

**Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Westward Ho! Park Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 in the Council Chamber, Windmill Lane, Northam at 6.30 pm.**

**Present:** Cllrs Mrs Hodson (Chairman), Laws, Leather, Mrs McCarthy and Tisdale  
Co-opted Members – Mrs C Hutchins, and Mr S Makeig-Jones  
**In attendance:** Mr G Langton - Deputy Town Clerk

**2209/431 Apologies**

Apologies were recorded on behalf of Cllrs Edwards, Newman-McKie, Sargent, and Miss Woodhouse.

**2209/432 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chair advised that given the need to receive reports from third parties, the meeting scheduled for 18<sup>th</sup> October would be cancelled. The next meeting of this committee would therefore be 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022.

**Action Point: Advise members of this cancellation and amend meeting calendar.**

**2209/433 Declarations of interest**

Members were reminded that all interests should be declared prior to the item being discussed.

**2209/434 To agree the agenda as published**

It was **resolved** to agree the agenda as published  
Proposed: Cllr Tisdale, Seconded: Cllr McCarthy (all in favour)

**2209/435 To confirm and sign the minutes of the Westward Ho! Park Meeting 16<sup>th</sup> August 2022**

It was **resolved** to confirm and sign the minutes of the Westward Ho! Park Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2022 as a correct record.  
Proposed: Cllr Laws, Seconded: Cllr Tisdale (all in favour)

**2209/436 Public Participation**

*Members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.*

*Each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 4 minutes. The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing orders shall not exceed 20 minutes.*

No members of the public were present.

**2209/437 To consider the Action Points**

The committee heard that the toddler swing had been received and fitted. The remainder of the action points were noted.

**2209/438 To receive a report on the sensory garden from the designer, Alison Bockh**

The committee heard a presentation from the garden designer, detailing her thoughts thus far relating to the design of the sensory garden at the Park. Two images were shown to the committee, one in plan format and one 3d-style image (attached to these minutes).

The design incorporated palisades of sleepers, varying in a wave pattern up to 2.4m from ground level, with gaps of approx. 12cm between each sleeper to allow for sightlines through and air passage, whilst still acting as a wind break. These would be left with a natural finish.

The design incorporated raised beds at the northern and eastern sides, made possible by the natural slope of the land, which the designer indicated would need to be smoothed out, though a gradient would remain. These beds, with wall heights of approx. 45cm would be of block construction and flat-topped. Other beds could be edged with metal or with granite sets, the latter being favoured by the committee.

Paths accessing this garden would be to the south east, with a sloped 1.2m (approx.) entrance by the pavilion, and a path through this garden at the western end, connecting then main through path of the Park to Golf Links Road. The designer suggested re-opening the entrance to Golf Links Road by the pavilion.

A boulder water feature could be installed. Some planting would be retained (the rose at the western end and the willow archway) other planting would be considered at a later phase, with the established plants being removed and replanted there or elsewhere in the wider Park. The planting could include evergreen perennials and grasses but would need to be attractive to all the senses.

The western end wall could be painted a muted, dark colour and a drift-wood style sculpture could be mounted to there.

The layout included many benches, two to be retained and others installed. The general surface could be some form of bonded gravel, though this had yet to be decided.

The committee was in favour of the design, understanding that certain elements had yet to be finalised.

Alison Bockh would return to the November 2022 meeting with a more detailed drawing of the sensory garden layout and planting, which would enable a clear understanding of costs to be drawn up.

#### **2209/439 To receive a report from the Chair of FOTWHOP**

The Chair of FOTWHOP reported on the successful installation of the locking box for equipment, noting that there were now three volunteers opening and closing it.

The accounts were healthy, in excess of £8,000. It was noted these funds included a grant to fund some works at the Sensory Garden, an allowances for planting costs and for future winners of the 200 Club draws.

The 200 club membership remained unchanged.

FOTWHOP had completed its first annual return.

There had been reports that some of the slats of the coloured benches in the play area were bowing.

**Action Point: investigate the damage to the benches and report to the supplier as required.**

#### **2209/440 To consider an update regarding the tennis courts/MUGA**

- Further discussion following a meeting with the LTA (Lawn Tennis Association)

Cllr Mrs Hodson reported that she, Cllr Laws, the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk had met with representatives from the LTA on the 26<sup>th</sup> September.

The LTA reported that it would fund work to reinstate a bank of three tennis courts, suitably fenced, to include nets as required and one of the bespoke access gate systems (which did not require a power or Wi-Fi connection) at the four-court site at Westward Ho! Park.

The Council would be supported by the LTA for the ten-year period of the project, receiving assistance with marketing and management. The gate access system has a background IT system, though NTC's access would be unique. Usage reports would need to be made via this system.

The LTA had instructed a surveyor to inspect the courts. In his reports he highlighted the wear to the playing surface, damage to the nets and surrounding fencing.

The surveyor had estimated that, with rolled mesh panel fencing, the cost to reinstate a block of three courts would be £65,950, though it was noted fluctuations in the prices of materials and services could affect this estimate considerably. The LTA had identified funding of £39,675 to support the project, which could fluctuate up and down, depending of the actual costs of the work.

The Council could pay the extra cost to the contractor completing the work to install a stronger, MUGA-quality fence at the western end of the courts and to repair the whole four-court surface, to enable the space left to be used for a hard-playground area, or other identified activity, in the future.

The Council would be required to generate an income from the courts of at least £4,100 annually, £3,600 would be a repair and 'sinking' fund, £500 would be annual maintenance of the gate system.

The LTA would undertake the procurement process, passing the management of the contract with the constructors to the Council on approval of the works.

It was **resolved** to advise the LTA that the Council wished in principle to progress the project on the basis below, the full details needing to be considered by the Council when those were available.

- i. The whole area would be resurfaced to the required standard, with three tennis courts line-marked.
- ii. Suitable fencing would be erected around the courts, with the western end being of a more robust construction, suitable for MUGA-type use
- iii. A full specification for the refurbishment to be available for inspection by the Council prior to the procurement process
- iv. The detail of the contract with the LTA, to include the destination of any money received through court use in excess of an agreed annual figure was to be decided solely by the Council
- v. The Council could withdraw from the project at anytime before any agreement was signed.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded Cllr Leather (all in favour)

Cllr Tisdale and Mr McKeig-Jones left at this juncture

**2209/441 To consider installing a water pipe to provide water for the raised vegetable beds**

It was **resolved** to not purchase hose pipes and fittings, nor instruct South West Water to proceed with the connection at this juncture, to enable the committee to further consider the matter in January 2023.

Proposed: Cllr Mrs Hodson, Seconded: Cllr Laws (all in favour)

**Action point: Include on January 2023 agenda.**

2209/442

**To consider “changing places” and an update on the meeting with the surveyor, Mr Hinton**

It was reported that the surveyor had not yet provided further details. It was agreed that the matter be deferred to the November meeting of this committee.

**Action point: Office staff to request report from the Surveyor.**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.35pm



Signed .....

Dated.....