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**Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on the 10th April 2024 at The Village Hall, Plough Road Great Bentley Colchester CO7 8LG**

Present: Cllr. P. Dennitts Cllr. P. Harry Cllr. B. Herbert Cllr. F. Edwards Cllr. G. Wright Cllr. R. Taylor Cllr. J. Jepson Cllr. K. Plummer

In attendance: Mrs Jennifer Spear (Clerk) and 0 members of the public.

**Minutes**

**04.27.24 To Receive and approve any Apologies of Absence**

Cllr. J. Wharton sent his apologies and these were accepted by the council.

**04.28.24 To Receive any declarations of Interest.**

Cllr. G. Wright declared a non pecuniary interest in that 3 of the companies quoting for this work have all carried out work for him in the past.

**04.29.24 Public Participation session with respect to items on the Agenda and matters of mutual interest (time limited to 15 minutes)**

None declared.

**Resolved –** Cllr. R. Taylor proposed that the meeting be closed, seconded by Cllr. K. Plummer, all in favour.

**This section of the meeting is closed and will exclude members of the press and public from the meeting (Admissions to meetings Act 1960) due to the confidential matter of contracts being discussed.**

**04.30.24 To discuss the quotations received and next steps for the installation of the bollards along the South Side Track**

The height of the bollards was discussed, it was confirmed that the contractors quoted to the tender specification, which was 700mm above ground and the rest below ground, 1200mm tall in total.

Uk potholes is the most expensive quotation, both Turf in Essex and Environmental Design both say they will install the posts with post mix in the ground. Cllr. R. Taylor advises that concrete in the ground will hold the water and therefore it encourages rot, so concrete may not be needed.

At this point before making a decision the council moved on to discuss the next section of the tender.

**04.31.24 To discuss the quotations received and next steps for the installation of the barrier along the South Side Track**

Cllr. R. Taylor asked why MTB Engineering have added a jockey wheel, and did we need it? Cllr. G. Wright replied that this is for the support of the gate. Cllr. R. Taylor said they do fail after time and it doesn’t seem like it would be needed, and they can damage the tarmac underneath. There is also no picture of the MTB quoted gate.

The council discussed that Environmental designs gate is not galvanised (or it does not say if it is) so we need to check this along with the specifications of their steel work. UK Potholes specification does not say their gate is galvanised.

At this point before making a decision the council moved on to discuss the next section of the tender.

**04.32.24 To discuss the quotations received and next steps for the installation of the surface along the South Side Track**

As the council do not know UK Potholes as they are not a local company, the council have looked into the background of the company and their details on Companies House in comparison to DA Cant who are a local company and have worked for the council previously and are working locally in the new housing estates.

The council discussed at length the differences between the two quotations and prices in different sections. It was also noted that DA Cants added their exclusions onto the end of the tender which gives the council a clearer picture of the total end price. They have also pointed out that there is going to be more to dig out to get the surface width back to the 3.5m width as specified.

Cllr. K. Plummer raised a concern that in the specification we have missed that the edge alongside the proposed new track also has a hard surface underneath because of the years of compacted surface underneath with the maintenance of the track that has been carried out, will the grass grow back through? This can’t be dug out afterwards as this could potentially weaken the new track. Cllr. B. Herbert advised that when he has managed to pull back the width using cones in past years the grass has grown back in those areas, he seems to think that when the work has been done the green will recover. Also, when the surface has been maintained over the years Cllr. B Herbert has been there and tried to make sure they kept all the new stones as close to the property boundaries as much as possible.

Cllr. K. Plummer we need to ask the contractor who is awarded the contract who is going to oversee the grading off, as this is really important to make sure this is carried out effectively.

**Resolved** Cllr. R. Taylor proposed awarding the surface tender to DA Cants, at a total cost of £45847.40 (net) plus £6225.00 (net) for the turning area, seconded by Cllr. K. Plummer, Cllr. B. Herbert abstained, all in favour.

**Action – Clerk (to arrange a site meeting with DA Cants)**

Cllr. P. Dennitts asked if any member of the council have contacted TDC planning, as recommended by the solicitors advice from 2021. They also discussed that the difficulty the council have had for years is that no other agency will definitively give the parish council a specific answer on whether the works are legal but that as long as we have contacted every agency and re-affirmed that we are trying to reduce the erosion of the village green that is getting worse every year.

**Cllr. J. Jepson** proposed that the parish council contact Tendring District Council planning and ask if the parish council need planning permission to change the surface of the track to a smaller bound surface from a larger unbound surface, as we are in a conservation area, seconded by Cllr. G. Wright, all in favour.

 **Action – Clerk**

The council discussed that subject to if the council need planning permission, then the contract for the surfacing will be awarded to DA Cants.

The council further discussed who is going to be on site when the surface work begins to over see the whole project, Cllr. B. Herbert proposed that he will be there all the time and can liaise with other Cllrs straight away. Cllr. K. Plummer advised that if there are problems that occur that need a further spend, we need a procedure in place to be able to make decisions quickly so that the council are not charged for any delays – which if the council have to authorise the spend it will take at least 3 clear days to be able to make a decision.

Cllr. G. Wright left the meeting at this time 17:55.

Cllr. P. Dennitts pulled the meeting back to make a resolution on agenda item 04.30.24.

**Resolved** Cllr. K. Plummer proposed that we go back to Environmental Design and Turf in Essex and ask them to quote for the installation without the post mix, and back to Landscape Services to check if his quote included reflectors and not post mix, and all 3 to confirm the total number needed (55) plus 2 removable posts, seconded by Cllr. R. Taylor, Cllr. B. Herbert abstained, all in favour.

 **Action Clerk to report back at the May meeting.**

Cllr. P. Dennitts pulled the meeting back to make a resolution on agenda item 04.31.24.

**Resolved** Cllr. P. Harry proposed going back to MTB engineering and asking for a picture or a drawing, and the price of the barrier with the removal of the jockey wheel, and to go back to Environmental Design and ask for the steel gauge and if its galvanised or not and the price if it is, with an amendment of the time the quotations are valid for, seconded by Cllr. K. Plummer, all in favour Cllr. B. Herbert abstained, all in favour.

 **Action Clerk to report back at the May meeting.**

The council discussed that at the moment the total cost is approx. £60,000 as the final decision has not been made on the contractors for the barrier and the bollards which will be decided at the May Meeting.

**Resolved** Cllr. P. Dennitts proposed that a contingency plan of up to \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*of the projected total as it stands above), in line with the surface and exclusion works, for extra budgeted spend for unexpected problems that may occur during the surfacing, that the clerk can authorise spending on without the need for calling a meeting, before the extra spend/ work is agreed the clerk must report any extra spend needed to at least 3 Cllrs. at the time. Cllr K. Plummer proposed an amendment to this in that if there is money left over can the top end be returned to grass as part of this project, Cllr. P. Dennitts did not accept this amendment as that should remain a separate project as agreed, the rest of the council agreed with this, seconded by Cllr. K. Plummer, Cllr. B. Herbert abstained, all in favour.

 **Action – Clerk**

*(\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* is redacted from the minutes until after the project has been completed due to the confidential nature of this decision and it amount).*

The council discussed that the Friends of the Green have offered to make a donation to the project for the bollards.

**Resolved** Cllr. K. Plummer proposed the clerk asks the Friends of the Green for a donation to the bollards, seconded by Cllr. P. Harry, all in favour.

 **Action – Clerk**

There being no further business the chair closed the meeting at 18:25

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