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**Minutes of a meeting of the Leisure & Cultural Committee**

**Held at All Saints’ Church, London Road, Ascot SL5 8DQ**

**on Tuesday 08 June 2021, commencing at 7.00pm**

Members Present: Councillors M Finch (Chairman), L Davison (Vice Chairman), R Ellison, B Hilton, S Humphrey, C Richardson and A Sharpe.
In attendance: Cllrs P Deason & J Gripton; Mr Syed Shah representing J McCann & Co; Helen Goodwin, Clerk to the Council.

**7917 TO NOTE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr C Lester.

**7918 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**The Chairman asked to receive any Declarations of Interest in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct. None were received.

**7919 MINUTES**The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 09 February, were approved as a correct record and signed as such.

**7920** **TREE FUNDING BY J MCCANN & CO**

 Mr Syed Shah reported that he has already met with Cllr Ellison who showed him the proposed locations of the new trees that the council is planning to plant at Victory Fields. Mr Shah will be drafting a letter to the team at J McCann & Co regarding their possible contribution for the trees. There is, as yet, no firm commitment from them but the company has a community legacy which he is hoping this will be part of. J McCann & Co will be resurfacing the area of the Warhorse memorial and they may be able to offer the council leftover tarmac should it be a suitable material to use to carry out repairs at South Ascot playpark. The clerk will send Mr Shah photos of the deteriorated playground surfacing.

**7921 CLERK’S SITES & PROJECTS UPDATE**

The Clerk provided an update on the sites:

* Victory Fields
	+ A new outside tap has been installed at the back of the pavilion to replace the one that was vandalised. The new tap is set at a higher level and will have protective bars to prevent it from being kicked;
	+ The clerk and David Norman met at the pavilion with Bill Lane of Security Horizons to review our current CCTV provision and discuss how it might be improved. It was agreed that the current cameras are generally good enough but one additional camera was suggested that would give the ability to zoom-in to see more detail. In addition, the installation of a wifi provision would enable remote, and real-time, access to the area via the cameras. Bill will provide a written assessment for the council’s consideration.
	+ The fencing at the back of the MUGA and tennis courts is in very poor repair. The clerk has experienced great difficulty in arranging fencing companies to quote for this work, compounded by the fact that there is a general shortage of fencing nationally due to the pandemic. It is hoped that quotes will be forthcoming soon.
	+ The sleepers around the large slide in the playpark have deteriorated and are in need of repair/replacement. This is quite extensive work and the clerk will be seeking quotes.
* South Ascot
	+ The playpark wetpour surface has deteriorated again and is in a very poor state of repair. Signs are up warning users of the tripping hazard but, until there is a contract in place for the lease of the recreation ground, it is not possible to spend the considerable sum required to replace the surfacing. In the meantime David Norman will do his best to patch it up.
* Blythewood
	+ The latest RoSPA inspection highlighted: some deterioration in the climbing frame and the need to have the timber resilience-tested; the requirement for a ‘high up’ inspection of the swings; the need to top-up the bark chipping at the entrance to the playpark. These are all being arranged.
	+ There has been some fly-tipping which the clerk is arranging to have removed.

**7922 CHAIRMAN’S INTRODUCTION**

The chairman spoke about the scope and breadth of activities that the committee is involved in, including the ongoing costs that are budgeted for and opportunities that come up. He suggested that the committee think about a vision/mission statement to clarify values and provide a focus, for instance the wellbeing of residents, and to pick up on activities that align with this. He would like to add definition to this over the coming months.

**7923 CHEAPSIDE PLAYPARK**

The clerk reported that the contract for the renewing the play equipment at Cheapside playpark has been agreed with Wicksteed and the plans have been publicised. The provisional date for the installation is in August, when the pre-school will be on holiday and there is access via the hall car park. The clerk will be meeting with representatives of Wicksteed later in the week to firm up on some of the details.

**7924 PARISH MAP**

The chairman gave an update on plans for the Parish map, explaining that he believes the way forward is to use the proposed Parish Online software (item 7926) which, if agreed, would enable the production of a digital solution. If it is decided, subsequently, to pursue an artistic version this can be based on the digital map.

