

OPEN SESSION: There were no members of public present.

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

Held on Wednesday 3rd November 2004 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Cllr N W Light (Chairman)
Cllr N J Chard
Cllr Mrs B A Charlton
Cllr D E Cracknell
Cllr L C Ford
Cllr M H Thierry
Cllr N Wood

IN ATTENDANCE: Terry Simpson, Town Clerk
Jo Stannard, Deputy Town Clerk

OS/4564 ABSENCE

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

OS/4565 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

OS/4566 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 6th October 2004, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

OS/4567 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 for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information (Annex 'A').

OS/4568 NORTHFIELD PLAY AREA

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that a bid had been submitted to the District Council for £10,000 of developers' contributions towards the refurbishment of Northfield Play Area. However, having spoken to several playground manufacturers, it had become apparent that a total budget of £17,500 would not provide for adequate safety surfacing, plus all the equipment that was required. Following discussions with Martin Devine at the District Council, it was clear that he would not be prepared to support the scheme without a full specification safety surfacing. It had therefore been suggested that the bid for developers' contributions be increased to £20,000. With the Town Council's contribution of £7,500, the project would be regarded as a jointly funded partnership scheme.

A summary of the quotations received was circulated to Members. The value of the quotations ranged from £17,000 to £42,900 and the proposed schemes were all very different.

It was therefore suggested that a Working Party, to include Members, the Deputy Town Clerk and members of the public, be formed to consider the quotations and make a recommendation to the next meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the bid for developers' contributions be increased to £20,000.
- 2) That a Working Party, comprising Cllrs Light, Chard and Ford, the Deputy Town Clerk and members of the public, be formed to consider quotations received and make a recommendation to the next meeting of the Committee.

OS/4569

RE-ADMISSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The public and press were re-admitted to the meeting.

OS/4570

PROPOSED RUGBY FACILITIES AT RINGWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

It was noted that the Rugby Club had some concerns about the project being contained within the £350,000 budget. They had therefore asked contractors to price the scheme and, following this exercise, a further meeting would be held.

Cllr Light suggested that the Council should instruct an independent surveyor to check the prices. This would be considered by the Committee following the meeting of all interested parties.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

OS/4571

CARVERS RECREATION GROUND – USE FOR TEMPORARY MEDICAL CENTRE

The Town Clerk reported on progress with the Lease of part of Carvers Recreation Ground for use for a temporary medical centre. He said that a clause had been included stating that any drugs left on the premises would be stored in accordance with the Misuse of Drugs Regulations. However, any drugs kept on the premises would be kept to a minimum and there would be none kept for the purpose of re-sale.

It was also noted that it was hoped the sewer connection would come via Frampton Place, therefore causing less disturbance than coming across Southampton Road.

The PCT had expressed concern that, if MedCentres went out of business, the Town Council may evict them from the site. However, the Town Clerk had assured the PCT that this would not happen and that the temporary building could remain on site until completion of the new Health Centre.

Cllr Thierry said that he had been approached by residents who were concerned that they may lose car parking on the verge between Carvers and Southampton Road. It was noted that the Walking & Cycling Working Group had identified this as a possible off-road cycle route and this was programmed to be considered in the next financial year. However, both the Town Council and residents would be consulted before any firm proposals were made.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted and the action taken be approved.

OS/4572
RINGWOOD YOUTH CLUB

Following decisions taken by the Policy & Finance Committee (F/3699), the Town Clerk had written to the County Council and asked for further information on funding.

Cllr Cracknell was concerned that the youth service was overplaying its role in the town. He did not believe that there were youth workers in the Cornerways Health Centre or Ringwood School, and he would be attending the next meeting to seek clarification on these points.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted and the action taken by the Town Clerk be approved.

OS/4573
PUBLIC TOILETS AT CEMETERY

RESOLVED: That the arrangements for turning off the lights in the public toilets at the Cemetery during the hours of darkness at weekends continue, and that this arrangement be implemented in the Christmas break.

OS/4574
DOG BINS AT POULNER COMMON

Following a request from a member of public, the Town Clerk had investigated the costs of providing 2 dog litter bins at Poulner Common. He said that, based on prices provided by the District Council, it was likely to cost between £400 and £500, plus the cost to empty the bins on a weekly basis. As Poulner Common is in private ownership, it was agreed that this would not be a good use of Council funds.

