

OPEN SESSION: There were no members of public present.

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

Held on Wednesday 6th April 2005 at 7.00 pm

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr N R G Clarke
Terry Simpson, Town Clerk
Lyn Wickens, P A to the Town Clerk

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Don Cole as a member of the Committee following his recent election to the Town Council.

OS/4618 ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr L C Ford.

OS/4619 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Thierry declared a personal, but not prejudicial, interest in agenda item 7, as he was a member of Ringwood Rotary Club. He remained in the room and took part in discussion and voting on the item.

OS/4620 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 2nd March 2005, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

OS/4621 LAND AT LONG LANE

The Clerk reported that following some preparatory rolling of the grass by our groundsmen, the land was still uneven and, in order to obtain a suitable playing surface prior to use of the site for team ball games and practice, it would be necessary for seeding and some remedial works to be carried out. If members wished to be able to offer these facilities to local clubs in the autumn it would be necessary for the seeding to be carried out during April.

Planning Consent was also required for permission to install a portakabin and to move the existing entrance gate.

RESOLVED:

(i) that application be made to the District Council for temporary Planning Consent for five years for use of the land for sports purposes, installation of a portakabin at the site and also to close off the existing entrance gate on the corner of Moortown Lane and Long Lane and form a new entrance next to the Council's allotment site, and

(ii) that the Town Clerk be authorised to proceed with arrangements to have the necessary remedial works carried out in order that the site can be offered to local clubs for team ball games in Autumn 2005.

OS/4622

RINGWOOD CEMETERY – OFFER OF SEATS

The Clerk reported that offers had been received from two members of the public to provide two memorial seats for installation in Ringwood Cemetery.

RESOLVED:

(i) that permission be given for a memorial seat to be placed in Ringwood Cemetery in memory of Mr A V Brown for a period of five years, the family of the late Mr Brown to install and maintain the seat in accordance with directions given by the Clerk, and

(ii) that permission be given for a memorial seat to be placed in Ringwood Cemetery in memory of Mr J Harling, for a period of five years, subject to the location being agreed with the Town Clerk and the wording on the memorial plaque to be clarified. The donor of the seat to be responsible for the cost of installing the seat and for its maintenance.

OS/4623

RINGWOOD CEMETERY – WATER SUPPLY

The Clerk reported that at present it takes the groundsmen two hours to fill each bowser for watering the summer planting around the town from the present water supply at the Cemetery. He sought the committee's permission to obtain an enhanced supply so that the bowsers could be filled more quickly.

RECOMMENDATION: that the Town Council obtain an enhanced water supply to Ringwood cemetery at a cost of £737.00 plus VAT, with the costs being met from within the existing budgets.

OS/4624

RINGWOOD ROTARY CLUB PICNIC AREA

Members were informed that Ringwood Rotary Club had written advising the Town Council that their members were unable to continue the maintenance of the tables and chairs in the Rotary Picnic Area at the junction of Mansfield Road and Stallards Lane and had asked the Town Council to consider taking over this responsibility.

The Clerk said that it was his understanding that the District Council owned the land and cut the grass on an ad hoc basis during the growing season. If the Town Council was to take over the maintenance of the whole area, it would need to obtain an assignment of any licence or lease that the Rotary Club had. He had made a preliminary investigation of any immediate works that would be required and these included the complete replacement of the three picnic benches and the renewal of the fencing around the site. Alterations would also be needed to the entrance to the picnic area to allow access for the Town Council's mowing machines.

Discussion took place on the options possible for the site. Cllrs Charlton and Wood felt that the town would benefit from turning all or part of the site over to car parking. Several members felt that the location of the site so close to the roads did not make it an ideal picnic area.

Cllr Thierry said that it was a designated and established picnic area and whilst it remained as such it needed to be well maintained.

Cllr Clarke, with the permission of the Chairman, said the Council needed to decide on the best use of this piece of land which was, originally, highway waste and enquired whether the use of Section 106 funds would be best spent here or elsewhere in the town, such as by the river.

The Chairman asked members to bear in mind the Rotary Club's request and consider whether, if permission was granted by the District Council, they wished to provide and maintain three new picnic benches for the picnic area. It was noted that, as financial provision was not available in the Committee's budget for this proposal, Policy & Finance Committee would need to approve the allocation of funds for this purpose. The Town Clerk would obtain estimates for consideration by that Committee.

RECOMMENDED TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE: that

- (i) the Town Clerk seeks the permission of the District Council to take over the maintenance of the picnic benches in the Rotary Picnic Area, and
- (ii) if permission is granted, three new picnic benches be purchased and maintained by the Town Council.

OS/4625

PROPOSED RUGBY FACILITIES AT RINGWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Members were circulated with copies of the Rugby Club's bid to the Sports Council, which had just been received by the Town Council.

After careful discussion it was agreed that a special meeting with the Rugby Club needed to be called to discuss this most recent document. Members agreed that all Town Councillors would be invited to attend the meeting.

RESOLVED: that a special meeting with Rugby Club Committee Members be called to discuss the proposed rugby facilities at Ringwood Junior School and that all Ringwood Town Councillors to be invited to attend the meeting.

OS/4626

URGENT BUSINESS

Ringwood School – Carvers Summer Usage – The Clerk informed members that Ringwood School had requested 95 sessions of rounders/softball during the Summer term. He proposed that the charge to the school be at a special subsidised rate of £10 per session.

RESOLVED: that Ringwood School's request to use Carvers for 95 sessions of rounders/softball during the Summer term be charged at the special subsidised rate of £10 per session, this rate to be for one year only.

With the permission of the Chairman, Cllr Mrs Charlton left the meeting at 8.15 pm.

OS/4627

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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information. (Annex 'A').

**OS/4628
LAND AT LONG LANE - QUOTATIONS**

The Clerk reiterated that in order to establish a level playing area for football and rugby, quotations had been sought for seeding and remedial works. Funds for the work could be met from reserves, pending receipt of Developer's Contributions. Members considered and compared the quotations received. It was noted that whilst the land was allocated on the Local Plan as open space, acceptance of tenders in advance of obtaining planning permission for sports purposes could be regarded as a risk that the Town Council would not ordinarily take.

However, the appropriate Planning Officer had indicated that in view of its designation, there could be no major planning objections to the proposed planning usage. Members felt that, in these circumstances, the risk was low. He had confirmed that planning permission would not be required for these works.

The work would have to be carried out at some stage in the future when an overall scheme for this area was undertaken and as such, these works could be regarded as advance works for the overall scheme. If, therefore, the Council wished to alleviate overuse of other pitches in the town, the work needed to be carried out immediately. The Chairman of Policy & Finance Committee and the Mayor indicated that they would fully support acceptance of a tender in these exceptional circumstances.

RESOLVED: that the lowest quotation received be accepted with a request that the work commence immediately.

**OS/4629
LAND AT THE BICKERLEY**

The Clerk reported that the acquisition of one piece of land was proceeding and explained the action taken with respect to the overall development of the area.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk's report be received and the action taken approved.

**OS/4630
STAFF JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

Grounds Foreman and Groundsman – The Clerk explained changes to the Job Descriptions which had been made to reflect the wider skill base required of grounds staff.

RESOLVED: that the new job descriptions for the posts of Grounds Foreman and Groundsman be approved.

There being no further business, the chairman closed the meeting at 8.37 pm.