**7925 IMPROVED CYCLING ROUTE INITIATIVE**

Cllr Richardson gave a report on the meeting of 17 May of the Walking & Cycling Working Group (W&CWG). The Ascot representative of the Windsor & Maidenhead Cycling Action Group (W&MCAG), Martin Richardson, gave a presentation to the group outlining the work W&MCAG are currently undertaking and how the group can support the Walking & Cycling Working Group (W&CWG). The W&CWG have identified several routes across both parishes using the Neighbourhood Plan and also the RBWM Cycling Action Plan. The primary routes identified are one that connects North Ascot to Sunningdale, a route from Ascot into Windsor Great Park and a route to Charters School. A gap analysis is being undertaken to identify what infrastructure is required to make these routes safer for cycling. For example, there is a shared cycle & pedestrian path from North Ascot (along the London Road) to outside the library on Ascot High Street but if a cyclist wants to continue their journey down Station Hill to South Ascot, they must join the road where there is no cycling infrastructure. RBWM has invited members of the working group to an engagement session on the RBWM Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan and Active Travel Initiatives on 29 June and Cllrs Richardson and Deason will be attending, along with Sunningdale councillor David Biggs.

It was suggested that the committee couldbuild some momentum around this issue and agreed that, when RBWM carries out its consultation in August, this will be the opportunity to get people interested and take part. Residents will have the opportunity so say what they want to see in Ascot and Sunningdale to make walking and cycling safer. The Parish Council will be able to say that it supports walking and cycling and highlight what it is doing, in terms of the work of the Working Group, on our website and social media.

**7926 PARISH ONLINE**

The clerk presented the proposal to subscribe to the Parish Online software which she feels would be extremely useful in providing bespoke, professional maps that can be used in many different ways including online for access by the public, as well as for highlighting footpaths and cycle routes, and for asset management to enable the clerk to produce a comprehensive map of all assets which would include all necessary information for managing the assets and be accessible to named users as required. There was discussion as to the whether the parish could have access to RBWM’s mapping software and also if there would be any ongoing costs. The clerk explained that she had attended a seminar on the software and felt it was very intuitive and was therefore confident that all those who needed to use it would be able to do so. It was agreed that such a purchase should be reviewed after one year to ensure that it met with requirements.

 Subscription to the software at an annual cost of £400 was agreed unanimously by show of hands.

**7927 SUNNINGHILL VICTORIAN STREET FAYRE**

It was agreed that, with the uncertainty surrounding the lifting of Covid restrictions, and due to the forward planning required, we will not be holding the Victorian Street Fayre this year.

**7928 EXTENDED USE OF FOOTBALL PITCHES**

A speculative enquiry has come in from a newly-formed team enquiring whether they can use the football pitches at Victory Fields and/or South Ascot at weekends. The pitches are currently used by Ascot Utd in the mornings so any further hiring would mean extending the use into the afternoons. There was discussion regarding whether this would cause damage to the pitches due to overuse and whether the fees gained would be lost to increased maintenance costs. It was pointed out that the football pitches are assets for the use of residents of the parish and the clerk was asked to respond to gentleman who made the request asking if the players will be from the parish and also suggesting that RBWM may have facilities which are suitable.

**7929 REOPENING OF TOILETS AT VICTORY FIELDS**

The disabled toilet at Victory Fields, usually kept open during the day, has been closed since March 2020 due to the pandemic. The clerk has investigated the requirements of cleaning should the toilet be re-opened. The committee agreed that the disabled toilet should be re-opened and cleaning carried out, initially, twice a week at a cost of £55 per week. This is for a trial period with a view to possibly increasing the number of weekly cleans during the summer holidays.

**7930 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. It was pointed out that the bench at the top of the cemetery is dilapidated and needs repair or replacement.
2. A suggestion was made for an additional bin at South Ascot recreation ground and for the installation of a baby changing table in the disabled toilet at Victory Fields.
3. Cheapside School have a Growing Together project for which they are seeking funding. It was suggested that the request be addressed to the CIL working group.

(iv) The chairman commented that, as the next L&C meeting is not scheduled until September, it may be necessary to call an extraordinary meeting at some point before then to discuss the possible installation of Wi-Fi at Victory Fields. He would also like the committee to consider the feasibility of arranging for an ice cream van to go around the parks at the weekends, which may have the benefit of helping tackle antisocial behaviour.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

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Councillor Mark Finch, Chairman