



UPTON BY CHESTER AND DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Meeting of Upton by Chester and District Parish Council Finance Committee held on 02 February 2021, 7.30pm, via Cisco Webex.

Present: Cllr A Bennion, Cllr T Egerton-Parry (Chairman), Cllr J Evans, Cllr P Greenhalgh, Cllr J Houlbrook and Cllr N Poulton.

In attendance: Ms S Bull (Clerk and Proper Officer) and 1 member of the public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for a late arrival at the meeting were received from Cllr Greenhalgh.

Resolved: noted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

No declarations of interest were made.

3. MINUTES.

Resolved: The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and will be signed by the Chairman at the next opportunity.

Proposed by Cllr Bennion, seconded by Cllr Evans.

4. FINANCIAL REPORTS.

Resolved: Details of income and expenditure and the budget net position were received.

5. TENNIS COURT REFURBISHMENT COSTS.

The Chairman of the QE II Playing Fields Sub-Committee provided the following information:

The cost of the tennis courts refurbishment project is approximately £50,000.

The Clubspark gate access and booking system will cost £6,000 which will be covered by a grant from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA).

There is £20,000 available in UPC funds.

The LTA will provide an interest free loan of £25,000 over a term of 5-7 years.

Quotations for replacement fencing, flood lighting and associated electric work will be 'refreshed' from when they were originally provided in 2019 (pre-COVID).

A ring-fenced sum will be set aside and built up to cover the cost of a new all-weather playing surface in 3-5 years' time, as necessary.
A planning application has been submitted for the installation of flood lights.

Resolved: The Clerk will provide the committee with the LTA cost income breakdown information and feasibility document.

The Clerk (in consultation with the Chairman), will draft a notice to inform neighbours of the improvements to the tennis courts, including the flood lights.

6. PLAYGROUND.

A summary of quotations received for the urgent repairs of the playground surface was provided.

The cost to repair and patch the 'wet-pour' surface are significant.

The QE II Sub-Committee has reconvened (post COVID restrictions) and is preparing to drive forwards the plans to upgrade the playground.

The Clerk reported on a site meeting with the annual playground inspection contractor where it was confirmed that the risk of injury from falls and trips on the damaged playground surface is low.

The QE II Sub-Committee will apply for grant funding to refurbish and improve the play equipment, by the end February.

Resolved: A further site meeting with the Chairman of the QE II Sub-Committee and the playground contractor, will take place on 9 February, to ascertain if a full replacement surface may be put down in advance of and taking into consideration the installation of the new equipment.

The Clerk will draft a 'time-line' of how the Parish Council will resolve the situation.

Cllr Poulton asked for her 'extreme concern' that the Parish Council has not yet been able to carry out the repairs to be noted.

7. FINANCIAL REPORTING.

Resolved:

Alternative formats for reporting on financial information will be considered; this may include graphs and charts. A member of the committee will research how other Parish Council's present financial information.

It was agreed that due to the disproportionate time required, it will not be possible to respond to an extensive and detailed request for information relating to finances and Parish Council procedure, by an Upton resident.

The Clerk will respond on behalf of the Committee.

8. INVESTMENT PLANS/INCOME GENERATION.

The Finance Committee has previously identified a need to increase the income from facilities at Upton Pavilion.

A success since its opening as a new building in 2015, the room hire capacity is limited which restricts its use by community groups.

The building has become a community hub with the shop and toilet facilities being well visited.

The Parish Council has previously received a recommendation from the Finance Committee to reconfigure the internal layout of the Pavilion to extend the function room and re-fit the shop and office.

Resolved: This will be brought back the full Parish Council for further discussion. A written report with detailed recommendations from this committee will be circulated; this will include that the project should be officially referred to the QE II Sub-Committee.

Cost-benefit analyses will be carried out in advance of work being approved.

9. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING.

Resolved: The date and time of the next meeting will be on 8 March 2021.