

Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Westward Ho! Park Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 10th January 2024 in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall at 6.30 pm

Present: Cllrs: Hodson, (Chair) Bach, Brading, Whittaker and the Co-opted Member – Mrs Penzer.
In attendance: Guy Langton (Deputy Town Clerk).

2401/629 Apologies

Apologies Cllrs Bruins, Hames, Edwards and Newman-McKie, and non-councillor members Mrs Hutchins and Mr Makeig-Jones.

2401/630 Chairman's announcements

The Chair apologised that Cllr Newman-McKie had been omitted from the attendance list on the circulated draft minutes of 29th November 2023.

2401/631 Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that all interests should be declared prior to the item being discussed.

No member declared an interest in any item.

2401/632 To agree the agenda as published

It was **resolved** to agree the agenda as published

Proposed: Cllr Brading, Seconded Cllr Bach (all in favour)

2401/633 To confirm and sign the minutes of the Westward Ho! Park meeting on 29th November 2023.

It was **resolved** to confirm and sign the minutes of the Westward Ho! Park meeting on 29th November 2023, with the noted amendment in the attendance list.

Proposed: Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Brading (all in favour)

2401/634 Public Participation

Members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 4 minutes. A question shall not receive a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given. The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing orders shall not exceed 20 minutes.

No members of the public were present.

2401/635 To consider the Action Points.

The Chair noted that two actions had not been reported upon, they were:

That the Council would seek donations of garden tools for the volunteer gardeners at Westward Ho! Park, most crucially lighter more easy to handle varieties.

That the Men's Shed would be asked if they could help sharpen and refurbish tools that the volunteer gardeners had.

The remainder of the Action Points were noted.

Action point: Advertise for tools as described.

2401/636 To receive a report from the Chair of FOTWHOP

Mrs Hutchins sent a report, which was read out by the Deputy Town Clerk, as follows:

There is not a great deal to report from the Chairman's side, things are ticking along - the 200 Club has 174 members, and people do watch the live videos of the draw.

We've had people give donations over the Christmas period, - choosing to give to charity as an alternative to sending cards. There was some discussion about the tennis courts on the Westward Ho! community page, it looks like some people don't understand how charging for the tennis courts will work.

The question has been asked about how to retrieve footballs from the tennis courts - it may be an idea to put something about this in the noticeboard in the park. We continue to promote Easyfundraising, and this has resulted in some more people signing up to support us with this.

I would like to express my thanks to the gardening volunteers.

Mrs Penzer reported that the gardeners continued to encounter issues with Dog Waste not being picked up by the dog walkers.

The committee discussed placing a CCTV camera on the pavilion to cover the tennis court gate and park paths, which may catch people not picking up after their dogs. It was noted that some authority's dog wardens have portable CCTV units to place in locations with high incidents of dog fouling.

Action point: Office to request that the Dog Warden makes regular patrols.

Action point: Promote the FOTWHOP Easy Fundraising page through the Council's website and Facebook.

2401/637

To receive an update on the Tennis Courts

Completion of the works.

The outstanding issues with the ramp and fence-edge had been completed. The final painting works would not be done until the weather improves.

Booking system.

The Council had been registered on the booking system and awaited the remote link to the number-pad on the gate to be completed. Each booking would be issued with a unique PIN to access the courts.

It was anticipated that the booking system would be complete and the courts open for booking from late January 2024.

It was noted all bookings would be made through the Council's website and its link to the *ClubSpark* website. This had been populated and had gone live. Members were asked to review the pages and send comments to the Deputy Town Clerk.

Charging for use now.

Charging has previously been agreed at £35 annual household membership and £5 per hour for casual users (Full Council August 2023).

Charges for use of the courts until the painting had been completed would be £1 per court per hour.

The Annual Passes would not be available until all three courts had been painted and were open for use.

Opportunities for free tennis through Park Tennis were to be pursued.

The committee further noted that a press release would be drafted which would include an invitation from interested parties to discuss the provision of tennis coaching or acting as Park Tennis Facilitators with the Council.

Action point: Office to draft the press release.

Action point: Members to review the Council's website and its web presence on *ClubSpark* and feed back to the Deputy Town Clerk at their earliest convenience.

2401/638

To receive an update on the "Changing Places Toilet Facility"

Members were advised that the Contracts Finder tender had been published.

Tenders were expected to be submitted by noon on the 16th January, after which they would be opened and presented to Full Council for consideration.

Cllr Whittaker noted that with the extension to the date for the completion of the Changing Place, at least one grant would have expired before the work was completed.

Cllr Brading noted concerns that should the pavilion be demolished and re-built that the Changing Place would be detrimentally affected.

Cllr Bach noted that given the age of the pavilion and its state of repair, its lack of thermal insulation (so low U-values) and effect of the weather on the bricks, the asbestos tile construction of the roof and possibility of rot or insect damage to timbers, it may not be economical to repair. New build allows a modern and sustainable build and layout, making full use of up-to-date knowledge and materials. He recommended the Council get professional advice regarding the cost of new build against refurbishment.

It was confirmed that those submitting tenders for the work had been informed of the works that could be undertaken on the pavilion. Similarly, the course leader at Petroc College had been informed of the works to be undertaken to provide a Changing Place.

The Chair noted that any works on the Pavilion would need to be undertaken following a full survey of the building and an options appraisal, which would consider renovation of the existing building and its replacement.

It was noted that a link had been formed with the HND in Sustainable Development at Petroc College, who had agreed to allow the final year students to design a replacement building. It was agreed that this was a positive link, providing the students a good opportunity to apply their skills and the Council with a clear and costed brief.

Mrs Penzer asked if, should the building be demolished, could the bricks be used in building the sensory garden and its raised beds? The committee considered this a suitable use and it would be noted.

Action point: Office to check grants for expiry dates and write to the committees of relevant funding bodies.

Action point: Relay the possible use of the bricks to assist in building the sensory garden and raised beds in the Park.

2401/639

To consider installation of a defibrillator for Westward Ho! Park

It was **resolved** to seek the installation of a defibrillator at the Park as an additional unit as part of the scheme operated by the South West Ambulance Service, with which the Council has other units across the Town area and to be mounted on the wall of the Changing Place. The cost of £1,000 would be met, at least in part, through Councillor community grants.

Proposed: Cllr Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Whittaker (all in favour)

Action point: Cllrs Bach, Hodson and Whittaker to review their Torridge District Grants for available funds.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.45pm

Signed.....Date.....