

LANGWATHBY PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting Held on Thursday 27th February 2020
in the Village Hall commencing at 7.30pm.

Unapproved.

Apologies

County Cllr. Miss C Driver and Cllrs T Anderson, D Banks, C Eland.

Present

Cllrs: Mr. I Harrington, (in the Chair), Mr. J Corbishley, Miss. K Little, Mrs. C Merrie, Mr. M Holliday, Mr. C Wilson and Mr. J Fleming (Clerk) and one member of the public.

14/20 Declarations of Interest

There was none.

15/20 The Upgrading of Children's Playground Facilities in the Parish.

The Chairman gave a brief to the meeting of the current position regarding the Langwathby Playground upgrade initiative.

The Playground Subcommittee had put forward, at a previous meeting, a proposed plan, this had then, subsequently, been discussed, informally, by Councillors who had given the proposed development their unofficial approval, subject to two conditions being met. The first being that it was felt that the proposed plan centered too much on toddlers and that both the swings and the climbing frame and slide should be altered to accommodate a child up to twelve years old; the Council having a responsibility for all age groups. Secondly, as the Council had to look after the interests of parishioners in both Langwathby and Edenhall, provision should be made to relocate the existing roundabout to the Edenhall playground. The Parish Council recognizing that the Langwathby playground was very much in need of updating and gratefully welcomed the work of the subcommittee.

These suggested amendments had been put to 'Kompan' with a request to requote, before this formal meeting of the Council was called, to approve a final, costed plan.

Kompan, subsequently, had suggested that the 'Tower and Slide' be replaced with a 'Two Towers Slide with Bridge and Spider Climbing'. They had confirmed that the original swings proposed were designed for a child up to twelve years. They also indicated that it would be more cost effective to provide a new roundabout at Edenhall rather than relocate the old one and that they could provide this at a heavily discounted price, if installed at the same time as the Langwathby development.

The provision of a 'Two Towers Slide with Bridge and Spider Climbing' was considered ideal, being a challenging piece of equipment for the older child; however, the extra cost of approximately £5300 was quite expensive. With this extra cost, the extra fencing and safety matting, along with a 2020 price increase, the overall cost of the Langwathby project had risen from £41836 to £50756.

It had been confirmed that the roundabout provision at Edenhall had been quoted at £3627, installed, with safety matting. Kompan had also suggested, as an alternative, an 'Agility Trail' costed at £5538 installed, with safety matting. This suggestion was rejected on the grounds of cost and the difficulty in maintaining the grass beneath it.

The purpose of this meeting being to discuss a way forward, with a view to the Parish Council formally approving and adopting an agreed plan.

To this end it was very disappointing and particularly unhelpful that the neither the Playground Subcommittee Chair, having been invited to the meeting along with Councillors, or a representative, was present to join in and contribute to the discussion and final decision-making process.

This was especially so as the Chair of the Subcommittee, had specifically expressed her wish to be present when Councillors formally debated the proposals.

16/20 Public Participation

The Chairman welcomed Stephen Wilcock, the proprietor of the Shepherds Inn, to the meeting. Mr. Wilcock indicated that he was in general favour of the proposed development. Should the work progress he offered the pub toilet facilities for use of the contractors, he also offered his help generally, where practical and possible.

17/20 Councillors Decision on the Proposals

17.1 A general debate then took place during which the following points were raised and discussed: -

17.2 Councillors welcomed the revised plan and quotation received from Kopan, which had addressed the concerns raised during the previous, informal, meeting of Councillors.

It was agreed that the proposed 'Two Towers Slide with Bridge and Spider Climbing' was an ideal and challenging piece of equipment, well suited to a 12-year-old; however, the extra cost implications were a concern.

Councillors were in favour of the provision of a 'Carousel with Bars' (roundabout) being installed at the Edenhall site.

17.3 It was recognized that the Playground Subcommittee had presented a proposed layout, which Councillors had previously agreed in principal and costed at **£41836**. The changes then requested by Councillors, to accommodate children up to 12ys and to provide a roundabout at Edenhall, had raised the costs by an extra £8920 at Langwathby and a further £3627 at Edenhall, bringing the total cost of the project to £54383, an increase of £12547.

17.4 A discussion then ensued, debating how costs could be paired. Options considered were going back to the 'Tower with Slide' but installing the higher version. Whilst this would only increase costs by approx. £1100 it was considered not challenging enough for a 12-year-old.

Removal of the existing roundabout was questioned, as it was well used and popular, was fully serviceable and had many years of life left in it.

It was suggested that the roundabout be retained with the 'Climbing Frame' being removed from the plan, so as to make way for the 'Two Towers Slide with Bridge and Spider Climbing', thus keeping the development within the existing fence line. This option was favoured by those present.

7.5 Councilors were aware that the above-mentioned increased cost to the budget or the cost cutting suggestions, mentioned above, had not been discussed or agreed with the Playground Subcommittee

7.6 It was agreed that before any work commenced there should be a site meeting to peg out the layout, with the playground back fence being as close to the back road as was possible.

7.7 It was accepted that no further progress could be made without further costings and agreement with the Playground Subcommittee.

18/20 Ballot Arrangements on the Final Proposals with Residents on the Parish Electoral Role.

18.1 It was agreed that once plans had been finalized, the Clerk would undertake a secret ballot of all Parishioners (Edenhall and Langwathby), there being one vote per residence based on the Electoral Roll, provided by Eden District Council. The project would only go forward if there was a majority in favour.

18.2 It was also agreed that the Ballot documents would be circulated to Councilors for comment prior to distribution.

19/20 Fund Raising Arrangements

It was agreed that the Playground Subcommittee, as the initiators of the Project, would take full responsibility for fundraising.

Assuming that approximately 80% of the cost could possibly be raised from Grants, this would need a figure of up to approximately £11,000 to be raised.

The Playground Subcommittee to be asked to confirm what funds had already been pledged and where they were planning to seek financial support from.

20/20 Grant Application Arrangements.

It was agreed that the Playground Subcommittee, again as initiators of the project, would take a lead in seeking opportunities of possible grant support, working closely with the Clerk.

With the both playgrounds being located on Parish Council property and to facilitate the Parish Council reclaiming VAT, all applications would require to be made through the Council, by the Clerk.

The Playground Subcommittee to be asked what plans they had in place for seeking grant support; a figure of up to £43,400 approximately needing to be raised.

21/20 The Chairman to Conclude the Meeting.

The Chairman concluded by saying that the meeting had clarified the options open to the project, with associated costings.

No final decision had been made, the ability to achieve this being limited due to the lack of attendance of representatives of the Playground Subcommittee.

As a consequence of no representative of the Playground Subcommittee attending, the Clerk was to seek the assurance, from the Chair of the Subcommittee, that they were still committed to the project and for them to confirm their intention to see it through to completion.

The Chairman that all present for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.20pm.