

## Kingsbridge Town Council

### MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PROPERTY COMMITTEE HELD AT 6.30 p.m. ON TUESDAY 18 MARCH 2014 IN QUAY HOUSE

**Present:** Cllr Irene Jeeninga (Chairman)  
Cllr Amanda Bloomer  
Cllr Robin Griffin  
Cllr Wayne Grills  
Cllr Graham Price  
Cllr Beryl Washington  
Cllr Jax Williams

**In Attendance:** Martin Johnson (Secretary)

#### 13/32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

#### 13/33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 13/34 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Members received the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2013 which were approved by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### 13/35 QUAY HOUSE

**35.1 Maintenance budget for financial year 2013/14.** Members received a breakdown of all Quay House related cost codes. It was anticipated that there would be a surplus of income over expenditure circa £3k at FY end.

**35.2 Roof – fallen slates.** There had been 2 recent incidents of fallen slates from the roof which had hit stationary vehicles. The roof had been given a thorough inspection and the broken slates replaced.

**35.3 Fire alarm system – recommendations.** The latest quarterly fire alarm inspection report by Chubb dated 26 February 2014 had highlighted 2 recommendations to satisfy an enhanced British Standard:

- replacement of existing fuse spur for a lockable double pole type, and
- a colour coded zone chart to be positioned next to the fire alarm panel.

The zone chart could be actioned in-house. A quotation had already been received from Chubb for the electrical recommendation. It was

**RECOMMENDED** to gain a further quotation for proposed works to the fire alarm system to satisfy British Standard (BS) 5839 2013.

#### **35.4 Feedback:**

- **Rear Hall doors.** Repairs agreed at the previous meeting had been completed. Invoice for 50% costs had been supplied to the Rear Hall tenant.
- **Light tubes (Rooms 1, 9, 10 & 12).** Incremental conversion to energy efficient LED light tubes had been completed.
- **Virginia Creeper.** A hard cut back to just below 1<sup>st</sup> floor window level had been completed; to be maintained at this level through summer 2014.
- **Skirting boards.** Repairs and repainting had been completed in the ground floor female toilet.
- **Water supply.** A leak at the external water meter had been fixed by South West Water on 6/7 November 2013. An outstanding bill had been sorted and a leak allowance credited at 87%. Latest bill from readings supplied by the Town Council (KTC) in December 2013 and March 2014 at circa £100 was on par with estimates.

#### **13/36 QUAY HOUSE GROUNDS**

**36.1 Grounds maintenance.** Satisfactory with nil issues.

**36.2 Car parking spaces/bollards adjacent to Rear Hall.** A previous committee recommendation for white lining to identify 2 car parking bays (Pharmacy and KTC leaving Rear Hall blank) had been pulled at October's full council meeting. It was noted that Roger Whiteley's (TQ7 Hairdressers) tenancy for the Rear Hall completed in July 2015 and that a bollard in the locale had been broken at its base and removed. It was **RECOMMENDED**:

- that the current car parking arrangements at the rear of Quay House to be maintained,
- that no immediate action was required, and
- to review the parking situation in early 2015 in preparation to progress a new Rear Hall tenancy with effect from July 2015.

**36.3 Car parking management at the front of Quay House.** Members considered that the management of car parking was difficult and the primary concern was noise and associated anti-social behaviour in the evenings and at weekends. It was recognised that the only way to keep vehicles out of the car park was to lock a chain across the entrance between 2 bollards. It was **RECOMMENDED** for the chain to be placed across the car park access in the evenings/at weekends on ad hoc occasions to stop vehicle entry.

**36.4 Driveway – potholes.** A number of growing potholes were due to be filled-in shortly.

**36.5 Proposal for Trim Trail outdoor gym equipment – rear of Bandstand.** It was noted that the Trim Train Working Group had earmarked Quay House grounds for outdoor gym equipment (alongside the Recreation Ground and Duncombe Park). Members anticipated that the equipment was likely to be well used and looked forward to receiving a formal proposal.

### **36.6 Feedback:**

- **Liquid Amber tree.** A new tree had been planted to replace the specimen snapped at its base and removed during Fair Week 2013.
- **Litter problems.** The 2 picnic benches were very popular and although the litter situation was much improved it had not disappeared. It was **RECOMMENDED** to position dog faeces/litter signs again.

