

Minutes of the Amenities Committee Meeting held on 8th November, 2023 at 7.00pm at Sedbury and Beachley Village Hall, King Alfred's Road, Sedbury.

Present: Councillors: Koning, Strong, Swambo (chairman) and Tullett.
Officers: D Stevens (Assistant Clerk).

1. ATTENDANCE

- a. **Resolved to receive** apologies for absence from those councillors unable to attend, from Councillors Bollen and Russell. No apologies received from Councillor Wall.
- b. **Resolved to accept** those apologies received with reasons for absence from Councillors Bollen and Russell.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers and in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members. None received.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- a. **Resolved to approve** as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 13th September.
- b. **Resolved to consider** any matters arising from those minutes. There were no questions.

4. PUBLIC CONSULTATION

There were no members of the public present.

5. ASSISTANT CLERK'S REPORT

- a. **Resolved to accept** the Amenities budget sheets.
- b. **Resolved to note** Ash dieback identified on trees on Wyebank Road and some additional tree maintenance required while contractors were on site.
- c. **Resolved to note** another hinge on the Sedbury and Beachley Village Hall gates has broken and there is second Hinge requiring replacement. The Assistant Clerk to obtain quotes to replace broken hinges.
- d. **Resolved to note** that the Assistant Clerk to obtain quotes for the cutting back of overgrown trees/bushes along the boundaries of the Sedbury and Beachley Village Hall playing field and adjacent garages and bungalows. Councillor also discussed the weeds around the Sedbury and Beachley Village Hall building and asked the Assistant Clerk to obtain quotes for the removal and if applicable applying of weed killer.

6. TO CONSIDER CHURCHYARD WORKS AND ISSUES

To consider quotes to trim hedges/brambles and generally tidy the overgrown hedges and bushes at St John's Church, Beachley. Two contractors were invited to quote but only one provided a quote.

- i. **Resolved to accept** Dave Kirkham – Hedge trimming. £ 280.00 no Vat.

7. TO CONSIDER OPEN SPACE ISSUES

- a. **Resolved to accept** allocating £500 in the Council budget for the treatment of Japanese Knotweed should this be detected on Council land.
- b. **To consider** the three-year quote for grass-cutting for the 2024-2026 seasons. Three contractors were invited to quote but only two sent pricing. Councillors considered the quotations in detail and agreed to implement reduced cutting, every three weeks for all areas except Tutshill recreation ground pitches, and review mid-season. Councillors also agreed to further review the 'Nature Isn't Neat' initiative proposed by Monmouthshire County Council. The decision was based on total cost.

<u>Price Per Cut</u>	<u>Annual Cost</u>
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- i. **Resolved not to accept** Glebe Contractors – grass cutting as per current contract, 16 cuts per season:

Year 1 and 2 – 2024 and 2025.	£742.00 + Vat = £890.40	£11,872 + Vat = £14,246.
Year 3 – 2026 subject to 3% increase.	£764.26 + Vat = £917.11	£12,228 + Vat = £14,674.
Option 1 – No Mow May – Year 1.		£12,315 + Vat = £14,778.
Option 2 – Reduced cutting to once every three weeks – Year 1.		£14,535 + Vat = £17,442.
Option 3 – Reduce area to cut at Wyebank Road – Year 1. Reduction of:		£320 + Vat = £384.
Option 4 – War Memorial Recreation Ground only – for information only.		£465 + Vat = £558 per cut.

- ii. **Resolved to accept and option 2** Monmouthshire County Council – grass cutting as per current contract, 16 cuts per season:

Year 1 – 2024.	£635.39 + Vat = £762.47	£10,166 + Vat = £12,199.
Year 2 and 3 – 2025 and 2026 subject to RPI percentage increases.		
Option 1 – No Mow May – Year 1.		£9,207 + Vat = £11,048.
Option 2 – Reduced cutting to once every three weeks – Year 1.		£8,247 + Vat = £9,897.
Option 3 – Reduce area to cut at Wyebank Road – Year 1. Reduction of:		£297 + Vat = £356.
Option 4 – War Memorial Recreation Ground only – for information only.		£164 + Vat = £196 per cut.

8. TO CONSIDER PLAYGROUND ISSUES

- a. **Resolved to accept** the annual playground inspection report and recommendations for repairs and refurbishments. Councillors considered the report in detail and the need to replace a number of pieces of playground equipment. Due to the cost of new playground equipment, it was agreed to get quotes for urgent repairs and then to undertake a survey of what local people would like in the playgrounds and draft a proposal be prepared for consideration at a future meeting.
- b. **To consider** the repair of the agility trail equipment at Tutshill Recreation Ground playground. Three contractors were invited to quote but only two sent pricing. Considering the annual playground report, item 8a, councillors agreed that the Assistant Clerk request a further quote for the additional repairs to the agility trail identified in the annual playground, these can then be considered urgent.
- i. **Resolved to accept** Greenfields Garden Services Ltd. £385.10 + Vat = £462.12.
- ii. **Resolved not to accept** Playdale Playgrounds Ltd. £1,236.99 + Vat = £1,484.39.
- c. **Resolved to accept** quote for monthly playground inspections.
- i. Anthony Roch – 7 playground inspections once a month. £80.00 no Vat.
- d. **Resolved to accept** the repair of the gate latch and reset the loose edging brick surrounding the swing area At Woodcroft playground.
- i. Anthony Roch £43.99 no Vat.

9. TO CONSIDER CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- a. **Resolved to note** correspondence from a resident with regards maintenance of closed churchyards.
- b. **Resolved to note** correspondence with regards trees overhanging Wyebank Rise. Councillors asked the Assistant Clerk to write to Offa's Mead Academy to advise the trees in question appear to form part of the original boundary meaning the trees are their responsibility.
- c. **Resolved to note** correspondence received from residents following feedback to initial complaints with regards location of Chat Benches, and additional feedback suggesting alternative location. Councillors considered the correspondence and resolved the location of each chat bench remain as proposed.

10. TO CONSIDER THE AMENITIES BUDGET FOR YEAR 2024/25

Resolved to approve the Amenities budget for 2024/25 with the following changes, budget to be considered by the Finance Committee for inclusion in the full council budget.

- i. Those items with an inflation calculation, the inflation rate should be 10% due to possible worsening of cost-of-living issues.

- ii. The community action group to clear Ivy from the St. Lukes Churchyard walls is likely to be completed in Spring, therefore the wall survey cost will be considered in 2024/25.

11. TO RECEIVE COUNCILLORS' LOCAL REPORTS AND MATTERS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

Cllr. Strong – advised that the hedges/trees growing from properties on the corner of Beachley Road and Buttington Hill are overgrown and blocking visibility for traffic using this corner. The Assistant Clerk to write to the property owners and request the hedges are cut back or report to GCC Highways.

12. RESOLVED TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Next meeting 10th January, 2024.

The meeting closed at 20:10 hours.

DRAFT