

Aylesford Parish Council

Environmental Services Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Aylesford Football Club, Aylesford on Tuesday 12 December 2023

Present: Councillor Mrs Gadd (Chairman) and Councillors, Balcombe (from item 8), Mrs Birkbeck, Chapman, Craig, Ms Dorrington, Mrs eves, Fuller, Gledhill, Ms Oyewusi, Rillie, Sharp, Shelley, Smith, Sullivan and Walker.

In Attendance: Melanie Randall (Clerk)

Apologies: Councillors Mrs Ogun.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies of Absence from Councillor Mrs Ogun were received, and the reason for absence agreed.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest additional to those contained in the Register of Members Interests, except Councillor Fuller declared an interest in item 8. He left the room and took no part in the discussion or decision.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 November 2023

It was **Resolved** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 November 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Small Works Programme

The Clerk informed the committee that no further progress has been made. **Ongoing**

5. Highway Improvement Plan (HIP)

The Agreed Action Plan was submitted to KCC on 30 April 2022. **Ongoing**

6. Climate Change and Environmental Strategy for Aylesford Parish Council

The Clerk informed the Committee that the Green Business Grants Scheme is due to go live at the end of January 2024. This is to apply for some funding for solar panels for the Parish Office. **Ongoing**

7. Metal Coronation sign for Coronation Gardens

The Clerk informed the committee that no further progress had been made. **Ongoing**

8. Request received from Aylesford Football Club.

The Clerk informed the committee that Aylesford Football Club have requested to put a picket fence in around the grass area of the recreation ground immediately outside their pavilion along with astro turf. It would be a larger area than is currently permitted.

The reasons being.

- The entire area is currently weed infested, which is becoming hard to maintain.
- The grass is not durable enough given all the foot traffic to and from the pavilion.
- The pre-school currently uses the outdoor space, which is fenced off with temporary fencing for bikes and play, which causes more damage.

A vote took place and the results were For = 15, Against = 1. It was therefore Resolved that the request be permitted, subject to the following conditions.

1. The fence and astro turf must be maintained to an acceptable standard at all times, this includes the pre-school taking some form of responsibility, as it was noted that the area has worsened over time since they have been using the pavilion.
2. The Parish Council will not bear any costs associated with this project both now and in the future, for any reason.
3. Repairs, maintenance, replacement will be the sole responsibility of the football club and/or the pre-school.
4. The football club/pre-school will be responsible for the maintenance of the fenced in area, this will also include the hedge (top and sides) as the contractors tractor will no longer be able to reach the area with the fence in place. The football club must ensure this is regularly maintained, particularly the height as the Council does not want it to be allowed to overgrow and become a problem.
5. The Clerk reserves the right to inspect the area at any given time without notice.

Closed

9. Grass Maintenance 2024

It was **Resolved** to accept the quotes for the grass maintenance for 2024 as per the spreadsheet circulated to members at a total cost of £31,014.61 to three separate contractors.

Closed

10. County Councillor Kennedy's 'Strengthening our communities' meeting

The Clerk informed members of Andrew Kennedy's upcoming meeting, due to take place on Thursday 18 January 2024 at 6.30pm in the Acorn Room at Ditton Community Centre. It is a meeting for volunteer groups, so things like litter pickers, lunch clubs, the guides, scouts, coffee mornings, drop-in centres, choirs, food banks, gardening groups, active retirement associations etc. the aim is to see what more can be done to support these community groups to flourish and grow into the future.

Councillor Kennedy asked if anyone from the Parish Council can attend and the Clerk confirmed she is hoping to go along and Councillors Fuller, Chapman and Ms Oyewusi will also attend in their capacity as people who organise/run community groups but will double up as Parish Councillors too. **Closed**

11. Any Other Correspondence

The Clerk reported that there is a lady in the Cemetery regularly picking up the leaves and putting them either in black bin bags or loose in the large euro bins, leaving no room for general rubbish or peoples old flowers etc. It means that sometimes the Council is paying the collection fee to dispose of mostly leaves. The Supervisor has spoken to her several times, explained the situation and told her where to put them but she is not abiding by the request. The problem is the good deed is creating another problem and this did happen last year, although the lady did eventually comply.

The Clerk reported that today in the Parish Councils car park 18 parking spaces were taken by people who all went off site, that's nearly half the available spaces. This will have a detrimental effect on hirers of the hall and people visiting the recreation ground. This is something the Clerk will continue to monitor especially with the very real possibility of TMBC introducing charges in their two public car parks, as this will create a big problem for the Councils car park.

12. Duration of Meeting

7.35pm to 8.04pm