HEDGE END TOWN COUNCIL – MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD 9 OCTOBER 2024

Cllrs present: Cllr Margaret Allingham, Cllr Paul Carnell, Cllr John Jupe, Cllr Derek Pretty, Cllr Jane Welsh (Chair)

In attendance: Brett Athow – Operations Manager

R510 Apologies: None received

R511 Minutes and Matters arising

To agree the minutes of the meeting of the 11 September 2024 and signed by the Chair as a true and correct record.

Matters Arising

The Operations Manager updated councillors that Snowdrop Place Care Home has emailed to say they will cover the cost of replacing the pads if they use the defibrillator in future.

R512 Correspondence

i) For noting – Fireworks Event Update. An update was provided from the organisers to say that sadly they would not be able to run the event this year due to poor health and escalating costs. Cllr Jane Welsh recommended sending a letter to Mr Burnett to wish him well. **RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed to write to Mr Burnett.**

R513 Cemetery

Councillors considered the previously circulated report proposing that certain trees along the northern boundary are removed to promote health and growth of the remaining trees. Councillors discussed that it was always a pity to remove trees, but these large growing species were too densely planted with no room to grow. **RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed to the proposed treework.**

R514 Dowds Farm Play Area

Councillors considered the previously circulated report proposing the installation of safety surfacing around the roundabout unit. This unit was identified by RoSPA as the ground has suffered erosion and is medium risk. The existing soil and matting is cost effective in the short term but offers no longevity and resilience to future issues. Councillors said they were keen that this work is carried out as soon as possible. **RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed to the resurfacing of the roundabout and to use the funding available in the play area capital budget.**

R515 Norman Rodway Pitch Maintenance

Councillors considered the previously circulated report proposing the pitch maintenance works at Norman Rodaway as part of the Football Foundation Grant. The total grant funding available for this season is £7,464.
RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed to the contracted works at Norman Rodaway.

R516 Norman Rodway Recycling Compound

Councillors considered the previously circulated report outlining the issues with the recycling compound at Norman Rodaway. The glass bins have been removed by EBC, however there remains a high level of fly tipping and overflowing bins which requires additional Council staff time to clear the site. No Fly Tipping signs were installed, and these have since been vandalised. Cllr Derek Pretty said the area was an eyesore and was a drain on the Council's resources having to continually clear it up, with health and safety implications as it was impossible to know what was inside the bags.
The Operations Manager said that the Salvation Army were collecting the recycling at least once a week, but the bins were still overflowing. Councillors discussed that it might be easier for the Salvation Army to manage the recycling if the bin was in their own car park at White's Way. **RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed to remove the recycling bins.**

R517 Lock Road Play Area

Councillors considered the previously circulated report outlining the successful funding bid from HEWEB for a replacement play area. Councillors were asked to consider the following points:

- What type of play facility was required, LEAP or alternative. Cllrs recommended that this play area should remain a LEAP.

- To consider what size area was required as a minimum. Cllrs agreed to wait until the outcome of the public consultation before making a recommendation.

- To consider the option to move the play area to the adjacent EBC land. This area could enable an increase in the equipment as there would be a reduction in the surfacing and fencing costs. Councillors considered how moving the play area may impact nearby residents. They discussed how the existing play area gets very wet in the winter and the adjacent site would have better drainage as it is higher ground, but they would like to hear the views of those living locally. Cllrs agreed that they would wait for the outcome of the public consultation before exploring whether to move the play area.

- To consider minimum requirements for play facility and age range. Cllrs agreed they would wait for the outcome of the public consultation before considering equipment.

- To agree the draft timeline. Cllrs agreed the timeline.

- To agree when to consult and who to consult. Councillors were happy with the draft public consultation. They agreed that letters should also be sent to those nearby residents most likely to be impacted if the play area was moved to the adjacent site. **RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed to the public consultation going ahead and to wait for the outcome before making recommendations on the play area equipment, size and location. Letters will also be sent to those residents closest to the potential alternative location.**

R518 Operations Manager Report

The report contained the following updates:

- Albert Road Cemetery
- Allotments
- Conservation Volunteers
- Cricket & Football
- Graffiti & Vandalism.
- Local Nature Reserve
- General Updates

Cllr John Jupe noted it was a very good report. Cllr Jane Welsh said that it was dreadful to see offensive graffiti on play equipment and to hear that Council staff had been confronted by youths. Cllr Derek Pretty said they had discussed at the recent Policy and Resources Committee supplying some members of staff with bodycams for protection. The Operations Manager said all threats to staff were reported to the Police.

Cllr Paul Carnell said it was disappointing that the Shirley Tornadoes were no longer hiring the pitch at Berrywood Fields. The Operations Manager confirmed the Council were hopeful a replacement will be found.

There being no further business to conduct the meeting closed at 7.32pm.