking for the Parish Council’s permission to access some pipeline valves located in Shawlands Wood LNR.

Cadent Gas had reassured the Council Manager that they would finish the valve remediation works with a layer of gravel supported by wooden boarding to ensure future low maintenance.

Members **AGREED** to give Cadent Gas permission to carry out the works on the understanding that they leave the ground in the condition described above.

**6. TO RECEIVE THE NOTES FROM THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD AT SHAWLANDS WOOD LNR**

Members reviewed and **NOTED** the notes from the meeting held on the 21st April 2022, which had been provided by the Council Manager **(see Appendix A)**. Members discussed the recommendations and agreed the following actions:-

1. To consider the installation of a dog and/or litter bin in the pit area.

Members agreed that a bin was a good idea and **AGREED** for the Council Manager to obtain costings and further details on how the bin would be emptied, given that it would be located further than 45 meters from the highway.

1. To consider appropriate signage/information boards.

Members agreed that signage would only alert people to the fact that there were protected species within the woods.

1. To work with the Police regarding any anti-social behaviour.

The Council Manager advised that this work was ongoing and the Parish Council received regular visits from the local PSCO. Any incidents of anti-social behaviour and/or vandalism were also being reported to the Police.

1. To instruct Sudbury Common Lands Charity to carry out a tree management survey with a view to recommending a programme of works to thin out the trees.

Members **AGREED** for the Council Manager to instruct Sudbury Common Lands Charity to carry out a tree management survey.

1. To request a quotation from Sudbury Common Lands Charity to extend the fencing at the entrance opposite Maldon Court.

Members **AGREED** for the Council Manager to request a quotation from Sudbury Common Lands Charity.

**Meeting closed at 7:42pm**

**APPENDIX A**

Notes from the Public Meeting held at Shawlands Wood on Thursday 21st April at 2pm

Attendees:

Councillors Mark Newman, Tony Bavington, Pam White, Tracey Welsh and

Colin Wright

Council Manager Nadine Tamlyn

Community Wardens Bradley Smith, Ben Mason and Evie Andrews

Sudbury Common Land Charity Nick Shimwell, Ranger

Members of the Public Ernest Stannard, Scott Stannard, Ann Duke, Yasmeen Ashrat,

Rayner Byham and David (surname unknown)

Apologies Marion Gray – Teacher Pot Kiln School

Attendees walked around the Woods and made the following observations:

* The area adjacent to the entrance opposite Poplar Road was known to have Common Lizards and Grass Snakes but numbers appear to have dwindled in recent years;
* Dog fouling is known to be a problem throughout the Wood;
* It was suggested that an additional bin in the area of the pit would be beneficial. Attendees were made aware of the logistical problem of emptying bins more than 45 metres from the Highway;
* Members of the public raised concerns about obstacles being placed in areas used by push bikes which is extremely dangerous;
* A member of the public raised concerns about the protected species and the impact anti-social behaviour such as lighting fires, cutting down trees was having on the wildlife;
* It was generally felt that some areas of the Wood would benefit from being thinned out and that a large number of the trees are now covered in ivy;
* SCLC highlighted that the fence opposite the Maldon Court entrance would benefit from being extended to stop motorbikes accessing the Wood;
* It was noted that Pot Kiln School would like to resume holding Forest School lessons in the woods and intended to contact the Parish Council regarding the matter.

**Recommendations:**

1. To consider the installation of a dog and/or litter bin in the pit area which would require a two stage process for emptying; firstly by the Community Wardens and secondly by BDC;
2. To consider appropriate signage/information boards which should focus on the desirable characteristics of the Wood and educate people on the wildlife and promote the Wood’s LNR status;
3. To work with the Police to also include information on anti-social behaviour such as cutting down trees, digging holes, lighting fires etc;
4. To instruct SCLC to carry out a tree management survey with a view to recommending a programme of works to thin out the trees;
5. To request a quotation from SCLC to extend the fencing on the entrance opposite Maldon Court.