



Minutes of the Caistor Town Council Estates Committee held at 7:00pm at the Arts & Heritage Centre on 23 January 2024

Present: Cllr J. Wright, Cllr M. Galligan, Cllr S. Hodson (Chair),
In Attendance: Michelle Moss, Cllr L. Milner, Cllr A. Clark, Kim Hodson,
Members of public present: 0

- 1. To resolve to accept apologies for absence and reasons given - Ref: 2661**
Apologies received from Cllrs Davey and Richardson
Cllr Hodson was voted to Chair the meeting in the absence of Cllr Davey.
- 2. To receive declarations of interest and requests for dispensations in relation to agenda items and to consider granting requests for dispensations - Ref: 2662**
None
- 3. Public participation - 10 minutes - items raised which are not on the agenda will be referred to a later meeting, if appropriate - Ref: 2663**
None
- 4. To approve the draft minutes of the Estates Committee meeting on 24.10.2023 - Ref: 2664**
RESOLVED that the draft minutes of the meeting held on 24th October 2023 be approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.
Proposed: Cllr J. Wright Seconder: Cllr M. Galligan All in favour
- 5. Allotments - Ref: 2665**
 - a) To review the fees charged for the allotments and agree any changes or action - Ref: 2666**
It was noted that the current rate for all plots is £30.
RESOLVED to keep the rent at the same level for 24/25.
Proposed: Cllr J. Wright Seconder: Cllr M. Galligan All in favour
 - b) Plot 6 surrendered - Review and agree action - Ref: 2667**
It was noted that: the tenant for plot 6 has decided that the plot is too large for him to manage and he would like to surrender half of the plot; the plot can easily be divided in half as there is a grassed path which runs across the plot; the current tenant would like to retain the half furthest from the gate.
RESOLVED to split the plot into 6a and 6b with the current tenant taking plot 6b and 6a being let to the next person on the waiting list.
Proposed: Cllr M. Galligan Seconder: Cllr J. Wright All in favour
 - c) Plot 14 surrendered - Review and agree action - Ref: 2668**
It was noted that: the tenant for plot 14 has surrendered the plot; the tenant had started work on the plot and cleared most of it so it is in a good enough state to relet without any additional work.
RESOLVED to let it to the next person on the waiting list.
Proposed: Cllr M. Galligan Seconder: Cllr J. Wright All in favour
 - d) Review request from plot holder to review and reinstate paths - Ref: 2669**
It was noted that: the main paths between the plots are uneven in places; the levels are different across the entire allotment site leading to some uneven ground.
RESOLVED that Cllr Hodson would take a look at the paths and report back to the estates committee possible ways to improve the paths.
Proposed: Cllr S. Hodson Seconder: Cllr J. Wright All in favour
- 6. Play areas - Ref: 2670**
 - a) To review the Play Inspection report and agree any action - Ref: 2671**
It was noted that: whilst there were no high risk areas reported, there are 8 areas reported as moderate risk

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which need addressing as soon as possible, including replacement chains/shackles, rotting timber on the wooden equipment; there are also many lower level issues reported such as missing caps, graffiti, moss/algae, soft pour shrinking, subsiding and breaking up; the inspector suggested that some of the wooden equipment had a remaining life span iro 1-3 years; Kim Hodson had sprayed most of the play areas with algae removal and would start to clear the algae and moss next week; it is also on the agenda to purchase a power washer to help remove the moss/algae.

RESOLVED

a. to purchase the replacement parts necessary to address the moderate issues as budget permits, early in the new financial year;

b. to form a working group to address the longer term issues with the play areas including polling residents for their views and fundraising to replace some of the worn equipment. Working group members agreed as Cllrs Hodson, Galligan, Wright, Milner and Clark (to be approved at the next Full council meeting).

Proposed: Cllr M. Galligan Seconder: Cllr J. Wright All in favour

b) To consider the need for play inspection software, consider the quotes and agree next steps - Ref: 2672

It was noted that: the inspections are currently completed using paper checklists which is out dated and difficult to assess trends/analyse data; several companies offer software solutions for play equipment inspection and maintenance; 3 quotes had been sought including one from Edge IT who provide the cemetery management software program; Edge IT will provide the tablet (which can also be used for memorial management), inspection program on an annual contract (£177.70pa), set up and training for a total of £653.20 (ex VAT). RESOLVED to ask Edge IT to arrange a demo with a view to taking the service from April. Final decision to be made after the demo.

Proposed: Cllr M. Galligan Seconder: Cllr J. Wright All in favour

c. To agree to purchase the petrol powered pressure washer to clear alage and moss from play areas (quotes to be shared by SD/SH) - Ref: 2673

Quotes were shared for 4 petrol washers, light commercial. Consideration was given to suitability, portability, price, and after sales care. The most favourable washer was from Idro, but the price exceeded the allocated budget. It was noted that CIB have a petrol pressure washer in the fire station and have offered use of it if it is suitable, but there were questions over its condition. Cllr Galligan agreed to the use of CIB bowser, and agreed that he would be willing to transport the power washer and bowser to the parks for Kim to complete the jobs. RESOLVED to go back to Idro and try to negotiate the price and assess whether the one from CIB would be suitable before agreeing on a purchase.

