



KINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council

Wednesday 24th July 2024 at 18:30

Present: Cllr Paul Chatley (Chair); Cllr Jerry Cook; Cllr Davina Martin (Vice-Chair); Cllr Val McWilliams; Cllr Steve Reeves; Cllr Richard Story; Cllr Sole; Members of the Public; Stephanie Woods (Clerk)

1. Chairman opening remarks, apologies and approval of absences:

Cllr Chatley welcomed everyone present and thanked them for attending the meeting. Cllr Spencer sent her apologies.

2. Minutes of previous meetings:

The minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 8th July 2024 were approved as a true record, proposed by Cllr Cook and seconded by Cllr Reeves, and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

3. Finance:

a. Payments and Receipts:

Payments:

Diane Mummery – Annual Finance Audit - £60

The above payments were proposed by Cllr Story and seconded by Cllr Reeves. ALL AGREED.

4. Embankment

Cllr Chatley explained that most of the councillors met on site at The Embankment on Thursday 18th July. During this site meeting, it was decided that there were some questions of accuracy of the recently conducted tree survey as Cllr Reeves has identified more ash trees that were more than 20% diseased. Research on Ash Dieback is that infected trees quickly infect other ash trees so recommendation is that diseased trees of more than 20-25% should be felled.

Tonight's meeting is to discuss the cost and priority of the works needed. There is not enough money in the PC reserves for all trees to be removed that need removing. The priority is to avoid injuries and that the current identified trees (approximately 6) need to be either removed or felled asap.

Clerk informed the group that the company that completed the original survey are back on Monday they were not aware of the boundaries and did not survey it completely. It is hoped Cllr Reeves will be able to meet them on site to discuss.

Moving forward it was agreed that due to the PC's limited funds that any tree that is diseased and could fall on footpath should be priority.

Cllr Spencer had emailed two concerns that were discussed:

1. Is woodland management plan part of felling licence? It was investigated and there is no need for a woodland management plan as part of the felling licence. The Clerk circulated the felling licence to all councillors for future reference.

During this discussion, it was asked if it was necessary to fell ash dieback. Cllr Reeves explained that there are standing dead trees leaning on other trees which makes them more difficult to remove and more

dangerous. It was also reminded that the Felling Licence was issued for the PC to clear dead trees and replant and all works need to be completed by 02/12/2027. Cllr Reeves clarified that the best time for planting is September to November depending on weather.

2. What about any potential adders on embankment? The Clerk informed the meeting that only species on the EPS list were protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and adders are not on EPS list. Smooth snakes and sand lizards are European protected species (EPS) are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Other native reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and it is an offence to kill or injure:

- Adders
- grass snakes
- common or viviparous lizards
- slow worms

It was agreed that the tree works would not deliberately kill or injure any present adders and that any public liability concerns overrides wildlife concerns.

It was agreed that the Clerk will get quotation to remove/fell the urgent identified trees. A number of options will be asked for in the quotation including need for specialist equipment or open ground fell which could potentially damaging other trees, are the logs left in situ, roll to bottom of Embankment to clear site, put somewhere for people to take as fire wood or removed by the contractor. All these different options will have different associate costs.

It was raised that residents may question why the PC is spending money on embankment so it was decided that an article in magazine to let residents know history and the PC liability regarding the site.

Clerk to also investigate if there is any funding available to help with future tree works and obtain quotations for painting bus shelter at Black Robin pub.

3. **Date of next meeting:** 2nd September 2024 at 7.30pm in The Barn, Kingston

There being no further business, the meeting was closed to the public at 19:17.

Signed (Chairman)

Date

Please note these Minutes remain as draft Minutes until they are approved by the Parish Council at their next Parish Council meeting on 2nd September 2024.

Future meeting dates:

07/10/2024, 04/11/2024 and 02/12/2024