

**OPEN SESSION:** There were four members of the public present, one of whom wished to speak.

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**

Held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2004 at 5.40 pm

**PRESENT:** Cllr N W Light  
Cllr N J Chard  
Cllr D E Cracknell  
Cllr L C Ford  
Cllr M H Thierry  
Cllr N Wood

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Terry Simpson, Town Clerk  
Lyn Wickens, Personal Assistant to Town Clerk

### **OS/4521 ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs B A Charlton, Mrs B J Wright and S C Wright.

### **OS/4522 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllrs D E Cracknell, Mrs L C Ford and M H Thierry declared personal, non-prejudicial interests in agenda item 5, Ringwood Health Centre. Cllr N J Chard declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 6, Recreation Strategy. Cllr M H Thierry declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 15, Draft Blashford Lakes Strategic Management Plan.

### **OS/4523 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2004, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

### **OS/4524 JUBILEE GARDENS**

**(i) Information from Insurers on fencing:** The Town Clerk informed members that the Council's Insurers had advised there was no need to fence the Millstream where it runs through the Gardens as this had always been unfenced, but that repairs to the fence adjoining the River Avon should be carried out as a matter of priority. The Clerk confirmed that the fence had already been repaired, but consideration should be given to affixing wire mesh to the fence as a further deterrent to stop access to the riverbank. The Insurers had confirmed that there was no need for a notice advising the public of "deep water".

**RESOLVED:** that wire mesh should be affixed to the fence adjoining the River Avon in Jubilee Gardens.

**(ii) Update on land ownership and Licence to maintain the Gardens:** The Town Clerk reported that the Council's solicitors were still in the process of obtaining clarification of the ownership of the land.

**RESOLVED:** that the Town Clerk continue to pursue clarification on the issue of ownership of the land at Jubilee Gardens and report back to the Committee when obtained.

**OS/4525  
RINGWOOD HEALTH CENTRE**

Cllr Thierry reported to members that the District Council had approved the Planning Application for temporary siting of Ringwood Health Centre on Carvers Recreation Ground while the building in The Close is demolished and rebuilt. There were conditions attached to the approval, viz: a limit had been set on the length of time the temporary buildings could be on Carvers; the land to be returned to its previous use at the end of the time limit and the Southampton Road entrance to be splayed for improved sight lines for access to the Ground.

**RESOLVED:** that the approval for temporary siting of Ringwood Health Centre on Carvers be noted and the Town Clerk complete the negotiations of terms for the use of the site as soon as possible.

**OS/4526  
RECREATION STRATEGY**

The Committee Chairman gave background information to members regarding the Council's pursuit of an overall recreation strategy to overcome the existing shortfall in recreational playing facilities for residents of the Town. He thanked the Town Clerk for his diligence in producing such a comprehensive report, (see Annex 'A' to these minutes). All members concurred. As a result of the meetings undertaken with local sports clubs, the report suggested five recommendations, which the Chairman hoped the Committee would accept.

Members debated the issues raised in the report and noted that the Discussion Paper prepared by the District Council should be treated as providing additional background information supporting the findings from meetings with sports clubs. The principles underlying the provision of a town park at Carvers for informal recreation with development of formal playing facilities at Long Lane were supported.

**RECOMMENDED:** that

1. The general principles contained within the report be supported;
2. Further discussions be undertaken with the District Council about development of a long term strategic development plan utilising Long Lane as a centre of excellence for playing provision for the town;
3. Further consultations be undertaken with all Clubs in the town before completion of any strategic overview;
4. The views of interested organisations be sought on the future usage pattern of Carvers Recreation Ground and
5. The strategy being developed be incorporated within the Town Plan when it is prepared.

**OS/4527  
PROPOSED RUGBY FACILITY AT RINGWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Members received notes of the Steering Group meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2004 and the Town Clerk updated members on the current detailed proposals offered by the County Council for the use of the Junior School's playing field. The Chairman asked for guidance for the Town Council's two delegates on the Steering Committee, bearing in mind the changes in pitch requirements now put forward by the Rugby Club.

Members noted that when the proposals were originally submitted to the Town Council it was believed that the Junior School site would provide a sufficient number of pitches for the Rugby

Club. It was now noted that the Club would retain its pitch at Picket Post and would be seeking a further pitch at Ringwood School. This spread would cause additional work for the Rugby Club and would not assist in reaching all of its original objectives. Members suggested that in view of the Club's pitch requirements, it would be more appropriate for the Club to relocate to Long Lane. It was also noted that the cost of the scheme had increased significantly and members were concerned that the Town Council could be required to provide revenue support in the longer term. Notwithstanding these concerns, the Committee was pleased to note that, subject to negotiations, there was now a clear expectation of reaching agreement with Hampshire County Council for a 35 year lease of the site.

**RESOLVED:** that, in view of the significant changes in playing facilities required by the Rugby Club, the Town Council's representatives on the Steering Group seek further clarification from the Rugby Club on its Business Plan, with particular reference to the way in which the dispersal of pitches at three locations will enable the Club to meet its overall objective.

#### **OS/4528**

#### **RINGWOOD TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB**

The Town Clerk reported that he had received a request from Ringwood Town Football & Social Club for financial assistance in providing new changing rooms at the site in Long Lane.

**RESOLVED:** that Ringwood Town Football & Social Club be advised that the Town Council would not provide financial assistance for the provision of new changing rooms for the Club, or as Landlords, approve any changes to the pavilion that might prejudice the implementation of a comprehensive Recreation Strategy for the town.