## **13/37 BANDSTAND**

### **37.1 Maintenance:**

- Satisfactory with nil issues.
- It was anticipated that there would be a surplus of income, above the estimated budget, at circa £625 and an under spend at circa £95 at FY end.
- The repaint completed early 2012 still looked well and the gutters had been cleared by the grounds maintenance contractor.
- Hand washing had been budgeted to be actioned late spring 2014.

**37.2 Electrical inspection.** Annual inspection was required mid-April to satisfy Health & Safety requirements.

**37.3 Skateboarding.** The practise continued despite notices being positioned by SHDC; the Street Scene Officer was liaising with the Legal department to ascertain what enforcement action could be taken.

## **13/38 EMBANKMENT ROAD CEMETERY**

**38.1 Grounds maintenance.** It was anticipated there would be a combined over spend, above the estimated budget, at circa £600 for grounds maintenance and tree surgery. However, this may be offset by an under spend at circa £200 for cemetery monuments. The highway alongside the cemetery had been cleared of fallen leaves/debris the previous day.

**38.2 Condition of grave stones.** Circa 20 older headstones were leaning over heavily. Risk of injury to persons was assessed as very low. All headstones were checked at the beginning of each month visually and by hand test to check stability. One headstone had been laid down recently. It was **RECOMMENDED** to gain a quotation for a burial ground safety survey.

**38.3 Tree survey & risk management.** The latest tree survey was carried out in 2004 and probably required reviewing. Discussions had been held with SHDC Tree Officer and the authority would provide a quotation for an inspection and production of a Tree Risk Management Strategy. It was **RECOMMENDED** to gain quotations for a tree survey.

**38.4 Holm Oaks bordering Embankment Road – overhanging branches.** The oaks are mature at a height circa 20 metres and in good condition without decay. Fallen leaves continually littered the highway, upper regions of the cemetery and top footpath. Previous investigation in 2009 to fell the trees was not supported by SHDC. Subsequently, costs to reduce by 25% had been

estimated at circa £3.5k and a request for part-payment by neighbouring properties had not been supported. Branches on the cemetery side were now almost touching headstones and the tree canopy was not balanced. It was **RECOMMENDED** to gain quotations to reduce/thin out branches of Holm Oaks hanging over the upper cemetery.

**38.5 Reclamation of land adjacent to the estuary.** Shrubbery and small trees had been cleared along the estuary perimeter to gain further space for burial plots and cremated remains. The area now required to be raked and strimmed in Spring to bring up to a satisfactory standard for burials.

**38.6 Fallen tree 10 Feb 14.** The tree had been chopped up and cleared from within the cemetery. Adrian Mundy would report on any damage to headstones but it was suspected that none/little had occurred. The remainder of the tree was in a very poor condition and had been reported to the landowner of the garage/boat store at Melleray; arrangements would be made for early felling.

**38.7 Feedback:**

- **Moles.** The mole catcher had caught several moles in December and January however, it was anticipated that the runs would be re-worked.
- **Public seating.** A new memorial Cavendish bench had just been installed by a family to replace an older seat in situ; arranged by KTC with all costs reimbursed.

**13/39 ST EDMUNDS CHURCHYARD**

**39.1 Grounds maintenance.** Tree and shrubbery clearance along the perimeter of the Town Hall had been actioned. Large Buddleias in the lower levels at the rear of the cemetery required hard pruning. A horizontal grave stone still required to be pushed back into position; risk for injury to persons was assessed as very low.

**39.2 Feedback:**

- **Re-bedding of stonework/repairs to perimeter wall.** The issue was being monitored; a quotation was awaited for works.

**13/40 TREBBLEPARK ALLOTMENTS**

**40.1 Tenancy and condition of plots.** There were 9 full plots and 31 half-size plots with nil vacancies and a waiting list of 27 persons to date. Two plots were in a poor condition and had not been worked for a considerable time; the tenants would be contacted. It was anticipated there would be an under spend, below the anticipated expenditure budget, circa £300 at FY end. Plot holders would be reminded to take all their waste away with them (as identified in the tenancy agreement) as they paid their fees for FY 2014/15.

**40.2 Feedback: new plot marker posts.** The marker posts had been installed however, the numbers stapled onto the wooden posts were not proving to be robust and would be replaced by painted numbering.

