



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Council Office, 122 Sea Road, East Preston, West Sussex. BN16 1NN

01903 770050

<http://eastpreston.arun.gov.uk/>

Email: epparishcouncil@btconnect.com

MINUTES: of the Proceedings of the Special Meeting of East Preston Parish Council held on Monday, 25th September 2017 at the East Preston Infant School, Lashmar Road, East Preston

PRESENT: Councillors Christine Barber, Lisa Duff, Joop Duijf (Chairman), Barbara Gale, Pat Gander, Elizabeth Linton, Glyn Mathias, Rick McElroy, Danny Shah, Hazel Tester and Steve Toney

ALSO: Clerk to the Council, Simon Cross
Assistant Clerk to the Council, Tracy Khoo (Minutes)

ABSENT: Councillor David Moore

* * * * *

Cllr Duijf opened the meeting at 18:30hrs. Cllr Duijf welcomed those present and thanked members for attending a Special Meeting of the Council to discuss a new Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) for Lashmar Recreation Ground.

705/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology and a reason for absence had been received from Cllr Moore.

706/17 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None were declared.

707/17 PUBLIC SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

708/17 COUNCILLOR RESPONSES

There were no responses.

The following paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

Special Meeting, 25th September 2017
Agenda Item - Lashmar Road MUGA

The following report was presented to the Amenities Committee at their September Meeting:-

AGENDA ITEM 8 - NEW MUGA (LASHMAR ROAD)

Cllr McElroy and myself met with a panel from ADC at the end of July to choose a preferred contractor to install the MUGA. This was agreed but the preferred contractor had offered two schemes, one of which had enhanced features. ADC advised meeting with the preferred contractor to discuss if the second enhanced scheme could be supplied within budget.

As Cllr McElroy was unavailable, I attended a meeting with the preferred contractor and ADC at the end of August to discuss the enhanced scheme and what the contractor could offer. The meeting was successful and the contractor agreed to supply the enhanced MUGA scheme, **plus an additional pair of side goals, plus repainting the existing youth shelter** all for the agreed budget of £63K. The Parish Council would be expected to fund the full £70K to ADC initially and then if the 7K contingency budget was not needed, this would be returned.

I explained to ADC that the Parish Council needed to satisfy the Council's agreement for this money by looking to see if there was any grant funding available for the project before the contract was awarded as retrospective grants would close any funding chances. ADC said it would need to negotiate with the contractor to see if a letter of intent would be sufficient to hold this scheme at this price. I said if the Council could be given to the beginning of December to source grants then this would be a realistic timeframe to show that external funding options had been exhausted.

After further discussion with ADC, the following deal has been set out by the contractor:

"He said he would hold the discounted price of £63,000 with the extras of the 2 goals and shelter repaint until the end of October. After that he would hold the non-discounted price of £64,159.25 with the extras of the 2 goals and shelter repaint until the end of December. After the end of December he would have to review prices.

Bearing in mind that the Tender demanded that tenders are to stay valid and open for acceptance until 90 days after the tender closing date and the end of October would be 102 days, plus the fact that we have already negotiated more than the tender offered (two additional goals and a shelter repaint), I think his offer is very reasonable.

Michael Rowland"

The Committee is asked to consider the above information and agree how it would like to proceed."

After some discussion, the Committee agreed that due to funding restrictions over land ownership and the time it took to apply for grants, with no guarantee of a positive outcome, it was in favour of using the £50K set aside from the Amenities Budget over the last two years and the £20K top-up from Reserves, agreed by Full Council to fund the new MUGA.

1 | Page

Having emailed around to all Councillors to inform them of the Amenities decision, there has been mixed opinion about spending the money earmarked for the MUGA. Therefore, this Special Meeting has been held to allow Councillors to openly discuss their views and come to a decision on funding the MUGA.

The options are:

1. Say we will go ahead with the MUGA by the end of October and use the £50K earmarked from the Amenities Budget over the last couple of years and £20K from Council Reserves to fund the project (the Village Improvement Reserve Account has £62K in it currently). Bearing in mind, 7K of the £20K will be ADC's required Contingency sum and may not all be used. In the meantime, continue to look for grants throughout October and promote a Crowdfunding page to raise some funds for the facility.
2. Say we will go ahead with the MUGA by the end of December but be prepared to pay an extra £1,159.25 on top of the £70K due to the extended time to look for grant funding. However, there is still no guarantee we will be successful and it would need some Councillor assistance to look for grants.
3. Wait to go ahead with the MUGA until we have secured a significant amount of grant funding for the project but with the risk that prices will go up from January 2018 and the tendering process may need to start over again.

Councillors are reminded that more outdoor facilities for the younger generation in East Preston were identified as being needed in the Community Led Plan back in 2012.



Tracy Khoo - Assistant Clerk to the Council

21st September 2017

2 | Page

The Chairman gave councillors with some background information on how the request for a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) had come about:-

Extra Full Council 25th September 2017

Some History

The basis for the current MUGA was born as a result of the Community Led Plan. The consultation process was commissioned by East Preston Parish Council in February 2012. Action in rural Sussex (AirS) published the results of the questionnaire in March 2012. The Community Led Plan Survey Report was officially published in June 2012 and work on the Action Plan began. Those who want to know: 2,986 questionnaires were sent out, one to each household in the Parish. A total of 947 survey forms were completed (in paper or electronically) giving a response rate of 32%

At the beginning of August 2012 a draft for the East Preston Action Plan became available. The Action Plan was approved by Full Council 1st October 2012 – resolution 638/12 and Additional comments appeared 24th November, still in the same year.

