

CROFT PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
HELD AT 7.30 PM ON TUESDAY 21st JULY 2020
ON THE ONLINE MEETING PLATFORM ZOOM

Present: Councillor Partington (Chair)
Councillors, Allen MBE, Bland MBE, Cummerson, Partington,
Griffiths.
Borough Councillor Grime

Apologies: Borough Councillor Davidson, PCSO, Cllr Thewsey

2021/71 Code of Conduct – Declarations of Interest.
None declared

2021/72 Minutes of the Meeting held 23rd June 2020
Resolved
Approved

2021/73 Matters arising from the minutes
2021/49 Fly Tipping: The signage has now been provided to the land owner and the final location for placement has been agreed. Erection expected to take place imminently.
2021/22 Dogs on playing field: Permanent signage has now been secured to all entrances of the Playing Field advising that dogs are not permitted.
2021/70 Heath Lane Speed Signs: WBC have sent an email to the company providing the signs but have yet to receive a response. Until a response is provided from the company, WBC are unable to approach any other providers.
2021/50 Parkside: Cllr Allen informed members that at the joint meeting with Peter Black it was decided to not request a rule 6 as to request rule 6 meant that there was the potential for the Parish Council to be liable for legal action in the future.
Resolved.
Members agreed not to proceed with Rule 6.

2021/74 Covid 19 – Playing Field.
Following the Government announcement on 28th June that play areas could be reopened on the 4th July, a risk assessment was conducted based on the guidance provided by MHCLG. At the time, it was found that the Parish Council could not meet the guidance that had been provided by MHCLG and Members agreed via email that the Playing Field Play Area should remain closed. The Clerk asked members to confirm that decision and approve the initial risk assessment.
Resolved
Approved.

The Clerk informed members that on the 7th July WBC provided a statement confirming how they would be addressing some of the logistical issues posed by the reopening of their play facilities. These plans were in line with plans that had been circulated by other councils nationally. Members were also informed that members of the public had been repeatedly removing the hazard tape and 'closed' signs and allowing their children to use the play equipment. Members were asked for their suggestions for how the play area should be managed.

Resolved.

That the hazard tape be removed from equipment and signage matching that of WBC be erected to inform that anyone wishing to use the play equipment is doing so at their own risk.

That the caretaker be instructed to clean the equipment at the beginning of his shift every day.

The Clerk also informed members that an independent safety survey had taken place of the play area that had found there to be little or no risk on all pieces of equipment, with the exception of the helter-skelter slide, which was classed as moderate risk. As a result of these findings, the report advised that the slide be repaired or replaced. The Clerk sought a second opinion from a metal worker who reported that while there were some instances of rust on the slide, actions could be taken to resolve this easily and that overall the slide was very robust. A painter was also consulted, who found that there was rust present, but that it could be easily remedied with a rub down and the application of rust treatment. The condition of the soft pour flooring was also highlighted in the report as needing some attention although this was not deemed to be a risk. The Clerk reminded members that the soft pour was repaired within the last 2 years and is already in need of attention. Quotes have been sought from 3 companies to repair the soft pour but no response has been received. The Clerk provided members with details of a product called Eco Surface which is very durable, comes with a 5 year guarantee and also meets the safety criteria needed for play area flooring. The cost of this product is £80 per square metre, due to the size of the area needing attention, 3 quotes would need to be sought, however the Clerk has struggled to get a response from any other company.

Resolved.

That the Clerk get full quotes for the works needed for both the slide and the soft pour flooring.

That the helter-skelter slide remains closed until repair works have taken place.

2020/75 Police Report.

The PCSO for Croft has informed The Clerk that as he does not have access to a vehicle he is unable to come to the Croft area frequently. The Clerk has raised the issue of speeding on Heath Lane, the PCSO has informed that he will arrange for speeding checks to place.

Members suggested that the Police hold open surgeries in Croft, similar to those they hold in Culcheth. Members also suggested

that the Police Commissioner be contacted to raise the point that Croft does not get a fair representation.

Resolved.

That the Clerk asks for open surgeries to be held in Croft.

That the Clerk contacts the Police Commissioner.

2020/76 Correspondence was noted

2020/77 Flowers.

