

## Snodland Town Council – Amenities and Recreation Minutes

24<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Committee Members in attendance:	Cllrs Mrs D Crook (C), D Morgan (VC), Mrs J Ayers, Mrs S Bell, A Bennison, P Hickmott, G Miners, S Loader and W Mallard
Non Committee Members in attendance:	
Committee Members Absent with apologies:	Cllr Mrs D King
Committee Members Absent without apologies:	Cllr Mrs K Mordecal-Woolf
Council Staff Present:	Mrs K Sowten (CEO) Mrs K Miners
Members of the public:	2 members of the public

1.	<p><u>Apologies for absence</u></p> <p>see above</p>
2.	<p><u>Declaration of Interests</u></p> <p>None</p>
3.	<p><u>Minutes - To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024 were agreed as a true record.</p> <p><b>Update on actions:</b>  CEO met with Snodland Football Club who are going to put forward a proposal regarding grounds maintenance. No time line was given, but CEO will touch base shortly. CEO advised that this would be for New Potyns only. A Councillor asked the CEO to confirm if this could include the marking of the front pitches. It was suggested that Cllr Morgan be involved in any further talks with the football club regarding the proposal.</p> <p>Gate security at Potyns - CEO, Cllr Loader, Cllr Miners, security contractor and electrician met up to see what electrical sources are available on the flood poles, and there wasn't any. The electrician and security companies will come up with a proposal which sounds promising and is awaiting updated quotes.</p> <p>CCTV – no problems in relation to the electrical supply and can be re-evaluated at the next appropriate meeting for the quote to be approved.</p> <p>Allotments – Drainage – not update at present</p>
4.	<p><u>Questions from the Public</u></p> <p><i>Pursuant to Standing Order 3 e &amp; g Members of the public may make representation, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda. A member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes</i></p> <p>A member of the public spoke regarding an appeal relating to a pond on his allotment.</p>

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	<p>The member of the public made the following comments –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appeal against reducing the size of the wildlife pond being as per the council specification of 1m round/square size limit.</li> <li>• Carried out research before he made pond</li> <li>• Asked for the council to consider raising limited size.</li> <li>• Horticultural society – aim for depth 20-60cm which varies across the pond and suits a manner of pond life.</li> <li>• Pond and garden design.co.uk – depth of pond, key for pond on survival of health wildlife, a mix of shallow areas from 15-30 cm, at least 1 deeper area up to 1 metre is recommended. Reason for depth to block out light and reduce oxygen, cool and stable temperature.</li> <li>• In winter a pond with deeper section will unlikely freeze over.</li> <li>• I tried to vary depth, hopefully will not freeze in the winter and wont evaporate in the summer.</li> <li>• Mine is not an unreasonable size, and I have not taken liberties. Have not pushed the boundaries.</li> <li>• Less then 2% of my plot and is in a small area. Maximize wildlife in a small area.</li> <li>• There was a log pile there, which has been moved across and pond built.</li> <li>• Once the plants are established, will reduce the water seen.</li> <li>• The water is 1 metre depth.</li> <li>• There are 2 other ponds on the allotment which exceed council limits. Would they be asked to reduce their size.</li> <li>• Tenancy agreement, at the time of creating the wildlife pond, the conditions in our agreement were quite detailed and clear setting out obligations stating what could not be done and what prior consents were required. The allotment agreement is a legally binding document that protects both parties in which case I have not contravened any part of the agreement by creating this wildlife pond. In addition to that the size restriction that was proposed, and suggested after your last meeting was done after I had built the pond, and is the case for the other ponds too. I have no issues with setting a size limit if that is sensible to do so. However larger dimensions for the reasons I have already shared would be more sensible and effective.</li> <li>• Summarize – it is not unreasonable size, big enough for a healthy and substainable self regulated wildlife environment in my allotment, and this considered, I have not contravened my tenancy agreement, it would be inappropriate to try and impose retrospectively limitations.</li> </ul>
5.	<p><u>To receive an appeal from an allotment tenant relating to the size of pond on Birling Lands</u></p> <p>Following on from the member of the public appeal a discussion followed and the following comments were noted -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the reason that ponds have become an issue is due to recent activity where an allotment holder tried to create a excessively large pond. Allotments are for growing, ponds are a relatively new concept, and they are not necessarily good. Understand encouragement of wildlife, however it could also be a hazard if a child fell in.</li> </ul>

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- We have to fence in areas of water. We want a pond that you couldn't fall into.
- Would it be sensible because it is a wildlife pond, would it possible to consider adding a marsh area to it, and shrinking the size of the pond. Adding plants to it to change the biodiversity of it to meet our requirements.
- we have to consider, if a tenant gives up their allotment, we as a council have to put it back, as it was. If there is a hole in the ground, it would be our responsibility and although it is the tenants responsibility to put it back as it was that doesn't always happen.
- If we make an exception for one, we will need to for everyone.
- Installed at end of the summer, in August.
- Safety – can be mitigated if fenced.
- Cost of filling up the ponds – there are 3 at the moment if everyone had a pond, we would have to pay the costs of filling them up. We do not charge allotment holders for water – this can be mitigated by charging extra rent for ponds
- Setting a precedent for everyone – can we set a restriction of how many ponds on allotment.
- Setting a restriction on the number of ponds is not fair to all allotment holders.
- The depth is an issue for safety, and topping them up in the summer, there must be some form of charge.
- Where do we stand with insurance?
- The other allotment holder pond was excessive, this is a small pond, I do not think that this is excessive. We could charge for extra water. Can we ask KALC for safety measures that we ought to follow.
- Is the pond to encourage wildlife?
- a healthy pond, no requirement to filter, they should filter themselves.
- Mosquitos could be a problem if no fish.
- Looking at this, if you need the depth could we not mitigate the depth issue with something at the bottom, example, a bread tray at the bottom, would mean no one could fall in it.

