

EF26-019 NORMANDY COMMON

i. Leases

The cricket club asked for the a change to be made when Sproglets left, they informed our solicitors and they changes it to 'Class E(f) (commercial, business and service)' – The Assistant Clerk has gone back to the solicitors to ask them to amend the contract to stat that the council would require prior written notice, 2 months in advance of any business starting, so it may be discussed and approved by the council.

We are still waiting for the tennis club to give us names, then this lease can be finalised.

ii. Electricity box update

The council need to consider the information required in advance of Full Council in order to make an informed decision regarding the proposed sale of land to the electricity company and any associated lease arrangements.

Background - The Council is considering the proposed sale of a section of common land to the electricity company. In addition to the sale itself, the company has requested rights over other areas of Council-owned land to enable future access for the maintenance, repair and replacement of electrical infrastructure.

Before Full Council is asked to make a decision, the committee should ensure that the necessary legal advice has been obtained and that sufficient information is available to support an informed recommendation.

Matters for Consideration

It is recommended that the Committee considers the following actions prior to referring the matter to Full Council:

1. Legal Advice – Sale of the Land

That the Council instructs its solicitor to advise what legal documentation, statutory requirements and professional advice are necessary to facilitate the proposed sale of the land. This information should be obtained and circulated to all Members in advance of the Full Council meeting.

2. Legal Advice – Access Rights and Leases

That the Council instructs its solicitor to advise on the legal requirements relating to any leases, easements, licences or other legal agreements required for the electricity company to access additional areas of Council

land for the inspection, maintenance, repair or replacement of electrical infrastructure. This advice should also be available to Estates committee before Full Council considers the matter.

3. Valuation and Sale Price Advice

That committee consider whether independent legal or professional valuation advice should be obtained to ensure that the Council is achieving best value and that the proposed sale price is appropriate.

4. Recommended Sale Price

That committee consider recommending a minimum sale price of **£5,000**, reflecting the figure previously identified during earlier discussions, subject to any professional advice received.

5. Structure of the Financial Agreement

That committee determine whether the financial arrangement should consist of:

- a single payment covering the sale of the land only; or
- a capital receipt for the land together with a separate lease, licence or easement payment for ongoing access rights over other Council land.

Should a separate lease or licence arrangement be required, the committee should also consider the appropriate duration of that agreement and whether periodic payments or a one-off premium would be more beneficial to the Council.

iii. OPM

After the survey, 3 quotes were obtained to remove nests. As a maximum price had been agreed in Full Council and left to Chair and Clerk to decide on, Meadows Landscaping was chosen to remove the nests.

They are due to do the work on August 5th/6th and will put up 4 nest boxes. Friends of Normandy Wildlife have offered to donate the nest boxes.

Cllr Mitchell is trying to arrange a meeting with GBC to find out more about what GBC is doing about the problem.

iv. Woodland Management Plan

There are two aspects that need to be worked on:-

1. Applying to higher stewardship funding – still waiting for an invitation to do so from Rural Payment Agency, though policy may change soon and we may have to do an expression of interest. Ww will need assistance in doing this from Penfolds. Predicted cost is:- £3,000 to £4,000.

If we achieve Higher Stewardship funding, this will be about £3,683 a year for 10 years to support the management of the woods.

2. Start developing the felling plan for the western hemlock woods. It may be possible to do this ourselves, but we have not done it before. Penfolds have offered support to i) find suitable contractors to quote, ii) work with the chosen contractor to do all the felling and removal of timber. The predicted cost for this support for the first year of timber removal (we may only do 1 year) is £4,000 to £5,000.

The sale of the timber should cover the removal costs, though there may be some other upfront costs for access.

Grant Funding:

It may be possible to get extra funding from DEFRA (in addition to the Higher Stewardship) to support specific actions such as rhododendron removal.

Some of the Higher Stewardship might be spent on professional support as some actions in the WMP (eg ensuring the replanting and follow-up care is done properly and that management of issue species (holly and rhododendron) is done and results can be seen as well as the 5 year monitoring) are noted as being the responsibility of the agent.

The remainder is for the management of the woodland area.

Matters for Consideration

1. Cllr Mitchell to contact the Forestry Commission directly regarding how to manage the felling of the woodland and whether it is advisable to employ a manager to support or not.
2. Committee to consider whether the potential income from sale of land to electric company can be used to support the Woodland management plan (especially felling of the western hemlocks) and if so, make this as a recommendation to Full Council.
3. If Full Council agrees, then Committee to agree to appoint Penfolds to manage the felling aspect of the Woodland Management Plan on the following basis: the income from the timber extracted needs to cover the full costs of extraction, including any temporary access requirements.
4. Wait for either contact from the Rural Payments Agency or confirmation that we need to do an EOI before taking that section forward.