A resident contacted the Clerk asking if it would be possible to have displays of flowers on the entry routes in to the area.

Members discussed how historically hanging baskets had been in place, but these were removed as WBC required risk assessments for each basket and the associated fees were deemed too high.

The Parish Council is only responsible for 2 plots of land within the Parish and both of these plots do have planters on them at present.

Resolved

That the Clerk contact the Memorial Hall to suggest plants are placed at the front of the building and that the Parish Council will make a donation for this.

2020/78 Playing Field Trees.

The Clerk spoke to members about the need to have the trees on the Playing Field inspected regularly in order to avoid negligence and ensure the safety of users. He also informed members that a resident had been in contact to inform that there were branches from a tree on the Playing Field touching their roof and overhanging into their garden.

Resolved.

That the Clerk arrange an arboreal inspection every 18 months.

That the Clerk arrange for the branches touching the roof of the residents' property be removed.

2020/79 J11 Service Station.

Notes from the meeting with Peter Black were circulated to members.

Resolved.

That the report has official approval and should be submitted.

2020/80 Christmas Lights

In order for the lights ceremony to take place, an application form needs to be submitted to WBC no later than 12 weeks before the event is due to take place. The potential Covid impacts on the Christmas Lights ceremony were discussed, including considerations that would need to be made around track and trace, enforcing social distancing and the number of volunteers needed to safely manage the event. Consideration was also made that at present, organised gatherings of more than 30 people are still not permitted.

Resolved.

That the Christmas lights be erected and switched on, but with no public ceremony.

2020/81 Recess

The Clerk requested that members approve that during the Summer recess, decisions requiring approval be delegated to the Chair and Vice Chair with formal ratification taking place at the next meeting. Members expressed that they would like to return to 'face to face' meetings as soon as is practicable.

Resolved.

Approved.

2020/82 Investment Strategy

Investments by the Parish Council are conducted in line with advice provided by the Government and by Governing bodies. The Parish Councils investments meet all objectives of this guidance.

Members reviewed the document and requested that the pre-amble be amended to explain that the policy is regarding the safeguarding of funds rather than the investment of funds. The Clerk requested that members approved the formalisation of the investment strategy and that amendments to the pre-amble would be made.

Resolved.

Approved.

2020/83 Financial Reports.

The Clerk informed members that issues with the bank statements persist and are being investigated by the Natwest. The financial report up to the end of May 2020 showed an underspend of £4,153.01 against budget. The May creditors list of £3,538.60 was presented as were the cheques for July, which came to £4,586.70.

Resolved.

Approved.

Planning Applications.

Cllr Grime left the meeting before any planning applications were discussed.

2020/84 2020/37359 116 Heath Lane, WA3 7DS

Householder – Proposed first floor rear extension.

There was no opportunity for comment.

2020/85 2020/37332 10 Main Lane, WA3 7EE

Full Planning – Removal of existing dwelling replaced with 1 ½ storey dwelling with associated landscaping.

Resolved

No objections.

2020/86 2020/37233 22 Browmere Drive WA3 7HR

Householder – Proposed single storey side extension and associated alterations.

There was no opportunity for comment.

2020/87 2020/37185 21 Eaves Brow Road. WA3 7LG

Householder – Proposed single storey extension to rear.

There was no opportunity for comment.

Members Referrals.

2020/88 Mustard Lane Speed Sign.

Cllr Cummerson raised that the speed sign on Mustard Lane is blocked by the surrounding hedge. The Clerk advised that he has been in contact with WBC to try to establish who it is that is in charge of the land. Cllrs Cummerson and Griffiths said they would try to find out who the land belongs to.

2020/89 Boundary Stone.

Cllr Allen enquired if there had been any update on the Boundary Stone being moved. The Clerk informed that WBC have investigated this matter and can find no boundary that the stone would be marking, meaning there is nothing to state that the stone should or should not be in the place it has been moved to.

2020/90 HGV Placement.

Cllr Griffiths informed members that a number of heavy good trailers have been placed on a hardstanding garage near to a property in the Parish. Cllr Griffiths has reported this matter to WBC enforcement and is awaiting a further update.

Part 2.

2020/91 Quote for works

The first quote for painting works on the Playing Field has been received and shared with members. Further quotes have been requested and will be shared with members once received.