The previous Council had worked hard to achieve this all.

A Working Party was created to follow-up and to achieve as much as possible as by the Action Plan. One of the highly listed wishes was to supply more sporting facilities for young and old and after exploring the options the MUGA project was born. There is by the way still a lot to do about that Action Plan but it looks like those results get less and less attention.

Several councillors came together with one purpose: to gather as much information as possible to achieve all option of available grants and this not only for the MUGA but for all major projects.

Discussions were held what the best place for the MUGA was. Warren Recreation Ground, Langmead and other areas were looked at. Eventually Lashmar seemed to be the best place. As this is not EP land negotiations started with Arun District Council to install it at Lashmar. In the beginning and for a long time it appeared that grants could be obtained to minimise the high costs. This with help of the suppliers, ADC, National Lottery etc. One of the bottlenecks was and is the ownership of the land. Eventually ADC agreed to install the MUGA in their grounds: Lashmar.

All our efforts to obtain grants diminished and the current situation looks like there will be no grants at all.

The project went for tender by ADC and by the end of July 2017 the preferred contractor was invited to get an even better deal which was successful by the end of August.

ADC demands tenders to stay open for acceptance until 90 days after closing date and by the end of October this would be 102 days.

If the tender is not accepted negotiations have to start all over again and it is likely there will be a price increase. This process is normal and certainly is not black-mail.

It should be noted that EPPC has budgeted and set aside £50,000 plus agreed by Full Council to top this with another £20K.

So in a nutshell Council has to make a decision to go ahead, postpone or cancel the project by the end of October 2017.

At their last meeting on 18th September, the Amenities Committee had agreed to go ahead with the MUGA project, even if it meant the Council needed to use part or all of their own funds to pay for the MUGA, as grants seemed particularly difficult to find in the timeframe.

Cllr McElroy said the Amenities Committee recognised this was a much needed outdoor facility in the village and the project had already been greatly delayed from a time before he was on the Council, due to the land being owned by Arun District Council. He explained the Amenities Committee had budgeted £25,000 towards the MUGA during 2015/16 and 2016/17 which meant £50K was earmarked for the MUGA by the beginning of this financial year. Due to the delay, ADC then informed the council that £50K was probably not going to be enough to purchase a decent sized MUGA as ADC's procurement requirement states that a 10% contingency sum must be put aside for any project. Full Council was then asked to agree a further £20K from Council Reserves to increase the budget to £70K which would allow £63K towards the MUGA and a £7K contingency sum. ADC agreed this was a better amount to fund the MUGA.

Cllr Gander said the additional information provided by the Chairman at the meeting was very useful in helping councillors make an informed decision on the project.

Cllr Barber asked if the Council voted against funding the project, what would be the outcome. Cllr McElroy said MUGA prices would more than likely increase from the New Year and the tendering process would need to start over again. He said even if the Council applied for grants, there was no guarantee the Council would be successful.

Cllr Mathias said he fully supported the MUGA project but was concerned how the project had now progressed, whereby the Council could be paying most of the cost of the MUGA, rather than using mainly grant funding.

Cllr Shah outlined the original agreement by Full Council was to underwrite £70K for the MUGA project, to allow ADC to start the tendering process. At the time, Full Council was told that it was hoped most, if not all the funding would be raised through grants but these could not be applied for until quotes had been received and prices were known. Cllr Shah explained how Full Council was now being asked to fund most, if not all the MUGA project as funding was proving difficult and lengthy which would delay the project further. The

added pressure was that the preferred contractor would only hold the price for the Council's budget until the end of October.

After further debate, the Council was asked to consider whether to agree to spend the £70K from the Council's Reserves or to wait until further funding options could be explored. Councillors were reminded the grant application process was very time consuming and could lead to unsuccessful results and officers did not necessarily have the time needed to search and then apply for grants. Some grant decisions were also phased and could take up to 6 months before a decision was made. The Council was informed a Crowdfunding Page had already been set up and if the Council gives the go ahead tonight, then this could be updated with the new MUGA design and be circulated through Social Media and the Council's Notices. A suggestion was made to also approach local businesses and traders to see whether they would be prepared to sponsor a part of the MUGA.

Cllr Toney proposed to go ahead with a new MUGA for the Lashmar Recreation Ground and for the Council to cover the £70K cost for the MUGA by the end of October, regardless of whether any grants or other funding had been achieved.

1133 The council **RESOLVED** to go ahead with funding the total cost of the MUGA at the end of October, even if grants or other funding could not be obtained in time. This would be £63K for the MUGA and £7K for ADC's required contingency sum.

10 councillors voted in favour of the Council financing the MUGA and 2 councillors abstained.

The meeting concluded at 6.55pm.

Chairman: *Cllr Joop Duif* Date: **2nd October 2017**

END