The Chairman advise that we need to check insurance and further information, and we are not in a position to make a decision this evening.

The member of the public left the meeting and a further discussion followed with the following comments made -

- our agreement to tenants states to observe and perform any special conditions which council consider necessary to preserve the allotment from deterioration.
- The issuing of the Allotment Policy on the 25 July sets out many special conditions that should be followed and clearly states that “The absence of mention within this policy does not grant free reign to act as on please, as there are still obligations to adhere to. If there's anything unclear or not mentioned” please seek clarification from the Council. The pond was built after this Policy was sent out and built without asking for permission.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are 2 other ponds, but they have been there for years.</li> <li>• We sent out our new policy in July, and the pond was built in the August. It does state on tenancy, you cant do as you please, you should be asking. The tenant had this 4 weeks prior to building the pond and this needs to be taken into consideration</li> <li>• At that time it didn't say that you can't build a pond, but it also doesn't say that you can.</li> <li>• we have these policies, and when people come into office, and our staff are doing what we say. We should support staff and not undermine the rules we have put into place.</li> <li>• The council have resolved on a size of a pond, we will check sizes of the other ponds, and if necessary, we will need to ask them to reduce the size of their ponds.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions -</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a look at insurance regarding ponds</li> <li>• Safety advise from KALC</li> <li>• Measure other ponds</li> <li>• Bring finding back to Council</li> </ul>
6.	<p><u>Snodland Goes Cleaner</u></p> <p>Next litter pick at Recreation Ground on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November at 2pm. Cllr Hickmott can attend and the litter pickers will be put in the truck.</p> <p>Last litter pick at Potyns was only Cllr Miners, Cllr Mrs Crook and two members of the public. Two further members of the public had been there 2 days before, there was not a lot to clear. We didn't do new Potyns, as this was locked.</p>
7.	<p><u>80<sup>th</sup> VE Day Commemoration 8 May 2025 – Beacon Lighting</u></p> <p>The committee considered the report relating to VE Day commemorations</p> <p><b>Suggestions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are we doing another fish and chip night?</li> <li>• The people that came really enjoyed this.</li> <li>• Film can be run under churches license – finding a film that is appropriate.</li> <li>• We could just have the singers.</li> <li>• Shall we ask the football club to host it.</li> <li>• Street party – use the church for VE party, with tea, sandwiches, cakes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Proposal:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lunch –traditional afternoon tea will ask for Mrs Crook to do this - sandwiches, cakes, scones.</li> <li>• Approach football club for evening event with singers again in evening and daytime.</li> <li>• Beacon lighting.</li> </ul>

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1332	<p><b>RESOLVED</b> to hold VE Day commemorations with a traditional afternoon tea, Mrs Crook to do the catering. Approach singers for entertainment both daytime and evening. Beacon lighting in New Potyns. Approach the football club for evening venue.</p>
8.	<p><u>To Receive a report from the Events Committee</u></p> <p>A lot of people were in attendance.</p> <p>Actions for Cllr Morgan and Cllr Miners to put gazebos together, to ensure all pieces are together in one place. Spoke about stage for next year as a focal point. CEO to contact staging company. Lantern parade – Mayor will attend. The CEO and Cllr Bell have another meeting with Cohesion plus on Tuesday and will provide any further updates.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask Hicks –This is for power and access, CEO will go and speak to them</li> <li>• Cllr Miners to see if he can get the speakers. Organising the lights and the sleigh.</li> <li>• Arrange Father Christmas – staff to advise School that no Santa available.</li> <li>• Volunteers – for light switch on – we need to re-chase – need 15 volunteers to include road closures - staff</li> </ul>
9.	<p><u>To consider the play equipment quotation report</u></p> <p>Quotations were considered for the 3 items of replacement equipment in Nevill Park and the Recreation Ground. Please refer to full report on file.</p> <p>Nevill Park - Board Rider Playdale £21257.98 Safeplay £12836.00</p> <p>Nevill Park – Snake Swing Playdale - £14748.07 Safeplay - £11404.00 (using Playdale equipment) Safeplay £8530.00 (using Robinia equipment)</p> <p>Recreation Ground – Air Rider Playdale - £6634.88 Safeplay - £4313.00 (using Playdale equipment) Safeplay £4271.00 9 (using Swing Air Rider)</p> <p>The CEO advised the committee of the cost of the replacement parts that they had concerns about from the previous meeting. Timber snake swing Playdale - whole seat replacement £1478 Playdale advised no customer care problems and have never had to quote for replacement.</p>

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	<p>Safeplay replacement seat £952.</p> <p>Air rider – buffer is £232, but have never had to replace the whole board before.</p> <p>Timber Snake Swing Playdale advised they need to excavate whole area, as wont fit in existing area. Play Safe they are using an existing area and will make patch repairs and will extend it.</p> <p>Neville Park – Saltings Road – Electra Unit replacement with Board rider, Playdale are going to remove whole area and reinstate, and Safe Play are going to patch and repair and extend wetpour areas. Using up existing areas, there will still be some empty areas.</p> <p>Discussions followed regarding both Companies</p> <p>Safeplay who we use to do our existing repairs, they are cheaper. Doing wet pour patching. Playdale descriptions are good. Safeplay offer a more competitive price. With Playdale they have welfare facilities, and containers. Are we getting that much more value of money?</p> <p><b>RECOMMEND</b> to accept the quote from Safeplay for all three areas. Full Council to determine whether use of Playdale equipment or Safeplay equipment. This equipment cannot be installed until the Spring due to ground surface conditions.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get quotes for naughts and crosses/snacks and ladders on remaining wetpour.</li> </ul>
10.	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>None.</p>

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 20:35