

Clerk's Report and additional information for items for the Community and Culture Committee Meeting 29th October 2024.

- 1) Safety testing on columns – The Clerk can confirm that this has all been done and this is in place until October 2025.
- 2) PA System – The Clerk has engaged a company to come in and have a look at the system next week and give a quote for updating everything.
- 3) Bookings – A weekly meeting is now in place for a Monday between the staff and the café.
- 4) New paperwork for allotments – This has all gone to full council and been agreed.
- 5) Artist in Residence – The Clerk is meeting with the artists this week and will report back at the meeting.
- 6) Skatepark – The electrics of the skate park are being looked into and further discussion about the area will be brought back to another meeting.
- 7) Paddling Pool – Cllr Gilson will give a verbal update on this. However nothing can be discussed or agreed at this meeting and it will be an item for a future agenda.

Item 6 Christmas Lights Switch On

The Clerk has circulated a report from the Bookings and Events Officer which gives the details that the working group discussed at their meeting on 12th October. Cllrs C Mulroney, P Gilson and B Arscott may wish to talk to this item.

The Clerk asks for the committee to discuss the suggestions and agree next steps.

Item 7 Memorial Plaques

The Clerk has received a couple of requests for memorial plaques on the planters in Strand Wharf. The Clerk asks the committee if further plaques are allowed?

Item 8 Disability Project at Manchester Drive Allotments

The Clerk has circulated an email from a resident who is interested in setting up an allotment plot accessible to all. The Clerk believes this project has been discussed previously but there are now questions from the person wishing to start the project. The Clerk asks the committee to discuss the request and advise if they are happy for plot no. 59 to be allocated.

Item 9 Music Event Proposal

The Clerk has circulated a report from the Bookings and Events Officer regarding a possible music event being put on at the community centre. The original suggestion was from Cllr S McCurdy. The Clerk asks the Committee to discuss the suggestion and advise on any actions to be taken.

Item 10 Community Fridge

The Clerk has received an email from the member of public who normally looks after the fridge in the foyer in terms of making sure there is nothing out of date in it, that everything that is in it can be there and that it is emptied at least once a week.

The resident is no longer able to undertake this role, and the Clerk asks the committee if there is a Councillor who would be able to take this on? If not, can the committee suggest an alternative.

Item 11 Monies Allocated to the Allotment Associations

a) At present the Council pays the associations the following amounts:

Marshall Close - £125 per quarter = £500 a year

Manchester Close - £1,500 per quarter = £6,000 a year.

Each month Marshall Close send accounts to show what the monies have been spent on. The Clerk has circulated a copy of the latest accounts the office has received.

Manchester Drive have advised that in the past they have just sent an annual list of the things the money had been spent on.

As this is public money and the Council is accountable the Clerk has concerns that the Council is not receiving accounts from Manchester Drive to show accurately where the money is going. The Clerk would recommend that the Council request Manchester Drive, from now on send accounts to the Council at least annually. A quarterly basis would be preferable in the same way that the Council pays them quarterly.

The amount that is paid to Marshall Close has not changed for some time and the Clerk has received a request from the association for a small increase. The email which was received is below:

'Hello, I've been asked to send you an email concerning the amount of money paid to MCAA by LTC. Our Association was set up in 2015 to run and maintain Marshall Close allotments, on behalf of LTC. We do much of the work ourselves and are very frugal, but inevitably costs do occur. Last winter our old tool shed finally collapsed and we had to buy a new one which cost us £850, this left us with very little money for day-to-day expenses, and at one time this summer we had as little as £50 in the kitty, so any repairs to machinery would have put us in trouble.'

Our annual payment in 2015 was set at £500, paid to us quarterly. We have not had any increase in this since. According to the Bank of England inflation since 2015 has been 34%.

Out of our £500 we have to pay for our Public Liability Insurance, in 2015 this was £80, in 2024 it was £134, other expenses have risen considerably. I raised this at a meeting at LTC on 8th August both Councillors Lloyd and Gilson were present together with Adam Dean, and they said they would take it to Council, but now I have been asked to contact you.

My proposal was to increase it to £700 pa but fix it for 3 years.

I'd be grateful if you could consider this and let me know.'

The Clerk asks the committee to consider the associations request. Considering the rise in costs in general and the information received from the association the Clerk would have no concerns about the sum paid to them being increased by the £200.

- b) The Clerk met with some of the Manchester Drive association committee members, and they asked if there was any possibility of having CCTV installed at the main entrance and one camera at the Randolph Close entrance. The one at the main entrance can run from the electricity at the site whereas the one at the Randolph Close entrance would have to come from elsewhere. The Clerk asks the committee to discuss the possibility of the CCTV before she investigates this any further.

Item 12 Cooker for Café

The purchase of a new cooker has already been agreed at Full Council and at the Finance Committee meeting. The Clerk has circulated the three quotes for the new range cooker for discussion and agreement as to which quote to go with.

The Clerk's recommendation would be Nisbets at £3,719.99.

Item 13 Lighting in Room 4

The Clerk asked for the electricians to look at the lights in room 4 as there are only 4 working. Unfortunately, it is not just a matter of replacing the bulbs which the Clerk had hoped for, the actual lights are broken and unrepairable. Therefore, the company have quoted for replacing all the hanging lights in the room. The quote received is from G P Mason Electrical Ltd at a cost of £1,690.00 plus VAT.

The Clerk asks the committee to discuss if they are in agreement with the lights being replaced. If the committee is in agreement the Clerk will gain two further quotes for replacement. This will then be brought back for agreement as to which company to use.

Item 14 Shelter near Gypsie Bridge

Cllr P Gilson will talk to this item to allow discussion and agreement on any actions to be taken.

Item 15 Draft Budget 2025/26

The Clerk is working on this and hopes to send this to all Councillors by Friday 25th October 2024.