Proposed: Cllr S. Hodson Seconder: Cllr J. Wright All in favour

7. Grass Cutting - To review the quotes and agree next steps for 2024 contract - Ref: 2674

It was noted that: 3 quotes had been received from contractors and summarised into a spreadsheet; last years contractor for the parks and amenity grass had done a great job and his quote came in within budget, but his quote included a statement about the perimeters of the parks requiring specialist equipment which he doesn't have; Kim has been strimming the perimeters over winter with a standard strimmer; last years contractor for the churchyards had completed a great job but had not submitted a quote; Kim has cut the cemetery in previous years, but has time constraints which mean he has to cut it over several days/weeks resulting in a few complaints; it would be useful to free up some of Kims time so that he can give attention to some other necessary estates work; all quotes for the cemetery and churchyards have come in over budget and were significantly higher than last years contractor.

RESOLVED

a. to appoint Dyne Group to cut the parks and amenity grass for the 2024 season, but to ensure the park perimeters will be strimmmed as necessary;

b. to contact the contractor who completed the churchyards last year and ask if he is prepared to cut them again this year for a similar price;

c.to organise an additional meeting to agree a solution for the churchyard and cemetery cutting.

Proposed: Cllr S. Hodson Seconder: Cllr M. Galligan All in favour

8. To consider the service schedules for electrical feeder pillars and agree any action - Ref: 2675

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It was noted that an electrical installation condition report is completed every 5 years for the electrical feeder pillars, but there is no interim schedule for checking; service schedule suggests interim maintenance/checks should be completed by the end user/qualified professional; there are currently no guidelines for end users and use is not currently supervised.

RESOLVED

- a. to get quotes for annual test, lubrication and visual inspection;
- b. to draft a policy for use of the feeder pillars.

Proposed: Cllr S. Hodson Seconder: Cllr J. Wright All in favour

9. To review the requirement for annual PAT testing in office and any estates equipment and agree next steps - Ref: 2676

It was noted that: there are several items in the council office which require PAT testing; estates do not use any electrical items; the town hall committee have their electrical items tested annually.

RESOLVED to approach the town hall committee and ask for the council office items to be included as part of the hall PAT testing.

Proposed: Cllr J. Wright Seconder: Cllr S. Hodson All in favour

10. To agree the requirement, date and format of the next Councillor town walkabout - Ref: 2677

It was agreed that a quarterly walk about would be useful, with an itinerary. It was agreed that Cllrs Hodson, Galligan and Wright would co-ordinate this with the next walkabout being planned for March.

11. Update from EO on agreed list of Winter jobs and agree any additional jobs required - Ref: 2678

Kim noted that he has made progress on the agreed list of jobs, including - bench repair completed; replacement bench installed at sports field; edging in the cemetery completed; vegetation cut back in Millfields beck; most play areas have been sprayed for algae and now need clearing; started cutting the brambles in cherry valley; progress is being made with the hedge at the cemetery, but clearing the cuttings is difficult; SH has agreed to clean the mowers.

It was noted that there is often broken glass at the play areas and agreed to add this as an agenda item for discussion at the next estates meeting.

Kim was asked to include cleaning up the signs/bins around the town to smarten up the appearance.

12. Review the comments from the IA regarding Estates employee/RA's and agree any action - Ref: 2679

It was noted that: the internal auditor had identified that risk assessments should be in place for all estates activities and that lone working practices should also be in place; the clerk has drafted and shared risk assessments for most of Kims jobs, but a RA is needed for knapsack spraying and will be needed for use of the pressure washer when it is purchased; Lone working was considered at a meeting in September; Kim has a first aid kit, including eye wash; he prefers to use his own phone rather than have a CTC phone; has sufficient contact numbers for clerk and councillors and does not feel he needs any additional support.

13. Review and agree action and date to clear out Southdale, lock ups and fire station - Ref: 2680

It was noted that: WLDC have asked for all council equipment to be removed from Southdale by end Feb; Cllrs Hodson, Wright Clark, the clerk and Rob Turner from Caistor Goes/Lions had been to the storage at Southdale, the lock up on sports field and the old fire station and assessed what was stored; at full council meeting on 11th Jan Estates committee were asked to organise clearing out the unwanted equipment and making best use of space available.

It was agreed to meet on Saturday 17th Feb at 9am to clear out unnecessary/unused/broken equipment from all 3 storage areas and to remove any items there is not room for to a secure outbuilding at Cllr Daveys farm until a longer term solution can be arranged. Rob Turner to be invited. Inventory list to be updated with what CTC equipment has been written off or relocated. Cllrs Hodson, Wright, Galligan, Clark and Milner agreed to attend.

14. Date of next meeting - Ref: 2681

Next meeting scheduled for 26th March 2024, but it was noted that an additional meeting may be required to finalise the grass cutting contract.

Meeting closed at 9:10pm

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