**13/41 LAND OFF DERBY ROAD**

**41.1 Condition of the site & rubbish clearance.** A hand clearance of vegetation had been conducted by the grounds maintenance contractor which had revealed much debris and litter particularly along the perimeter of Rack Park Road rear gardens. Members had viewed the site and considered it to be untidy and the rubbish needed clearing which could be actioned either by hand/skip hire/removal leaving the site green or mechanical digger/removal which would scrape off the top surface leaving bare earth. On completion it was suggested that wild flower seeds and poppies could be sown on the land to make it more attractive. It was further noted that Kingsbridge Feoffees had 4 years plus left on their 10 year option to purchase the site for a housing development. It was **RECOMMENDED** to gain quotations to clear rubbish from the land off Derby Road.

**41.2 KTC report to SHDC Environmental Health.** The vegetation cut (41.1 above) had also revealed a number of rotting animal carcasses on part of the land. A SHDC Environmental Health officer had made a site visit and advised that the carcasses should be double-bagged and taken off site when cleared. Members considered that the carcasses should be removed forthwith by contract.

**41.3 Fence & gate repairs.** The fence/gate on access to the site had fallen over during recent severe weather. A quotation to repair was awaited.

#### **13/42 DECORATIVE LIGHTING**

**42.1 Maintenance.** Expenditure was on budget. The lights had not been working since severe weather/tidal flood damage in early February. South Western Distribution had recently replaced the cut-out in the electrical supply cabinet. The fault in the festoon could now be investigated by the electrical contactor and it was anticipated to be fixed shortly.

**42.2 Proposals for Christmas Lights display 2015.** Destination Kingsbridge had conducted a walkabout in early January while the festive lights were in situ. A range of suggestions had been gleaned for the 2015 display which would be costed however, the primary ambition was to install festoon lighting around the town square (similar to the Mill Street display) and to transfer the Christmas Tree from Quay House grounds to the Town Square.

#### **13/43 CCTV**

**Operations and maintenance.** Expenditure was circa £540 (77%) over the estimated budget due to recent repairs. Members agreed that CCTV proved to be a most effective tool and the Police continued to fully support its operations.

#### **13/44 ANY FURTHER CURRENT PROPERTY MATTERS**

**44.1 Condition of War Memorial.** The marble sculpture, 3-tiered granite base, and lead painted lettering of the names fallen were all in good condition. The War Memorials Trust advised against chemical cleaning and power washing and recommended extreme care when cleaning. Therefore KTC hand

washed the Memorial annually however, because of the WW1 commemoration it would be cleaned on 3 or 4 occasions in 2014 to ensure its appearance was maintained.

Members noted that a litter bin had been moved at the adjacent Memorial Shelter and it was now positioned below the Poppies painting by Gill Cox. It was **RECOMMENDED** to request SHDC to move the litter bin to a more suitable position.

#### **44.2 Feedback:**

- **Installation of seat at corner Fore Street/Knowle House Close.** The bench supplied by County Cllr Brazil's locality budget had been fitted. It had been included on KTC's Asset Register for future maintenance.
- **Wall at Memorial Shelter.** Coping stones had been re-cemented on the top of the wall; actioned and paid by KTC at £50.
- **Assets Register.** The Register had been revised and was available for members' scrutiny.

#### **13/45 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

There were no members of public or press present.

#### **13/46 QUOTATIONS FOR WORKS**

**46.1 Refit of QH ground floor kitchenette.** It was noted that the kitchenette had been in a less than satisfactory condition for circa 15 years but remained functional. Members received 4 x quotations to refit the kitchenette. All were above the earmarked reserves set at £5,000 as members anticipated however, one quotation was identified as competitive. It was **RECOMMENDED** to further investigate the kitchen refit to ascertain if anticipated costs could be reduced.

**46.2 Extension of Embankment Road decorative lights to the Memorial Shelter.** Members received a quotation and the parameters for the project which required the installation of 6 galvanised 6m poles, with heritage conversion kits, to be painted green, ground works, catenary wires, circa 130m of festoon lighting, circa 500 LED bulbs and electrical supply. Earmarked reserves were available at circa £6k. It was **RECOMMENDED** to gain further quotations to extend the Embankment Road decorative lights.

#### **13/47 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To be confirmed June 2014.

*The meeting closed at 8.18 p.m.*