#### **OS/4529**

#### **DEVELOPERS' CONTRIBUTIONS**

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that he was putting together a package of recreation and open space proposals for the acquisition and improvement of land within the town, which he suggested could be submitted to the District Council for funding from Developers' Contributions. These were:

1. Improvement works to the access road to the Picnic Area at Poulner Lakes
2. To buy out the requirement for regular Methane monitoring/inspections at Poulner Lakes
3. The Purchase of Dr Little Gardens
4. The purchase of land at the Bickerley to link with the Pocket Park
5. Improvement work at Pocket Park and the adjoining land
6. Purchase of Rotary Mower for use on The Bickerley

**RESOLVED:** that the Town Clerk's action in producing a package of proposals for the acquisition and improvement of open spaces within the town, utilising Developers' Contributions, be endorsed.

#### **OS/4530**

#### **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

Members were asked to approve the Specification for Grounds Maintenance (see Annex 'B' to these minutes) of individual general open spaces under the control of the Town Council.

**RESOLVED:** that the Specification for Grounds Maintenance (Annex 'B') be approved, but that amendments be made as and when required, with the agreement of the Committee.

**OS/4531  
GROUNDS MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT**

The Town Clerk updated members on equipment included within the Committee's budget. He explained that following a more detailed review of this equipment, it was clear that certain items were unused and surplus. He identified equipment now needed and more suitable to the needs of the Council, together with details of Council-owned items for disposal.

Members discussed the option of buying a new or second-hand tractor for use with the new rotary mower to be used on larger open spaces such as The Bickerley.

**RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE:** (i) that the Town Council purchase a second-hand tractor suitable for use with gang mowers and, if possible, a highway verge Kubota, at a cost not to exceed £4,000 and (ii) that the Town Council dispose of its Kubota B2400 Mini Tractor.

**OS/4532  
HEALTH & SAFETY**

The Committee received a report on the inspection of the Town Council's play equipment by RoSPA (see Annex 'C' attached).

**RESOLVED:** that the RoSPA Report on the inspection of the Town Council's play equipment be received and the recommendations made therein accepted.

**OS/4533  
SKATE PARK**

The Town Clerk reported that, as a result of the recent vandalism at the Skate Park and graffiti which had been sprayed on the equipment, he had met with Inspector Kenna to consider what action could be taken. A suggestion had been made at the meeting that the users of the Skate Park be allowed to repaint the equipment, including approved graffiti. The Clerk sought the Committee's approval to go ahead with this suggestion.

**RESOLVED:** that, together with Councillor Cracknell, the Town Clerk meet with youngsters who use the Skate Park to discuss the suggestion to paint the equipment, including approved graffiti.

**OS/4534  
ALLOTMENTS**

The Chairman reported that members of Ringwood Gardening Club had judged the Allotment Competition at the beginning of July and had given him the results.

**RESOLVED:** that presentation of cups and awards in respect of the 2004 Allotment Competition be held at the Full Council Meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2004 and that a letter of thanks be sent to the Gardening Club together with an invitation to attend the prize-giving.

**OS/4535  
DRAFT BLASHFORD LAKES STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Chairman reported that, on behalf of the Committee, he had read the draft plan and, in as far as it applied to land in the ownership or management of the Town Council, he was in agreement with the plan.

**RESOLVED:** that the Town Council approves the draft Blashford Lakes Strategic Management Plan in as far as it applies to land in the ownership or management of the Council.

**OS/4536**

**NATURE CONSERVATION ASSESSMENTS UNDER THE COUNTRYSIDE AND RIGHTS OF WAY ACT 2000**

The Chairman reported receipt of notification from the Countryside Agency about access assessment being carried out under the provision of this Act. He reported that the proposals would not have any significant impact on land in the ownership of the Town Council.

**RESOLVED:** that the Countryside Agency be advised that the Town Council does not consider that the access rights granted under the Act will give rise to any significant increase in access to areas covered by their consultation exercise.

**OS/4537**

**URGENT BUSINESS**

**(i) Carvers Recreation Ground:** A resident from Collins Lane had requested the removal to another part of the Recreation Ground of a seat located on Carvers immediately behind his boundary hedge. The resident had advised that users of the seat were noisy and threw objects over the hedge into his garden. Members considered the request, but

**RESOLVED:** that the seat in question on the boundary of Carvers should not be moved as it was in a prime position for watching cricket matches and would only shift the problem to a different location on the Recreation Ground.

**(ii) September meeting of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee:**

**RESOLVED:** that the September meeting of the Recreation, Leisure and Open Spaces Committee be held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2004 at 6.00 pm.

**(iii)** The Town Clerk reported that he had received information from the District Council that the Hampshire Farmers Market wished to come to Ringwood on Saturdays instead of Sundays in future.

**RESOLVED:** that the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chamber of Trade:

**(i)** ascertain why there is a need to change the day when the Hampshire Farmers Market comes to Ringwood from Sunday to Saturday and

**(ii)** express the view that the town would wish to retain Sundays as the Farmers Market day for Ringwood

**OS/4538**

**EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED:** that under section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

**OS/4539**

**DR LITTLE GARDENS**

The Clerk reported the current position with regard to the purchase of land at Dr Little Gardens.

**RESOLVED:** that the purchase of land at Dr Little Gardens be pursued.

**OS/4540  
FISHING RIGHTS**

The Town Clerk advised members of the offers received for the bottom beat on the River Avon.

**RESOLVED:** that unless more attractive offers are received, the fishing rights be retained by the Town Council.

**OS/4541  
STAFF MATTERS**

The Town Clerk advised members of a work related problem which he was trying to resolve for a member of staff.

**RESOLVED:** that the Town Clerk be authorised to proceed as appropriate to resolve the work related matter for a member of staff.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.12 pm.