

REDBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Commons & Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on Thursday 5th OCTOBER 2017 at 7.30pm in the Conference Room, Redbourn Parish Centre

PRESENT: Cllrs T Finnigan (Vice Chair), D Mitchell, I Caldwell and D Bigham

IN ATTENDANCE: N Khanna (Clerk), 2 x Residents and 1 x representative from St Albans BID

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr C O'Donovan (Chair - Holiday), V Mead (Prior Engagement) and M Maynard (Health)

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr Caldwell – Nickey Line, U3A

Cllr Bigham – Care Group and Village Hall

Cllr Maynard – Redbourn in Bloom and the Museum

Cllr Mead – The Museum, Redbourn in Bloom

Cllr Finnigan – RPC representative for Classics on the Common

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was agreed that Items 10.1 and 10.2 be brought forward on the agenda.

10.2 To receive news of Redbourn's inclusion in a St Albans BID initiative

A representative from St Albans BID (Business Improvement District) addressed Cllrs and explained the purpose of a BID and how the St Albans BID came about.

It is a government endorsed legal entity, funded by 532 St Albans businesses and will run for 5 years from April 2017. St Albans BID is neither run by or part of St Albans District Council.

'The introduction of a Business Improvement District allows significant investment into St Albans managed by local businesses in focus areas decided by them. Five areas of focus have been identified to build on the strong foundations already in existence in St Albans.' The 5 areas cover Appearance, Leisure, Business, Awareness and Network (ALBAN).

The BID is running an initiative to encourage footfall into St Albans town centre and the wider district, by strategically placing large Nutcracker soldier statues in various locations. Residents are then encouraged to engage with competitions to name the Nutcrackers and to then track down each one across the district, to win a prize. A Nutcracker will be placed in Cumberland Garden in Redbourn, to enhance the Xmas lights and act as a draw to increase footfall to Redbourn High Street and Xmas Market. 10 x Nutcrackers will be placed in and around St Albans town centre, with 6 more being placed around the district.

There is no cost to Redbourn to be part of this initiative and the Nutcracker will be installed on 23/11/2017.

Cllr Mitchell requested some information and images to be used in our upcoming Newsletter. The BID representative said this was already in hand with the BID marketing team.

Cllrs thanked the representative from St Albans BID for attending and were supportive and grateful that Redbourn was included in this initiative.

10.1 **To review overnight access to Cumberland Garden**

A resident addressed Cllrs and raised a concern that Cumberland Garden being left unlocked overnight may have contributed to a recent act of vandalism.

The resident reported that there had recently been an increased level of litter and youths loitering in the Garden, making it feel intimidating to use.

The resident stated that they had experienced a few acts of vehicle vandalism on Lamb Lane approximately 3 years ago. Hawkes Drive had, until recently, felt a safe place to park a vehicle, but a car had been recently vandalised there overnight. The resident asked Cllrs if they had any plans to close the Garden overnight.

The Clerk reported that the Council were aware of the recent increase in litter and at the last meeting had requested our grounds maintenance contractor perform daily checks to monitor the situation. The feedback so far is that littering has reduced and is more than likely down to reduced evening use due to colder/wetter weather.

The Clerk reminded Cllrs that Cllr O'Donovan was contacting the volunteers who had previously opened and closed the Garden morning and night, to see if they would consider being on a rota to do it again.

Cllrs discussed this at length. Cllrs felt it was best to continue to monitor the situation for the time being and asked the Clerk to continue to get feedback from our grounds maintenance contractor and report back if the situation worsened again. Cllrs also agreed to monitor the situation and report back, as necessary.

Action: Clerk / All

Cllr Caldwell reminded Cllrs that the Garden would be locked overnight for the duration of the Xmas light display and so a comparison could be made of incidents before, during and after that period.

4. MATTERS FOR REPORT

4.1 Classics on the Common 2017

4.2 Play areas

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th September 2017 are adopted as a true record of the meeting.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA

None

7. FINANCE

7.1 The Clerk summarised the Commons income and expenditure and balance sheet reports dated 2nd October 2017 for Cllrs. The Clerk reported that the reported reflected accounts reconciled to the end of August 2017.

It was proposed by the Chair and resolved that:

The Commons Committee Income and Expenditure report dated 2nd October 2017 be received.

The Clerk then summarised the latest Balance Sheet dated 2nd October 2017, showing the latest figures for the reserves to the end of August 2017.

8. REDBOURN COMMON

8.1 To receive an update on Common repairs

The Clerk reported that some posts required replacement / repair around the Common and the grounds maintenance contractor was in the process of dealing with them.

The Clerk reported that he had spoken to the owner of Cover Point and as construction was almost complete, was hoping to arrange an onsite meeting to finalise any actions that may need to be carried out to reinstate the Common.

Action: Clerk

Cllrs then discussed vehicles driving on to the Common, specifically the overflow area that had recently been closed off following the end of the cricket season. As the kerb is quite low at this point, vehicles are driving on to the Common and still parking in this area.

