

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE **OPEN SPACES & AMENITIES** COMMITTEE HELD IN THE **COUNCIL CHAMBER** AT DITTON COMMUNITY CENTRE ON **MONDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2026**

PRESENT: CLLRS J COX (CHAIR), MRS L COX (VICE-CHAIR), N NEWMAN, MRS M NEWMAN, A WATERS, MRS A THROSSELL AND D ADLINGTON. MRS L FITCHETT (ADMIN ASSISTANT)

193. **OPENING OF MEETING**

The meeting was opened by the Chair at 7.40pm.

194. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr Mr A Mulcuck. The previously notified reason for absence was recorded in the absence book Ref. 623 and accepted and approved.

195. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

196. **FINANCE**

(a) **Financial Analysis - Month 5**

**READ AND NOTED.**

Cllr Adlington raised a question about the maintenance of the steps in the quarry and budget allocated for this.

**RESOLVED** this would be required to be considered as part of the 5 year plan to be addressed at a future meeting.

(b) **Repair costs – Truck Service, MOT and Repairs**

It was **NOTED** that the truck had undergone both bodywork repairs, a service and MOT and aircon repairs. The Chairman confirmed that whilst this has seen heavy expenditure the overall department is within budget and van should now be in good condition for the foreseeable future.

(c) **New deck for Kubota delivered**

It was **NOTED** that the new deck has arrived for the Kubota and that further weights will be required to balance this on the road when in lifted position.

(d) **Waste oil and chemicals collected and processed**

It was **NOTED** that this process has now been completed. The admin assistant explained that this was a long process of providing data sheets and photos etc, the oils etc have now been taken away for treatment.

197. **ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

a) NRRG Path works completed - page 63, item 144 (a)

It was **NOTED** that this work has now been completed to a good standard with a root membrane fitted.

b) NRRG Boundary fence work completed page 64, item 144 9b)

It was **NOTED** that the weld mesh fence panel has now been installed. However, it was brought to the council's attention that a dark green privacy screen had been fixed to the council's new fence by a resident. It was **NOTED** that no requests had been received from any residents and on tracing the owner of the screen, an email was received from the resident which then retrospectively asked for the council to consider approving it. The fence is the Parish Council's property and is within Parish Council land and not against this resident's boundary.

**RESOLVED** – The Council does not agree to this screen being added to its fence and would like it removed – failure to remove it, will result in action being taken for its removal.

198. **TREE'S AND PLANTING**

(a) Conservation area tree works scheduled for 30th September

**NOTED.**

(b) Quote for dead Silver Birch in Community Centre entrance

It was **NOTED** that a quote had not yet been received and Councillor Waters questioned if the tree is actually dead as it does now appear to have started to produce some recovery. The tree does not have a TPO.

**RESOLVED** to wait to see if the tree recovers in the spring as likely it's just been affected by recent heat and water deprivation.

199. **ALLOTMENTS**

(a) Inspection and waiting list update

It was **NOTED** that there were only a couple of plots that required improvement during the last inspection and one resignation will be forth coming. The waiting list is currently 5.

(b) Allotment Tenancy fee Nov 26

It was **NOTED** that last year's new tenancy agreement advised tenants that this year's tenancy will increase to include water and will be in the region of £26.00.(12 month's notice had been provided)

**RESOLVED** to Approve the rates at £26 per half plot and £52 for a full plot.

## 200. **PLAYGROUNDS**

### (a) Further information on inspection contract quotes for review

The Admin Assistant updated members on how other local councils manage their play inspections, how many are carried out and by whom. It was **NOTED** that quotes received for playground inspection contracts in the spring are still valid and would ensure a high level of inspection is met and provide a facility to provide maintenance that cannot be undertaken by parish council staff.

**RESOLVED** to accept the quotation from the local provider and review in 6 months' time.

### (b) NRRG Interim playground gate repair completed

It was **NOTED** that a new spring had been fitted to slow the gate closing, however the ROSPA inspection has raised this as needing further improvement. The admin assistant advised that a request for a quotation has been made to a fencing company recommended by another parish council.

### (c) ROSPA Annual Playground inspection received – Interim works required

It was **NOTED** that the latest RPII inspection has been received. All improvements were listed as low or very low risk. Some items listed were a repeat of those received last year and Councillors noted that such items should have been pre-prepared for and the reasons for this not being undertaken will be looked into.

## 201. **MUGA AND OUTSIDE SPACES**

### (a) Increase in bookings received

It was **NOTED** that bookings had increased to 13 per week from 8 previously with significant hires received during the summer holidays, in particular via Netball clubs.

### (b) Pitch Power Assessment

It was **NOTED** that this independent assessment of the football pitches by Kent FA was due to have taken place on Friday 25th September.

### (c) Bike Prevention Gates further information

It was **NOTED** that the Committee Chair and Admin Assistant had carried out a review of the number of exits and the type of gates required to try to eliminate this problem. Due to the makeup of the grounds and the previously recorded KCC information received it was -

**RESOLVED** to pause this review at present.

Cllr Waters suggested looking further into the CCTV options and HD/Zoom lens Camera's and their positions to review scope of capturing more refined images from the gates. Cllr Newman stated additional power would be required. It was agreed to defer this matter and it be considered by the appropriate committee, if required in the future.

202. **CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) Request from MUGA hirer for installation of seating surrounding

**READ and NOTED.**

**RESOLVED** to consider purchasing double sleeper style seating in next year's budget if agreeable and best options will be researched if funding is agreed.

- (b) Request from resident re Coppicing Trees behind Acorn Grove

**READ and NOTED.** Cllr Waters advised there were no issues with head room.

**RESOLVED** to respond to the resident advising that the Council has considered their request and they may remove any overhanging branches affecting them.

- (c) Magazine's for noting –

- (i) Allotment & Leisure Gardener
- (ii) ARBOR – Kent Friends of the Tree's

203. **CLOSURE**

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Chairman  
12th October 2026