

## WALKERN PARISH COUNCIL

### Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 8 April 2021

#### **The meeting was held via Zoom and commenced at 7.00 pm**

Those present were the Chairman, Cllr T Deffley, the Vice-Chairman, Cllr M Rist and Cllrs C Nudds, M James and K Overall. Two members of the public also attended the meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting, having been circulated, were accepted as a correct record on the proposal of Cllr Nudds and seconded by Cllr James.

#### **Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

After discussion, following the Clerk receiving three separate quotations to maintain the Recreation Ground this year, the contract was awarded to Timeless Gardens Ltd. Work will commence with cutting back the overgrown hedges at the playground.

The Clerk contacted etrees who has asked for pictures for any project the Parish Council would like trees for, to enhance the community. Two areas are suggested: the back of the Recreation Ground and an area at the far side of the sportsfield,

#### **Declarations of Interest**

None.

#### **Public Forum**

Pot holes along the High Street were highlighted. The Parish Council encourages residents noticing any issues to report these directly to Hertfordshire County Council Highways department, either online or by phone.

#### **Update on Policies for the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan**

Cllr Rist has had a meeting with Jacqueline Veater, Planning Consultant, who is working with Cllr Rist to update the NP policies and will forward a report to all Councillors. Jaqueline is in the process of applying for a grant of up to £10,000 towards the costs. Jacqueline has also requested a contract with the Parish Council and Cllr Rist will ask her to draft something. **Action: Cllr Rist**

#### **Walkern Sports & Community Centre**

Cllr Deffley has provided a commercial lease to the Chairman of WSCC, Nigel Bennett, who has suggested a couple of amendments. Cllr Deffley is to discuss with Nigel further. Jo Ransom has been successful in another grant application for £10,000 for WSCC which is fabulous news for the Club and the Parish Council wish to thank her. Nigel will discuss with the Parish Council how this should be spent. WSCC's first outside event this year will be held on Friday 16 April 2021. **Action: Cllr Deffley**

### **Fitness Trail at Sportfield**

The fitness trail is all set to go ahead very soon. The Clerk will confirm with HAGS that the equipment can now be ordered. The Parish Council agreed that the correct signage should also be incorporated into the total cost.

**Action: The Clerk**

### **Box Wood – Proposal to add Footpaths to the Definitive Map**

Cllr Deffley is concerned about the increase in off road bikes and quad bikes being used in the wood and will contact our Neighbourhood Police Officer to ask his advice on what can be done to deter this. One nearby resident reported that he can see and hear this in the evenings and at the weekends. Another concern is litter and dog waste and the bins required if footpaths are officially added and whose responsibility it would fall on to empty them. Cllr Rist is going to contact Jacqueline Veater regarding an additional policy for the Neighbourhood Plan to protect the Monument and Box Wood itself.

**Action: Cllr Deffley & Cllr Rist**

### **Edible Garden Space**

An earlier suggestion for an edible garden space in the village is being explored. Two areas have been highlighted, the Recreation Ground and an area at the sportsfield, which the Parish Council would like to turn into a community garden, with trees producing fruit, picnic tables etc. Cllr Rist will provide some pictures of the areas to send to etrees and the Clerk will enquire if fruit trees are included in their offer. If this idea proceeds, it is suggested it should become a community project, with volunteers to help prepare the ground and plant trees.

**Action: Cllr Rist/The Clerk**

### **Finance**

#### **Payments made to date:**

Staff costs -	£1350.01
Parish Council Websites - maintenance of the Parish Council website	£ 72.00
Timeless Gardens Ltd - maintenance of the Recreation Ground	£ 180.00
Tax Assist Accountants - annual book keeping fee	£ 480.00

The above payments were ratified on the proposal of Cllr Deffley and seconded by Cllr Overall and the following agreed to be paid.

HAPTC - annual membership fee	£697.76
The School Grounds Company Ltd - maintenance of sportsfield	£647.40

Brian Alexander of TaxAssist Accountants provided an up to date detailed account and a Budget Report for Walkern Parish Council for 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. He also provided the Council with a VAT refund statement for HMRC.

### **Planning**

#### **Planning application received since the last meeting:**

Land at Winters Lane, Walkern	3/21/0672/VAR Removal of condition 7 of planning approval 3/17/1225/FUL
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Erection of 4 no. 4 bed dwellings comprising 2 detached and 2 semi detached together with garaging, curtilage parking, communal bin store and landscaping plus the provision of 2 vehicular parking spaces along Winters Lane. Please see the EHDC planning website for Parish Council comments.

2 Bridgefoot Farm Barns, Church End,  
Walkern

3/21/0691/FUL

Retention of: Erection of fence. Please see the EHDC planning website for Parish Council comments.

2 Bridgefoot Farm Barns, Church End,  
Walkern

3/21/0692/LBC

Regularisation of: Erection of fence. Please see the EHDC Planning website for Parish Council comments.

#### **Planning applications granted:**

18 Glebe View, Walkern

3/21/1227/HH

Demolition of rear conservatory and detached garage.  
Construction of ground floor side and rear extension.

#### **Planning applications refused:**

2 Winters Lane, Walkern

3/21/0027/HH

First floor side extension above existing garage.

#### **Correspondence**

A request to hold a choral event at the sportsfield on 11 July 2021 has been received. This would be a free event for anyone wishing to attend. The Choir would consist of approximately 150-200 singers and the organisers have suggested people come along with a picnic if the weather is fine. The Clerk will contact Zurich Insurance to discuss public liability insurance cover and the necessary Risk Assessment.

#### **Schedule of Outstanding Items**

A review of the Clerks terms and conditions of employment is due. The Parish Council will discuss this in camera.

#### **Any Other Business**

Cllr Nudds suggested a leaflet drop across the parish in the near future to promote the Parish Council's work and to encourage new members. The Parish Council currently has two vacancies.

Cllr Nudds offered to respond to correspondence received for Government guidelines relating to how meetings should be held moving forward once lockdown eases.

A request for a dog waste bin on Dovecote Lane was rejected by the Parish Council for the time being.

Eggs were delivered to the elderly over the Easter weekend. Any spare went to the Food Bank at St Mary's Church. Thanks to Cllr Overall for arranging this and Cllr Rist for delivering eggs.

Cllr Overall will contact Clarion Housing regarding rubbish gathering outside a property in Moor Ley.

The Clerk will email EHDC again regarding collection of the village litter bags from WSCC. District Councillor Ken Crofton will be copied to this, as we do not seem to be getting anywhere with this issue of requesting a larger bin.

**The meeting ended at 9.30 pm.**

**The next meeting will be held on Thursday 6 May 2021 and will be the Annual Parish Council Meeting preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting, where the Chairman will give his report to the village.**