

PADDOCK WOOD TOWN COUNCIL
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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ESTATES COMMITTEE held on
Monday 12TH FEBRUARY 2024 in the Day Centre Commercial Road at 7.45 pm

PRESENT: Cllr R Atkins, in the chair
 Cllrs A Mackie, D Kent, R Moon, D Sargison, J Thompson

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs N Reay, Town Clerk
 Mr C Smith, Estates Manager
 Mr S Songhurst (KRAG)

APOLOGIES Cllr T Mobbs,

ES76 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
 There were no declarations of interest.

ES77 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**
 The minutes of the meeting held on 11TH December 2024 were APPROVED.

ES78 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- a) Both Whites Corner and Mount Pleasant have been renovated. The funds for the work at Whites Corner came from the UKPSF Community Grant of £2038. Some additional planting is still required.
- b) Update on works at Putlands pond – Unfortunately the work at Putlands Pond had taken longer than anticipated but it was expected that they would be completed this week. The fishing platforms and tree trunks had been removed and would be left on the bank until it was drier weather. Copies of the previous year's toad rescue was copied to members. The clerk had been advised that toad patrols would start on the 19th February 2024. Members expressed concern about damage to the field due to the wet weather, also disruption to the wildlife habitat.

Cllr Atkins proposed, Cllr Thompson seconded:
That standing orders should be suspended to allow Mr Songhurst to speak.
 CARRIED unanimously.

Mr Songhurst advised that Putlands Pond was an important toad habitat and that the volunteer toad patrols had already rescued 326 toads and put them in the pond this week. Natural England recommended that any work to habitats should be completed by 31st January to avoid disturbance. It was his recommendation that any further work should be completed by hand until after the toad breeding season.

Signed Committee Chairman:

Date:

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Standing Orders were re-instated.

Cllr Thompson proposed, Cllr Moon seconded:

That all work should cease on the site around Putlands Pond. The area should be fenced off until after 30th March, to be reviewed if necessary. Work on the pond at Green Lane and Elm Tree could be completed.

CARRIED unanimously.

The contractor would be instructed accordingly, and notices published explaining the delay to the completion of the work.

ES79

PURCHASE OF NEW VEHICLES

The Town Council currently rents a Renault Kangoo for the Estates Manager and owns a Toyota Dyna open backed truck as well as a Case tractor. Both of which need replacing. A total of £75,000 has been allocated in the 2024/25 budget for replacement vehicles.

Cllr Atkins proposed, Cllr Kent seconded:

That the Estates Manager, in consultation with the Clerk, should be authorised to purchase 3 vehicles to the budgeted sum of £75,000 plus trade in value of existing vehicles. Additional checks will be carried out if there is no manufacturer's warranty remaining on the vehicles.

CARRIED unanimously.

The funds would not be available until after the 1st April and the rental van would be replaced first. The vans would have the town council logo added after purchase.

ES80

GARDEN THERAPY

A memorandum of understanding has been drawn up for agreement with the Tonbridge Garden Therapy project (PCN(Ton)). This item was withdrawn.

ES81

FOAL HURST WOOD

- a) A quotation of £2900 has been received for the tree safety work to be carried out at Foal Hurst Wood. The report was forwarded to members in September.

Cllr Kent proposed, Cllr Thompson seconded:

That the quotation should be accepted.

CARRIED 4 in favour, 1 abstention.

- b) 25th anniversary

The Town Council has allocated at total of £10,000 for event for the year 204/25. The Foal Hurst Wood Budget also has £4,000 maintenance for the coming year as well as £17,000 in its reserves – this includes S106 money as well as £1,000 from Waitrose Community Fund. See item ES81 c on the agenda.

Foal Hurst Wood volunteers have been asked for suggestions on how to mark the 25th Anniversary of Foal Hurst Wood.

- Mural or picture or a FHW 25-year nature related recognition in the new community centre
- Planting of new oak trees in an area they will grow,

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- New areas or protection or new habitats or Dormice boxes for the new area of wood
- Anniversary ideas signs of trees telling people what they are next to them
- Nature trail
- A new noticeboard
- Laminated maps of the area with details of what can be found / seen, and where.
- Guided walk around the wood – with volunteers/members

Members asked that the following ideas should be followed up:

- Laminated maps of the woodland to be made available.
- Replacement noticeboard
- Tree planting – specimen tree with a plaque
- Additional dormice boxes
- Nature Trail
- Open day for walks around the wood on Monday 6th May 2024.
- Posts with bird sounds

c) Tree planting – the remainder of the Levelling up Funds which were received last year have now been spent. The following have been planted in the wood and community orchard.

- 3 walnut trees
- 3 mulberry trees
- 11 sweet chestnuts

The Community Orchard was originally funded & planted by Waitrose. The Town Council currently has a further £1000 donation from Waitrose in its account. The Estates Manger has asked if this fund could be used for mushroom compost for spreading around the base of the trees. The Community Payback team could be asked to carry out the work in the spring.

Cllr Atkins proposed, Cllr Thompson seconded:

That the Waitrose donation should be spent on mushroom compost for the community orchard.

CARRIED unanimously.

ES82

PADDOCK WOOD CEMETERY

a) Dogs on leads/dog fouling in the cemetery. There has been an increase in dog fouling in the Cemetery and Closed Church Yard. Members considered the attached report from the Deputy Clerk. The lower part of the cemetery which is not yet used is often used by dog walkers. Dogs have been seen running freely among the graves in both the Closed Church Yard and Cemetery.

Cllr Atkins proposed, Cllr Thompson seconded:

That a similar design to the Arun Council sign should be used and installed at the Cemetery and Closed Churchyard advising residents that Dogs must be Kept on

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Leads and they must clear up after their dogs. The dogs on leads to take effect from the 1st May 2024.

CARRIED 5 in favour 1 abstention.

- b) The Working Group to discuss the future for the cemetery had met. The Chairman advised that future plans were being influenced by new regulations from the Environment Agency stating that burials cannot take place within 10 m of a watercourse. Due to the new French Drains this has limited the amount of space in Cemetery B that can be used. Plans were being drawn up to include improved access road and a turning circle for hearses. Also included in the plans was an extended baby grave area, new brick wall in place of the wooden fencing and paths.

Costings were being sought to enable a bid to be made for S106 funding. Once the plans were finalised, they would be submitted for consideration by members.

ES83

DOG FOULING

The Estates Manager has reported an increase in dog fouling across the Town Council property, this despite additional signage. It was agreed that this needed to be highlighted to residents. The Estates Manager would obtain some cans of spray which would be issued to members. Dog fouling would then be sprayed when found to emphasise the problem to residents.

ES84

ZIP WIRE

Members discussed whether the zip wire should have grass matting or rubber mulch under it. Both of which had been quoted for.

Cllr Thompsom proposed, Cllr Sargison seconded:

That the order should be placed with Playdale, with a grass matting safety surfacing.
Carried unanimously.

ES85

ESTATES STAFF

The Personnel Committee has agreed the job description for the new members of staff and adverts will be posted online and on the Town Council social media sites.

ES86

MEMORIAL FIELD

To consider the attached email from Insulators. New football posts will cost in the region of £3,000 including installation. This can be funded from the s106 money for the Memorial Field. This item was withdrawn pending a meeting with Insulators Football Team.

ES87

COUNCIL BUILDINGS

The five-year fixed electrical testing has been carried out and the reports had been received that morning. The works required had been divided into two categories – those which need to be carried out as a matter of urgency and those which were recommended. Quotes would be obtained for the works and reported back to members at the next meeting.

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ES88.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Monday 11th March at 7.45 pm.

DRAFT

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