The Clerk was asked to contact local tree services companies to see if they could provide logs that we could use to restrict access on to the Common.

Action: Clerk

The Clerk was also asked to get costs from grab lorry services to collect and deliver large logs on to Redbourn Common.

Action: Clerk

8.2 Common Car Park Working Party Update

Cllr Finnigan reported that the Lybury Lane / Common car park extension and resurface was progressing well. The Clerk reported that the car park would be closed for October 2017 to allow the 'grasscrete' to establish itself in time for use during the firework display in November 2017.

Cllr Finnigan reported that the next meeting would be scheduled soon.

Action: Cllr Finnigan

8.3 To receive an update to a previous easement request across the Common

Carried forward as further details from our solicitors still pending.

8.4 To consider location suggestions for more cycle racks in Redbourn High Street

The Clerk reported that he had contacted representatives from the Co-Op to see if they would consider cycle racks as and when they developed their new store at the former Bull public house, but had not received a response. Cllrs suggested other locations, including by the entrance to Cumberland Gardens, by the entrance to the Village Hall, the new combined fire station and library site and near The Hub.

As all locations were on the highway, the Clerk was asked to add this to the agenda for the upcoming Highways meeting.

Action: Clerk

8.5 To receive an update on management of the River Red

The Clerk reported that a meeting scheduled for the 28th September 2017 with a representative from the Chalk Stream Project did not take place and would need to be rearranged.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Mitchell reported that an informal conversation did however take place on that date with our grounds maintenance contractor and it was clear that the banks were being maintained well as a nature park, encouraging lots of wildlife. In recent weeks, the grounds maintenance contractor had seen ducks, moorhens and a muntjac deer emerge from the nettles on the banks. Cllr Mitchell also reported that the River Red appeared to be flowing well on that day.

The Clerk reminded Cllrs that Redbourn had also received a biodiversity certificate in the recent Anglia in Bloom Awards, in recognition of its maintenance of the Common.

9. NICKEY LINE

9.1 The Clerk reported that he had received a quote to surface the Nickey Line access paths at Chequer Lane. The surface would be tarmac with a shingle layer embedded in it for traction and appearance. The quote was to provide this surface to a maximum area of 100m² across the two access footpaths.

Cllrs then discussed the overall plans that had been agreed for the Nickey Line access at Chequer Lane and felt it made sense for this contractor to quote for the other parts also. Further comparable quotes could then be sought.

The Clerk requested Cllr Finnigan meet with the contractor as she had drafted the plans for the Nickey Line and the Clerk was asked to set up the meeting.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Caldwell reported that Harpenden Town Council had created a Nickey Line Facebook group and suggested that RPC joined it to keep abreast of related news. Cllr Caldwell said he would send the Clerk a link to the group.

Action: Cllr Caldwell

10. CUMBERLAND GARDEN

10.1 **To review overnight access to Cumberland Garden**

See above under Item 3.

10.2 **To receive news of Redbourn's inclusion in a St Albans BID initiative**

See above under Item 3.

11. PLAY AREAS

11.1 **East Common Play Area**

None

11.2 **Long Cutt Play Area**

None

11.3 **Flamsteadbury Lane Play Area**

The Clerk reported that the Community Officer had now confirmed that the outdoor gym would require planning permission. As this will take some time to process, the play area refurbishment will now proceed as soon as possible and the gym will follow once the correct permissions have been received from SADC Planning and HCC's legal department regarding amendments to our lease.

11.4 **Silk Mill**

None

12. TREES

The Clerk provided Cllrs with an update on the large trees that had previously been reported as posing a threat to the Methodist Church and which at first appeared to be on Greyhound Meadow. Further investigation has revealed that the trees are on land owned by one of the Methodist Church's neighbours and are not RPC's responsibility. Both parties have been made aware.

13. COMMONS OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

The Clerk reported that he thought the outstanding list was up to date and had been issued. The Clerk to check and arrange for the document to be sent to Cllrs, if it had not already.

Action: Clerk

14. MATTERS FOR REPORT

14.1 Classics on the Common

Cllr Finnigan reported that the organisers of the event thanked RPC’s Commons Committee for their permission and support for the recent event. The event had been very successful, raising £4,000 each for the Friends of St Marys and for Redbourn Care Group.

Cllr Finnigan reported that she had seen drone footage covering the event on Facebook. Cllrs asked Cllr Finnigan to feedback to the organisers that drone operators should be fully licenced and have sought permission from RPC before operating on the Common.

Action: Cllr Finnigan

Cllr Finnigan reported that a meeting was being scheduled by the organisers to discuss holding the event again.

Cllr Mitchell asked Cllr Finnigan to request the organisers provide an article for the upcoming Newsletter.

Action: Cllr Finnigan

15. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 2nd November 2017, 7.30pm, Parish Centre.

The meeting closed at 9.06pm.

Chair..... *Date*