RESOLVED: That no dog litter bins be provided at Poulner Common.

OS/4575
LITTER BINS AT WAR MEMORIAL GARDENS

The Town Clerk reported that it would cost a maximum of £500 to replace the litter bins in the War Memorial Gardens with covered bins, to prevent litter being taken out by birds.

Cllr Thierry suggested that the fish and chip shop should be approached for a contribution towards the cost of the bins, as much of the litter was generated from there. The bins could then include small sponsorship signs.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the litter bins in the War Memorial Gardens be replaced with covered bins, up to a maximum cost of £500.
- 2) That the fish and chip shop be asked to make a contribution towards the cost of the bins, which could include sponsorship signs.

OS/4576
FOOTPATH EXTENSION AT THE BICKERLEY

It was noted that the County Council had funds available to provide the next link of footpath across The Bickerley, from Kingsbury Lane to Kings Arms Lane, and may be able to extend this further. This would not be a tarmac path, as this would necessitate a land exchange before proceeding. It would therefore be a compacted gravel path, meaning that a land exchange could take place at a later date.

RESOLVED: That the arrangements for the extension of the footpath at the Bickerley be approved.

OS/4577

CARVERS RECREATION GROUND – USE OF FOOTPATH BY CYCLISTS

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that the Walking and Cycling Working Group had identified the footpath across Carvers as a safe route for cyclists travelling to and from the town centre, avoiding the busy town roundabout. However, as the footpath was on the Definitive Map, it was necessary for the Town Council, as the landowner, to give permissive rights to cyclists to cross Carvers.

It was also noted that access to Carvers would have to be improved and it was hoped that the Working Group could obtain funds to resolve this issue.

RESOLVED: That the use by cyclists of the existing footpath across Carvers, from Southampton Road to Carvers Lane, be approved.

OS/4578

ACCESS ROADS ACROSS THE BICKERLEY

The Town Clerk reported that he had received several complaints from residents in the Bickerley Road area about cars parked on the access roads across The Bickerley. These cars were parked in such a way as to prevent access by emergency vehicles to Old Mill Flats, Riverside Terrace and Bickerley Terrace. Cars were also parking along Bickerley Road, hard up to the dragons' teeth, causing traffic congestion.

Following advice from NALC, the Town Clerk had determined that these cars were parked illegally and the Town Council has the power to deal with any vehicles parked on Village Green. He suggested that there were several ways this could be tackled.

Members discussed wheel clamping, which had proved to be very effective in Monmouth Court, removal of vehicles and the use of signs and media coverage. However, some members felt that the actual use of wheel clamping or removal of vehicles would not be supported by residents.

Cllr Thierry suggested restricting the width of the access roads to the width of one car. He felt that this would deter vehicles from parking on these roads. However, the Town Clerk stated that the agreement with the Old Mill House Flats giving access across the Bickerley to residents, specifies the exact width of the road. Therefore no work could be carried out to this track without the approval of residents and amendment of the Agreement.

Cllr Wood suggested that Members should carry out a site visit to look at the extent of the problem and to see where cars could be moved on to if action was to be taken against illegally parked vehicles.

RESOLVED: That members of the Committee should attend a site meeting to determine the extent of the problem of vehicles parking on the access roads across the Bickerley.

OS/4579

URGENT BUSINESS

i) Committee Budget Report

The Town Clerk circulated a summary budget report for the period April to October 2004 and said that this would be an agenda item for all future meetings.

It was noted that the budget was underspent against the profile budget in some areas such as machines and maintenance, but that this had been expected at this time of year.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Budget Report be noted.

ii) Ashley Wood

Cllr Light reported that he had attended a site visit with the Town Clerk to the Town Council owned wood at Ashley. He said that work would be required to the footpath through the wood and that a number of the young oak trees had dead branches. A Health and Safety assessment would be undertaken shortly and there could be a need for significant expenditure in this area. He added that the Council was also responsible for Folly Farm Lane, which was experiencing heavy use due to building works in the area.

Cllr Cracknell suggested that pupils of Waldorf School could help with any work required.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm.